

## Ellen Shockro, Still a Champion Swimmer

### *This Now 80-Year-Old Lady Has Been Living One Crazy Swimming Life*

**By Ellen Shockro**

I swim at least six days a week. Before I retired, I probably swam four or five days a week. I compete in both Masters swimming events, including Nationals and Worlds (before COVID) and also in Open Water swims, usually in the ocean, but sometimes in lakes as well.

I swim with a team and with coaches. I never had the experience of being coached in swimming when I was growing up, so now I get to pretend I'm still a kid. I live in Newport Beach now, and my team is the Irvine Novaquatics.

They have five workouts every weekday, and also workouts on Saturdays and Sundays. There are many swimmers at all the workouts. I am the oldest person swimming regularly.

I live only two miles from Big Corona State Beach, and that's where I go for ocean swimming.

During COVID when pools were closed, the Nova coach organized



**Ellen holds a special bottle of wine given to the first place finisher in a 1.5 mile swim from Alcatraz.**

swimming both in the ocean and the bay nearly every day. We had to be masked on the beach and stay very quiet. It was amazing fun.

I have a home in Stonington, Maine on Deer Isle, and while my husband was still alive, we spent four to five

months there. This summer I was there for only two months. I'm a member of the Down East YMCA, and I swim at the pool in Blue Hill, Maine. I also swim regularly at Walker Pond, which is about three miles long by one mile wide, but still a "pond".

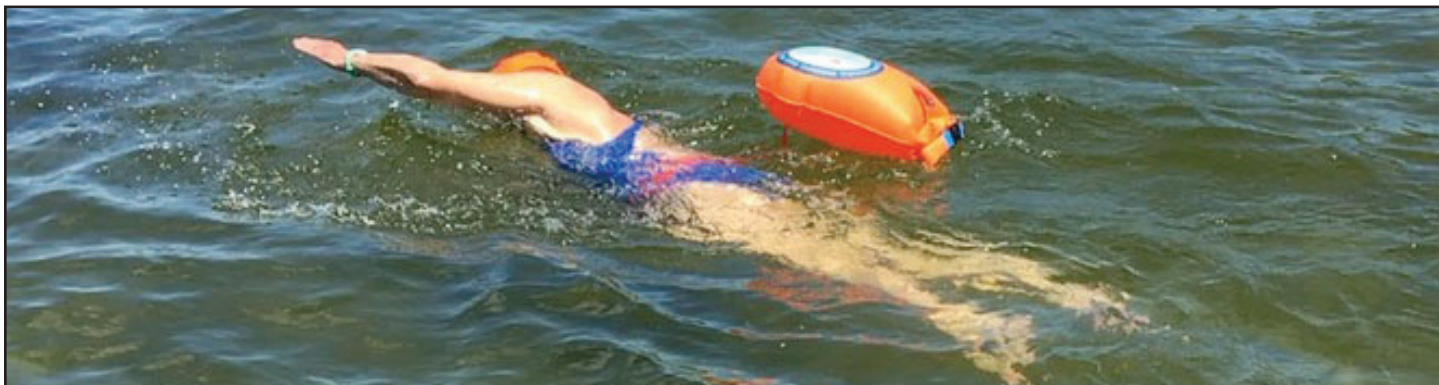
Our home is on Penobscot Bay, which is usually in the 40s when I arrive from California, and this year, it was in the high 50s when I left in late August.

As crazy as I am, cold water swimming is an art, so I only do limited amounts. I've been "anti-neoprene" for a long time, and instead I swim in "bioprene" - a made-up word for swimming in a normal swimsuit. I wear a wetsuit when the competition requires it.

I started swimming with masters at Caltech in 1981. I also started doing triathlons that year. I ended up completing in 68 triathlons and several hundred ocean swim races from 1981-1991.

For the 12 weeks of summer during those years, I would compete every Saturday and Sunday in a triathlon or an ocean swim or a running race. In 1987, PCC featured me finishing the Ironman in Kona, Hawaii, on

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# Traveling the World To Compete and Swim . . .



Ellen Shooko

## PCC's Superwoman

Superwoman? Not really—just one of those rare people, high on life and totally involved with living. Mother, teacher, lecturer and an extremely fit instructor at PCC, Dr. Ellen Shooko's most recent accomplishment was completing her second year in the Ironman Triathlon: World Championship, held in Kona, Hawaii.

"I did it the second year," she said, "just to prove that the first year wasn't a fluke." But as anyone knows, completing the grueling 112-mile triathlon, the 2.4 mile swim and the 26.2 mile run, is never just a "fluke."

Everything Shooko tackles is performed with an incredible amount of energy and dedication. A firm believer in the effects of a positive attitude, Shooko said, "I don't waste energy being negative."

