The “Reading to Learn, Learning to Read” Issue
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Cover and back photos by Barbara Barnes

EDITOR’S NOTES: TRADITIONS
Ramon Royal Ross, Editor

In the middle of every summer, before prune picking got underway, my father and mother would pile us kids in the back of the big Oldsmobile Eight sedan, along with pillows and blankets and cooking utensils and short-handled clam shovels and books and color crayons and tablets and coats and sweaters and clean underwear and a few dollars in my father’s little leather coin purse and a cold fried chicken and fresh tomatoes from the garden for our first lunch stop, and we’d start out early one morning, heading for “The Coast,” as my parents called it—the little town of Long Beach, Washington.

We’d make our way down the Columbia River to Portland and then on to Astoria, where we crossed the Columbia River Bridge and turned due north up the coast to Ilwaco, finally arriving at Long Beach, a distance of perhaps 350 miles away from the farm. It would be night and we children asleep by the time my father pulled the car to a stop at the little settlement of wooden cottages where we stayed. We’d stumble inside, yawning, trying to wake up, seeing again the familiar worn linoleum floors, the single dim light bulb overhead, the cook stove and the wood box, filled with wood, the sink and the ice box, the tiny bedroom and dark bathroom, smelling the exotic iodine smells of sea salt and mildew—smells I’ve always loved because I associate them with that cottage and summer happiness—hearing the steady crash and roar of the ocean, perhaps a hundred yards to our west.

My sisters slept on the floor next to my parents’ bed on a make-shift accumulation of blankets and pillows, while my brother and I slept near the kitchen stove in army surplus down-filled sleeping bags, where I remember some of the best sleep I’ve ever slept, deep and warm and filled with happiness.

Our mornings would begin at about 4:00 a.m., depending on the tides, when my father would rouse us from bed. We’d dress hastily, down a slice of toast with jam, and pile into the car to drive through the dark out to the edge of the ocean, where we’d turn north on the hard sand and continue to where a few other cars were parked along the beach. That’s where the razor clam digging was taking place. You can spot a razor clam’s location by two tiny holes, close together in the sand, and marked by a slight dampness and depression. Working fast, you station the tip of your narrow bladed shovel perhaps six inches away from that depression, press down with your foot, and lift up a shovel full of sand. If you’re lucky, there’s a razor clam in that sand. If not, you dig again, as fast as you can, for a razor clam, feeling the vibrations overhead, can make its getaway faster than you can shovel …

And now, seventy five or more years later, every summer Gloria and I pile our car high with clothes and cooking utensils and books and magazines and various pills and a dozen bottles of wine from Trader Joe’s and a bottle of Beefeater gin and gifts for the family and pillows from our bed and start out from Virginian Lane early in the morning, heading north on highway 395, up into the high desert country east of the Sierras, spending the first night at Creekside Inn in Bishop. Always, on our way, we share a hamburger and French fries at the Ranch Café in Olancho. We stop at the Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery, where we feed the trout. There’s a contemplative stop at Manzanar, the ‘relocation camp’ where 11,000 Japanese American citizens were housed during World War II (ten camps nationwide), and where we remember our own dear friends, including Satz and Tad, long ago neighbors of Gloria’s, and Jimmy Kato, whose family was relocated to a Farm Labor Camp near where I lived, and who went through high school and college with me.

At the Creekside Inn, I mix a gin and tonic for each of us, which we carry down to the swimming pool along with books and magazines, for an hour or so of relaxation before dinner at Yamatani, a Japanese restaurant half a block away from where we’re staying.

The next day we drive up through the pines of the Sierras and past Reno to Alturas, an old farming town, its store windows now mostly empty, where, after another gin and tonic, a good dinner awaits us at Antonio’s Cucina Italia.

We arrive at my brother’s farm in Walla Walla the following day and spend a few days and nights playing in the creek and changing irrigation pipes, then drive west to Seattle and my sister’s and brother-in-law’s house in Port Angeles for more happy days and nights. And finally, we start south along the Washington coast, convening at Long Beach and the Anchorage Cottages, where we celebrate our arrival with a feast of fried Willapa Bay Oysters, and, if we’re lucky, a few razor clams.

As I think of those traditions, I can think
of another dozen or more, just for starters. We buy our Christmas tree every year at Costco, driving there in the old Isuzu Trooper, with grandsons Trevor and Jake sitting in back; returning home with a noble fir, trussed like a mummy, tied atop our car. We decorate the tree, and that same day or so peel apples for applesauce and grate potatoes for latkes. There’s the lighting of the first candle of Hanukkah and the opening of little gifts, and, at the same time, the placing of beribboned and mysterious boxes under the tree.

Some of this celebration becomes a little confusing, particularly for our grandchildren. Chance, the oldest grandson, now in college, made up this song and sang it when he was four or five years old,

Dreidel, dreidel, dreidel,
I made it out of clay,
Little Baby Jesus
Was born on Christmas day...

Tell us your own family traditions—those storied happenings that over the years have bound you and your loved ones together. We can’t wait to hear from you!

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As I entered the Dome of Love Library, I couldn’t decide if I were feeling like Alice in Wonderland or a child in a candy shop!!! Either way, I knew that I was going to have “an adventure,” for I had been told that changes had been made all over the library. I first took the elevator to the Basement Library Addition where the Media Center and Group Study Rooms are located. All rooms are equipped with a white board, and handsome study tables and chairs. (As an aside, all the furniture in the library is pluggable!) Here students may share projects, practice presentations, record themselves and receive immediate feedback from their peers. In addition, the presentations may be saved on CDs. Wireless connectivity is available. The rooms must be reserved. In addition, the Basement includes a laptop lounge that is a food friendly area. You might be interested to know that the Media Library contains approximately 8,000 DVDs, 15,000 CDs and 5,000 VHSs (Video Home System). The First Floor contains the Writing Center. It is on this floor that one of the WPA murals can be seen. The First Floor also contains the Donor Hall. I should mention that Group Study Rooms are also available on this level and on every level of the Library. These rooms do not need to be reserved. Also, there are themed presentations on the First Floor which change periodically. The theme at this time is “Alternate Religions.” There is also a fantastic Science Fiction collection and a display entitled “Battleship: Earth,” which is on loan from another library.

