In keeping with the theme of this edition of the PostScript I will describe for you my “brief but spectacular” passage into the artistic realm. For those who know me, art appreciation is not exactly a foreign concept but it is not a familiar stroll for me. So, when I saw the summer catalog for the Osher Program at SDSU advertised a course titled “Introduction to Furniture: Making a Shaker Table” I figured, why not? Even all of my thumbs cannot screw this up too badly. So, I signed up and showed up and was pleasantly surprised to find nineteen other seniors interested in eating a bit of sawdust. Our intrepid instructor, Liz Koerner, graduate student in the Furniture Design Program at SDSU, slowly but surely shepherded us through the six class periods required to complete the table. We were provided with the necessary pieces of wood and with access to the equipment in the wood working shop on campus. The class was a bit laborious at times as Liz was a stickler for caution and the safe use of the machinery which made for many opportunities to chat with classmates as we waited our turn to use the band saw, jointer, domino machine, etc. What, you do not know about a domino machine? Guess you will just have to take the course. There was a fair amount of cutting, tapering, and a surprisingly large amount of time spent sanding by hand. For the perfectionist in the class it was difficult to know when to stop. There was always one more rough spot to sand or one joint to square up. I fairly quickly came to the conclusion that my table was perfect just as it was and needed no more sanding. The next to last step in the making of the table was the gluing together of the legs and the connecting aprons with little wood pegs (no nails) for which I did not have enough hands. To add insult to injury all of the glue had to be applied at once, the pieces fitted together and then clamped in place, and the drying time for the glue is fifteen minutes max. PRESSURE!!! Luckily, the instructor recognized a disaster in the making and provided me with considerable assistance. Last step was applying the finish which was time consuming but not too difficult. I recognize that making a table is a rather broad definition of “art” but then that broad definition is needed if I am to pretend that I created a piece of art. It was a fun and different experience and I am proud of my little Shaker Table.

The PostScript Committee would like to hear from you. We will be sending out a questionnaire requesting ideas for themes to feature in future issues and suggestions for content that would interest you. We want to know how we can serve you better.
THE GREAT SPRING LUNCHEON AND SCHOLARSHIP EVENT  
Nancy C. Stewart, Chair, Scholarship Committee

San Diego, April 25th, 2018. Weather: warm, sunny, and clear. A perfect day for the Retirement Association’s Annual Spring Luncheon/Business Meeting at Tom Ham’s Lighthouse, and a day to celebrate and recognize the RA scholars for 2018 and meet their families. President Popp welcomed everyone and recognized the Board members in attendance. He then introduced Laura Shinn, Planning, Design & Construction, to present SDSU’s plan for the redevelopment of the Mission Valley site at SDCCU Stadium. The plan sounded intriguing, and the visuals were eye-catching.

Following upon Tom Ham’s delicious buffet luncheon, a very brief business meeting was conducted to elect two officers for the RA Board: Deborah Quiett, Vice President, and Robin Fishbaugh, Treasurer. Thanks to them, and to Dean Popp, who has agreed to serve as president for a third term.

Next on the agenda, Ron Young, Awards chair, introduced the 2018 service awardee, Tom Donahue. Tom is a loyal member of the RA Board, and our resident expert on retiree benefits especially in the health arena. He also serves as our liaison to CSU-ERFA, and is Chair of their Pre/Post Retirement Committee as well. Congratulations Tom, you deserve this honor, and we’re proud of you.

And at last to the very happy part of our annual luncheon—the presentation of this year’s RA Scholars. The students introduced their family, spoke briefly about themselves, and received an attractive award certificate, designed and prepared by Dorothy Romano. Their names and majors are listed in the sidebar.

We were delighted that all seven were able to come to the luncheon, and that their family members were able to enjoy the scholarship presentations with them. Thank you one and all!
President Sally Roush honored retiring faculty and staff at the Retirement Association’s reception May 1 in the Faculty Staff Club.

After Association president Dean Popp introduced President Roush, she tucked away her prepared remarks and spoke from her heart to congratulate and recognize the retiring faculty and staff.

She expressed her gratitude for the retirees’ service to SDSU and acknowledged that she too would be retiring soon…for the second time.


The SDSU Retirement Association resurrected the formerly Faculty-Staff Club event last year after a long lapse in order to celebrate and recognize retiring colleagues. Co-sponsors included Aztec Shops, Faculty Advancement, Business Affairs, Faculty-Staff Club, and University Relations and Advancement.

