

Staying Connected

PCC Retirees Association

March 2010

Bessie Tells About London and Paris Trip

By Bessie Radcliff-Darden

I spent eight days in London and Paris, and it was a wonderful vacation and an exciting adventure just being able to see things I had only read about in books or saw on the travel channel.

It all began with a motor coach to our hotel from Heathrow Airport in London.

Our first outing was a bus tour of the city so that we could get an overview of the city's attractions. One of the first stops on the tour was Buckingham Palace where we were able to view the changing of the guards. I have seen both the palace and the changing of the guards many times in movies and on travel channels, but never in person.

This was an awesome sight and one of the highlights of the tour. That night our group dined on traditional English fare consisting of fish and chips and all the trimmings.

We were on our own for the next two days, so my roommate and I learned to take the tube (subway) to see many of the historic sites of London. We toured Westminster Abbey where some of the kings, poets and artists are buried. It is unreal to be able to stand in Parliament Square and view Big Ben, the Rolls Royce taxis, St. Paul's Cathedral, the old red telephone booths, the double deck buses, the river Thames and Tower Bridge. Those historic sites are ingrained in my mind forever.

The last famous monument that blew me away was the Tower of London. We had a choice of going to Harrods Department store or the Tower; we chose the tower. My cousin and I walked every floor in the tower. Statues and pictures of ancient Kings and Queens, fighting armor, torture chambers and some of England's first coins were on display. The most exciting part of the Tower of London was the Queens' Jewels. Every crown from the early days to the present queen's crown was on display. The jewels were beautiful. Diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, rubies and many other precious stones were embedded in the crowns. I even bought a small (very small) jewel necklace which I will treasure for the rest of my life.

We departed London on the fourth day and headed to Paris on a Euro star train. This train took us under the channel to the Paris station. From there, we checked into our hotel, the Novote, which was located on the east bank of the Seine River, about a mile from the Eiffel Tower. We had a terrific view of the Eiffel Tower from our room, and at night, it was spectacular.

Our first night in Paris was a city tour by motor coach. Dinner that night was at a wonderful Italian restaurant with entertainment consisting of singers performing rock and roll. Try to imagine Michael Jackson and Elvis Presley tunes being sung with a French accent. The night was still young, so we took an after dinner cruise on the River Seine. What a view of the city from the river!

The next day, we visited the Louvre. How fascinating it was to see so many famous paintings. I can't remember all of them, but I do have many pictures. I saw for myself how the Mona Lisa's eyes follow you as you move about. It really is the truth.

After leaving the Louvre, I didn't think I had any energy left, but there was so much more to see. With the Cathedral of Notre Dame just across the yard, I couldn't resist going in. A mass was being celebrated when we walked inside. Notre Dame has to be one of the most beautiful architectural designs I have ever seen. The stained-glass windows, the pews and the overall design makes one wonder why with all our knowledge and all our computers we can't build something so beautiful today that will last for centuries.

We did a lot of walking on our own, so after touring the cathedral, we took off for some shopping and a stop at a side-walk café. We got in more shopping the next day when we visited the famous Champs Ely-sees. What a shopping heaven. There were Gucci, Louie Vuitton, Vera Wang stores and so many more. It was unbelievable, but we loved it. We were too tired to walk back to the hotel, so we took a taxi.

We also had a guided tour of the Palace of Versailles. It was filled with beautiful paintings, sculptures, statues and the most beautiful gardens that one could ever see.

Our last day in Paris was Bastille Day. You can't imagine the traffic that we encountered while trying to get to our restaurant for dinner. We were late, but we still managed to have a wonderful farewell meal. We had a choice of traditional French or an American dinner. By now I was ready for an American dinner. We got back to the hotel in time to see the fireworks from the Eiffel Tower. They were beautiful, but I don't think they compare with our fireworks at the Rose Bowl on our Independence Day.

It was now time to get packed to get ready for our return home to the good ole USA. It was a wonderful trip. It's nice to get away and see other countries and learn about their cultures, but it is even nicer to get back home.

Mixing with Friends

The mixer held at the home of Bill Goldmann and Suzanne Bravender was another successful event sponsored by the Retirees' Association. The mixer brought together 57 retirees and guests to renew old friendships, chat with colleagues and to enjoy good food and libations.

Those attending were Norma Altschuler, Rosemary Aragon, Barbara Bair, Mikki Bolliger, Carolyn Britton, Suzanne Bravender, Bruce and Kathy Carter, Roberta Cole, Karlene and Bill Cunningham, Laura Davis, Lisa Davis and Elton Davis. Also on hand were Al DePonte, Vi Gaudin, Carter Gengler, Bill Goldmann, Ray Guzman, Karen Holgerson, Harry Kawahara, Jo Ann Kim, Jim Kingman, Betty Kovacs, Alan Lamson, and Mr. and Mrs. Bob Levis.