She spends at least three hours every day in vigorous training, whether or not there is an upcoming competition, running, swimming or cycling.

the cover of one of their publications. Honestly, I was pretty extreme.

I have done the Waikiki Roughwater Swim 26 times.

In Masters swim-

ming, one competes in five-year age groups—so, 60-64 or 75-79 etc. It's actually fun to "age up" when one is competing. 2022 is an "aging up" year for me.

Since I retired in 2010, I have gone to the U.S. Nationals, Canadian Nationals, and to World meets.

I've traveled to many cities in the U.S., and also to Riccione, Italy, on the Adriatic, and to Budapest, Hungary. Until COVID,

I went to England every year and participated in their Royal Navy Meet, by special permission.

I had the privilege of teaching in the PCC Oxford program four times,



Friends and master swimmers celebrate Ellen's 80th Birthday with what else but a birthday swim. That was just one of many swimming celebrations for her special day. This one was 4,000 yards. Ellen didn't start swimming until she was 40 in the 1980s. Even then she was a "superwoman."

and I made some good British swim friends while there. COVID disrupted international travel and swimming, as everyone knows, just as it interrupted so many things in our lives.

If we are truly over the worst, I will go to Japan and New Zealand next year for big meets.

It's just a great excuse to travel, and I see friends from all over the world.

I was always an athlete, but I had never swum competitively until the 1980s, when I was in my 40s. I love the sport. I encourage anyone who loves to swim to try out Masters swimming. There's a great program at the Rose Bowl and also at Caltech.



Life is all about swimming for Ellen. Left, she just completed a 2.4 mile swim from Peaks Island to Portland, Maine. Wet suits were required. Center, she celebrates another win. Right, a lot of swimmers turned out to

honor Ellen on her birthday. Some were surprised that she was still swimming at 80. The large balloons confirmed her age. Back in the 1980s, she was labeled PCC's Superwoman by the Courier.



# Retirees Visit the Autry Museum for an Interesting and Fun Excursion

By Liz Polenzani

In early August, a group of PCC Retirees enjoyed a private tour of the exhibition "Dress Codes" at the Autry Museum in Griffith Park. When I hear the term "dress code," I think of the dreaded school and scout uniform, the unwritten attire needed for high school mixers etc.

As PCC employees, I do not recall a specified "dress code" but there was certainly a definite "look" I felt compelled to adhere to. And if you go on campus today, that look would be a lot different! As times change, the "dress code" changes too.

The Autry Exhibit, Dress Codes, is about "what we wear, how we wear it, and why." Being a western museum, there are six western styles that are explored: blue jeans, plaid shirt, fringed jackets, aloha shirt, China Poblana dress and the cowboy boot. Our tour guides walked us through each area relating tidbits of information about the presentation and construction of the exhibits. This project has been in the works for over four years with more than 150 objects on display.



**This pair of Levis was found in an abandoned mine in 1890. Levi Strauss offered a Lifetime Guarantee on his pants.**

Besides exhibiting items from the Autry clothing collections, items are on loan from Levi Straus & Company, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Harry S. Truman National Historic Site, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County plus many more.

The importance of jeans is obvious as you go through the different sections. For the first 50 years, denim jeans were worn by railroad workers, ranchers, farmers and cowboys. Today jeans are a multi-billion business worldwide, and everyone wears them.

A number of jackets and shirts with fringe were also on display. When people see them, they usually think of native groups, cowboys and the West. What most don't know is that it was easier for the person making the garment to trim the seams into fringe instead of having to trim the leather.

Daniel Boone and Buffalo Bill Cody wore fringed jackets and were rarely seen without them..



**What would a Dress Codes exhibit be without cowboy boots. Some of those on display were worn by Western Stars Patsy Montana, Roy Rogers and Gene Autry.**

fitting for a former haberdasher. By 1946, at the suggestion of his personal physician, the President headed to the Naval Station in Key West for some rest and rejuvenation. His dress code changed from dark, heavy suits to crisp summer suits and light-colored sport shirts.

Soon local merchants were sending him bold print sport shirts. Even Duke Kahanamoku, the legendary Hawaiian swimmer and surfer, sent Truman several aloha shirts from his newly created



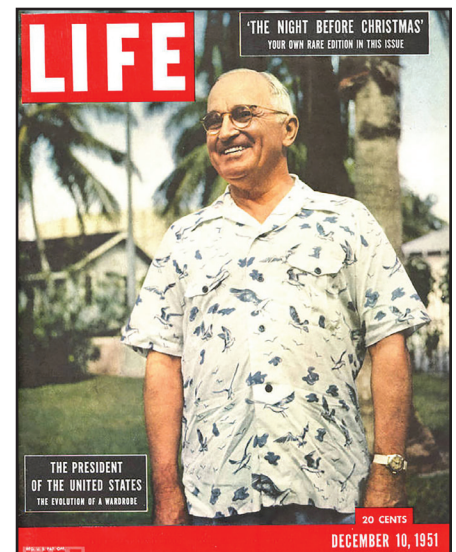
**This jacket, circa 1900, was worn by Buffalo Bill Cody, who said, "He considered himself the best dressed man in the United States."**

collection.