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MEMORIES ABOUT SDSU PRESIDENTS

Charles J. Stewart, Chemistry

The appointment of Adela de la Torre as the 9th president of SDSU made me think about our Presidents. How many did I know? How many knew me, or at least knew my name.

Since I entered State as a freshman in the Fall of 1947, I could start with the third president of San Diego State College, Walter R. Hepner. During the 1950 Graduation Ceremony, I shook his hand. That was the first time I ever had any contact with a campus President.

Hepner retired in 1952. The California Board of Education appointed Malcolm A. Love as the 4th President of San Diego State College. To me, Malcolm Love was the epitome of a college president. He had a very distinguished appearance, tall, handsome and possessing an aristocratic bearing. The campus was still small, about 5,000 students. At the beginning of each fall semester, President Love held a faculty meeting in the auditorium of the Campus Lab School and new hires were introduced to the faculty.

President Love knew “his” faculty. I can remember in the middle 60s, walking from the new Chemistry-Geology building toward the Administration Building and President Love was coming toward me. As we passed, he greeted me with “Good morning Dr. Stewart.”

Malcolm Love left his mark on San Diego State. He was president as the state colleges were moved from the California Board of Education to the California State College system. He changed the administrative structure of the campus and its name. We became San Diego State College, not “California State College, San Diego,” as Chancellor Dumke wanted. Divisions were restructured and turned into Colleges. He wanted vigorous graduate programs and for the campus to be able to grant the Doctor of Philosophy degree. He succeeded. SDSU became the first campus in the CSU to grant a Ph.D. (in Chemistry).

In 1971 Love retired. Vice-President Don Walker administered the campus while the Board of Trustees conducted a search. The faculty assumed Don would get the position. However the Board of Trustees appointed Brage Golding, a chemical engineer, as the official 5th President of SDSU.

I accidently met Golding very, very early in his time at SDSU. He was making a tour of campus buildings. I was running an experiment and in going from lab to office, there was Golding looking at a bulletin board in the hallway of the fourth floor of the Chemistry-Geology building. I don’t remember the conversation, if any, except to welcome him.

Golding wasn’t here long enough
It was on a spring evening in 1956 when I was walking back from the “old” library and across campus when I saw a sign in front of the Campus Lab School that announced a concert. I had some free time so I went inside the “cafetorium” and found a seat amongst that rather sparse audience.

There were four music stands and four chairs arranged in semi-circle. At the appointed time, the stage lights (what few there were) came on and the house went dark. Four elderly men in tuxedos entered with their instruments and sat down. Applause greeted them. Nothing was said for a few moments and then they placed their instruments under their chins and with a nod of one of the men, began to play. The depth of the music (composer long forgotten) filled the room and entered my along with about 100 other senior SDSU faculty.

Regrettably, Tom’s 1992 action has clouded his other achievements. The campus grew in size and program quality. As a member of the National Science Council, he enabled SDSU to become nationally recognized. He increased the number of doctoral programs, making ours a true University.

Thomas B. Day retired in 1996 and Stephen Weber became the 7th President of SDSU.

I didn’t really get to know President Weber. As a Professor Emeritus, I would meet him occasionally at a fund-raising event or say hello on passing. My impression is that President Weber was a good president and had an excellent relationship with the campus.

Weber retired in 2010, after 14 years of service. The board appointed Eliot Hirshman as SDSU 8th President.

Luckily, I met President Hirshman early in his term as President of SDSU. As one of his early presidential duties, he attended the annual Mortar Board* ceremony honoring a retired member of the administration and a member of the faculty for their service to SDSU. I had the opportunity to chat with him and to introduce my wife and three daughters. He was amazed at my long association with the campus.

Eliot Hirshman was an excellent fund raiser, more than doubling SDSU endowment funds. He supported strong academic programs and kept the public aware of SDSU as a major university. However the East and his family called, and he retired in 2017, to become president at Stevenson University in Maryland.

The Board of Trustees appointed Sally Roush to be interim President for one year while they searched for a permanent president.

Of the interim presidents, Don Walker, Trevor Colbourn and Sally Roush, I think Sally had the toughest year. She faced two large problems, the Aztec name controversy, and a football stadium. In my opinion, Sally resolved the problems quite well. We are still Aztecs and, if the voters approve, we will have SDSU west.

Such is a sampling of my random thoughts about the SDSU presidents I have known.

