

SJSU ERFA Newsletter
Winter 2021 Volume 35 Number 2
A Newsletter of the SJSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association

Higher education at an “inflection point”

By Don Keesey

This year’s fall event, once again an online affair, featured as guest speaker Vincent Del Casino, SJSU Provost and Senior Vice- President for Academic Affairs. Provost Del Casino began his talk by describing higher education at an “inflection point.” What will it look like in a post-pandemic world? To what degree will we meet a continued demand for distance learning? How will we measure the value of on-campus experience? Noting that SJSU was back to about 40% in-person classes this fall and expected to be at about 60% in the spring, he expressed certainty that it would never return to the days of 90% or more in-person classes. He was also certain that distance learning—if done right---could be as effective as in-person classes.

As for specific developments at SJSU, Provost Del Casino found many reasons for optimism. While several universities lost enrollment during the pandemic, SJSU this semester enrolled over 37,000 students, its highest total ever. Student graduation rates have also continued to improve, and over the last five years the university has hired more tenure-track faculty than any other CSU school. The new faculty are also the most diverse in the university’s history and increased funding for academic advising has been targeted to reduce the equity gap in student outcomes. Another positive development has been greater involvement with the city government and local businesses that have recognized the importance of the campus to the city’s economy. In short, despite continuing problems and the advent of another interim president, Provost Del Casino remains decidedly upbeat.

You can hear the entire speech, including a following question-answer session, at <https://youtu.be/7wMr6-PvTZM>.

SJSU Choraliers Bring Holiday Joy

By Lonna Smith

“Awesome!”

“Absolutely wonderful!” “Aaaaah. Wonderful, all of it!”

From the first measures of the music, the accolades started appearing on Zoom's Chat message board, all well- deserved. On December 3rd, ERFA members and their guests were treated to the second annual virtual performance of choral music from the incomparable SJSU Choraliers under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Benson. As they did last year, this remarkable group of dedicated, talented singers showed us that even seemingly never-ending pandemics cannot dim their enthusiasm or their ability to touch our hearts with their beautiful music.

The program started with what is probably the most delightful arrangement I've ever heard of Leroy Anderson's "Sleigh Ride," by SJSU student composer Kendrick Hunyh. This comical and skillfully arranged piece was followed by a sincere rendition of the SJSU Alma Mater, "Hail, Spartans, Hail," enhanced by videos of the Choraliers decked out in SJSU garb.

We were also treated to a remote performance of "O Holy Night" that was entirely organized, rehearsed, recorded and edited by the students with no involvement of Dr. Benson. Finally, we enjoyed an encore performance from last year of "Deck the Halls." As with the other selections, choristers recorded themselves at home singing their individual parts. Then all recordings were edited and layered to create the look and sound of the entire chorus singing together.

Maestro Benson shared what it was like teaching in person after over a year of remote instruction. According to Benson, students started the semester below the level they would normally be had there been no pandemic, but they progressed faster than normal. As Benson reported, "The students were very excited to be back and instinctively knew they needed to be committed to being safe, to follow protocol and to push themselves."

When asked if there were any benefits to remote instruction, Benson stated it forced organization for everyone, students and faculty, and all needed to use the online resources to their fullest extent.

As a special treat, fourth year student and music major, Katie Darrow, visited with us on Zoom. Katie, who has been a Choralier since her Freshman year, summed up her experience and her director in one word: Phenomenal. For all of us in attendance, Katie's summation said it all!

Call for Nominations

At our Spring business meeting, the Nominating Committee will be recommending a slate of candidates to serve on the Executive Board, and members in attendance will cast their votes. The elective positions to be filled this year are:

Vice-President (to serve as President in the 2023-2024 year),
Treasurer (2-year term),
Academic Senate Representative (1-year term), and
one Member-at-Large position (2-year term).

If you are interested in being a candidate for any of these positions or would like to submit a nomination, please email Mary Jo Gorney- Moreno at mj.gorney-moreno@sjsu.edu for details. Nominations close on February 1, 2022.

Chat Room

This section contains news about travels and activities volunteered by the membership. Members are invited to send news about themselves to Nancie Fimbel at fimbeln@gmail.com or by snail mail at

239 Cypress Point Drive
Mountain View, CA 94043

Carol Christensen (Kinesiology '04) and her partner Linda spent three weeks in New England in Fall 2021. They visited Cape Cod (including Nantucket and Provincetown), MA; Mount Washington and The Flume, NH; and Acadia National Park, ME; plus many sights in Western MA where they stayed with family. The fall colors were glorious; the many lobster meals - Yummy!!! AND they have plenty of water so showers could be longer. Carol is now doing research for a book on the history of sport and recreation in California mainly in the mid-twentieth century.