The President called these shirts his "Key West Uniform". The President returned to Independence, Missouri with over 60 of these beloved tropical shirts. Many of these shirts are in this exhibition.

This exhibit is just one part of the Autry Museum. All agreed that the visit was very educational and a place to return to.

The building and surrounding grounds are welcoming with an amazing gift shop. Enjoy free admission to the Autry the second Tuesday of each month. The museum has a wide variety of exhibitions and evening musical entertainment. Check out their website for more detailed information.



# *Lend Your Voice To Comfort People Through Song By Joining New Choir*

By Karen Carlisi

Since my retirement in Spring 2018, I have been quite busy with a variety of activities and projects, including some teaching, OER training and development, Italian language studies and travel to Italy, where most recently, in 2020, Howard and I got stranded during the first months of the pandemic and finally made it home after four cancelled airline tickets!

This past February, I ventured onto a new path and was trained as an INELDA End-of-Life Doula. As an EOL Doula, my role is to walk alongside those who are terminally ill or dying and to offer communication, companionship, and comfort.

Doulas can connect with hospice to provide an additional level of support for the dying and their loved ones, or simply provide companionship and guidance for individuals and their loved ones.

I am now working with another Doula to form a collective, and we will be offering guidance with legacy projects. As an ethnobotanist, she creates legacy scents and incense and I offer help with memoir writing.

In March, I also became a member of the Westside Threshold Choir. If you have never heard of Threshold Choir, we offer comfort—through song—to people facing all kinds of challenges of living and dying. Often, we sing at bedsides, or in hospital rooms, or in people's homes.

Usually, we are there in pairs or trios. We sing a cappella in two-and-three-part

harmony, and most of our songs are short and repetitive. Since our music is something we share to benefit the one (or ones) we sing to, and is not a "performance" in the usual sense. Those we sing to simply listen and benefit from the music.

Each chapter of Threshold Choir is a member of an international organization, founded in 2000, of more than 100 Threshold Choirs—most in the United States, some in Canada, and a few in other places around the world. It is a growing organization. We have no religious affiliation and honor all paths.

Most of the songs we sing were written by choir members from all over and were written especially to soothe, comfort, uplift and bring peace.

What we do is really, very intimate, so when we can, we tailor the songs to the individual we are singing to. Depending on what is needed, we might choose a very simple quiet song, and sing many repetitions

Since becoming a member, I have been able to join rehearsals with The Westside Chapter on Zoom, but hopefully, live rehearsals will resume soon.

Due to the sprawling geography of LA, I have been inspired to create an Eastside Chapter of Threshold Singers, so I am presently following the steps to put that in place.

Perhaps you enjoy singing and you would like to offer your time and voice in this way?

Please contact me to find out more



about the Eastside Chapter. Or if you can, please help our community learn about us. You can contact me at: [kcarlisi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kcarlisi@sbcglobal.net) or by phone at (626) 755-8142.

## *Ron Koertge Writes Another New Book*

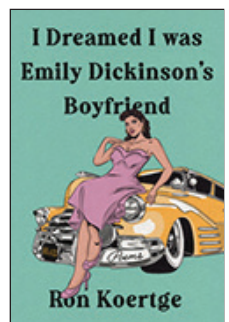
PCC's favorite poet, Ron Koertge, has done it again. He has written another book that was launched at a special celebration earlier this month.

Another author, Eloise Klenin Healy, joined Koertge and announced her new book as well.

Ron's book is called, "I Dreamed I Was Emily Dickinson's Boyfriend." Ron, who is Poet Laureate for South Pasadena, has won more awards for his writing than we can list here.

If you want more details about his new book and all of the others he has written, check online. By just typing his name, you will get a whole list of all of his publications.

This book and all of his other works are available in bookstores and on Amazon.



**The choir sings to people who are ill and in need of comfort. They sing at bedsides in homes or hospitals.**





# Retirees Visit the Motion Picture Museum

By Jim Arnwine

Sixteen PCC retirees took a tour to the new Academy Museum of Motion Pictures located in the Mid-Wilshire district of Los Angeles next to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and across the street from Petersen Automotive Museum.

Housed in the former May Company Department Store building (designated as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument), it opened in the fall of 2021.

At the museum, group members branched out and took in the variety of exhibitions. One highlight was the retrospective of Japanese filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki's work which included designs, storyboards posters and cels from the archives of his studio, Studio Ghibli.

