

Staying Connected

PCC Retirees Association

Oct 2016

Cecile Anderson Takes a Bucket List Trip of a Lifetime to Machu Picchu

By Cecile Davis Anderson

Going to Machu Picchu was on my bucket list, but not my husband's.

So, I'd put the notion on the back burner as we typically travel together. However, after learning about a two-week yoga/hiking trip in the Sacred Valley of Peru that included a two-day visit to the iconic site, I made plans to go solo.

I prepared by hiking up Henninger Flats or the Mt. Lowe trail once a week for three months before the trip as well as continuing my yoga practice. I'm glad I did this. The trip was physically demanding.

In Cusco, the launching point for the trip, I arrived a couple of days early to adjust to the high altitude. Hah! Pattern breathing, a frustrating grasp for air in cycles visited me each night during the days I was at 11,000 feet in Cusco and at the retreat center, the first stop on our trip.

My traveling companions were a group of ten fellow yogis between the ages of 28 and 62, from Canada and the US. We had a Peruvian guide and a yoga teacher from NYC.

We traveled by van up and over many of the breathtaking in-your-face mountains over tiny bridges, eroding cliff roads and hairpin curves...

The Source retreat site, owned by a young enigmatic American expatriate who made his money being a game software wiz and is now a shaman, is an amazing complex nestled in the foothills where people come to practice all sorts of spiritual rituals. There, we quickly practiced drinking lots of water and chewing on coca leaves to cope with the altitude.

After three luxurious days there, we headed to the high jungle near Santa Teresa where we camped for two nights in little tents, roughed it with outdoor showers, 3-walled toilet stalls facing the Urubamba river, and shared space and meals with creepy crawlies, bees and mosquitos.

The stay included a 7-hour-hike up and down the mountains near Lucmabamba to Llactapata where we earned a breathtaking view of Machu Picchu from a distance. With intermittent rain and slippery rocks, I fell on my bum often on the descent, and was the last person to make it down. Thankfully the guy assigned to be the sweep was charming and patient.

Next day we zip-lined across vast valleys between mountains way above our campsite. This experience was unnerving and beautiful at the same time!

A relaxing train ride the following day took us to Aguas Calientes, the touristy town tucked in the mountains and launching point for Machu Picchu. Pedestrians would move out of the way as they made their way to destinations using the tracks as a path.

In the quaint town, we dined elegantly, relaxed, practiced yoga, spent money, and met the shaman who was to be our guide the next two days.

Out by 5:30am the following morning, a 25" winding bus ride carried us up into the clouds where huge green mountaintops hovered.

Our shaman instructed us not to gaze upon the Machu Picchu village until we experienced a centering ritual away from the crowds and chewed on coca leaves and ash. We avoided being like the frenzied tourists wandering about armed with selfie sticks.

When I set my eyes on the iconic view, overwhelmed with awe and gratitude, I wept.

It hadn't registered until then that we would climb to the top of the iconic Huayna Picchu mountain the next day! Reputed to be a very dangerous climb as I learned afterwards, I wasn't sure I was up to it after the prior arduous hike. I thank our shaman for allaying my fears.

Next day we took on Huayna Picchu, an ascent of only 1,158 feet (Henninger flats is 1,400ft), but involved circling around and through the mountain, including through a tunnel on hands and knees, stone stairs, a one-story ladder and rocks up and down a path built mostly by the Incas.

I hesitated to begin this trip with the San Pedro ritual drink offered by our shaman, but after the hike a couple days before and all the unwanted attention I got, I prayed for endurance and decided the slimy goop the shaman made with his dirty fingers might help.

I gulped it down, inspiring the rest of my fellow travelers to do the same before the climb. I don't know if it helped or not, but I made it to the summit in better shape than some of the 20-somethings.

Our shaman soothed us with reedy music and chanting on the way up. Two of the younger folk needed his comforting as they dealt with overwhelming feelings brought on by pre-trip burdens.

On the way up we followed his gentle instructions, making sure to stay on the mountainside of the climb when passing tired folks descending, ensuring we would not be knocked off the steep mountain side by accident.

We made it to the top and down safely, forever touched by the spirit and adventure of the beautiful mountain and its temples.

The trip ended back in Cusco, where we learned more about the Incas and their legacy. We also celebrated ourselves and our trip with more yoga, coca leaf readings and a few rounds of pisco sours over the next couple of days.

I remain ever grateful for having been able to take this amazing trip.