The Second Floor houses the Wells Fargo Financial Markets Lab. In September 2012, through the support of donors Stephen and Marjorie Cushman and the Wells Fargo Bank, a lab was established having 12 Bloomberg Terminals, a stock market ticker display and the latest in classroom technical organization. It is one of the largest such educational facilities in Southern California. The lab facilitates small and large student projects that are central to many courses across the disciplines of the College of Business and elsewhere. It also supports the creation and management of student run investment funds, while providing students with skills required for careers in finance and other industries. Bloomberg certification will improve students’ abilities to obtain employment.

There are still “Quiet Study Areas” throughout the Library and Study Lounges. And there are still those wonderful stacks where one can get lost amidst books. And of course, to facilitate research, the Library has 685 public access computers with internet access! And on the second floor of the Library Addition, a 24/7 Study Area!

I had a wonderful time in my visits to Love Library and I have only included just a few of its programs. While there have been many changes, some things never change and, sometimes, that is a good thing! There is still a wonderful “collection of librarians” to guide students as they learn to make use of all that the library offers to them as they pursue their educations.

Was it Wonderland or a candy stop? I’m still not sure, but I can assure you that it was an adventure! You must go and decide for yourselves.

(Special thanks to Alan Andrade, the Director of Development, University Initiatives for his wonderful Library tours and to Barbara Barnes for her photography.)
THE DAY I CHANGED MY LIFE
*Houston M. Burnside, Education*


I can identify with the author as she tries to find answers to that question. Barbara Taylor and I have had parallel (or almost parallel) life experiences. She was an Episcopal priest and parish minister. I was an ordained American Baptist minister and a church pastor. We both left parish ministries for new lives in academia.

For Taylor, one aspect of leaving the parish ministry was a change of clothing. Her plastic clerical collars and black, long-sleeved clergy shirts were packed away. And away with them went the status of being a church leader, immediately recognized and respected. There’s a certain sense of authority that comes with being an Episcopal priest or a church minister. People often see their church leaders as direct representatives and spokespersons for God.

Taylor’s book hasn’t changed my life, but it does reflect many of my own experiences and outlook on life and religion. As a church minister she had begun to feel a certain numbness about her clerical duties. Exciting challenges turned into routine chores. Her theology morphed into a broader understanding of traditional doctrines and practices. She even found herself seeing God in a new light. God wasn’t that wise old bearded superpowerful man in the sky. She could see the divine in the earth she was turning in her garden, the tomato plants as they began to develop, even in un-churched people she met.

The organizational structure and traditions of the Episcopal Church became less important and meaningful than they were before Taylor’s life change. The Christian Bible remained important to her, but not as important as people whom she felt called to love and serve. She now reads the Bible metaphorically. To read it literally misses the Bible’s deepest messages. For her the bottom line of what religion is all about has to do with how we treat other people. This appears to be one value which she carried with her to her new assignment at Piedmont College.

For me, I didn’t have to lay aside everyday items of clerical clothing. As a Baptist I wore clerical robes and stoles only on special occasions. I did, however, don new items of clothing once I attached myself to academia. My image of a professor was someone who wore a tweed jacket with leather elbow patches and who smoked a pipe. In my first year at San Diego State College I could be seen making my way to class wearing just such a jacket and puffing away on my new Meerschaum pipe.

I was still up front, talking to people—not too much different from being a preacher. One thing I had to watch, however, was my habit of closing each sermon with prayer. When my first class concluded I still felt that same urge. I caught myself just in time. With raised hand I said “Shalom.” It worked. I followed that practice for twenty-seven years. My life changed and new traditions took over.

ANOTHER VIEW OF HAWAII; MOLOKAI
*Pat Coffey, Business Administration*

A few years back, one of the “One Book One San Diego” books was *Molokai* (2006) by Alan Brennert. I love Hawaii and try to get there every year, so I thought it would be a good read. However, knowing the history of the Kalaupapa leper colony on the island of Molokai, I wasn’t convinced that I would enjoy reading the book, but I ordered it for Kindle anyway. (On a side note, I never enjoyed reading until I got a Kindle because of some difficulty I have with tracking lines of small print. I can adjust the font size on the Kindle and I enjoy reading for the first time in my life.)

The story is about a young Honolulu girl, Rachel, in the 1890’s who is discovered to have leprosy. She has to leave her large family and is sent to the Kalaupapa leper colony. There she meets up with her uncle and his partner who teach her about her Hawaiian heritage.

She falls in love with a young Japanese American and they marry. They have a baby girl who is removed from the family for adoption to keep her free from the infection. Rachel feels separated from her family and has trouble contacting them because they have moved from Honolulu to avoid being shunned by their neighbors because of Rachel’s leprosy.

The book goes through the decades of her life and as it got into the 1930’s and 1940’s, I kept hoping that Rachel could be cured with antibiotics. She had a full life in Kalaupapa and survived in spite of her disease and increasing disability. There were many wonderful people in the book who helped her out. Finally, a combination of antibiotics cured her leprosy, but she remained disfigured. She was allowed to leave Molokai and look for her family.

I enjoyed the book tremendously and ended up reading two more of Brennert’s books. *Honolulu* (2007) was about a picture bride from Korea and *Palisades Park* (2013) was about the famous amusement park in New Jersey. All of his books are historically correct and have references to the real people upon whom his characters are based.
BEING DOWN AND CATCHING UP
Leif Fearn, Education

In the eighth grade I read a library book about a football player, and that is all I remember about that book. In the eleventh grade I read Mac Hyman’s No Time For Sergeants (1954), and I remember laughing. In my senior year of college I read Leon Uris’ Exodus (1958), and I remember not laughing. By my twenty-first year I had read three books. I was a college graduate, never having read a textbook. Being resourceful got me through.