Patty Marks, Terri Marsala, Mary McGuire, Pete Mhunzi, Skip Morkisch, Marion Murphy, Rick and Fran Neumann, Helen Oak-ley, Jan Platt, Marilyn Porter, Jeanne Porush, Joe Probst, Pat Savoie, and Sally Shuster came to join the fun. In addition, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Spiro, Patricia Staub, Hollis Stewart, Marjorie and Vernon Strong-Faulkner, Jan Sutherland, John Tully, Marge and Mike Vickers, Chris Watson, Judy White and Bruce Wilson also attended.

If you didn't make it to the last mixer, watch for announcements about the next one. We'd love to see you there.

PCC To Grant Honorary Degrees to Japanese American Students Evacuated in 1942

By Harry Kawahara

This year's June commencement ceremonies at Pasadena City College will feature a special presentation of honorary degrees to be granted to a number of Japanese Americans who were students in spring 1942 whose educations were interrupted by Pearl Harbor and World War II. These students were denied the opportunity to graduate from what was then Pasadena Junior College because they were ordered to report to internment camps by the U.S. government.

As a result of the passage of AB 37, legislation authorized by Assemblyman Warren Furutani, the University of California, California State University and California Community College systems are recognizing Japanese Americans who were unable to graduate with their classes due to the wartime incarceration.

Pasadena City College would like to honor these students after all these years. Through no fault of their own, these students were denied the opportunity to participate in the celebration of their own graduation.

Due to their confinement in the internment camps, it was not possible to continue their college studies until much later.

Opportunities to pursue their educations became available only after the government allowed students to leave the camps if they could find sponsors to attend colleges away from the west coast states.

This was a daunting task since there were legitimate concerns about their reception in many areas where they may not have felt welcome. Thus, many did not want to leave the relative safety of the camps even while desiring to further their college educations.

A committee of PCC administrators, faculty, staff and community members are endeavoring to locate these former students. A good number of these students are deceased, but efforts are being made to contact their families so that a family member or representative can be present to receive the honorary degrees posthumously.

On a personal note, one of my older sisters was a sophomore at the University of California at Berkeley in the spring semester of 1942, when she was forced to leave in order to obey federal Executive Order 9066 which called for the evacuation of all persons of Japanese ancestry from the west coast states.

Although my sister was not able to complete her university studies, last December, UC Berkeley granted her an honorary degree along with 120 former students at their winter commencement ceremonies at Haas Pavilion.

My deceased sister's son proudly walked across the stage to receive his mother's honorary degree on her behalf. Several members of my family and I were there to witness this special event. It was a moving moment for us.

Harry Shares Memories of the Time He Spent in Internment Camp

In writing about the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, I am reminded of the fact that I spent three years of my life as a young boy in these camps. My family lived in northern California at the time; my father farmed in San Leandro in the San Francisco Bay Area. We were ordered to report first to what was called an assembly center, a temporary camp, while the more permanent camps were being constructed.

Our assembly center was the Tanforan Racetrack in San Bruno, just south of San Francisco. Our “home” for five months was a horse stable where we slept on top of canvas bags filled with hay on steel army cots. The odor of horses was still present.

Then we were ordered to board trains to be transported to an inland internment camp. Ours was located in central Utah at a camp called Topaz, sixteen miles from a small rural town called Delta. It was set in a barren desert, very dry, and subject to heavy dust storms.

We lived in tar paper covered barracks. We did not have running water in our living units and we had to use communal toilets with very little privacy.

We ate in a large common mess hall with rather boring food. This is where I spent almost three years of my boyhood days for the balance of World War II.

Needless to say, these were not good times. However, what I do want to emphasize is that we need to be vigilant to see that this type of injustice does not happen again in our country. We cannot repeat this grievous mistake.

Today there are racist demagogues and narrow-minded people in our midst, just as there were in 1942. Thus, we need to freshly embrace and actualize our core values of common decency, equity, fairness, social justice and compassion for others to offset some of these negative forces spewing about today. This is our challenge.

Please Make a Scholarship Donation

You don't have to wait until the end of the school year to write a check for the Retirees' Association Scholarship Fund; you can donate anytime during the year. You can write a check or simply call the PCC Foundation and use your credit card. You can get a tax deduction, help a deserving student and earn air miles all at the same time.