*Jane K. Smith Cap & Gown Chapter of Mortar Board♦
Forty-four SDSURA members and friends gathered at the Santee Lakes clubhouse on a toasty May 5 for the Twenty-First Kentucky Derby Party. (Thank goodness the clubhouse was air-conditioned!) Prior to post time, partygoers sampled abundant hors d’oeuvres (including Mary Nelson’s special liver paté and other goodies supplied by Dan Gilbreath, Dorothy and Al Romano, Sharon and Dean Popp, and Nancy and Jack Stewart), dined on fried chicken, desserted on pecan pie, and enjoyed, throughout the afternoon, Tricia Moulton’s famous Mint Juleps. And even though they couldn’t be at the event, Pat and Jerry Koppman were in everyone’s thoughts, forever part of SDSURA’s Kentucky Derby tradition.

As for the 144th Run for the Roses itself, “Odds Maker” Cheryl Trtan directed the luck-of-the-draw wagering, circulating a Derby hat with the contenders’ names inside. When the race was finally run on one of the wettest tracks in Derby history, the chestnut colt, Justify, had won. Six SDSURA members finished in the money as well, having drawn Justify’s name: Mary Nelson, Rinda (and Ron) Young, Joan McArthur, Barbara Barnes, Joyce Wright, and Carolyn Balkwell. This was Joyce’s first time at the Kentucky Derby party, and Carolyn’s first SDSURA event ever. Beginner’s luck maybe, or a little bit of SDSURA magic going on? Whatever the reason, congrats to all the winners and a warm welcome to Joyce and Carolyn.

For the team who coordinated this year’s celebration and gave their time, energy, and resources—Tricia Moulton, Cheryl Trtan, Mary Nelson, Ann LePage, Joan McArthur, and Ann Burgess—a huge thank you! And as always, much appreciation goes to everyone who attended SDSURA’s Twenty-first Kentucky Derby party and made it a fun time for all.
Al Hillix

My past went over the hill
Against my will
With that fine finality
That constitutes reality.

MY PAST WENT OVER THE HILL
Al Hillix, Psychology

Sixty-eight years ago I wrote a very short poem as a friend of mine literally disappeared over the hill west of my house on his way from Missouri to California; I never expected to see him again.

It has become more relevant every year since, although I eventually followed him to California!
LEST WE FORGET: 
HOUSTON M. BURNSIDE
Leif Fearn, Teacher Education

I don’t recall when I met Houston Burnside, but my guess is it was 1969. That would have been about the time he and Bill Wetherill, department chair in what was then the Division of Education, met and talked. Houston was pastor at the church at the corner of Del Cerro Boulevard and College Avenue. Bill lived down the street and one day asked Houston something like, “What do you know?” Houston answered with enough to make Bill ask if he were interested in teaching. Houston said he would be, and that began his start at San Diego State, with classes in history and philosophy of education. We did things like that long ago. Many valued colleagues came to the faculty because someone found someone who knew something valuable. Over his 27 years on the faculty, Houston also taught mathematics for teachers and the law for teachers. He also supervised student teachers.

But he never left his foundations in the pulpit. That is not to say he preached in his classes, though many of us would have to acknowledge in our more honest moments that “preach” is some of what we did in our classes. What Houston carried from the pulpit and into his classes was a profound and unshakable commitment to the worth and well-being of those in his momentary care, and an endless search for truth.

Houston’s search for truth is best expressed in his book, A Pew-Sitter’s Search for God. An army chaplain wrote that when he finished the book, he stood up and cheered. A university colleague wrote that Houston’s message is unpretentious and uncommonly enlightened. Houston’s own pastor lauded the message as a reminder that spirituality is a journey.

My first professional association with Houston occurred over several months when he and I served on an informal committee to formulate a preschool teacher credential. I was there because of my years in Southwest tribal Head Start programs. Houston was there because it was a laudable effort, and good people gravitate toward laudable efforts. Houston gravitated toward many laudable efforts during his nearly three decades on the faculty. He planned and taught in experimental teacher preparation programs. His course in the law was the only one at the time. His student teachers universally reported that he provided professionally valuable feedback, but more, his observations and recommendations were delivered tenderly, as though his entire professional life were committed to that one novice teacher in that one moment.

Houston was a widely knowledgeable scholar in the historical, social, and theological foundations of his ministry. A little over a decade ago when my son and I were writing about what to teach when we think we are teaching the social studies, we sent our chapter on world religions to Houston for his comments. We expected something like “Good show” and assurance that we didn’t err in our narrative about the major theologies we selected for K-12 instruction in historical, biographical, and geographic perspectives. Houston read the 27-page chapter and sent back 25 page-specific notes/comments/corrections plus 17 margin-notes. Each of the 44 notes, and the 44 collectively, made the chapter one of the three best of the nine in the book. Houston’s contribution was especially important, for world religions is one of the three content elements in the nine social studies least well, and typically dreadfully, handled in K-12 schools. (Personal Finance and Native Peoples are the other two.)