With over 300 works spanning the entire fourth floor, it commanded the full attention of some on the tour.

The main ongoing exhibit is titled Stories of Cinema which presents stories of prominent moviemakers, their work and impact on society.

Also included are examples of how the artistic and technical aspects of movies are created.

While two hours at the museum was enough for a good introduction to the collection, everyone agreed there was much more to see in subsequent visits.

But it was lunchtime! The next stop was at The Original Farmers Market just a short distance up Fairfax Avenue. People took advantage of the many dining options for lunch and

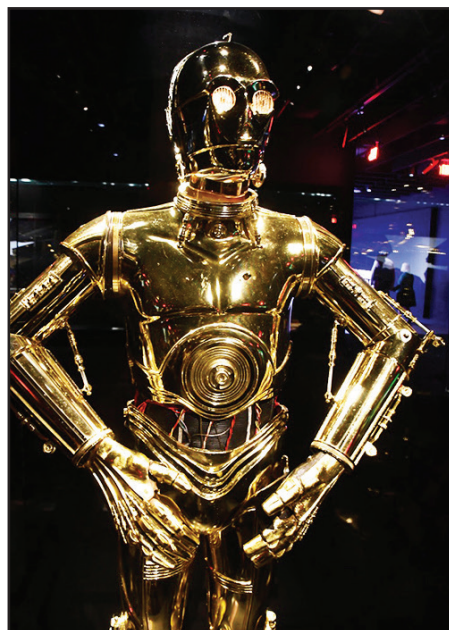
enjoyed shopping in both the Farmers Market and at The Grove.

The best part of the day was the fun ride on the big yellow bus, from PCC to Mid-Wilshire and back.

The hour-long ride each way gave everyone a chance to enjoy the scenery, have conversations, and catch up after months of isolation.

More information about the museum can be found at its website, [www.academymuseum.org](http://www.academymuseum.org).

If you want to go to the museum on your own or with friends, you have to reserve tickets online in advance. Prices are \$25 for adults and \$19 for seniors.



Retirees ran into a lot of interesting characters on the tour of the muse-

um. ET, C3PO and Jaws made the exhibits special. *Photos by Rob Lee*



# Sandra Collins Wanted To Be An Actress From Age 13, but Real Life Interfered

By Sandra Collins

I remember my first time I performed in front of an audience. It was 1972. The Girl Scout and Brownie Troops in Capitol Heights, Maryland had a jamboree with other neighboring troops. Looking back, it seemed like 500 people were in the auditorium for that jamboree, but it was probably only about 50 people.

The leaders of the troops decided to have a dance off with each age group taking turns dancing. When it was my troop's turn, everyone but me refused to go on stage. I wish I could tell you that I danced like my life depended on it or I did the latest and greatest dance of that day, but the truth is, all I did was bounce up and down on shaky legs. I remember this so well because it was traumatizing.

No, I did not win the prize for the best dancer in my age group. However, the following week, when I returned to my troop meeting, the leader told everyone what I did, gave me a prize, and had everyone applaud me.

That day, a seed was planted in my mind—push past fear to find your greatness. This life lesson has served me well throughout my life.



From the age of 13 I knew I wanted to be an actress. My Mom would take my sisters and me to various dinner theaters in D.C., Maryland and Virginia. The actors and actresses would capture our imagination. The theater transported us to another place and time.

I remember when I told my Mom I wanted to be an actress. Her reply was not at all what I expected. She said it was a tough career and very few people have success in it. She said it would be better if I chose another career.

I now understand why my Mom would encourage me to put aside my dreams. In 1977, there were very few African-American performers in positive speaking roles on TV. *Roots*, a seven-part TV mini-series, was the first major TV drama to feature a primarily Black cast. African Americans were represented by Flip Wilson, Sanford and Son, Good-times, and The Jeffersons, just to name a few.

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# ... Now She is Living Her Dream

So, I went to plan B. A college counselor advised me to study computers and business. I graduated with an AA and a BA degree in Business Administration. I got my first job with the U.S. government and the second in the Administration at PCC. Plan B consumed me. After a few years, family and kids became my focus.

While working at PCC, the drama department decided to do the play, *Hairspray*. Two employees at the college, Tim Bereth and Marcie Ambrose encouraged me to audition.

Casting day came and the roster was posted. My dream once again was awake. I was cast for the role of Mortormouth Maybelle in PCC's rendition of *Hairspray*. Doing the role relit a flame in me, a flame that I thought had long since been blown out.

My first week of rehearsal, I was seriously reconsidering my commitment to the play. Between my 8-to-5-job, picking-up my kids, feeding them and staying at rehearsals until midnight, I really believed I was in over my head. I thought about what my mother said regarding a career in acting.