Another Ambitious Trip for the Carters; This One Was A Lot Closer to Home

By Bruce Carter

Kathy and Bruce have embarked on a number of trips to far -flung destinations since Bruce's retirement in 2005. Several of these have involved focusing intently on the heavens. In Turkey in

2005, far western China in 2008 and Iwo Jima in 2009, total solar eclipses have served as great excuses to indulge their love of travel. However, their most ambitious trip is one much closer to home: hiking in Big Santa Anita Canyon in our local San Gabriel Mountains.

As a consequence of spinal surgery early in 2005, Bruce has difficulty with his balance and walking in general. He had been unable to hike in to his rustic 1917 cabin for 5 years when he decided to try the hike just after Christmas 2008.

The hike was successful, but the condition of the cabin was terrible with serious leaks, peeling paint and other serious problems. The 3-mile round trip is challenging, but he and Kathy have been making the hike once or twice a week throughout the past year.

After a 15-minute drive up to Chantry Flats, the hike takes 30 to 40 minutes unless one meets and visits with fellow hikers on the trail. Although the pack train can carry goods to the cabin at reasonable rates, Bruce uses his large old backpacking frame pack and often carries large loads into the canyon. On one trip he even carried a 50-pound rock specimen out of the canyon!

Bruce and Kathy tore out rotten boards, scraped peeling paint, repaired windows, broke down old furniture and scrubbed the rock walls. They then painted, patched the ceiling and roof, repaired the fireplace mantle and brought in new furniture. The cabin is now back in good shape like it was twenty years ago when Bruce used to bring his 3 young kids and 2 large Labradors to the canyon for overnight stays.

The Big Santa Anita Tract is the only group of cabins with historical designation in the San Gabriel Mountains. Built between 1900 and 1920, these cabins are characteristic of the structures built during the great hiking era of the early 20th century.

From time immemorial, ever since humans began to congregate in cities, they have always craved the opportunity to get away from it all and relax with friends in exotic locations far from the pressures of the urban environment with its crowds and job worries.

For much of our history only the wealthy elite had the means to take long vacations to escape the city. Before the advent of paved highways, airplanes, etc. ordinary people had little choice beyond perhaps an occasional day's trip to the beach.

In the Los Angeles area, however, an extensive rail network (the famous red cars) allowed access to the base of the rugged mountains bordering the northern edge of the rapidly developing city. Between the 1880s and the 1920s an extensive trail network was developed within the San Gabriel Mountains and tens of thousands of people poured into the canyons on the south front of the range.

Trail camps and developed resorts sprang up in many of the canyons, most of them a day or two's hike from the end of the rail lines. Here, people could enjoy the beauties of nature-the wildlife, the waterfalls and the sense of visiting a garden of nature, more peaceful and pristine than the urban environment they had left behind.

Locally, the rail line ended in Sierra Madre, and people hiked up Santa Anita Canyon to enjoy one of the most beautiful canyons of the front country.

Roberts Camp was one of at least five resorts in the canyon, boasting a general store, post office, ranger station and many cabins available to the weary hiker after the trek from Sierra Madre. On occasion more than a thousand people passed through Roberts Camp on a holiday weekend.

The first U.S. National Forest was established in the San Gabriel Mountains a little over a hundred years ago. As part of the goal of encouraging more public use of the national forests, the government established a program of leasing small plots of land on which people were allowed to build modest cabins for their personal use.

Most cabins in Santa Anita Canyon were built between 1910 and 1920. Since they were built, floods have destroyed about half of them, but there are still about 80 cabins in this canyon alone.

China, Madagascar, South America and Iwo Jima are all great destinations and we both have many fond memories of our travels there. However, in some important ways, it has been the repeated hikes into the canyon that have provided us with the most significant and consequential experiences of the past year.

Bruce continues to improve his walking skills, we both benefit from the exercise and we now have a cozy retreat deep in the mountains where we can quickly get away and enjoy a totally different type of travel experience.

Sometimes Even a Seasoned Professor Can Find Herself Wondering What to Do

By Fay Chandler

I am a seasoned teacher with three decades in the English Department, and I never lost my voice in class. Whatever happened, I went on talking. I retired, went to Barlad, Romania to do conversational English and lost my teacher voice completely. What a shock. After all, during my years at the college there were serious incidents, but I was not stunned into silence.

In the early 1970s, I had three incidents that almost shut me up. The first involved a male and a veteran of the Vietnam War. I did not know he was a vet because it is college policy not to give any information on students unless it is medically necessary. The class was sitting in a large circle while a student read his essay with a premise that the war was all a great mistake and we must get out now. He was less than two minutes into reading when the veteran jumped from his chair and lunged at him. Somehow I got between them, and placed my hands on their shoulders all the while pleading with them to sit down so they could talk with each other and the class. I don't know how many times I said, "Please sit down. You're in college; we can have different opinions." Finally they sat down, and we talked. I don't recall our dialogue: I was shaking inside. To my surprise, they finished the semester.