It was a Monday when I squeezed into my tiny Simca with everything I owned and pointed it west. Every mile past Indiana, Pennsylvania was a mile farther west than I had ever been. I meandered a while and then turned southwest. On the seventh day I awoke in a Globe, Arizona motel and drove the last miles to Tempe, where I was to begin a graduate program the following week. I did all the necessary stuff quickly—a job, a dingy apartment with a swamp cooler, groceries. The following morning I went to the university and bought the seven required textbooks.

After work that night, I opened the first book. It was a thick philosophy survey for a required course. I remember thinking that the change of scenery was all I needed to read it. I read the first sentence of the introduction and realized the change of scenery had nothing to do with reading the book. And I realized that if I didn’t beat this, that Simca and I would be headed east to Pennsylvania, where I’d teach fifth grade in Dillsburg or Walnut Bottom or New Bloomfield where I’d teach fifth grade in Dillsburg or Walnut Bottom or New Bloomfield for the next 40 years. I remember saying aloud, “Okay, dadnabbit, get your behind in gear and read the bloody introduction.” I used my alternative vocabulary in place of several of those words.

I read the sentence again, and still it didn’t work. I read it again, aloud. Several more times, and it started to reveal itself. I rewrote the sentence as I understood it. I went to the second sentence. I’d learned from the first sentence that if I read a sentence enough times, aloud, and if I concentrated on the words, I could eventually get it. I rewrote the second sentence on the pad beside the book. When I went to bed three hours later, I had rewritten two pages from the introduction, and I knew what they said. And I knew that I could.

I worked five hours every day that week and weekend, and I was ready for the five classes in my first week at Arizona State (College at the time). During that week of classes I rewrote more. I got to the point after several weeks where I could read a paragraph, or at least part of one, and scribble a main idea, and my main ideas were increasingly accurate. By Thanksgiving, I could read a short section, even a short chapter and, if I focused on every line, and made notes about ideas from the lines, through brute force, I could bludgeon my way to reading textbooks.

Fast-forward fifty years. I’ve read my way through Asimov’s autobiography in three volumes, a dozen biographies and autobiographies of media people (Howard K. Smith, John Chancellor, Daniel Schorr, and so forth), and several volumes of the Paris Review interviews. Bill Moyers’ A World of Ideas (1989), made clear I had a lot of catching up to do. So I set up a program. I would read two books a month, every month, no excuses, not seeking but finding some occasional pleasure. I started keeping a record in 2007. I read to my interests—paleoanthropology, god concepts, history, race, conservatism. I’d never read A World of Ideas (1989) into my tiny Simca with everything I owned and pointed it west. Every mile past Indiana, Pennsylvania was a mile farther west than I had ever been. I meandered a while and then turned southwest. On the seventh day I awoke in a Globe, Arizona motel and drove the last miles to Tempe, where I was to begin a graduate program the following week. I did all the necessary stuff quickly—a job, a dingy apartment with a swamp cooler, groceries. The following morning I went to the university and bought the seven required textbooks.

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**LITERATURE FOR GRANDPARENTS**

*Peter F. Neumeyer, Comparative Literature*

When I was in my thirties, I would jot and paint simple children’s stories into watercolor pads for my three little boys. By chance, a college textbook editor I was working with came by one day, and while I was getting the bourbon, he rummaged on my desk, found these little tales and said, “Forget about textbooks, Peter, let’s do children’s books.” And that’s how it started.

I had little experience with children’s books till then, but after my first ones were published, my misguided Harvard graduate students demanded I give a course in Children’s Literature. I had never really thought about the subject, but now I had to learn fast. And so I developed this peculiar passion for them accidentally and late.

Over the decades I reveled in my new vocation, and now I’ve got to pick just a few of the thousands of books that have sustained and delighted me.

Top of the list, surely, is Beatrix Potter’s *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902), the most perfect match of text and illustration. Quite likely the great John Constable was an artistic influence on Potter, who, herself, became a superb painter of mushrooms, flowers, and mice. Potter would synchronize this focus on the minuscule in nature with an acerbic honesty of verbal expression to create as exciting, terrifying, and finally, satisfying book as I have ever encountered. Even now, when I see Peter caught in a net for two pages, or come upon Mr. McGregor with his terrifying rake, my pulse races.

Then, at risk of raising eyebrows, I confess I am captivated by Helen Bannerman’s *Little Black Sambo* (1899). The latest edition was done under the guidance of Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Chair of Afro-American Studies at Harvard. The charm of the book lies in its fine English seminar topic.

Munro Leaf’s *The Story of Ferdinand the Bull* (1937) is another book that has been censored, banned, burned, reviled worldwide. It’s another book perfectly matching a fine illustrator with a fine writer. Robert Lawson’s powerful black ink drawings are distributed throughout this story in paced rhythm. Every moment of tension is protracted over a number of pages. And again, we’re treated to visual jokes, as when Ferdinand sets himself under his favorite cork tree, fruiting with cylindrical little bottle corks.

And currently we have stored away for grandchildren two copies of Iona and Peter Opie’s *I Saw Esau: the Schoolchild’s Pocket Book* (1992). The book, of lovely shape, size, heft, consists of little verses, “clearly not rhymes that a teacher might sing to a grandchild on her knee.” Rather, they are useful rhymes that occasionally serve a subversive or practical purpose. They may ease school tasks, provide insults for your tormentors, lamentations, incantations, curses for those who desecrate your books, and satirical perversions of saccharine lullabies:

Good night and sweet repose  
I hope the fleas will bite your nose,  
And every bug as big as a bee  
And then you’ll have sweet company.

Books serve to show a man that those original thoughts of his aren’t very new after all.  
Abraham Lincoln

The rhymes are graced with Maurice Sendak’s irreverent drawings of anarchic rascals tumbling and cavorting, little babies safely in mothers’ arms, and for those Freudianly inclined, an in-joke about all-consuming infants, to accompany “I one my mother ... I ate my mother.”  

And in my view a minor landmark in American literature is E. B. White’s picaresque tale of Stuart Little, “a little boy who happened to look like a mouse”—White’s term when someone mistakenly referred to Stuart as a “mouse.”  