Jo Ann Lee Does Some Paddlewheelin' Up the Mighty Mississippi River

By Jo Ann Lee

In March, I cruised aboard the American Queen Steamboat paddle wheeler from New Orleans to Memphis. The theme: MUSIC OF AMERICA. I was in music heaven, thoroughly enjoying all the different kinds of music, from jazz to Dixieland to blues to bluegrass to 50s-60s, and everything else!

The on-board band and singers and dancers were outstanding. Other entertainers were brought on board to perform as well. One Sunday morning, we went to a Baptist church to hear the gospel choir; and then to the Delta Blues area to a club (owned by Morgan Freeman) to hear a blues guitarist likened to B.B. King!

One of our dining room waiters, a senior music student at Loyola, invited his tables to attend an impromptu cello recital during his free time. So, this musical tour was certainly a well-rounded one!

The boat was beautiful and quite comfortable, the meals and service were excellent. There were many travelers from Canada, England, Australia, and New Zealand, all fascinated by stories of the Mighty Mississippi.

One premium shore excursion I chose was to St. Francisville, LA. Twenty miles outside the city (pop 1,765), I was sent to prison: Angola Prison, the Louisiana State Penitentiary!! This is the only maximum-security prison in the state, housing the worst criminals, with 82 percent of the 6,500 inmates serving life sentences with no chance for freedom.

Angola was once known as the most dangerous and bloodiest penitentiary in the U.S., due to the rebellions against the constant mistreatment of inmates while under the 55-year management of a family that owned the former plantation. In 1972, the State and a new Director of Corrections made major reforms and improvements.

Today, Angola is a faith-based institution whose mission is redemption and rehabilitation.

All able-bodied inmates have to work, and they can choose their work. Non-voluntary work programs include operating and managing the cattle ranch (Angola is the 2nd largest cattle operation in the state); the K9 training facilities; Percheron horse breeding and training; and The Farm, which produces millions of pounds of produce (corn, soybean, etc.) for consumption here and for three other prisons.

The inmates can earn their GEDs and college degrees as well; many earn their certifications and licenses in the trades and skills areas.

The Re-Entry Club is an Offender organization created and administered by the Offender “Lifer” population to support the rehabilitation process by mentoring and assisting in the re-entry program for those eligible. The mentees are assisted in their educational, vocational, and moral rehabilitation.

Any misbehaving or infractions of the rules among the inmates may result in solitary confinement or worse, transfer to another maximum-security facility whose “programs” most likely differ dramatically from those at Angola.

The 9-hole golf course is open to the public; inmates are trained to maintain the greens.

The Big House Restaurant operated by inmates is open to the public. A rodeo is held twice a year and brings in about 12,000 people.

Arts and crafts created by the inmates are sold. Inmates earn money through sales of such items as well as their work in the prison.

One of the trusty-inmates told us he was in for 2nd degree murder; he had committed a robbery during which someone died of a heart attack. He’s been in for 19 years, probably since he was 18.

He has a parole hearing in a few months. He was a well-spoken young man, very active in the operations of the facility and the church, a mentor.

During our visit at Angola, we walked among the residents, who were friendly and courteous toward us.

This concept of redemption and rehabilitation appears to be unique in the U.S., and hopefully more prisons will adopt such an approach. Offering education and skills-building for lifers, this program gives them a chance to become a productive member of a community—albeit a gated community. Sister Helen Prejeans’ book, *Dead Man Walking*, is based on Angola.

Back to the real world, in Memphis, I revisited Elvis’s Graceland, still impressed with the

simplicity of the home he purchased at age 22 for himself and Priscilla. Also on the grounds is a separate wing for all his gold records and other awards, an automobile museum, stables, and airplanes.

While in Memphis, I detoured from the usual sights/sites and trekked over to St. Jude's Children's Hospital, particularly the Danny Thomas Pavilion. He and his wife founded this hospital in 1960.

When he was down and out, he prayed to St. Jude Thaddeus, the patron saint of hopeless causes, promising that if he became successful he would build a hospital to treat children with various forms of cancer and to do research for its cure.

The Pavilion is beautifully done, with stories about the children and their families served—at no cost, the research work being done, and the backgrounds of the Thomas Family.

All in all, this was a combination relaxing trip as well as an actively educational one that combined lots of history along the Mississippi River and the cities along its path and, of course, the Music of America!

The Scholarship Committee Encourages Members to Consider Adopting a Student

The Retirees Scholarship program needs your help for a special fundraiser. We are asking retirees who can afford it to stretch a bit more this year and consider adopting a student for \$1,000. Your contribution will support one of our scholarships in

the spring of next year. At our award's luncheon, you will be invited to sit with your "adopted student" and present him or her with an award certificate.