The second incident was a female student coming to class, at the last minute, in a fishnet top. It was a bit thicker than the male version. I kept my cool. This happened during the time when we tried to do away with gender specific words, remember. No mailmen use carriers, no firemen only fire fighters, policemen became officers. What did we do with manhole covers, can't remember? She was saying if men can wear fishnet tops, women can, too. I said nothing and went on with the class never missing a beat. Of course the males were not listening to me. Had she worn it again, we would have talked in private. She didn't. I was grateful the class was not in a circle. During this time a few guys tried out for rose queen.

I'm still troubled by this last episode also with a veteran. It almost silenced me, but I went on with some doubt. He had been in a class with me a few semesters before, and it was clear then he had drug and alcohol problems. He was one of the brightest students of my career. I was at the lectern talking about the narrative essay when he rushed into the room, pushed me aside saying—"You are boring." My mind raced around itself. What to do? Should I send for security, or say it is the wrong class and try to walk him out. Suddenly, my teacher fairy dust showered me with an answer. I said, "We are talking about the narrative in writing. Will you tell the class about your experiences as a soldier"? He did about five minutes of rambling then walked out in the middle of a sentence. I never saw him again.

The event in my teaching that completely silenced me happened in Barlad, Romania. When I retired, I joined Global Volunteers and went there to do conversational English with students at a high school. My assignment was to work with eight males, ages 17-18. We sat in a circle. They were a bit energetic but always polite, and most of them were able to speak understandable English. One of the teachers asked if she could sit in the class because she wanted to improve her English pronunciation. Of course, she was welcome.

Miss Anna (not her name) was a stunning woman, tall with dark eyes, and long black wavy hair. And she knew how to dress. Most of her breasts were exposed and her skirt slit a few inches below the thighs (no dress code here). Since she needed to take care of her class first, it was necessary to come late and leave early. No problem, being a guest in her country I wanted to please.

Well, you can imagine what went on with all that testosterone.

When Miss Anna left, the student to my right said in clear English—"She's got great tits." They went into belly laughs. I'm flummoxed and speechless. Should I talk about English slang, or standard and nonstandard usage, or the verb got? I gave them a break.

By the time they came back grinning, I had sorted myself out and we talked about slang using elbow and automobile as examples. In my college days an elbow was part of an arm. Now, it is marijuana. Often slang becomes part of standard usage, i.e. automobile into car.

They shared some of their slang, but it was difficult. Much was lost in translation for all of us. It was a mistake to try it. American slang is off of my list of topics. Slang needs its mother tongue.

Since Romania, I have been to Ukraine, Peru, Crete, Xian China, Hainan Island China, and Vietnam not doing slang and not going speechless.

Maybe You Can Go Home Again; Hollis Tries, but He Offers Apologies to Jack London

By Hollis Stewart

You can never go home, so the saying goes, but you sure can try. That's exactly what I tried to do when my son Roy and I headed for Boise, Idaho in his Dodge Daytona 5.7 Hemihead pickup. It was a fast and comfortable trip, even though we took a day and a two thirds including an overnight stop in Ely, Nevada where we enjoyed dinner and a beer in the 'local big time' casino/hotel.

We were told there was other famous Nevada recreation available all night, but we declined. We got an early start the next morning, cutting up to Idaho through Jackpot, Nevada and then going north to

Twin Falls, ID on the Snake River where we connected with I-86 and broke for Boise where we arrived just before 5 p.m.

Our relatives were happy to have us in Boise; although, we had to hurry a bit since we were going to leave for north of the Payette Lakes late the next morning. I ought to mention here that I lived in Idaho as a youngster, and my pioneer family lived there in the late 1800s, mining and so forth. (They didn't own the mines; they worked in them). As a matter of fact, I lived in Boise and my grandparents lived in Old Meadows (just Meadows back then), west of the Payette Lakes toward Oregon.

So getting back out in the mountains where my daddy used to take me was bliss. When I was a kid, we fished the lakes and streams for trout and salmon, and the older men hunted elk, bear and deer. Lake Josephine, the place in the National Forest that we went to camp for the week is named after my grandma Stewart. There is also a creek and a getting smaller glacier (global warming is real) with her name stuck on them.