Bill DeVincenzi (Accounting & Finance '13) has taken on a part-time role as Faculty in Residence for Sustainability, reporting to the Provost. His job is to enhance sustainability literacy among faculty, staff and students; to communicate sustainable activity success at SJSU; incorporate sustainability across the curriculum; create collaborations with businesses, government and non-profits; and improve SJSU's reputation for sustainability. (It turns out that SJSU ranks in the top 6% in the world for its sustainable activities, an amazing accomplishment!) Bill invites ERFA members interested in sustainability to contact him at william.devincenzi@sjsu.edu.

Anne Fountain (World Languages & Literature, '12) was presented with the 2021 American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese Distinguished Leadership Award. (She received the Distinguished Service Award in 1999 and the Outstanding Teaching Award in 1994. She was also President of the organization in 2016.) The award was given to her in recognition of her leadership in AATSP, several other regional and national associations, and her numerous publications. With husband Mike Conniff, Anne will cruise the Caribbean in December, aboard the Viking Star. Mike will lecture at the various ports, including the Panama Canal, about which he's published several books. Other ports of call: Yucatan, Belize, Bay Islands, Puerto Limon, and Montego Bay.

Joel Franks (Social Sciences/Sociology) is working on a book called From Honolulu to Brooklyn: The American Empire, Buck Lai and the Travelers to be published by Rutgers University Press in 2022. Arlene Okerlund (English '01) After streaming twelve Shakespeare lectures to over 1,000 viewers at the Institute for the Study of Western Civilization during our COVID lockdown, Arlene has learned that on-line teaching can be very effective, though neither easy nor cheap. She has enjoyed streaming Shakespeare to adults. She says, "Every student wants to learn—is happy to fill in the educational blanks missed while pursuing career-focused classes. Emails arrive from NYC and Australia with thanks for explaining the Hecuba references in Hamlet. And I love the luxury of delving deeply into a Shakespeare play without having to grade term papers and quizzes. My particular thanks goes to Shakespeare. Yet again, he taught us about life as we lived through difficult times."

Kim S. Uhlik (Recreation and Leisure '11) and his partner, Johanna, recently completed a 5- day, 1,000-mile road trip from Las Vegas to Reno, Lake Tahoe, Yosemite, Death Valley, and back. The final leg of the trip, from Yosemite to Vegas, featured a 10,000-foot change in elevation (9,000+ to -200), and numerous tiny outposts located at natural springs.

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### **Did You Know?**

Once you retire and have your Emeritus status you retain your SJSU ID.\* With that ID (and password) many resources continue to be available to you beyond retirement; For example:

- The student employees at the IT “help desk” are, in fact, very helpful (e.g., if you have lost access to your SJSU email account). <https://www.sjsu.edu/it/support/service-desk/index.php> —Beyond the IT help desk, software help is also available through the Center for Faculty Development. Contact Jean Shiota directly: ([jean.shiota@sjsu.edu](mailto:jean.shiota@sjsu.edu)).

- If you are buying gifts or taking holiday visitors to local attractions, you should know that there is a wide range of discounts available to you. Check here for details: <https://www.sjsu.edu/up/mybenefits/employee-discounts.php>.

## **Report on CSU ERFSA Meeting**

By Nancie Fimbel

The statewide Emeritus and Retired Faculty & Staff Association met via Zoom on October 20. This was the penultimate meeting for Harold Goldwhite, the Executive Director, whose position is now open to interested applicants. David Wagner, Director of Health Benefits, will also step down, and a replacement is being sought for his position. ERFSA receives reports from many state CSU-related organizations: the Chancellor's Office via Romey Sabalius, the SJSU faculty member who serves on the CSU Board of Trustees; CalPERS; the CSU statewide Academic Senate; CFA; and the California legislature. Information that affects retirees is reported in the quarterly newsletter *The Reporter*, found at [csuerfsa.org](http://csuerfsa.org).

Current concerns across the CSU include the Long-Term Care Program, the eroding of the proportion of tenure track faculty positions, the granting of permission to the Community College System to offer certain baccalaureate degrees, and the proposed decrease in benefits for future retirees of the CSU. ERFSA weighs in on these and many other subjects; your membership in the association strengthens its voice.