I never knew Houston as an ordained minister. I didn’t know him as a high school dropout, either, nor as a United States Marine who served four years in North China. However, I did know he was some sort of minister, so when Nancy and I were planning to marry, I asked Houston to officiate. He faced us in full white regalia before the fountain outside the Old Globe Theater in Balboa Park and cemented our marriage with pure words, thoughts, and feelings. In almost fifty years, I never heard anyone who knew Houston say anything other than what can be captured in the phrase, “Houston Burnside is one of the best people I have ever known.” ♦

HOUSTON BURNSIDE: 
EM CUMMINS REMEMBERS
Em Cummins, Counseling

Leif invited me to add a few words to his eloquent recollections about our recently departed colleague, the Rev. Dr. Houston Burnside, who dropped out of high school to join the US Marine Corps—yet went on to earn graduate degrees in divinity and philosophy before joining our faculty in the College of Education. Alvin Toffler published his best-selling book Future Shock in 1970, addressing the personal and social effects of “too much change in too short a time.” We were both so impressed with this
book that we created a 2-week Intersession class to present our students with the challenges facing their own generation. (Intersession fell in the brief hiatus between spring and summer terms, providing an opportunity for strapped faculty members to earn a few extra dollars—as well as for students to pick up some needed extra credits.)

We named our course “20th Century Identity Crisis” and attracted 70 or 80 students each summer. Seeking to offer something that would both inform and challenge students concerning the radical social/cultural changes taking place during that era, we included topics like these:

- The Vietnam War protests
- The Black Power phenomenon
- The La Raza movement
- The Stonewall Riots and subsequent Gay Rights crusade
- Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers strikes
- The Sexual Revolution, including the rise of Feminism

We invited local spokespersons representing these causes to our class. Our efforts had an impact because many students reported us to the university administration for presenting controversial material inappropriate for a university classroom. (One irate student became so confrontational with a presenter that we had to call the campus police to have him forcibly removed.) However, the Vice-President for Academic Affairs defended our right to address these provocative topics—largely because we did so in a fitting professional manner.

In retrospect, without the gentle demeanor of Houston Burnside providing cover for such potentially volatile material, such a class might have crashed and burned. His quiet confidence and ministerial persona enabled us to deal successfully with these emerging themes.

It was my privilege to attend his private graveside ceremony last March at Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery where a US Marine Corps Color Guard presented Connie (his widow) with a folded American flag and bade him farewell with the sounding of taps. Rest in peace, dear Houston. You made a difference in our world.

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ART SIMULATING LIFE
Steve Barnes, ARPE

Editor’s Note: This a single page torn from a fictitious novel, demonstrating how an author might attempt to capture and freeze complex human emotion.

Chapter 3 – EMPTY SPACES

Madam Bouquet, bejeweled and pensive, suddenly turned around as if spun by a human-sized lazy Susan, and looked directly at Whitcomb. “Where the hell is he?” she demanded. Considerable time passed. Nothing in the room moved or emitted sound. Then, pouring himself a second single malt, drawing up his breath and seemingly stretching two inches taller, Whitcomb uttered:

Love neither contemplates its co-conspirators nor plans its retreat. At the very moment of its human expression it struggles to survive against stiff odds, therein lies both its irresistible appeal and wondrous gift to those fortunate enough to be touched. You and Gunther were somehow picked in heaven, perhaps randomly, there simply is no other conceivable explanation for your ardor and agony. His disappearance at this time is equally baffling but predictable just as one waits for rain to stop or witnesses a field of whooping cranes explode into flight and head southeast at precisely the same instant. It is beautiful, intoxicating, precious, all of it.

She said nothing, understanding perfectly well the layers of meaning in his words but the misery of the message lingered on. Audible only to her was the unhurried tearing of a human heart.
We all like to think that an aesthetic experience offers something transportive, transcendent, perhaps ennobling, and that we look forward to repeating the experience in the near future. At times, a person also gets back in touch with deeply felt personal feelings, as well. By any perspective the film On the Waterfront is an aesthetic experience for me. The story, which has a plaintive and heart-tugging tone, is set near the docks in New York City, where at the beginning there is a mysterious fall from the roof as a warning to those who would buck a corrupt stevedore’s labor union. The account features a damaged ex-boxer, a pliant fixer-lawyer, and a group of rugged men who are temporarily cowed into cooperation with vicious bosses.