Well, my son Roy and I and my cousin's son Brent, got to Lake Josephine in my cousin's pickup truck. We borrowed it because it had heavy duty everything, but no 4-wheel drive. Cousin Gene says that our family has gotten all over Idaho without 4WD, and if you are true to the spirit of the West, you use your talent and two wheels.

The campground is about 2/3 of a mile from the Lake, and you have to walk in, uphill cause there ain't no roads there.

The weather looked threatening, but the three of us were so anxious to get up to the Lake and throw a rock or two that we lit out for the lake immediately, rain and weather be damned. We got up to the Lake and hiked along the shore line for a bit, and skipped some stones. Then thick clouds and a wind came whistling down from the surrounding mountains, and we high tailed it for the campground.

Actually calling it a campground is being generous cause there was no water, no toilets, no tables, no electricity, only a place to park your vehicle—just the way we wanted it. Half way down the trail the rain smacked us and pretty quick we were drenched but laughing. We set up our tent in the rain and managed to keep the water out. That buoyed our spirits, but it was going to be hell to fix any food with torrents of rain and a wind probably around 60+ mph blowing down trees and stirring up all sorts of debris.

However, we waited it out, and after the rain stopped and the wind dropped, we fired up our camp stove and made some vittles, drank a beer or two, talked and got a good slumber in our sleeping bags. Overnight the temperature dropped to about 38 degrees, so those mummy bags felt good.

For the next five days, we trekked up to the lake and fished and just hung out. On the first day, we carried our pontoon boat up so one person at a time could paddle out and around the Lake trolling for trout.

We never caught one damned fish in five days, and it seemed that everyone else pulled in one or more trout.

Fish are where you catch them, and we weren't there.

Back around our tent we had deer visit every evening and morning. During the night, they would come up and nuzzle our tent, pushing on it and on us with their noses to let us know that we were on their turf and we were the guests.

Late one afternoon, we went over to Burgdorf Hot Springs, a rustic hot spring that has been a local spa since the 1860s. I had been there before with my mom and pa when I was a kid.

It was delicious being in that hot water pool with a sandy bottom that is edged by logs, not concrete. On the fourth day out, we were determined to climb up the back side of the caldera to the ridge that overlooks Lake Josephine. In other words, the Lake is in a hole on a blown-out side of an old volcano, or that is how it looks to me.

Anyway the climb up to the top of the mountain was a vertical climb of 1,100 feet in 1.8 miles. Here I was with my son, 24 years younger and my cousin's son who is about 27 years younger, starting this trek and wondering if I would make it. We would climb from the 7000 to the 8,100 foot level. Well, we made it in one hour and 6 minutes. And yes, I made it too. The fact of the matter is that I led a lot of the way, and I tuckered out them youngsters so they were breathing hard. We all had a great time and enjoyed looking down on the lake.

For an old coot like me to have a chance to share time with these two guys was just great. However, I wanted my granddaughter and some of my cousins' daughters and granddaughters to come along, too. But we left that for next year when we will have two weeks or more to make the trip.

I have got to say, though, that living in L.A. all the time makes it feel really weird to be out in the wilderness like that. No TV, no radio, and no cell phone, but we did take along a pair of walkie-talkies so we could stay in touch when we were out hiking. But after a couple of days, the strange feeling went away, and it was like I belonged there. But times of wonderment always come to an end.

As someone who didn't get to spend much time with his son when he was growing up, (I was an antiwar and community organizer activist) this vacation was the best. When you get out away from the distractions of city living, you see the people next to you much more clearly. And the wild world, being nudged by a deer poking around your tent just adds to the allure of the "Call of the Wild".

Another Group of So Called Reformers Puts Public Employee Pensions Back in the Crosshairs

By Hollis Stewart

Once again an attack has been launched to change CalSTRS and CalPERS, the retirement systems covering most of us who are non-federal public employees working in California. That last effort failed for lack of public support. However, when one petition drive fails, a new one pops up. This time, the drive is being led by a group called "California Foundation for Fiscal Responsibility" (CFFR). Its members are reviving many of the same ideas, but this plan is even worse.

The CFFR submitted a request for Title and Summary for Proposed Initiative for the plan that they are calling the "New Public Employees Benefits Reform Act." This will drastically cut the retirement benefits of public employees who are hired after July 1, 2011. Unfortunately, this will be a bare knuckles brawl that we must win by defeating this perfidy and protecting public employees and their families.

Although the group has had some fund-raising problems of late and suspended its effort to collect signatures, CFFR leaders have vowed to continue the push to reform public employee pensions. They have indicated that their efforts are suspended NOT ended.