I pushed through keeping up with work and family requirements, the late nights, the dance routines, the



**The photos in this article show you the many faces of Sandra Collins, the actress, as she lives her dream. The photo above shows the "real" Sandra that you might meet on the street or at a retirees mixer.**

songs and the physically, demanding-rehearsals.

The play opened to rave reviews in the PCC Courier. My dream was alive, and the experience was magical. It was hard but I quickly wanted

to do it again.

Despite that, I would not act again for six years. During the *Hairspray* play, I was the most alive I had felt in 18 years.

My focus had to turn to my children who were entering High School and Jr. High School. My 8-to-5 job intensified due to a promotion. I was burning the candle at both ends and a little in the middle. I was stuck in the waves of life. My body, mind and spirit began to fail me, and in 2019, I chose to retire. I could not continue with the demands of Plan B.

My son had finished college and was living in another state. My daughter was attending California State Polytechnic in Pomona. It was time to turn focus toward me.

The list of my credits includes stage plays, television roles, commercials, game shows and music videos. I was also cast in the lead of a television pilot, and I did a music video with Beyonce.

If you asked the question, what does retirement mean to me? I would have to say it is the freedom to pursue my goals and dreams. After finding myself, I never want to lose what I have gained becoming who I am today.

## *Save the Date for the Holiday Mixer*

Holiday time is just around the corner, so we want to get the holiday mixer on your calendar early. The Retirees Association's Fall Mixer has once again been scheduled at the home of Bonnie Shimasaki, who generously opens her home to the retirees group. It is a treat to visit Bonnie's home which is always beautifully decorated for the holiday season.



Mark your calendars for Wednesday, Dec. 14 so you won't forget to join us. The event will be held from 12:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. at 1715 Homet Road in Pasadena. Mixers are always casual get-togethers, where friends and former colleagues can spend a relaxing afternoon. Please call Dona Mitoma at (818) 403-8421 only if you can come. Because everyone at the mixer enjoys chatting and munching, feel free to bring an hors d'oeuvre or wine to share.



## **Retirees To Get PCC E-Mail Accounts**

The Retirees Association Board has been working with IT personnel at the college to get PCC e-mail accounts for all retirees. The way it is now, when employees retire from the college, they lose access to their PCC e-mail accounts. Over the years, retirees have asked if there was any way to keep their college accounts, but the answer was always no. However, the board tried again this year, and the answer was positive. It is a matter of working out the details.

When accounts become available, each retiree will be given instructions on how to access his personal account. Each e-mail account will have the extension of "[@retiree.pasadena.edu](mailto:@retiree.pasadena.edu)".

As soon as PCC IT provides us with step-by-step instructions on how to access your new account, we will send it to you.



# Retirees Association Adds New Members

Every year the PCC Retirees Association gets to add new members to its rolls when employees decide to retire. All new retirees automatically become official members of the Retirees' Association on the day they retire. It doesn't matter what your job was at the college; if you retired from PCC, you're in. This year the Association will add 23 new members.

The new crop of retirees will join close to 700 current members. The retirees group offers a variety of activities for members who still want to keep in touch with friends and colleagues from the college.

The group hosts Fall and Spring mixers each year. The get-togethers are a fun way to enjoy a relaxing afternoon catching up with friends. Mixers and

excursions are casual, so there is no need to dress up. Just come and enjoy.

In addition, the association sponsors excursions to different places in Southern California. Depending on the event, bus transportation is provided for those who prefer not to drive, so they can join the fun. Members will get email or snail mail announcements about the activities.

Members also receive a subscription to the retirees' newsletter "Staying Connected." This issue includes two events for retirees..

Everyone is invited to contribute to the newsletter, which comes out in October and April of each year. Whether it is a story about a trip you have taken or something interesting you just want to share with other retirees, submit

the article to Mikki Bolliger, newsletter editor, at [MRBolliger@pasadena.edu](mailto:MRBolliger@pasadena.edu).

All issues of the newsletter are online at [Pasadena.edu/retirees](http://Pasadena.edu/retirees). You might want to check out the back issues to see what type of stories we print. So many retirees are doing interesting things, but they don't think they are worthy of an article. We are definitely interested in what you are doing.

Notice there was no mention of dues for becoming a member. The organization does not charge to join or to continue membership.

Members who decide to come on an excursion or attend a mixer almost always say they are sorry that they didn't come sooner.

Please put the dates on your calendar, and join us for some fun.

