President’s Message

A Tradition of Service

By Joan Merdinger
(Social Work/Faculty Affairs)

I’ve been doing some reflecting as my term of office concludes, and just as I began it, I'm grateful for being part of the service that SJSU-ERFA has been providing to its members and to the University since its creation. For your edification, I thought it would be useful to point out some important financial contributions that ERFA has made to the University over the last 12 years.

Shortly after the new Martin Luther King, Jr. Library was built, our organization funded a carrel for student and faculty use. Over the years, we have given additional donations to the University Library, in 2010 to honor Hobert Burns, and in 2014, for a special NEH challenge grant. We have also provided donations to the Beethoven Society in 2008 and to the Steinbeck Center in 2011, both of which are located in the University Library.

In 2012, we made $1000 donations to Deans of each of the Colleges to enhance faculty development. We received special thanks from each of the Deans for our most welcome contributions. The Colleges that received the donations were Applied Sciences and Arts, Business, Education, Engineering, Humanities and Arts, Science, and Social Sciences.

In 2013, it came to our attention that the Academic Senate was in need of a new computer. ERFA made a special contribution to the Senate for the purchase of a computer that is used to take Minutes for each of the Senate meetings. We received grateful thanks from the Chair of the Academic Senate for our timely and very welcome contribution.

An important accomplishment of the 2014-2015 year was the implementation of the ERFA Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award, designed to provide funding to two outstanding faculty members for research and/or creative activities. We had a dedicated and hard working committee that reviewed 44 high quality applications from faculty across the campus. The two awards were announced in March of this year and the awardees, a faculty member in Art and Art History and a small team from the University Library, spoke at our Spring Luncheon on May 8, describing their projects and thanking us.

This inaugural year for these awards has been a great success, and the Board has approved continuation of the award for the upcoming year. We have created a special account with a gift to the SJSU Tower Foundation to oversee the funding of these awards. As a result, SJSU-ERFA now has the benefit of owning a 501(c)3 account, and donations to that account are tax deductible.

I end this year with special thanks for having been able to serve as your ERFA President, and for being able to continue serving our University. We can all be proud of the direct contributions our organization has made to the campus which come from our annual dues. So on that note, please remember to send in your dues when you receive your renewal notice enclosed in this Newsletter. In addition, if you would like to contribute to the ERFA Faculty Research and Creative Activity Awards program, those designated contributions are now tax deductible.

My special thanks to the ERFA Board and the membership for a wonderful year of service!

calendar

Friday, October 16, 2015
Fall Luncheon
Michael’s Restaurant, Shoreline, Mt. View

Friday, December 11, 2015
Holiday Celebration
MLK Library

Remembrance of Things Past

Irma Guzman Wagner rues the decline of penmanship in our culture (page 4). And Pat Laurie mourns the demise of the Faculty Wives association (page 5).
Year End Review

By Peter Buzanski (History)
The University has again appeared in the local and national press for reasons not always to our credit. One such topic is the ratio between teaching faculty and administrators: the latter have increased while the former has decreased. I have questioned this disparity several times but both the previous Provost, Gary Setzer, and the current Provost, Andy Feinstein, have said that SJSU is one of the 23 CSU campuses with the fewest administrators. While I cannot locate a table of organization that lists all of our administrators, I have heard that we currently have at least thirteen Associate Vice Presidents (AVPs) in positions below the president and provost. While administrators are clearly needed, I wonder, for example, if the position of AVP for Student Academic Success Services must be a highly paid AVP? Or AVP for Faculty Development? The list is a long one. In the previous Newsletter we commented on the rapid departure of academic administrators. Now, our list of those who have been refilled, effective July 6, 2015, is as follows:

- Associated Vice President for Administration: Annette Biefeld
- Director of Human Resources: Roberta Connors
- Provost: Andy Feinstein
- Vice Provost for Academic Affairs: Dr. Virginia DiMaggio-Pang
- Vice Provost for Student Affairs: Dr. David S. Wilson
- Dean of Faculty: Dr. Rachel Hare
- Associate Dean of Faculty: Dr. Jennifer Grady
- Executive Director of University Relations: Dr. Susan Collins
- Dean of Student Affairs: Dr. Mary H. Guglielmo
- Dean of the College of Business: Dr. Greg Hilsenbeck
- Dean of the College of Humanities: Dr. Mary Jorstad
- Dean of the College of Science: Dr. Michael Cerny
- Dean of the College of Social Sciences: Dr. Richard Connors
- Dean of Undergraduate Studies: Dr. Mary Y. Kim
- Dean of Graduate Studies: Dr. Lisa A. Sisson
- Dean of Enrollment Management: Dr. George S. Sells

There has also been a major change in the salary structure of the entire CSU. Beginning on July 1, 2015, SJSU received a supplemental budget increase of $800,000 for faculty adjustments and $50,000 for support staff increases. The increase is substantial. According to the new payment formula, Assistant Professors will earn a minimum of $65,000, Associate Profs, $70,000 and Full Profs $75,000. This will affect 36 current faculty members. Something called a “salary inversion” policy for tenure/appoint track faculty, stipulates that assistant proffs cannot earn more than associates, and associates cannot earn more than full proffs. This affects 45 current faculty. Finally, full professors who have been in their positions for 5 years will receive a 1% salary increase on July 1 this year, and a year later, full proffs of 10 years or more will receive 2% more. In all, over 250 current faculty members are affected by these raises.