The two most prominent people working in favor of this perfidious piece of political thought are Marcia Fritz, president of CFFR, and Dr. Keith Richmond, MD (a former member of the Assembly). The main culprit is Marcia Fritz, a CPA, who has decided that public employees are too well off when they retire. Predictably, she attacks retired public employees but says nothing about the grotesque retirement packages and golden parachutes of private corporate executives and their ilk.

This initiative campaign is a transparent effort to “divide and conquer” current retirees from newly hired public employees by leaving alone the pensions of current pensioners and current employees but cutting the pensions of future public employees. Fritz and her buddies believe we are stupid, greedy, self-centered oafs who will agree to a first step of cutting public employee pensions if it is not (immediately) applied to us. They forget we are public-minded citizens who believe in public work and value our contribution to society.

In order to protect our pensions and retiree health care, we need to use what is often called the “one, two, three strategies” of political warfare. If you are not acquainted with this strategy, it assumes that we, the good folk, are the “ones” and our opponents are the evil “threes.”

Those labeled as “twos” are the undecided and/or folks who believe they are not directly affected. As the “ones,” we can bank on all the other “ones” to support our side. “Twos” are somewhere in the middle and are the great unknown. Our job is to win them over. The “threes” are our dire and committed opponents whom we want to isolate, demoralize, and crush. We should not waste time or resources trying to change the minds of the “threes” lest we lose our moral position through futile compromise and dillydallying.

Those in the “ones” group need to find and define an effective language and organizing strategy to motivate the majority of the “twos” to support our position because they believe protecting public employee pensions and retiree health benefits is in their best interest as well as in ours.

The “threes” campaign will use language and strategy to demonize “undeserving” public employees in an effort to convince “twos” that exorbitant public employee pensions and retiree health care costs are responsible for the economic problems of the state. They will pander to base instincts of jealousy and greed, hoping that a majority of voters will vote to cut public employee pensions and retiree health care.

For us TODAY, the challenge is to get California voters to protect and support their public employees and public services. We, public employee retirees, are an important sector of the “ones,” along with unions, civil associations, our elected officials and current public employees who can organize to beat back this effort to slash retirement benefits and health care.

It is time that we quit turning the other cheek, and we go on the offensive proclaiming the great work we do serving the people of the state in education, social welfare, police, fire, medicine, highways and transportation, utilities and on and on.

We must remind the public who it is that gives them medical care when they are sick or hurting, who it is that educates them, who it is that protects them when wild fires strike or when other calamities occur. And yes, they have to be reminded about who it is that answers 911 calls.

If the CFFR starts collecting signatures again, we must ask people not to sign them. However, if the measure does make the ballot, then we have to convince them to vote NO on the “New Public Employees Benefits Reform Act”.

Keeping in Touch

By Karen Holgerson

I continue teaching in the languages division at PCC, and I am enjoying it more than ever—probably because I don't have a full load of essays and reports to read.

I also started a floral business, on the side, which goes by the name of "Kattail." I had been doing all of the arrangements throughout three restaurants, as well as individual tables, until I broke my wrist in seven places several months ago.

It happened on a bicycling adventure with a friend in Ojai. Yes, it was my right wrist, and I'm right handed!

So I had to withdraw from the business for a while. However, after several months of healing, I'm ready to get back to the joyful work of creating floral arrangements of all kinds.

A Thank You from a Scholarship Winner

Dear PCC Retirees Association:

Thank you very much for your most generous and valued support. I am truly honored to be granted the PCC Retirees Association Scholarship. The scholarship is a tremendous aid to my pursuit of a Biological Science degree. With this assistance, I am able to better concentrate on my studies and acquire study materials to progress in my academic goals.

I am especially excited for this Fall semester as I will be exclusively taking science courses of my interests. I consider myself very fortunate to attend the-science classes at PCC with such amazing professors. In the midst of the current financial situation of California, I am grateful for the association's efforts to provide a helping hand to students in financial distress. Please accept my most sincere appreciation for your generosity in the Pasadena City College Retirees Scholarship.

Yours truly,
Collin Yu

In Memoriam

Sgt. Vince Palermo Passes Away from Parkinson's

Vince Palermo, former Sergeant of the Pasadena City College Police Department, passed away on Dec. 9, 2009 due to complications from Parkinson's disease. Vince is survived by his wife, children, grandchildren, niece and nephew.

Vince was a member of the PCC community for 10 years during the 1990s. Among his many accomplishments at PCC he created the Police Cadet Corp which was the first of its kind in the California Community College system. PCC's Police Cadet Corp is modeled state and nationwide and is still used today by the PCC Police Department. The Cadet Corp has trained hundreds of individuals who have moved on to careers in law enforcement.