There are some loose similarities with the personal background in my own childhood and youth. My parents lived in a steel mill town in Ohio where my father and his brother were structural ironworkers—a group of extraordinarily tough men. My uncle was a middleweight to light heavyweight boxer with a record of 300 wins and 3 losses in the 1920s, and my father was his sparring partner. Visitors to our house included their past and present work friends, an assortment of strong and able men who had polite and agreeable manners, but brought off with an air of silent menace. My father (bless him), sensing that I was always going to be just an overgrown grown-up without music. It wasn’t until my senior year in high school that I started listening to pop music. It wasn’t until my senior year in high school that I started to listen to pop music.

When I entered college, I started out majoring in chemistry and took German because it was suggested for chem majors. My second year German professor was Guy Stern who had escaped the Nazis in 1937. Our textbook was The German Heritage by Phelps and Stein. The book taught German by using German cultural writings. We read about Dürer, Luther, Goethe, Schiller, and Beethoven, among others. When we studied Schiller, Dr. Stern played Ode to Joy from Beethoven’s ninth symphony and I was hooked on classical music. I played Beethoven’s 9th in my dorm room over and over and joined the Columbia Record Club and got a new classical music record every month.

When we read Goethe’s Faust, the textbook had very moving photos from Gounod’s Faust, and they caused me to want to see that opera one day. After I moved to San Diego, I befriended an SDSU art teacher, Marybelle Bigelow. She had season tickets as well. I had never been to an opera, but after seeing my first one (Turandot), fell in love with the medium. One of the operas they eventually performed was Gounod’s Faust, and a lifetime ambition was fulfilled.

Guy Stern got me to appreciate the humanities. I struggled with my chemistry major for two and a half years, and in the middle of my junior year, I switched my major to art. I got to take courses in the humanities and got good grades for the first time in my life. Because of Guy Stern’s German class, I developed a love for music and opera as well as for the visual arts.

Editor’s Note: After writing her article, Pat decided to see if she could share it with Guy Stern, now 96 years old. She found his email address online, sent him the piece, and waited. His reply was delayed—he was traveling in Europe. When he returned, he sent the following reply. Here’s an excerpt:

Among the many emails that awaited me upon our six week hiatus from working at the Holocaust Memorial Center (was lecturing in Germany), I was thrilled to receive your lovely email. It is so gratifying to hear from former students, particularly one that was influenced by being in one’s class.... it is a pleasure to hear from you and to know that fifty years of teaching bring rewards beyond retirement. Your email is certainly one of those “pay-offs.”

Photo of a 1958 performance of Faust from Pat’s German text book
Years ago a friend and I made lists of plays you would have to pay us to see again. Haven’t updated my version recently but I could—if you paid me! As I remember Strindberg’s Dance of Death was high on my list, mostly because I saw it three times in one year. Too many hours of angst. A downer indeed. Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet was high on my friend’s list though not on mine. The language is so beautiful and the action, while tragic, is all believable. We mutually agreed on our dislike for Neil Simon’s 1963 romantic comedy Barefoot in the Park and vetoed getting tickets for it at the Old Globe this summer. I couldn’t take another two hours of watching actors pretend to be totally out of breath from climbing five flights of stairs when you know very well they just walked ten steps or less from backstage to onstage. Doesn’t work for me—and anyway it’s dated. Young people today work out! They could handle those stairs.

I enjoy seeing a wide variety of plays (last year I saw over 100) but over the years have become able to predict what will work for me. I am wary of plays or musicals based on successful movies or collections of songs. Margaritaville didn’t work for me. Cute Jimmy Buffet songs. Sketchy plot. I admire bold plays and playwriting, especially on difficult topics. I enjoy updated Shakespeare and other classics, musicals, and any play that explores the human condition on this planet now. These are difficult times so there is a lot to say. I often admire shows that are quirky, (Squirrels at the La Jolla Playhouse), emotionally upsetting (A Thousand Splendid Suns at the Old Globe), or even violent (Guards at the Taj at the La Jolla Playhouse). I want to come out of the theatre not just entertained but with food for thought. I’m really picky about comedies. My most recent favorites being the silly but delightful School of Rock (unfortunately at the too big Civic Theatre) and the deliciously ridiculous Spamalot at Cygnet.