For the past two years, the association's scholarship committee has been awarding scholarships to returning students who have experienced considerable difficulties in continuing their education.

Some have struggled with depression, with alcohol and drug addiction, with abusive parents or spouse, with homelessness. One student, Marcus Torres, spent six years in prison for an accident in which another driver was killed.

Yet Marcus and all of our recipients have shown resilience in overcoming their difficulties. They have earned at least a B average in their classes and been active with on and off campus organizations. Most are pursuing careers that will make it possible for them to support themselves and their children.

Marcus is now working full time for a Jaguar repair shop in Pasadena after completing his automotive mechanics certificate and A.A. degree. He hopes to open his own shop one day. Another of our recent recipients, Francesca Colapinto, was recently featured in a PCC Foundation publication. She gets up at 3 a.m. on school days in order to get ready for school and drive to PCC from Santa Clarita.

Francesca, a single mother who was raised by her grandparents, is completing her nursing studies at PCC this semester; she plans to earn a bachelor's degree before starting work. When retirees have to take an IRA

disbursement and don't want to pay more taxes or they are just looking for ways to keep Uncle Sam from taking a bigger tax bite out of their income, adopting a student might be the answer.

Won't you please consider adopting one of our scholarship students to help them to turn their lives around?

You can send your contribution to the PCC Foundation at 1570 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena 91106. Or you can go to the Foundation website at give.pasadena.edu.

Click on the dropdown box for "Designation" and choose Adopt-a-Student. You can arrange to make payments over time by clicking on "Pledge" (installments) under Additional Information. If you prefer, you can call the foundation at (626) 585-7065.

Everything You Need to Know About Maine Lobsters Lamson's Learn About and Taste Foods of New England

By Alan Lamson

It was the third day of our Road Scholar tour — "Lobsters, Wineries, and Foods of New England." We had made our way from Rhode Island to Kennebunkport, Maine where we were scheduled for an afternoon lobster cruise, weather permitting.

Weather did permit, so we gathered together at the Nonatum Resort for a short walk to where our lobster boat, the Rugosa, was moored on the Kennebunkport River. If the name of the river sounds familiar, it is because George and Barbara Bush spend summers there at the expansive Bush compound, surrounded by children and grandchildren. Recently, the Bush name has received front-page news when a tape showed Billy Bush, George HW's nephew, engaging in "locker room" talk with Donald Trump. Billy is now out of a job at the Today show because of his comments.

At the dock, we were greeted first by lobsterman Dave and then by Captain Bob, owner of the Rugosa. Bob introduced Dave as a lobster expert who would be telling us about

the biology of the lobster. Bob, owner of the boat, said that he had been giving educational lobster tours for several years. We would first be going off shore to check out the location of his lobster traps.

After making our way offshore, Captain Bob stopped the boat and pulled up a yellow lobster “pot” with several of the “bugs” inside. (Lobsters have nervous systems similar to those of grasshoppers and ants, thus the name). Bob said the traps are baited with fish to attract the lobsters, but that lobsters usually dine on bottom dwellers like clams, snails, and crabs. They live in the murk and mud in the shallow waters close to shore.

Once the lobsters were aboard, Bob turned the show over to a biologist Dave, who was quite attractive to the women on board.

While holding up one of the wiggling lobsters, Dave demonstrated how to handle it. He placed a band around the claws that could do considerable damage to one’s fingers. He then took us on a tour of the parts of the lobster anatomy. He first pointed out the four antennae which lobsters use to find their way around their murky environment. He then pointed to the crusher claw and pincer claw, both of which contain chunks of meat. He said that some lobsters have the crusher claws on the right side and others on the left. This condition, he said, was the result of random selection. The large crusher claw on a male serves as a major attraction to a female when she is ready to choose a mate. Size does matter in the lobster world.

As for how to tell the difference between a male and female, he turned the lobster over to display its front side. This was a female, he said, because she has soft appendages on her underside and a broad tail to accommodate her eggs. She carries them up to fifteen months—until the time is right—before she fertilizes them with the male’s sperm. Of the thousands of eggs that she releases, only a few survive to become someone’s meal.

Dave then picked out a male from the several taken from the trap. On his under-side, the male has two hard appendages called Pleopods. The male uses these hard appendages to impregnate the female. Afterwards, the male protects the newly molted female from predators. After she has grown a new shell, he’s off to other conquests.