The CSU Chancellor, Timothy White has changed the review system for all campus presidents. Before, each president was reviewed every five or six years, but now preliminary reviews can begin as early as a president’s third year. The SJSU president is undergoing such a review at this time. All campus personnel, staff, faculty and administrators were invited to send anonymous comments about the president to the Chancellor who will bring them to the Board of Trustees. The Board will review the Chancellor’s report and the campus reviews and discuss these in their June 2015 meeting. Before the end of the current academic year, the Senate enacted several important policies for the President’s approval. The first dealt with policies pertaining to the appointment and promotion of faculty (ARTP). These policies changed every five years, but the collective bargaining agreements of 1998 made changes extremely difficult.

“deselection” was the preferred term. When I inquired what right a library had to eliminate the right to de-selection, most unsatisfactory reply came from the chair of the library board who stated that “all libraries deselect.” I foretold when two wrongs do not make one right. When a first reading of the revised policy was presented to the Senate, one member of the history department was granted fifteen minutes to present the case in opposition. His address was greeted with applause. When...
From Penmanship to Keyboarding

By Irna Guzman Wagner

Educational Historian

My grandfather, born in 1858, didn’t just sign his name; he proclaimed it with a flourish: Guzman Wagner. His pen strokes swished, swirled, and swooped from letter to letter, tucking each together with a certainty that his name had significance. Hermínio Guzman’s signature revealed aspects about the man behind the pen. It displayed confidence, strength, creativity, education, and respect for tradition.

If my grandfather were living now, he would be dismayed to see that handwriting and penmanship are disappearing. People today are pressing keys on boards and through some magical processes, which I don’t understand, making words appear on screens! During his time on earth, his pen was punctured to produce harpsichord keys, and he practiced what it preached! I assume that he read the book and grew when I study what he wrote.

“Reading between the lines” takes on a deeper meaning when I see how his words appear on paper. What will happen to handwriting? Will it become a lost form of writing, or will it make a comeback? The way his words appear on each page lets me connect with a person I never knew, and a feeling grows when I study what he wrote.

At the helm, the club began to meet more regularly and felt they were a more important group. Some members made the wives feel that their husbands’ positions on the faculty gave them a responsibility for attending and participating in the gatherings. Mrs. MacQuarrie welcomed new wives at the beginning of each year and hosted Christmas parties in her home.

The group met monthly during the academic year and grew in size to 165 paid members by 1955. Interest sections included Bridge, Book Club, Cookbook (fundraiser), Explorers, Friday Club, Gaynotes, Garden Club, International Dining, Newcomers, Travel, and Creative Stitchery. The general meetings included family Christmas parties, and that afternoon the 13 who invited all faculty wives to her home.

SJSU Faculty Wives & Associates. This name change was due to The Privacy Act of 1974. The organization became more inclusive, accepting spouses of female faculty members, and the new leadership in the board was supporting the betterment of San Jose State.

In the 90s and 2000s, it became increasingly apparent that our membership could only decline in numbers. As the average age of members advanced, there was less energy to organize fund raising affairs for scholarships, so memorial gifts became the main source. Meetings dwindled to three, and then two, per year, with an average attendance of 25. At its meeting on March 10, 2015, the board reluctantly voted to dissolve SJSU Faculty Wives & Associates.

We were invited to a brunch at the Pedagogical center on May 13, 2015, where we announced that after the upcoming fall coffee, all of the remaining funds ($12,000) would be awarded to four selected students for scholarships. Our only other asset, the silver coffee and tea service, will be gifted to the President’s House.

Though the organization will be gone, the memories of good times shared and good things accomplished will live on in the minds and hearts of all who participated. Friendships formed will continue forever.

[Sources: Reminiscing with Faculty Wives of San Jose State College by Evelyn Bell Settles (throughout 1917), various news letters and yearbooks (1958-2015).]
ERFA’s first two faculty award winners, Patricia Albers (left) and Emily Joseph Becker, Pam Stacks, Ken Mackay

SUMMER • 2015
ERFA
News
Chat Room . . .
Special news from and about our members. Edited by Gene Bernardini
This edition contains news about travels and activities taken from the membership renewal forms. Members are invited to send additional news about themselves to Gene Bernardini at gbernard@comcast.net or by snail mail at 775 Seawood Way, San Jose, CA 95120

• James Asher (Psychology, ’92) has just published a new book: Fermat’s Last Theorem Solved! Jim believes he has discovered the secret to Pierre de Fermat’s puzzle, described as “the most difficult mathematical problem in the world.” Mathematicians have worked at it for 400 years, but Jim’s answer is “as simple as 2+2=4,” which, he says, “anyone can verify in five minutes with simple arithmetic.” He hopes it will garner the attention of math buffs worldwide and is now looking for help to get it recognized.