I am a big movie fan but choose carefully. Great performances inspire me. But I avoid most movies which come in parts, disdain thrillers, gratuitous violence designed to thrill, and bad acting. I only go to the good stuff. There is a lot to see this year. Loved the visually stunning Black Panther, Incredibles 2 (I about fell off my seat laughing at the super powers that baby had), The Death of Stalin (it is hilarious), RBG, Won’t you Be My Neighbor (fascinating look at Mr Rogers), Leave No Trace (quiet, intense and moving), and of course Mamma Mia Here We Go Again with the talented Lily James a delight as the young Meryl Streep and British star Julie Waters a standout as Rosie. Silly but oodles of fun, especially in the last hour.

So here is my philosophy. Go. I’m selective (Continued on page 12)
but I go. I go to the theatre, go see movies on the big screen (yeah no commercials!), and I regularly watch the great shows now available on alternative tv. I admire excellence in writing, directing, design and acting in any medium. I read reviews because they help me figure out what to go see. I think about what I saw and talk to friends about it. What does this play/movie have to say about life today? Why did this playwright/screenwriter want to write this play? What did I learn or better understand? I feel free to walk out if I don’t feel the experience is worth my time. I support all the performing arts. I hope you do too. Plays and movies will take your mind off the heat. They will enrich your life. Guaranteed. If you go often enough you too can develop a list of shows they would have to pay you to see again. It will add clarity to your life. You too can say firmly No I Will Not Go!♦

FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE BALLROOM DANCE CLUB

The lights are bright
The 10 male musicians in the swing band and the one female vocalist assemble
The males are dressed in their blue blazer jackets and grey slacks and wear American flag ties
The female is dressed in a beautiful black dress

The lights dim
The band plays a loud chorus
Some jump at the sound, others rejoice
Several couples enter the dance floor

The intro sounds drift into a fox trot
Some complain of the sticky floor
Some complain of the slick spots
It takes more effort to go around the floor

The next three hours are bliss
The sweat pours from my skin and permeates every fiber of my shirt
The sweat feels cool but I continue to dance
My partners stay with me in spite of my dampness

I take my glasses off
Things look hazy
I put them back on
Things look clear

The music sounds great
My feet hum constantly
My feet want to make music
After a while they become sore
But I continue to dance
I will not stop
I know that it will soon be over
But I still want to dance

The grace and rhythm of the ballroom floor permeate my entire being
My partners feel the same way as I do
We dance the swing, the fox trot, the waltz, the rumba, the cha cha, the tango, the polka, the samba
Each dance presents a separate challenge

The lights are bright again
The couples leave the dance floor
The night is over
Another Friday night goes into the books

Jerry Sattler
Psychology

GOOD EATS: RESTAURANT REVIEWS FROM POSTSCRIPT READERS

Tip Top Meats in Carlsbad
6118 Paseo Del Norte, Carlsbad, CA 92011
Open 6am to 8pm daily

What You’ll Find: Deli meats and cheeses. Full-service meat market. Imported beer, wine, and things German in the market. Sidetown restaurant serving breakfast (6am to noon), lunch, and dinner. I usually go for the Octoberfest plate—sausage variety and the works. You won’t be disappointed!

Recommended by Robert Osborn, TNS/Business Affairs

We would like to thank Rob Ray and SDSU’s Love Library for permission to use the photographs of Malcolm Love (page 4) and Houston Burnside (page 8). The images are courtesy of Love Library Special Collections and Archives.
When I was about eight years old, in 1938, I contracted pneumonia. This was before the miracle drugs of today. I was bedridden for well over a month. My foster parents, Pa and Miss Betty, (formally Professor and Mrs. Sam J. King) aged 77 and 67 at that time, were looking for something for me to do. I read a lot. I kept up with my school work. But I had lots of time on my hands.

Miss Betty suggested that I make a quilt! She had a lot of pieces of material and voila! I was a quilt-maker. She taught me to cut and sew the pieces together. She gave me overall instructions, then let me work on them. Fortunately there exists no evidence of my quilt. It probably disappeared as soon as I got well and went back to school.

I was living with foster parents because my mother was dying of tuberculosis when I was 16 months old. My birth parents moved to West Texas, hoping the dry air would help my mother, and literally gave me over the back fence to Pa and Miss Betty.

The ladies of the neighborhood and church made a “FRIENDSHIP QUILT” for my birth mother at this time. They sewed their names in their block of the quilt. I have that quilt, carefully preserved.

After Mary Dee Dickerson (Family Studies) and I were married in 1974, her mother made quilts as celebrations for the births, beginning in 1987, of our four grandchildren.