The charm of the book lies in its premise, the same as in Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, of which 18th century Samuel Johnson pronounced “first you have some little people, then you have some big people, and the rest goes as you expect.” Given Stuart’s size, the rest follows, as the tiny mouse shaped boy gets whirled in a window shade, captains a sailboat in Central Park, and fills up his car’s gas tank with an eyedropper—all given a second, visual take in Garth Williams’s concise black and white illustrations.

And these five books are just the icing on the cake. My first involvement was a happy bourbon-fueled accident, and 50-years later I’m still delighted by these beautiful and witty and poignant books.

*This is an abridgment of a much longer article discussing many more books. I’d be happy to try to E-mail it to anyone who requests. PN: neum1400@aol.com*

**TWO BOOKS**

*Dean Popp, Economics*

*The Long Trains Roll* (1944) by Stephen Meador. I read this book in the 3rd or 4th grade and it made a reader out of me. A boy foils a plot to sabotage a train. I got the book from a mobile library (library in a truck) in Sunnyside, Oregon.  
*A Red Herring Without Mustard* (2011) by Alan Bradley. The author has written five or six books set in the same English town and with a twelve year old girl, Flavia, as an unassuming sleuth. Disarming style of writing and bizarre family.

*A book is like a garden carried in your pocket.*  
Chinese proverb
Those of us fortunate enough to be called literate, considering the millions worldwide who are not, probably have had a few experiences along the way which spotlight that title. One of my favorite memories about reading involves a former student who at fifteen was a Westinghouse Science Talent winner. That honor sent her to Washington, D.C., where she had the once-in-a lifetime experience of meeting President John F. Kennedy.

I had the unmitigated fun of coaching oratorical teams at the time. The Westinghouse winner was a member of one such team. We would set out for our Saturday competitions with six other students and myself aboard a good-sized station wagon; no SUVs then, and seat belts a thing of the future, heading out for the host school.

Along the way we talked of “cabbages and kings,” and the subject often got around to school. After thoroughly dissecting sports and drama productions and music concerts, ultimately we would examine the academic part. I remember this young science winner, when asked her opinion, telling our carload of teenagers, for they genuinely admired her intellect, “…I believe that for success in school and in life... let’s teach them to read and then let them go.”

Over the years, I’ve thought about this candid and spontaneous remark by a rural kid who had seen and met some very important people in some very stylish places, including the White House (and who was, later, a Stanford graduate). She was sincere and clear about her solution. To read mattered to her, as nothing else about her education. I’ve often contemplated about how she matter-of-factly embraced a rather Voltaire-like position when she advocated “let them go,” almost like freeing feral children, who once given the power of reading, and all that that signifies, could find their way beyond.

activists. He wrote about the pain and frustration of that period. He was a victim and chronicler of a time that I had not yet acknowledged that I was even part of. In later years a most moving trip was to visit his grave at Forest Lawn Memorial Park. There was so much I wanted to tell him and to thank him for. But I couldn’t. I was too late.

The God Delusion, Richard Dawkins, (2006). This book at last put to rest all my decades of fear, confusion, disbelief, anger, guilt and disappointment that had been instilled in me by my well-meaning but very misguided family.

44 Scotland Street, Alexander McCall Smith, (2004). Here is a story (the first of many) about people who surround themselves with love, humor, grace, understanding, and yes at times confusion. Beautifully told. Another fabulous trip was to Edinburgh, Scotland, where I visited Scotland Street. It really exists. I walked the neighborhood, hoping to soak up some of the peace that lives there in Alexander McCall Smith’s books.

Dan Gilbreath, Business and Financial Affairs

Pioneer Women, Joanna Stratton, (1982). I met Joanna in the elevator of the St. Louis Arch. She was there at the visitor center to sign her new book. Since we were captive in the elevator together on our way to the top of the Arch, we talked and she gave me a signed copy of her new book. This book began my book collecting career. I now have approximately 1000 signed, first edition volumes. Quite a hobby started in the Arch!

The Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck, (1939). I grew up in Monterey, California, but it was not until I took a creative writing course at Monterey Peninsula College that I was introduced to John Steinbeck. I can recall being so in love with his words. And his words caused me to love the California central coast and my home town. He truly began my love affair with books.

Borrowed Time, Paul Monette, (1988). Paul was one of the first AIDS activists. He wrote about the pain and frustration of that period. He was a victim and chronicler of a time that I had not yet acknowledged that I was even part of. In later years a most moving trip was to visit his grave at Forest Lawn Memorial Park. There was so much I wanted to tell him and to thank him for. But I couldn’t. I was too late.

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Leonè McCoy, Secondary Education

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Tony Gwynn’s statistical record is an absurdity—gratuitous. Eight time batting champion, fifteen time All Star, five time Gold Glove winner, and one of the purest hitters to ever play the game. Though I grew up worshiping his skill on the field, I was blessed with the chance to work with him for a year, and came to respect his essential humanity off the field even more.

My first encounter with Tony Gwynn took place in 1985, when the Padres and the Aztecs baseball team had an exhibition game before the season. Prior to the game, Tony Gwynn—at the time entering his third full season in the majors—and his younger brother Chris, who at that time was on the Aztecs, had a home run derby. In hindsight the idea is somewhat ridiculous, since neither of them was known for having much power, but at the time it was tremendously exciting to lots of people, including ten year old me.

My friend’s dad had some connection to the athletic department, and against all odds managed to get his son and me positions as honorary batboys for the game. We hung out in the Aztecs dugout before the game, mingling with the players and watching Tony and Chris talk and laugh. It seems hard to imagine, but Tony at that time was just 25, four years removed from college. The nation had yet to grasp his immense skill on the diamond, but his legend in San Diego was already growing.