• Lonna Smith (Secondary Ed., ’04) and her husband Michael have done a lot of traveling in the past year. They took a Danube River cruise into Central Europe in the Spring. In summer, they visited relatives in Ohio and Pennsylvania and later went on to Ottawa and Toronto. In October they traveled to NYC to take in the museums and theater.

• Susan Meyer (Dean, Education, ’03) also traveled extensively last year. She and her husband Michael made their way to Africa last fall, visiting Capetown, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Zambia.

• David McNeil (History, ’05) and his wife Faye alternate between homes in the Haight-Ashbury and Columbia/Sonora. Twice last year they spent a few weeks at their place in E. Tuscany, with brief visits to Barcelona, Nice and to Aix-en-Provence (where David was CSU campus director many years ago). They remain busy, active and happy, having just celebrated their first wedding anniversary.

• John Matson (Biological Sciences, ’07) and Sharon Parsons (Elementary Ed, ’09) completed a safari from Nairobi to Capetown early last year. John published a paper on “Small Mammals from an Isolated Cloud Forest in Guatemala,” in June, 2014 (Texas Tech Univ.). He has another coming out soon in The Southwestern Naturalist.

• Gus Lease (Music, ’93) has just completed his 70th year of teaching in higher education: one at the Univ. of Colorado, four at the Univ. of Oklahoma and 65 at SJSU. Once again he sang for the 63rd time at the SJSU Homecoming. As President of the SJSU chapter of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, he attended its biennial convention in St. Louis. He still sings for various organizations whenever asked.

• Warren Kalenchab (Teacher Ed., ’85) is enjoying the Oregon weather, especially when it rains. He and his wife Patricia are living close to two of their three daughters and their families. They’re especially proud of their teenage grandson who is a tennis champion.

• Adnan Daoud (Sociology, ’96) and his wife Pat took a wonderful trip to Europe last fall. They sailed from Venice, along the Dalmatian coast on to Greece, Corfu, Malta and Italian ports along the way. They continued on to Switzerland, where they visited all the main cities. Their highlight experience was a four hour train trip through the spectacular Swiss Alps on the Bernina Express. They cannot say enough about the efficiency and comfort of the Swiss rail system.

• Kim Uhlik (Recreation and Leisure, ’11) was featured in a one-man photo exhibition at the Downtown Gallery in Kent, Ohio, from March 25-April 04. The show’s premise is that a quirky, fascinating world exists literally at our feet, if we would take the time to look down and notice. Many of the images were taken in the San Jose area as Kim walked from place to place instead of driving. The exhibit will move to Palm Desert, CA, in August.

• Elsie Leach (English, ’34) is still living in Los Altos Hills. For several years now, she has offered at her church a celebration of Martin Luther King’s life on his birthday, centering on one of his memorable speeches.

• Fred Schutz (English, ’86) and wife Natalie continue their traveling. Last October they sailed south from San Francisco as far as Ensenada, Mexico. Then this January they spent a week at a Hilton resort called Waikaloa on the large island of Hawaii. They’d been there before and liked it so they stayed for another week in the Oahu area and spent a week in the Kona area. Then they went to Yosemite for a wonderful vacation, except for the disappointing sight of so little water coming over the falls.

Don and Phyllis Keesey, Wayne and Sandra Savage

At the Spring Luncheon
Photos by Dennis Wilcox
SJSU ERFA members and their friends and relations turned out to hear chemistry professor Pamela Stacks and enjoy the Spring Luncheon at the Villages.
That piece of evidence had to be transcribed into a word-processed document for her. But there may be hope. My daughter-in-law, an art teacher in Hawaii, told me recently that her students asked to be taught handwriting. “It’s cool,” they said. I agree.

My grandfather’s writing conveyed much of his essence. His beautiful handwriting was the personal reflection of a once-active individual who died in 1937. I doubt that a computer-produced journal by him would have provided the same kind of interest and insight for me. If, after I’m gone, relatives or friends try to analyze my handwriting, I shudder at what they might think. Then again, perhaps I shouldn’t worry too much about the demise of penmanship. After all, if it isn’t taught and people can’t read it, my memoirs would be useless for future generations. Moreover, if I use technology, what I print can go all over the world—even into “the Cloud!” Technology will also make it easier to put my ideas into print before I run out of days to tell my stories.

Handwriting or keyboarding? Must I decide between the two? Maybe not. I think I’ll use them both.