HOGUE,CHARLES N	INSTRUCTOR	MATHEMATICS
CHENEY,KENNETH B	INSTRUCTOR	NATURAL SCIENCES
RUIZ,JESUS	PBLCTNS ARTIST/TYPESTTR	STRATEGIC COMM & MARKETING
POWERS,JAMES R	INSTRUCTOR	NATURAL SCIENCES
BARNES,KATHY A	EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	STUDENT & LEARNING SERVICES
CHENG,MEI LING	DEPT LAB TCN II MATH	MATHEMATICS
SWANEGAN,MICHAEL W	INSTRUCTOR	KINESIOLOGY HEALTH & ATHLETICS
KELLOGG,CAROL D	INSTRUCTOR	BUSINESS
BUSTAMANTE,MARIA M	FIN AID INTAKE SPECIALIST	FINANCIAL AID
ARAGON,JAMES J	COUNSELOR	COUNSELING
DAVIS,ANN	INSTRUCTOR	MATHEMATICS
ANDREASYAN,GRAYR	ACADEMIC STIPEND	INSTRUCTION
MANCINI,ESPERANZA M	RISK MNGMNT SERVICES	BUSINESS SERVICES
OSTRANDER,ANNE M	TECH	BUSINESS
KRAUSE,PATRICIA N	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSIST II	FISCAL SERVICES
CROOK,MARY-ERIN	ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN	ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE STUDIES
OVENTILE,ROBERT S	INSTRUCTOR	ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE STUDIES
DANIC,YASMINA	LAC ASSISTANT III	ENGLISH
ADELI,SHERINE ANN	VIDEO PRODUCER	STRATEGIC COMM & MARKETING
BUSTILLOS,ERNEST N	INSTRUCTOR	SOCIAL SCIENCES
HAYNES,SANDRA C	INSTRUCTOR	VISUAL ARTS & MEDIA STUDIES
LUTTER,CORINNE ANN	ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN	FISCAL SERVICES
NAEEM,IBRAHIM	SPRVSR C E C OPERATIONS	COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER





## *A Rewarding Luncheon For Scholars With 10 Students Receiving \$1,000 Scholarships*

**By Alan Lamson**

It was a bright and sunny day—too sunny as it turned out for most of us sitting in the outdoor patio at the Pasadena University Club on July 8. But even with the heat, everyone appeared to enjoy the luncheon with this year's scholarship recipients.

All 10 recipients—even those absent—were introduced by one of our major donors along with President Endrijonas and faculty member Anthony Francoso.

One of the major donors, Harry Smallenburg, summed up his view of the event in a post to his Facebook page:

"Just came from a PCC Retirees Association scholarship awards luncheon. The recipients were a group of hard-working, dedicated, talented and intelligent students with many career goals, from the medical profession to various kinds of social betterment. They have all succeeded in spite of obstacles, often doubting whether they were college material. "These are true stories of resurrection and redemption in the real world. They reassure me about America's future."

Some of the students have been victims of trauma. Jessica Leeth Young is a survivor of both molestation and physical abuse. She was abandoned by her parents and allowed to "grow up in a failed juvenile justice system."

Another trauma survivor is Consuelo Rio. While in high school, her father was incarcerated and then deported

to Mexico. That trauma was followed years later when she fell into depression over her husband's drug addiction and her struggles to pay bills.

Justin Boss's trauma resulted from being "forcibly pulled" from school and placed in a conversion therapy program where he was "subjected to terrible torture and abuse." He's now at UC Berkeley.

Kirsten Morris, who graduated from high school 27 years ago, was traumatized as a result of a near fatal accident from which she was bruised and suffered PTSD for some time. She doubted she would ever return to school after marriage and having children. But eventually she enrolled at PCC along with her daughter.

Yuritzi Mesa, who actually graduated from college, says that afterwards she felt "crazy for even thinking I could be successful." She settled for a minimum wage job until she had a revelation that she could become a nurse. She's now "a proud nursing student."

Camille Rios joined the army at 17 and served two years active and 13 years in the reserves. She is a single mother who is now thriving in the dental hygiene program.

Like some of the other recipients, Susan Nguyen is an immigrant who doubted she would return to school in her 30s. But after marriage and raising a daughter, she enrolled at PCC and will soon graduate from the nursing program.

Another immigrant, Hsein Shim, was "unable to dream of higher

education" because she had to work three jobs to help pay for her family's expenses in Korea. Finally, she immigrated to the States and enrolled at PCC, the first in her family to attend college.

Jennifer Polk, a single mother, says about her life: "I made some mistakes along an award from Dona Mitoma. Her younger daughter with down syndrome hugged her at the end of her presentation. There was hardly a dry eye in the audience.

As Harry Smallenburg commented earlier, these stories are "true stories of resurrection and redemption in the real world."

There are so many students struggling to get an education. That's why the Retirees Association raises money each year to help as many people as possible. Some donors choose to sponsor one of the scholarships for \$1,000 and others make donations to the scholarship fund. The association depends on smaller donations because not everyone can afford to donate the amount for a full scholarship.

If you want to donate, please send a check to the PCC Foundation, and make sure to say it is designated for the Retirees Scholarship Fund.