Tony had just entered my consciousness at this point—the Padres had been to the World Series the previous season, and to that point I had known him simply as “that guy from SDSU.” But as my awareness of sports grew, my appreciation for his skill, his hard work, and his personality grew as well. As is the case with many 11 year old boys, casual appreciation grows quickly into full scale hero worship, and throughout my junior high years my fondness for Tony Gwynn knew few limits. I collected his baseball cards, had replica Tony Gwynn jerseys, and his posters covered the walls of my room. I wrote letters to the editor of the Union-Tribune, imploring the team to let Tony Gwynn himself be standing just a few feet away.

My dad saw that I was paralyzed with terror, and escorted me over to Tony. “My son,” he began, “has a shrine to you in his room.” I was still paralyzed, but this time with stark, raving embarrassment. My dad, telling my hero just precisely how much I worshipped him! Tony laughed it off, and asked who I thought would win the World Series game that night. I composed myself and said “Oh, the A’s.” “Naw,” said Tony, “it’ll be the Dodgers. This is their year.” Later that night, we watched the last inning of the game on the TV inside the box, and saw Kirk Gibson’s now-legendary home run propel the Dodgers to a one run victory and eventual championship. I peeked down to the President’s box, and saw Tony and a few other people whooping it up and exchanging high fives. “What a guy,” I thought.

My hero worship and adulation culminated in another bat boy gig, this time as an actual pro baseball bat boy for the San Diego Padres during the 1991 season. I knew the hours would be long and the job would be grueling, but every bit of drudgery was worth it to work alongside Tony Gwynn. I entertained notions of us becoming good friends, of me rising to his defense against any player who dared criticize him. These are the ideas that an awestruck 16 year old carries with him into his first job, working alongside his hero.

The popular narratives surrounding adolescent hero worship go something like this: boy has hero, boy meets hero, hero turns out to be a loathsome bum. This may be the common narrative, but nobody who writes narratives like that ever met Tony Gwynn.

The first day of the season, I remember arriving at the park early, after school, at around 3:00 p.m. We four batboys shined helmets before batting practice, and then went back to our locker area to get dressed in our brand new uniforms. I stood there, alone, when suddenly, Tony appeared. He held out his hand. “Hi, I’m Tony. How’s it going?” I stammered back, “Uh, not much.” He laughed, understanding everything.

The sounds and memories of that season come and go for me, but one of the constant touchstones is Tony Gwynn’s laugh. It was a chuckle, a guffaw, and chortle, all rolled into one. When Tony laughed, other guys around the locker room would smile, and laugh themselves. Before one game, the manager, Greg Riddoch, was doing a pre-game interview with a group of reporters, when Tony started laughing uproariously across the clubhouse. Greg stopped and said, “Hold on a sec, guys, I want to hear this.” And then he just sat there for 30 seconds and listened to Tony Gwynn laugh.

Over the course of the season, I had too many interactions with Tony to count. We played catch. He asked me about my classes. He asked me about girls I was dating. (Those were short conversations—I wasn’t dating anybody.) He would talk about his kids, he would talk about music he liked, he would talk about his favorite rib restaurant. He never gave the slightest hint that he recognized the awe that each of the bat boys felt for him—he acted like a regular guy who just happened to be...
the best pure hitter in baseball.

When a star player for another team cursed at one of the bat boys who was wearing an earring, Tony took it upon himself to come back to our locker area and perform a comedy routine with a teammate to cheer us up. When the end of the season rolled around, Tony left his Nike catalog in our locker with a handwritten note reading “Pick a pair.” We dutifully initialed the shoes of our choosing. Days later, a Foot Locker box with our shoes and a check for $500, was waiting in our locker before the game. A few games later, our boss, the equipment manager, pulled us aside and let us in on a secret: Tony had driven down to Foot Locker himself to buy us those shoes. No trappings of stardom. No prima donna attitude. Just a future Hall of Famer driving his 4x4 down to Fashion Valley to buy some shoes for the bat boys.

These are the memories that cycled through my brain in the span of about 10 seconds when I turned on my computer a few weeks ago and learned that Tony had died, felled by the salivary gland cancer he had fought for years. I said “Oh, Tony” quietly to myself, and stared out my office window for a good couple of minutes. When people learn I was a bat boy for the Padres, they always ask, “Who was your favorite player?” “Tony Gwynn,” I respond. “What was he like?” they ask. “He was the best guy,” I tell them.

David Frazee Johnson lives in Portland, OR., where he works as Director of Foundation Relations for the University of Oregon.

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**Reading to Learn (and Laugh)**

*Delores McCornack, Institutional Studies*

Some years ago I was touring England by bus. Our guide was a young Irish woman with a nice sense of humor. She made our hours on the bus short and delightful.

We were curious about English life, so she suggested we visit an Oxfam (used) bookstore and pick up a copy of *Notes From A Small Island* (2005) by Bill Bryson. I had never heard of him before. My word! (An expletive in Iowa) Bill is from my home state and grew up in Des Moines. His parents were reporters for the *Des Moines Register*. He visited Europe one summer while in college, and postponed his return to the States in order to explore England.

His first encounter with English ways began with his need to find work. He did just that, working in a zany mental institution, and falling in love with his soon-to-be wife who was a young nurse there. After completing his education (back in Iowa), he settled in London and worked for newspapers, writing travel articles. Later, he began to write about his adventures.

*Small Island* is one of Bryson’s early books. It is a lively account of his arrival and life in England for twenty years. He then decides to revisit much of England and explore some places he never has seen before. This endeavor is somewhat of a sentimental journey, because he has decided to take his family to the United States, so they can experience life in his country of birth. Again, the reader learns about Britons and how change has affected some of the country.

Bill became a walker during those twenty years. He attempts to walk the areas he is visiting when possible. In America, we would call it hiking, but Bill was walking with his small pack, staying in hotels and sometimes taking the train, bus, or taxi when necessary. He reveals himself as a somewhat cranky, waddling mess of a man, who loves a pint or two, and eats spicy Indian curry when possible. The reader feels as if he is along on the walk and can picture the seaside at Brighton or the lovely stone fences and manicured beauty of this old, old country. Bill returns to his family joyfully, and the reader hates for the book to end. It has been a good journey.