## **The Flourishing of ERFA After its Founding**

By Nancie Fimbel

The Emeritus Faculty Association of San Jose State University was one of the last such campus organizations to form in the CSU. Once it was established (in 1985-86), however, it flourished immediately. University records indicated that there were 335 eligible faculty, 72% of whom lived in Santa Clara County. By the end of the first year, half of those eligible for membership (173 to be exact) had become charter members. In addition, a spring luncheon and general meeting had been held, and the newsletter had been started with Mildred Winters as the first editor. By a vote of 214 in favor to 27 against, the EFA gained representation on the Academic Senate with voting rights. President Fullerton sent her congratulations on this achievement, reiterating the importance she and Academic Vice President Arlene Okerlund thought the Association would have. By the following fall, the first directory, containing names and addresses of retirees from 1970 to 1986, was published. Dues were \$10.

At first, the fall and spring EFA luncheons for members and their guests were held on campus in the cafeteria. The Board held its meetings at the University Club on Eighth St. (through Benton White's connection and with coffee). When the club was sold, Wayne Savage arranged for the organization to have an office in MacQuarrie Hall. Mailings used the Academic Senate office as a return address at first.

Within two years, emeritus librarians were added to those eligible for membership. Associate Membership was adopted for professors holding emeritus status at other

colleges and universities, and four men joined the Association as the first associate members. They had to pay dues, but they could not vote on EFA business. The Vice President/President Elect served also as the representative to the Academic Senate in 1988, but the positions were divided when this arrangement proved untenable. The Board informally adopted the tradition of selecting male and female presidents in alternate years; this continued almost without exception until well into the 2010s.

As early as 1987-88, the Executive Committee financially supported campus programs; that year it donated \$100 to the campus journal *San Jose Studies*. A gift of \$300 would be given in 1994 to the CSU- ERFA Emergency Fund after the Northridge earthquake destroyed the statewide office and its contents. More recently, the Association has made gifts to the Choraliers and other campus groups as well as more substantial awards since 2014 to faculty for research and creative activities. Once (1997) it funded a beautiful book of biographies of the retired faculty.

Over the years, adjustments were made to the composition of the Executive Committee of the board, the committee structure, and membership. The Bylaws of 1993 grant associate membership to "spouses of deceased SJSU emeritus faculty members, faculty participating in the Faculty Early Retirement Program, counselors, lecturers, and members of the SJSU administration." By 2006, spouses of regular members of EFA were permitted to become Associate Members of the organization. At this time, Associate Members were also given voting privileges and the right to serve as committee chairs and members.

A major revision of the EFA Constitution came in 2009-10 while Bobbye Gorenberg was President. EFA became ERFA: Following the lead of the statewide emeritus organization and several other CSU campuses, all faculty retirees (not just emeritus faculty), librarians and academic administrators who are CalPERS annuitants became eligible for membership. FERP faculty were dropped from the associate membership category because they are eligible for regular membership. The Executive Committee was renamed the Executive Board and was expanded. The Treasurer was no longer required to

present an annual report and budget at the annual meeting. Chairs of committees were no longer required to file written reports with the Secretary, and the chairs were invited to all meetings of the Executive Board. The position of Webmaster was added.

Currently, we continue to adjust the Constitution and Bylaws to enable us to operate electronically and to bring you, our members, programs and activities that you will find both educational and interesting. From the start, the Newsletter contained a column with member news; it was first called Personals and is now called Chat Room. As then, so now we ask that you send us news that will help your colleagues keep current with your activities and accomplishments. This is one of the ways we can achieve our mission to help faculty members “maintain a continuing and fruitful association with the University.”

### **Bonny Doon in the 1930's**

By Virginia Larsen

By 1931 the depression had deepened, and my parents saw that we must leave our cozy and comfortable house in Santa Cruz. Previously my stepfather and a partner had leased land in Bonny Doon where they grew bulb flowers - lilies, daffodils, narcissus - for the San Francisco flower market. However, by 1931, not many florists were selling flowers. Harvesting and shipping them had become too costly and the business failed.

At the same time my mother lost her 50- cent-a-week chambermaid job at the posh Palomar hotel. As the economy increasingly worsened it became evident that we would have to leave Santa Cruz. But where to go? Fortunately, the owner of the leased land decided to pasture his horses there. He hired my trustworthy, hardworking stepfather to care for and live on the property.