I have been to several quilt exhibitions. The one I remember best was in San Francisco at the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in Golden Gate Park about 1993. It was an Amish exposition. The women were restricted as to the design of the quilts, but not as to the colors. They did marvelous things with their quilts!

The picture is of the quilt in my bedroom. It was given to me by Faith Williams, a friend I worked with for many years in Europe. She made it.

In her book, A Passion for Horses, Caroline Lemay describes our relationship with horses in the following way: “Throughout human history, man has enjoyed a unique relationship with the horse, which he began to domesticate in around 4,000 B.C., turning it from a small, primitive multi-toed creature into the magnificent animal that we know and love today. The horse offers us its strength and loyalty, and we nurture and have even worshipped it in return, shaping it to suit our needs until it has become an integral part of our history on earth.” (Excerpt from the book A Passion for Horses by Caroline Lemay.)

I was born on a ranch in Silver City, New Mexico. Living on the ranch instilled my love for horses as well as nature. When I turned 18, I joined the Navy in which I served four years during the Korean War. When I returned home, I attended New Mexico Western University where I earned a Bachelors Degree in Industrial Arts and a Masters Degree in Education. During my studies, I had the opportunity to study the architect Frank Lloyd Wright and discovered his passion for nature. Wright states, “study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you.” This statement has inspired me not only to paint horses, but to incorporate aspects of nature, by painting birds, flowers, and landscapes.

Over the past 10 years, I have attended various art classes at Warner Springs Community Center in order to further enhance and develop my skills as an artist. In 2016, I was fortunate to attend an art workshop given by Joe Garcia, a resident of Julian, CA, who teaches composition, value, and spontaneity through every medium. He has also been published in numerous magazines, including Southwest Art, The Artist Magazine, Wild Life Art, and Watercolor Magazine. My preferred medium is watercolor, because it is easier to blend colors and brings out the beauty of the art work.

Since my retirement from SDSU as Associate Dean at the Imperial Campus, I have had the privilege and opportunity to share my art with the Julian community. While I was a member of the Julian Art Guild, my art was displayed at the Julian Library and in numerous art shows. Every year I produce a calendar of my art for my friends and family. I believe that art is a wonderful way to express myself and capture the beauty of nature in a single moment. All these experiences truly have been transformational in art for me. I am thankful for this gift and all who have inspired me.
News is out from the New York Times that the Oregon Public Retirement Fund (OPERS) is in trouble. OPERS, according to the April 14, 2018 NYT article, forks out an eye-opening $76,000 monthly pension to one of the system’s retirees. The report shows overall that OPERS has some ill-considered practices in its system policies. One of these is to be found in the policy to provide “Match Money” to individuals who have earned income during their careers from sources other than funds given in Oregon state salaries. A football coach, Mike Beloit, has a pension from his original salary, and in addition “money from licensing deals and endorsements that the Ducks’ athletic program generated”—yielding more than $46,000 a month for the coach. The match money provision thus consists of sums unrelated to any that were paid into the system in the first place.

Before we give in entirely to a question along the lines of “What were they thinking,” it is useful to compare the Oregon retirement system with ours in California. We will see that the problem in the newspaper account does not come from an obvious direction. CalPERS had 326.4 billion dollars under investment in 2016-17; the OPERS fund contains $78 billion in employee contributions and investment returns. Receiving monthly allowances from CalPERS are 678,059 persons, combining the figures for retirees and beneficiaries / survivors; OPERS pays benefits to 117,000 people. CalPERS figures from 2016 show that 23,000 persons received pensions of $100,000 a year or greater. The OPERS statement on its website reports that 810 persons receive more than $100,000 a year. The unfunded liability for the pension systems—always a polarizing figure in the methods of calculation and in the results, and it will be such for the indefinite future—is $136.8 billion for CalPERS and as of 2015 $22 billion for OPERS.

Apparently, despite the reported extravagances, OPERS seems to be in no more jeopardy than our system—and we should notice that ours has strong protections for the future. New hires at present have a pension that is capped at $100,000. In addition, according to Professor George Diehr, an ERDSA member who was formerly on the CalPERS board, our system “would not include outside earnings such as those cited in the NYT piece on the Oregon pension system.” Also, as an instance of continuing executive foresight on the matter, Governor Brown in 2017 lent CalPERS the sum of $6 billion to improve the figure for unfunded liability.