Bill and family move back to the States, settling in New Hampshire. What a clever man! He has an idea for another book. He asks his old Iowa pal, Steven, to join him in hiking a section of the Appalachian Trail. We learn much about preparing for this adventure, the equipment needed for a serious hike, the history of the Trail, and the many kinds of people who make the attempt, and all the strain and anguish experienced when doing serious hiking.

The result of Bryson’s excellent account of this killer-hike is entitled *A Walk In The Woods* (1999). It was on the New York Times Best-Seller list for weeks, and no wonder!

Bill’s children experienced life in America for a few years. He and his family are now back living in northern England near Durham. He has written several more books I want to read, including the one about the year 1927. I know I’ll learn a lot, and laugh while I read. To me, he is a treasure who has given me hours of reading pleasure. And he is an Iowa boy.

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**Our Mission**

To serve the mutual benefits and interests of retired and near retired faculty and staff. To facilitate continuing contributions by members to the furtherance of the scholarly and other professional objectives of San Diego State University.
Learning to Read involves visual and auditory perception as well as psychomotor coordination. In a prison population, about 80% have difficulty with reading. With youths who have reading problems, about 80% have visual perception problems. Is there a connection between these two groups? How do children feel when everyone else is reading and they are struggling? How do these feelings manifest themselves later on?

In the early 1980s my colleague, C. Lynn Fox and I were asked to attend a meeting in Fullerton to determine whether or not a visual training program with adolescent delinquents in the San Bernadino School District should receive funding. There were several persons attending, including a professor from UCLA. He came late, cast his “No” vote and left early. His single vote abolished a program which could have had far-reaching effects.

Following is a description of that research which was conducted by the Southern California School of Optometry and reported in December of 1982 in the Brain Mind Bulletin.

The San Bernadino Vision Training Program cut the re-arrest rate. The normal re-arrest rate for juveniles was approximately 50%. Only 10% of those who received vision training were re-arrested.

Dr. Stanley Kaseno, an optometrist who worked with interns from the Southern California College of Optometry in Fullerton, found that 96% of more than 1,000 Juvenile Hall residents had vision problems, usually poor eye movements.

The average patient profile was 16 years old, IQ of 96, and reading at a 5th grade level.

After 12 vision training sessions and the use of eyeglasses, if needed, the typical improvements were 4 grade levels of reading improvement, increased IQ measurements, raised self-esteem, and a more positive value system.

Vision training was one of the most popular activities in the juvenile facility.

Dr. Kaseno implemented the program after reading seven studies that linked learning disabilities and delinquency.

The Review of Optometry (November, 1982) reported the success of the program as follows: for every juvenile who did not show improvement, 10 showed success.

The program is no longer active.

It is unfortunate that this program could not have been implemented, as it could have made a positive influence on many youth. If we merely focus on changing curriculum, and do not include how students learn, little progress is made.

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MY LIMERICKS ARE ALWAYS QUITE VARIOUS...

My limericks are always quite various
Around the same theme, quite gregarious.
To be honest, ’tis true,
That the good ones are few,
And the others are never hilarious.

Jerry W. Koppman, Psychology

Editor’s note:

Richard Lederer wrote in his weekly Union Tribune column last August that he would accept up to three limericks from readers and publish the winners in September. Jerry sent him three limericks and one of them was published. We’re reprinting Jerry’s limerick here, along with our congratulations.

FIVE BOOKS

Tom Donahue, Linguistics


AT THE AGES OF EIGHT AND TEN
Mary Nelson, Aztec Shops

At the ages of 8 and 10, my brother and I together with my family moved to the “city” from the farm. We had to leave our ponies behind which was very hard. However, we soon discovered the City Library and found many good books to read. Walter Farley’s The Black Stallion (1941) was one of the first of course as we were reminded of our ponies. I think we both read it many times.

Another favorite was Dinah Maria Craik’s The Little Lame Prince (1875). It was great to imagine that you were flying on a carpet to see the world. What fun I would have pretending I was riding with THE PRINCE and he would tell me about the places we were flying over. The book was published in 1875 and still must be timeless for children today.

One book that I loved, but not so my brother, as he was a ‘macho’ boy, was Johanna Spyí’s Heidi (1937). It was fun to visualize the green mountains of the Alps, and as I had never seen a mountain I was able to let my imagination go a little wild. Also, the grandfather in the book was like my grandfather to me. During depression years, when we visited on Sundays, my grandfather always had a candy bar for each of us kids. I read Heidi many times, as I did many other books.

I don’t think there is a girl in the United States who hasn’t read Louisa May Alcott’s Little Women (1868). It was written in the 1860’s and the messages in it still remain current to this day. As young girls I think we were all romantic and “Little Women” became our fantasy. Our parents probably hoped it would entice us to help with the housework and learn virtue also.

Betty Smith’s A Tree Grows in Brooklyn (1943) made a lasting impression on me. The heroine in the book was an 11 year old girl. She and her brother collected junk and sold it for pennies to help the family finances. I could relate, because during the depression, we would go to my grandfather’s farm, dig potatoes, clean and bag them. Then we would go to the city and my brother and I would go up and down the street to the houses and sell the potatoes. I imagine my parents thought housewives would be more likely to buy from children than adults. Those were lean years and when you think about them, our parents were really saints to get us all through that time. Thank goodness, my parents finally became successful and were able to live a long and easy life.

The first four books I’ve listed were written and published from the middle to approximately the end of the 1890’s. Only A Tree Grows in Brooklyn was published later. That shows us how timeless some books are and still being read by many young children.

In Germany,
Seventeen days
Or eighteen days
Depending on when
The first Sunday in October falls,
Beginning in 1810
In Munich
To celebrate a marriage.

In El Monte Park
On 10-10-2014
We celebrated with
Bratwurst, beer, wine, and fellowship
In no particular order.
It’s always been a good time
And it was a good time again.