You can also go to the foundation website if you prefer to charge your donation. Go to [Pasadena.edu/foundation](http://Pasadena.edu/foundation). There is a large button on the page that says DONATE. Click on that and follow the instructions. We hope to be able to give out more scholarships next year with your help.



# In Memoriam

## Hans 'Skip' Markisch, Accounting

By Bonnie Shimasaki

Hans Irwin Märkisch - "Skip" born June 25, 1927 in Pasadena at the Huntington Memorial Hospital. He died on May 13, 2022 in Glendora. He attended Hamilton Elementary School and Pasadena High which merged to become PCC—he was always a part of PCC. He earned his college degree from UCLA where he participated as a cheerleader at football games. From then on, he was a diehard Bruins fan.

Skip had an inquiring mind and a curiosity that made him want to try new things and see new places. Once, he took his mother on a 3-month trip through Europe. His open-mindedness set him up for amazing adventures.

He served in the Navy and became an aide to a high-ranking naval officer at the beginning of WWII in at Pearl Harbor.

In Hawaii, Skip was a friend to a wealthy scion of one of the developers of Oahu, and though this connection, he met and became friends with the



Princess of Hawaii. With his friends, he shared some hilariously raucous escapades.

Back in California, he had an uncanny knack for being in the right place at the right time. Skip became secretary to Governor Goodwin Knight, a job that led to new opportunities. He also worked for a well-known advertising agency, and he created a Clio Award winning ad

for Bank of America.

With some friends, they opened a successful restaurant and bar in Marin. During one of his adventures, Skip met Mary Martin, Walt Disney, Tab Hunter and, gloriously, Pavarotti, who cooked dinner for Skip and friends. That must have been some dinner!

Skip returned to Hawaii for a time, and then he moved back to Pasadena to care for his parents. That is when he began to work at PCC in an hourly and then full-time position in Fiscal Services. In those old Fiscal Services were housed in the bungalows. Those who are around in those days, a lot of fun together.

He retired in 1990 but was ALWAYS busy. He was active with AIDS Posada, and he became a travel agent who planned many cruises for PCC employees and friends. Skip was a very personable and welcoming. He lived a fascinating, creative, interesting life with so many shared stories. He loved travel, theater, dining out, parties. Skippy, we miss you every day.

## Tommy Heredia, Worked in Maintenance

By Sally Heredia

My dad, Thomas R. Heredia, "Tommy" was born and raised in Pasadena and graduated from John Muir High School in 1963. In 1975, he married my mother, Maria Elena Hernandez and had four children, Sally, Robert "Bobby," Melinda "Mindy" and Eric.

In 1983, after eight years of marriage, he became a widower at the age of 39. We lost my mother due to a misdiagnosis of breast cancer when she was only 35.

My Dad became a single father to his four children ages 8, 7, 4, and 1. I was the oldest and I had to learn to help my dad change my 1-year-old baby brother's diapers.

After this tragic loss, my father dedicated his life to being both mom and dad to all of us. We were his priority and were everything to him. He never remarried.

He worked at Pasadena City College as a maintenance worker for 31 years and retired in 2009, at the age of 65. He leaves behind his four children nine grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

During his early years employed by PCC, he used to have to take us to work with him. After school, we had to stay inside his blue Chevy pick-up truck camper from 3 p.m. to midnight because he worked the swing shift and had no one to care for us. We all did our homework at the college.

My world will never be the same. I am so broken especially over the reason of his untimely death, where his cardiologist failed to give us accurate test results.

I had contacted her to ask about his results, and she had said his test results were "acceptable" when they weren't.

After his death, she admitted that



his EKG results showed his heart was out of control and in distress. "I'm so sorry, it was a misunderstanding," she said to me. My world has been shattered by his loss.



# Mei-Ling Cheng, Math Success Center Lab Tech

In loving memory of our mother, daughter, sister and aunt, Mei-Ling Cheng, who passed away on April 16, 2022 in Arcadia after a battle with cancer. Mei-Ling was 63 years old.

Mei-Ling was born April 1959 in Hong Kong and immigrated to Los Angeles as a child. She graduated with a mathematics degree from the University of Southern California and began her long career as an educator at Pasadena City College. After graduation, Mei-Ling married a fellow USC Trojan and welcomed two sons into their family.

Mei-Ling was passionate about her family, her friends, and education. She was the heart and soul of her family. Blessed with a magnanimous spirit, Mei-Ling was the harmonizing diplomat among family members and friends. She was the “cool mom” and “fun aunt” and awesome friend. Her students and PCC colleagues morphed into her “second family,” and her dedication was evident when she was honored with the Rissner Award for Outstanding Support to Education.