A lingering look at these figures seems to indicate that the members of OPERS are getting a sensationalized treatment from their system. To those persons, discussions like those in the New York Times are symptomatic of the anti-pension mindset found in a large and diverse variety of places in national news reporting. The New York Times ordinarily is not guilty of such a politicized dragnet piece, but no one is perfect.♦

IN MEMORIAM

Marvin Platz
Secondary Education
January, 2018

Houston Burnside
Teacher Education
March, 2018

William Phillips
Physical Education
May, 2018

Robert Mitchell
Husband of Jeannine Mitchell
Health Services
May, 2018

Virginia Platz
Secondary Education
June, 2018

WHAT PROTECTIONS DO WE HAVE
Tom Donahue, ERFSA/Benefits

TREASURER’S REPORT
Deborah Quiett, Treasurer
SDSU Retirement Association Accounts as of June 30, 2018

Scholarship Endowment Fund $211,468.25
Scholarship Fund $31,336.44
Operating Account $24,544.80
Activities Account $14,482.45
Sub-total $281,831.94
Bohnsack Scholarship Endowment Fund $52,437.63
Bohnsack Scholarship Fund $5,003.35
Sub-total $57,440.98
Total Assets $339,272.92

It has been my privilege to be your Treasurer for the past six years. Please welcome Robin Fishbaugh as the new Treasurer.

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.
COMING IN THE NEXT POSTSCRIPT—PETS, THE CRITTERS WE LIVE WITH

Barbara Barnes, Enrollment Services

“I want to experience the world the way these animals do, just for a moment or an hour. They are fully alive . . . . Animals have to confine their awareness to the present moment out of necessity. Compared to them, I am as dull as a fence post.”

—Joe Butto

The theme for our next issue is the critters we live with—our pets. We hope you will send us stories about the furred, feathered, fishy, and scaly companions in your lives, and answer questions like the following: Why do you think Labrador Retrievers (substitute your favorite breed) are the greatest creatures that have ever scampered on the face of this earth? How did you come up with the names for your pets? Does your cat charm your houseguests or does he make a beeline for the closet as soon as someone other than you crosses the threshold? Does your African Grey say things that you wish she wouldn’t? Have you rescued pets from animal shelters? Where do your pets sleep? How do you choose the pet that is going to come home with you, or as many have experienced, has that pet chosen you?

On the other hand, for whatever reason, not everyone decides to have a pet. I have a friend who travels out of the country frequently and feels it wouldn’t be fair to a cat or dog to leave it so often. As a substitute for a house pet, she visits the zoo, observing and caring deeply about her favorites—the tamarins, the tigers, the flamingos. I can always count on her to know who’s who in the zoo’s nursery. Or maybe you grew up on a farm with animals like cows and chickens, and though you didn’t consider them to be pets exactly, they were certainly part of your life. Pets or not, we’d love to hear stories about what the animals in your life mean to you.

For myself, I have always lived with at least one cat or dog; having an animal in my life comes as naturally as breathing. Those times when I’ve been without a critter companion, or more sadly, when a beloved pet has passed away, I feel the loss to my core. I muddle through, waiting to heal, until another animal to love and be loved comes along. And so far, one has. My pets have always been happy, engaged creatures, and have taken me with them on that positive path. Currently I live with two dogs, four cats, two box turtles, and seventeen koi. Care for this menagerie is time well spent; pets give so much in return—affection, loyalty, fun. As I’m writing this, one of my cats, Ansel (who is black and white), has hopped onto my computer table and placed himself in front of me. It’s his right, of course. I’ve moved the keyboard out of his way and Ansel takes over the space, purring, purring, purring. For me, time to take a break and enjoy the moment.

So, tell us about your experiences with pets, share any advice or tips you may have, and of course, send lots of photos. ♦
DEADLINE: November 10, 2018
Please e-mail your double-spaced article of approximately 400-500 words to whitesagecafe@aol.com. If you have no access to a computer, mail your typed or clearly printed article to 4829 Beaumont Drive, La Mesa, CA 91941. Scanned photos may be sent as an attachment or mail photos to Barbara Barnes at the above address. Photos are appreciated and will be returned.

PostScript is published by the San Diego State University Retirement Association
5500 Campanile Drive, Gateway 3528, San Diego, CA 92182-5000
Phone: 619.594.4701 email: retire@mail.sdsu.edu

Save the Date
Oktoberfest, October 19, Santee Lakes

Holiday Party, December TBA

Coming in the Next PostScript:
The next PostScript will feature:
“Pets”

Left: Paintings by Al Merino.
See story on page 13.