Thank you Mary Nelson and Ann LePage
For our Oktoberfest doesn’t happen without you;
And Michael Brooks for the Bluegrass pickers and fiddlers;
And Charles Stewart for the wine;
And Dean Popp for the beer;
And Mary and Ann for arranging the caterers;
And Kurt Kendall and all his family have done over the years;
And Dan Gilbreath and those who helped him fill gopher holes;
And the people who made sure the tables were covered;
And everyone who stayed late to help clean up;
And thank you everyone who was there
For there is no celebration without celebrants.

Leif Fearn, Chairman of the Fest
See page 14 for Oktoberfest photos.

Editor’s Correction:
In our last issue we reported on the 2014 SDSURA Scholarship Awards but left out some important information about how the awardees were related to SDSU/auxiliary employees. Here is that information now:

Kyle Lemaire
Son of Tricia Blumhardt
Office of Advising and Evaluations

Charles Pickering
Nephew of Reggie Blaylock
Student Affairs

Timothy Platz
Grandson of Marvin and Virginia Platz
Secondary Education

Rachel Platz
Granddaughter of Marvin and Virginia Platz
Secondary Education

Sierra Cronan
Niece of Terry Cronan and Al Hillix
Psychology

Joseph Olivieri III
Grandson of Joseph Olivieri
Facilities Services
My mother taught me to read so I could go to school and play with other little girls. The only girls in our neighborhood were babies, so my playmates were brothers and boys, and I was a tomboy. My mother probably thought I needed some socialization with some girls closer to my age, and elementary school was the only place to find them. Of course, I was underage! So Mother made a deal. If the school would let me attend as soon as I turned five, she would teach me what I needed to know to be there, and that primarily meant learning “real” reading words each day.

From the time I can remember, our mother read to us every day, the baby on the lap, the others beside her, or perched on the arm of the chair. We were five. When I learned to read, two brothers were already in school and I “went to school” whenever the baby was sleeping... learning three, five, seven, nine new words every day, five days a week. I think she talked with the first grade teacher about once a month, and the second and third graders had their reading lessons in “my” room. AND, I loved it, AND I played with girls who were five and six, AND my mother was delighted.

What a collection of books we read:

- A.A.Milne: *Winnie The Pooh*, *The House at Pooh Corner*, *When We Were Young*, *Now We Are Six*; and all the wonderful characters of the stories and poems, Christopher Robin, Pooh, Owl, Tigger, Piglet, Kanga, Roo, Eeyore...
- Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book*... with Mowgli, Shere Khan, the Bengal Tiger; Bagheera, the black panther; Baloo, the brown bear; and Kaa, the big rock python, Rikki-Tikki-Tavi, a brave mongoose, *Just So Stories*, *The Cat that Walked by Himself*, *The Elephant’s Child*, *How the Leopard Got His Spots*, *How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin*: “Them that takes cakes/Which the Parsee-man bakesMakes dreadful mistakes”; *How the Alphabet Was Named*
- Margot Austin: *Peter Churchmouse*, *Gabriel Church Kitten* (I could read both of them myself!)

And I haven’t even mentioned mythology and poetry (Daddy recited poems from memory!) I continue to read to this day, almost anything printed, and take great pleasure volunteering to read to young children at the library on a weekly basis. The books have changed, but kids still love to listen to the stories and explore the pictures. It is stunning to watch their focus change and build in front of you. I love, as the children do, the shapes of letters and the pictures they create as they are combined into words.

**TEN WORDS A DAY**

Nancy Carmichael, Biology

“Tell me what you read and I’ll tell you who you are” is true enough, but I’ll know you even better if you tell me what you reread.

François Mauriac
The news early in October reported CalPERS’ new policy about withdrawing money from its own carefully selected group of hedge funds. The story was given prominent play in the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, Businessweek, and Bloomberg News, among others. The critical consensus view of this matter is as follows: after the 2008 market disaster, a wide array of investors turned to hedge funds to help them out of a skidding and plunging market. CalPERS specifically under the guidance of the late Joseph Dear attempted in a variety of ways to gain as quick a recovery as possible. Part of the early strategy in the months after the crash was to position sums in hedge funds in order to provide accelerated returns—although CalPERS did not place large sums under risk at any time in these instruments.

As time passed, the policy makers at CalPERS saw two problems: there was a high cost in hedge fund investments, and an insufficient return. Second, there was a problem of scale: in order to try for large returns, CalPERS would have to invest such large sums that it would overwhelm any investment schemes in which it took part. At the same time CalPERS had success in other investment methods. Since 2009 investments in stocks, private equity, emerging markets, and commercial properties have allowed CalPERS to build toward a value that approaches $300 billion.

At present, CalPERS has invested only four billion dollars in hedge funds. It is quite a shock to realize that for institutional investors the hedge fund industry at present has over 2.3 trillion dollars under management, with assorted high-risk bets constrained only by the utilitarian outcome of bottom line results. We might say “under management” advisedly at that, when we can recall the manipulation of Goldman Sachs, which at the height of the recent crash committed a fraud against its own clients. The Securities and Exchange Commission alleged that Goldman Sachs “wrongly permitted a client that was betting against the mortgage market [Paulson and Co.] to heavily influence which mortgage securities to include in an investment portfolio, while telling other investors that the securities were selected by an independent, objective third party.” That is, other investors were kept in the dark about the influence of Paulson and Company and were thus defrauded. Directly to the point, one can hardly rest easy when, according to the discussion of moral approaches to investing in the Wikipedia article on hedge funds (which is worth a long look) a basic and enduring regulatory principle in contriving investment positions in hedge funds is to “minimize client fraud”—not to avoid client fraud, mind you.

In any event, hedge fund practices are not for the faint of heart. Those with long memories who might be amused by all this may recall a scene in the screenplay by Jo Swerling, Abe Burrows, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, and Ben Hecht in Guys and Dolls (1955). Sky Masterson’s betting habits are under discussion.

“All joking aside, I for one am glad that CalPERS walked away from this game.♦

TREASURER’S REPORT
Deborah Quiett, Treasurer

Retirement Association Accounts as of 10/31/2014

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It is my pleasure to write to you again concerning the state of the Retirement Association. The organization remains strong and vibrant.