Before his marriage to my mother, my stepfather had built a cabin. I am reluctant to call it a house, as he built it from redwood shakes given to him by the local lumber company. But the cabin was too small for a wife, two stepdaughters, and a new baby. Ever creative, Dad added two rooms, and a fence to keep the horses and a newly acquired cow out of the vegetable and flower garden.

Amenities were nonexistent-- no wires for electricity so no appliances, no lights, no telephone. No pipes were installed for running water, so no bathroom. We bathed in tin tubs. A wood stove was installed for heating water and cooking. My sister and I hauled water from a spring and wood from a woodshed for the stove.

My stepfather went to work on the roads for the WPA and did whatever jobs for the very small wages the ranchers could pay. My city-bred mother picked and packed fruit from the orchards and grapes from the vineyards. She did housework for the very few summer people who could still pay., acted as janitor for the local school, and was the competent go-to lady as member of the school board during the years we lived in Bonnie Doon. She even learned to milk our cow!

Although cash was spare, we did eat well. We kept chickens for eggs and for Sunday dinner. With no refrigeration and no ice delivery to our remote community we often ate home-canned vegetables and fruits. Mother sometimes bought canned corn beef and dried beans from the store.

These were bleak times but neighbors helped one another any way they could. For example, a neighbor loaned us his cow for milk for 12 years. Also, orchard and vineyard owners allowed their neighbors to pick as much fruit as they wanted, but only if we kids promised not to break branches by climbing trees. We carefully adhered to this rule. On the way to school I would pick fruit for my lunch from the orchards and vineyards lining the country roads.

If a rancher couldn't sell his produce, he couldn't pay his workers who had families to feed. Therefore, the workers became fewer. More women began to be seen in the orchards – my own mother included -and migrants began to trickle then flood in. Inevitably this meant a housing shortage; some families moved into barns, sheds, and empty chicken coops for shelter. (To be continued)

## **Remembering a Colleague**

By Chris Jochim

George Moore (1927-2021), an ERFA member since retiring in 1998, was well known for advancing Asian Studies at SJSU. He established the Asian Studies Minor Program, the Center for Asian Studies, and EARMARC (East Asian Regional Materials and Resources Center), a large collection of films, videos, and slides for loan to educators in Bay Area high schools and colleges. Year after year he secured federal funding for its support. Moore also served terms as Chair of History and Chair of Humanities. He taught Asian and world history in the History Department, and he long served in the team-taught Humanities Honors Program. He was twice chair of the SJSU Academic Senate, and he represented SJSU on the statewide CSU Academic Senate.

A wonderful memorial was held on Saturday Dec. 4, at Arlington Community Church in Kensington, near Berkeley, where George lived for the last few decades of his life. His sons Robert and James organized an event of which George would have been proud.

## **Tax Deductible Donation for the ERFA Faculty Awards**

By Mary Calegari, Joan Merdinger & Beth Von Till

As we approach the holiday season and the end of 2021, your ERFA Board is making its one appeal of the year to request that you make a donation to the ERFA Faculty Research and Creative Activity Award fund. This fund, created by the ERFA Board in 2014, is deposited in the SJSU Tower Foundation and administered by the Tower Foundation, which is a 501C (3) organization. As a result, all donations to the ERFA Faculty Research and Creative Activity fund are tax deductible.

On behalf of the membership of ERFA, the Board has now provided awards of \$2500 each for 16 faculty members from AY 2014-2015 to the present. Check our website for some of our previous winners.

The Board is currently working to provide funding for our planned upcoming awards for 2021-2022. The awards support current faculty – tenured, tenure-track and long-term lecturers – in their research and creative activities.

Since our Annual Spring Business luncheon in 2015, the ERFA Board has invited each year's awardees to make a short presentation to our members informing us about their work with the award support. It has been heartwarming to hear the gratitude of our younger colleagues for this important and most welcome opportunity to further their research and creative work.

These grants are made possible through the generous donations of our members and are not supported through our modest dues. Won't you please join your colleagues to keep the momentum going for this initiative by sending a check made out to "Tower Foundation," and on the Memo line include "ERFA Faculty Award." To be tax deductible for 2021, please send your check dated and postmarked by December 31, 2021 to our ERFA Tower Account liaison, Mary Calegari, 1776 Lexington St., Santa Clara, CA 95050. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

## **CalPERS Information – IRMAA Reimbursement**

By Joan Merdinger

In late November of each year, every Medicare recipient receives a letter from Social Security titled "Social Security Administration Important Information." This letter informs each recipient of the rate for the Medicare deduction from his/her Social Security monthly check to pay for Medicare Part B and Medicare Part D benefits for the upcoming year. As retirees in CalPERS, you are reimbursed each month – in your retirement

CalPERS check – for the basic Social Security Medicare Part B premium. For 2022, the standard Medicare Part B premium reimbursement will be \$170.10 per person.