Because of his position on the police department, Vince was often quoted in the campus newspaper, the Courier. In one story, a student reporter identified him as “head of all campus police,” which was incorrect. Vince visited the Courier office right after the issue hit the stands to make sure everyone knew his correct title was sergeant. His visit didn’t make much of a difference. That title of “head of all campus police” stuck, and he was identified that way until he retired.

Even though he dutifully called or came in person to correct the error every time, the faculty speculated that he was secretly amused to have been elevated to the head of the department. He probably also knew it irritated the real head of the department.

Vince was always helpful and kind, and since he left, nobody has come close to replacing this fine gentleman and police officer.

In lieu of flowers the family asks that a donation be made in his name to the Michael J. Fox Foundation. Information can be found online at <http://www.michaeljfox.org/>

Henry Guzman

The college was recently notified of the passing of Henry Guzman, an instructor for 22 years in the Social Sciences Division.

Henry started teaching at PCC in 1968, and he saw a lot of changes on the campus and in the student body before he retired from teaching in 1990.

Charlotte LeFaivre

She passed away last year. Charlotte spent 25 years at PCC working in the Fiscal Services Department. She started at the college as an intern in the Fiscal Services. and she worked her way up to supervisor in that department before she retired in 1992.

Robert Williams

Colleagues and friends of Robert Williams were saddened to hear that he passed away. Robert spent 17 years teaching in the Engineering and Technology Division.

Robert began teaching at PCC in 1982. He has been retired for 11 years.

Nursing Professor Elizabeth Rosenberg

Elizabeth Rosenberg was welcomed home into heaven by her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, on Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010, at Queen of the Valley Hospital with her husband, Alan at her bedside.

Elizabeth Rosenberg was a pastor’s wife for nearly half a century and a professor of nursing for 34 years at Pasadena City College. The family requests that In lieu of flowers, friends can make contributions in her name to the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of San Bernardino, 340 East Evans Street, San Bernardino, CA 92404. Elizabeth will be missed as a greatly loved woman of God.

Elton Davis Dies After Suffering a Stroke

Elton Davis, who taught psychology, humanities and religious studies at PCC for 36 years, died on Dec. 22, 2009 of a stroke. He leaves behind his wife of 30 years, Lisa Davis, their two sons, two daughters, and a stepdaughter and step-son. In addition, he is mourned by his 15 grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Elton was born on a farm in Craigmont, ID in 1925, one of six children. He joined the Navy in 1943 and was one of the first radar operators in Honolulu, HI. He fondly remembered his Navy years since it gave him a taste of foreign cultures such as Korea and Japan.

After his discharge, he earned a BA in education and an MA in religious studies from Pepperdine University. Early in his career, he served as a minister in the Church of Christ in Portland, Los Angeles and Pasadena. Later, he earned a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Southern California.

In addition, Elton had a clinical psychology practice in Pasadena for many years. Elton remained intellectually curious to his end, and enjoyed reading philosophy, physics and world religions. He was also an outstanding athlete: as a student, he belonged to the Pepperdine University track team, and continued his running at a later age to the marathon level.

Elton loved playing golf and meeting his golf buddies on local courses. He was a lover of the outdoors and an accomplished mountain climber. He cherished camping hiking, and mountain climbing with his children. Elton climbed some of the highest mountains on five continents and was especially thrilled when he reached the summit of Mt. McKinley.

He enjoyed worldwide adventure travel with his family and friends for over 30 years.

Elton loved the visual arts and music, and together he and Lisa shared their ongoing journey of spiritual discovery.

Elton was open minded and accepting; a truly gentle and insightful individual loved by many. He retired from PCC as a professor emeritus.

John Christopher, former Social Sciences Chairman

The dean of the Social Sciences Division, Mike Finkenbinder, notified the college of the passing of John Christopher. He died in February 2010.

John was a professor in Social Sciences for many years before becoming the chairman of the department.

Services honoring John were held at St. Andrews Church in Pasadena on Feb. 18.

Michael Conti, Natural Sciences Professor

Michael Conti, retired professor of Natural Sciences, passed away in January 2010. Michael spent 35 years teaching at PCC. He taught classes in anatomy, physiology, micro-technique and a number of

other courses in the natural sciences curriculum.

Michael started his career at the college in 1957, and he retired in June 1993.

Emilio Friel Cordon Passed Away in April

Emilio Friel Cordon, 80, husband of Mary Jane Cordon, passed away on April 28, 2009 in Palm Desert at Odyssey House after having fought a long, courageous battle with cancer.

Emilio was born on June 28, 1928 in Philadelphia, PA. In 1935, he and his family moved to Guatemala City in Guatemala where he attended school. He received a baseball scholarship to Florida Southern College and returned to the United States.