Mei-Ling served as a Lab Tech in the Math Resource Center (which went on to become the Math Success Center and then the STEM Success Center - Math) at PCC for 16.5 years. Mei-Ling was known across campus for her bubbly personality and her ability to make anyone feel at ease within moments of meeting her. She helped make the Math Success Center a place that students wanted to come to; a place where they felt supported, seen and heard.

Students and tutors always commented about her kindness, warmth, and the support she provided to everyone. She was truly a treasure, and the world is a better place because of her place in it.

Members of the department would like to establish a scholarship in her name, to support PCC students in their educational journey. If you would like to contribute to such a fund, please visit the PCC Foundation page. In the “Designation” field, select “Other” and write “Math Dept” in the “Other” field. In the Tribute Information at the end of the form, you may wish to select “In Memo-



ry of” and type “Mei-Ling Cheng”.

Mei-Ling is survived by her mother, three brothers, one sister, and her two sons. She was preceded in death by her father, brother, and beloved Poochon dog. Her legacy will be continued by countless family members, friends, and former students.

## Frank Way, Staging Services

After a lengthy career at Pasadena City College, Union work at various Event Facilities in Los Angeles and other stage managing in the San Gabriel area, Frank retired to Las Vegas. Golfing and staying active in AL-TOS was not enough for Frank. He worked awhile for the Stage Union and then got a full-time job with the Clark County Library System.

He oversaw all needed electrical equipment working and installed in all meeting rooms and auditoriums for the library’s events.

There were approximately 15 Libraries in the system including an outdoor open-air



theater.

After retiring again, he still wanted to do something besides following the space programs and other interests, so he went to work for Ahern Hardware Store. Short lived but fun. Frank loved his work and all the people along the way.

After full retirement he and his wife, Suzie moved into a Retirement community where he enjoyed new friends and Bingo!! He was very well liked and missed by many of the residents.

Frank is survived by his loving wife Suzie, his son Father Steven Way, his sister-in law, Sandra Way and 2 Nephews, Adam & Glen and their families.

Frank died 7/21/22 at home at Merrill Gardens Green Valley, 1935 Paseo Verde Parkway, #338

## Rosie Roberson, Student Services

Rosie Roberson was born in Sardis, Mississippi, and she was the youngest of 8 children (5 girls and 3 boys). Sardis is 2 square miles and has a population of 1,743 people. She loved traveling to Sardis every summer to visit family and friends. She also enjoyed going to Las Vegas.

Rosie, who started working part time and moved to full time, spent 22 years working at PCC.

Cooking soul food was her specialty. She loved cooking family meals for the holidays. She enjoyed movies. One of her favorites was Gone with the Wind.

Rosie was part of the front desk staff in Counseling. She loved working with students, and she had a smile to share with everyone. People loved how she was always dressed “to the nines.” She collected antique jewelry from antique stores and enjoyed finding treasures online. She would put together her favorite pieces to wear to work.

Rosie is survived by her two daughters, Parache and Moniquea and a toy chihuahua, named Mikki. “My mom left us a lot of jewels, but the best jewel of all was her wisdom,” said Parache.



# *Join the PCC Retirees Association for a Group Tour of the Nethercutt Collection*

The PCC Retirees Board is happy to continue its series of cultural tours with a tour of the unique Nethercutt Collection. This outing will include transportation to the museum, the tour admission fee, and lunch at the Smoke House Restaurant in Burbank. (Lunch will be on your own but we will be seated together.)

**Date:** Nov.17, 2022

## **Itinerary:**

8:45 a.m. Meet at PCC, outside lot 5 in the bus loading area

9:00 a.m. Bus departure for the Nethercutt Museum

10:00 a.m. Guided tour begins

12:15 p.m. A quick look at the separate museum building or pass through the 1912 Pullman Private Rail Car

12:50 p.m. Depart for the Smoke House Restaurant

1:30 p.m. Lunch

2:30 p.m. Return to PCC campus

3:00 p.m. Arrive at PCC

**Cost:** \$65 per person. Pre-payment will guarantee your spot.

## **Registration and Payment Dead-**

**line:** Thursday, Nov. 10, 2022. Limited to 20 participants, so sign up early

**Questions:** Contact James Arnwine at [jaarnwine@yahoo.com](mailto:jaarnwine@yahoo.com)

**To Register:** Please send the following items to: James Arnwine, 277 E Calaveras St. Altadena, CA 91001

1. A check made out to the **PCC Retirees Assn.**—\$65 for each member of your party.
2. List the names of each member of your party.
3. Include your phone number and email address for further information and updates.

For more information about the museum and restaurant, please see the following websites:

[www.nethercuttcollection.org/](http://www.nethercuttcollection.org/)

[www.smokehouse1946.com/home](http://www.smokehouse1946.com/home) (for menus)

[www.smokehouse1946.com/history](http://www.smokehouse1946.com/history) (for history)