If you think you may be eligible for additional reimbursement because you have an IRMAA (income-related monthly adjustment amount) which increases your premiums due to a higher income, you must apply to CalPERS in writing, and this must be done each year. You are also able to apply for IRMAA reimbursement for prior years.

For each method of application, you need to include a copy of your November 2021 letter from the Social Security Administration which describes your Medicare premiums for the upcoming year (make a copy of each and every page). If you are married, include a copy of the complete letter to your spouse, if s/he is included in your CalPERS benefits.

You can apply for your IRMAA reimbursement in one of the following three ways:

(1) Mail your written request along with the required materials to: CalPERS Member Account Management Division, Attention: Medicare Administration, P.O. Box 942715, Sacramento, CA 94229-2715;

(2) Fax your written request and all the required documents to the following: (800) 959-6545; or

(3) Go to your individual CalPERS account and upload your required documents directly to CalPERS.

Expect a response from CalPERS within a few weeks. It will then take from 30-90 days before the additional reimbursement is reflected in your CalPERS retirement check. See Medicare Enrollment Guide, August 2021.8.1, pp. 16-17. (CalPERS Health Benefits Program, Publication HBD-65).

<https://www.calpers.ca.gov/docs/forms-publications/medicare-enrollment-guide.pdf>

## **Academic Senate and Campus News**

By Chris Jochim

At the October 11 meeting of the Senate two resolutions were passed. One named Ken Peter as an honorary member and the other thanked Sage Hopkins, Women's Swimming and Diving Coach, for his service to the university. President Papazian spoke on the procedures for selecting a new president. SJSU is initiating a new master plan which will address the physical development for the campus through 2040.

A special budget session of the Senate met on October 25. In the report on the Academic Division budget (\$293,963,134), Provost Vincent Del Casino stated that SJSU hired more tenure track faculty than any other campus, but also hired more lecturers to meet demand for classes, so that the ratio is still about 50/50. The Provost promised to continue to try to improve this ratio. The VP for Administration and Finance Charlie Faas presented the

University Budget (\$719,709,599) and, as usual, faced questions about the budget for the Athletic Division, which some senators believe to take too much from general state funds. In particular, there were questions about the increase in the size of the personnel budget. Faas explained that the increase reflected the costs of hiring a new men's basketball coach and giving a new contract to the football coach.

The Provost reported that SJSU is hoping to hear something soon regarding the presidential transition. (Subsequently, it was announced that Sac State Provost Stephen Perez will be SJSU's Interim President.) He was asked: What percentage of our classes are going to be inperson versus online for Spring 2022? He said we would meet our goal of having about 60% of our classes face-to-face and 40% online or hybrid.

Vice President of Student Affairs Patrick Day reported that SJSU's enrollment continues to be strong. We have the largest enrollment at SJSU that we have ever had, 37,009 students at last count. He also reported that our students have done an exceptional job when it comes to COVID compliance. We are down to fewer than 100 students that still need to comply. To give you an idea of how hard we have tried to reach students, each student receives 21 emails, 8 text messages, 1 MySJSU notice, 1 CANVAS notice, and 1 phone call. We were all impressed by this (but I wonder how students feel). Finally, he reported that we are in finalist interviews for the Director of the APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American) Student Success Center Director, and that he has also met with our Gathering of Academic Indigenous and Native Americans (GAIN) group and had a discussion about the Indigenous Student Center and can now start the search for its director.

There was no report from the president, who was not in attendance.

At the December 6, 2021 Senate Meeting, the Curriculum and Research Committee presented a First Reading of the long-awaited new Guidelines for General Education, which incorporate coverage of the Ethnic Studies Requirement mandated by the California State Legislature.

The Professional Standards Committee presented a First Reading of an important amendment to the policy on Retention, Tenure and Promotion for Regular Faculty to include within the category of Service, activities that specifically enhance inclusion, educational equity and engaged service with students and in the surrounding and broader communities.

There was no report from President Papazian, who was not in attendance.



### **In Memoriam**

George Moore (History)  
Richard Ellefsen (Geography)



### **SJSU ERFA Executive Board**

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Activities-- Lonna Smith, Elba Maldonado-Colon, Lucy McProud

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