I am particularly pleased to report that the children of Kurt and Julie Bohnsack have funded an endowed scholarship to the Retirement Association. This endowed scholarship is in the amount of $50,000 and will generate $2,000 per year in scholarship monies. This is a named scholarship awarded in perpetuity and is intended to recognize the contributions of the Bohnsacks to the University and to recognize the expressed wish of the children that the scholarship be awarded by the RA. The Scholarship Committee and Board of Directors of the Retirement Association will determine the recipients of this scholarship in the same manner as for other RA scholarships. This is a substantial gift that will provide the RA with a solid foundation for providing scholarships in the future.

It is also worth noting that Veva Link, a staff member, included the RA in her will a year ago and gave a substantial sum to the endowed scholarship fund. There are a number of vehicles for any member of the RA to provide support to the scholarship fund.

The Board has prepared a new brochure (see enclosed) that is available to publicize the RA. The brochure is similar to the previous brochure but is updated and reformatted to better present the functions and purpose of the RA. We are pleased to provide you with a copy of the new brochure, especially if you can provide it to a prospective new member.

The Board and I look forward to a prosperous New Year and trust that you do so as well. If any of you are interested in becoming more active in the RA please E-mail me. We are always looking for interested and motivated people.♦
Peering here from privying drape
The Librarian contemplates
of what and whence he’s made,
all his bookish parts and pieces,
constituent rags, skins, boiled bark
for ink, beribboned vanity.

Remember man that thou art dust?
Dust dwindled down from errant comets.
Elements embracing elements,
amino acids animating ash,
sealed/concealed in molecules.
So seeds proceed, flowers flourish,
eggs exult. Convolving flesh.

I AM, am I? In there? Are you?
All in sync, in sync, in synchrony,
all in all in Eden’s symphony,
then launched to loneliness
from the accusing tree.

Can all the king’s horses?
Can all the king’s men?
Restore flesh to foliage,
bones to fruition?
Giuseppe asked

And set about to do just that:
translate the human form
into a cornucopia of apples, roses, onions, pomegranates, grapes.
constructing thus an emperor’s head.

Not satisfied with nature revived
the artist contrives The Librarian,
but here is one who recalls that
“all is vanity” … “the glory that was Greece,
the grandeur that was Rome,”
who knows that like the emperor himself,
peasant, merchant, miller, yes, the very artist,
he will dismantled be
to loam-encrusted root
and seed.

William Pease
Library
REPORT FROM THE SENATE: A FACULTY MYSTERY SOLVED
Gordon Shackelford, Senator; Physics

The large reductions in state funding over the last six years has led to a 17% reduction in the number of professors (tenured + tenure-track). The number has declined from 819 in 2008/09 to 676 in 2013/14. As a point of historic reference, we had about 1,200 professors in 1990.

First, I should say that information that I could obtain in a matter of hours when I was Chair of the Senate’s Committee on Academic Resources and Planning (CARP), now may take many months to obtain. These days, my best route for information is to question administrators and committee chairs on the Senate floor. I ask more budgetary resource questions than any other senator, at times more than is asked by the entire Senate!

So where is the mystery? In some of the recent years, we have run enough faculty searches that I expected to see the number of professors remain about even or fall only a bit. However, data on the number of faculty (tenured + tenure-track) has shown continued sharp declines when I thought we were running enough searches to avoid this. A report by the CARP committee to the Senate in November provided a description of what has been happening to the size of our faculty.

Back in my CARP days, I used a starting assumption that in any given year, about three per cent of our professors would retire or leave SDSU. Of course, age distribution of the faculty and any retirement incentives could greatly impact the actual number of retirements in a given year.

When a number of planned faculty searches for an upcoming year was announced at the Senate, I would make an estimate of the projected impact on faculty numbers in the following way: I assumed that 90% of the searches would be successful and that about 3% of the existing professors would retire or leave SDSU.

For 2012/13, 21 faculty searches were approved. Using my estimates, 19 searches would be successful and 23 would retire or leave SDSU. Based on that figure, I estimated a decline of four professors.

So what happened: Based on data in the CARP report given to the Senate in November 2014, all 21 searches were successful, “12 faculty members entered the FERP* program (Faculty Early Retirement Program) and an additional 32 professors separated from the University for other reasons.” The result was a net decline of 23 professors.

For 2013/14, 70 faculty searches were approved. Using my estimates, 63 searches would be successful and 23 would retire or leave SDSU. I estimated a net gain of 40 professors.

However, based on data in the CARP report given to the Senate in November 2014, 63 searches were successful, “19 faculty members entered the FERP* program and an additional 27 retired or resigned from the University.” The result was a net increase of 17 professors.

Taken in total, for service in 2012/13 and 2013/14 we ran 91 faculty searches of which 84 were successful. Despite this, we saw a decline of two professors.

Looking ahead, Administration has announced plans for 300 faculty searches over the next five years. Of this, 80 faculty searches will be funded by the new “Student Success Fee.” The remaining 220 faculty searches, an average of 44 per year, will be funded by Academic Affairs. This seems like a very ambitious plan. However, given the net results of the last two years, growth of the faculty beyond the 80 funded by our students is not obvious. I brought this up at the Senate, noting that faculty hiring needs to be evaluated not on the gross number of new searches, but on the net results.

* FERP is the Faculty Early Retirement Program which allows retired professors to teach 0.5 time for as much as five years.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDSURA BOARD OF DIRECTORS</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
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<td>Senator</td>
<td>Gordon Shackelford</td>
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Coming in the next PostScript

The next PostScript will feature “Traditions.”

Save the Date
February 13th, Friday, Valentine’s Day Luncheon
March 15-18, Sunday-Wednesday, Borrego Desert Escape

DEADLINE: March 10, 2015
Please e-mail your double-spaced article of approximately 400-500 words to ramon.r.ross@gmail.com.
If you have no access to a computer, mail your typed or clearly printed article to
9227 Virginian Lane, La Mesa, CA 91941.
Scanned photos may be sent as an attachment or mail photos to Ramon Royal Ross at the above address. Photos are appreciated and will be returned.