He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1945 and subsequently served in World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam. He was employed over the years by McDonald Douglas, Hughes Aircraft and Boeing.

Emilio was an adoring husband to his wife, Mary Jane, a loving and caring father to his two daughters,

Lisa and Sabrina, and a proud, doting dedicated grandfather to his grandsons, Justin O'Donnell and Cade Ball.

He will always be remembered for the true, deep love he held for his family, country and God.

Retirees Association Board Gets New Members

The Retirees' Association Board added three new members on Jan. 1. In addition, two current members were appointed officers in the organization.

Professors Kay Dabelow, Social Sciences, Elvio Angeloni, Social Sciences and Mike Riherd from the English division will serve two-year terms on the board.

Hollis Stewart will be the new first vice president, and Teresa Marsala will take over the duties of treasurer.

Rick Neumann, Jim Kingman and Bill Goldmann will retire from the board. However, Bill Godmann will serve the association in an advisory capacity.

Harry Kawahara will continue to serve as president, Al De Ponte will remain as second vice president, Dick Chamberlain, will remain as secretary, and Marion Murphy will continue to hold the position of historian and membership chair.

The Family of Retiree Mable Duncan Featured at Pasadena Muse

The Pasadena Museum of History's focus on "sharing a community's legacy" spotlighted six cultures that contributed to making the City of Pasadena what it is today.

The exhibition of photos and mementos from the Armenian-American, Euro-American, Japanese-American, Chinese-American, Latino-American and African-American communities was a powerful statement of how much all of these groups influenced the community we know today.

PCC retiree Mable Duncan and her family members were featured in several photos on display. The Duncans played an important role in the development of the City of Pasadena.

News About PCC

KPCCFM Moves After More Than 30 Years on Campus

KPCC-FM, 89.3, that started out more than 30 years ago as a student-run radio station on the PCC campus, has moved to a new location.

The station, which grew into a National Public Radio Station, outgrew its home on the campus.

The station, which has been housed at the college since its infancy, will now occupy a new 35,000-foot state-of-the-art broadcast center at 474 S. Raymond in Pasadena.

Although all of the station's operations will now be at the new location, it will still maintain a connection to the college. Pasadena City College still holds the radio station's license.

The new \$27-million facility was made possible by donations from listeners, family foundations and charitable organizations. The station's capital campaign, which is scheduled to end in June, has already raised \$26 million of its \$27million goal.

In addition, two gifts from the Southern California Public Radio board helped make the move possible. While at its campus location, the station operated with analog equipment. In the new studio, everything will be digital.

Now that the station has vacated its old offices, lots of people on campus will try to convince the powers that be that they need to move into the Media Center.

Board to Broadcast Meetings on Cable

In case you have missed not seeing the Board of Trustees in action, you may soon be able to watch the meetings from your own living room.

The board members have been debating about broadcasting their meetings for years, but nothing was ever done about it. Board members always nixed the idea, claiming that it was too expensive.

However, things have changed, and the board voted two weeks ago to broadcast its meetings on the Web and on cable television channels throughout the district.

Taped meetings will be broadcast beginning in July. None of the cable stations broadcast live meetings. Pasadena and Altadena residents will be able to watch the Board meetings on Channel 96. Other communities in the district will be able to watch the meeting on their local government channels.

The taping of the meetings will be a pilot program for one year. Board members will then be able to gauge constituent response to the public access to their decision-making process. The one-year program will cost the district \$15,400. That is \$700 per meeting. Trustees believe that the public wants more access so they can see how their money is being spent in these difficult economic times.

College Once Again Searching for a New President

The college is once again searching for a new superintendent-president, and a dead-line for applications has been set for March 24.

The firm, Academic Search Inc., was hired by the Board of Trustees to help with the selection process. This time around, the board voted to make sure that candidates for the job have at least five years experience in senior administration or leadership as a minimum requirement.

The incoming president will not be guaranteed housing assistance has been the case in the past. Although, the board may consider helping the person relocate if it is necessary.

Lisa Sugimoto has been serving as president since Paulette Perfumo left her position after months of controversy. The college is still paying Perfumo \$215,000 a year until her contract ends.

Scholarship Fund Needs Donations

Times are tough, especially for students who are trying to make ends meet in these tough economic times. Each year the Retirees' Association prides itself in being able to support outstanding students who need help to continue their education. However, without your help, we won't be able to give as many scholarships. Remember, you can earn air miles by putting your donation on your credit card. Just call the foundation office at PCC and tell them it is for the retirees' scholarship.