After Dave’s presentation, Bob took over to discuss other aspects of lobster fishing. Going back a few centuries, lobsters were so plentiful that Indians used them to fertilize their fields. Later they became known as a poor man’s food. Over time lobsters became so prized for their taste, that they became over shed. As a result, lobster fishing is now highly regulated to ensure they are not over fished.

We were surprised to hear that the lobster population has increased dramatically in the

past few years, but no one is quite certain why. In any case, the ample supply of lobsters has been good news for local lobstermen. In the Kennebunkport area, a good catch for the season—mid-summer to fall—results in about 15,000 pounds of lobster using the 800 traps that each fisherman is allowed. At about \$5 a pound, that makes a haul of around \$75,000 for the season. Up north, Bob said, in the area from Bar Harbor to the Canadian border, catches are much larger. Many of the lobstermen working this area make well in excess of \$100,000 a season. Overall, the lobster industry provides a major boost of about \$500 million annually to the coastal economy of Maine.

As our cruise was ending, Bob asked if there were questions. How long do lobsters live? It is thought that they can live up to 100 years but it is difficult to tell their age. How large can they grow?

The largest ones can reach forty pounds. Are sons following their fathers into the business? Yes, it is still a tradition that the son becomes a lobsterman. The business provides a decent income with a modest investment in a boat and traps. Is there any theft of lobster traps? No, there is a code of honor among lobstermen. If any- one is caught stealing, his days are over as a lobsterman.

We didn't have lobster that evening, but we did the following evening at the Sun and Surf in York on the Gulf of Maine. The ones we were served were about a pound and a half each. If you've ever eaten a whole lobster, you know that it takes some work to extract the meat. We had already been given a lesson on how to do this by Corinne, our tour guide.

Before our lobsters arrived, we were issued plastic bibs to wear along with nutcrackers and narrow forks for extracting the meat. When the lobsters arrived, most everyone first checked out the sex of their lobster by turning it over and looking at the underside. "Oh, mine's a male," laughed one of the women.

I recalled that Corinne, said to first remove the narrow legs that contain little meat. Then you twist off the two large claws, crack them open, and remove the meat with a narrow fork. Next, separate the tail from the body and break off the tail flippers.

The body contains the largest chunk of meat, which, she said, can easily be removed by pushing it out with your fingers or with a fork.

My fingers worked ne. The whole process consumes more time that it takes to eat a meal but it provided much entertainment for the group.

The next day we were on the road again, this time to Vermont where we would stay at the historic Brandon Inn in the small town of Brandon. Other delights awaited us on the

rest of our tour of New England, but our cruise with Bob and Dave on the lobster boat and our lobster meal--stand out as high points of the trip.

Reminder!

The PCC History Department is still waiting to hear from you. In the last issue of the newsletter, Susie Ling made a special plea to get all current and former college employees to tell their stories for the college's 100th Anniversary and the school's archives. A lot of people seemed excited about telling their stories, but then life happened and most of them forgot. Well, consider this a nudge to sit down and tell your story. Write about how long you worked at the college, what job you did, and details about your work. It doesn't have to be a novel, just tell your story about the time you spent at PCC. If you need more information, you can call Susie Ling at (626) 585-07335 or email her at shling@pasadena.edu.

Bruce Carter Stays Close to Home for This Trip

By Bruce Carter

After a relaxing riverboat trip in France with Amy Ulmer, Richard Beyer and two other couples, Kathy and I thought we would have a nice quiet summer at home before traveling to Africa in October.

Then one evening the doorbell rang and someone I didn't know introduced himself and invited me to join him on a short trip into the western San Gabriel Mountains to look at some interesting geology.

He was working in part of the area I had mapped in the 1960s as part of my Ph.D. thesis prior to coming to PCC.

He was working with a large group of professionals doing preliminary work in preparation for possibly driving a tunnel through the mountains for use by the high-speed rail route from Los Angeles to San Francisco. They were drilling six holes thousands of feet deep to investigate the subsurface geology along three possible routes through the mountains.

A few days later, I drove out to a warehouse in Santa Clarita where they had laid out about 10,000 feet of drill cores from three wells. I was invited to check out the cores and to comment on anything I saw.

Since most of their drill sites were in or adjacent to fault zones, the rocks were pretty broken up and shattered, but I recognized many rock types and was able to give them a little information they had not seen when they studied my maps and the other literature.

A couple of weeks later I drove up into the mountains to one of the drilling operations. The Sand Canyon re had delayed the drilling work in prior weeks, but the fire was out by

the time I got there. Although signs indicated that the road was closed, I was able to drive around them and through several miles of drastically burned over mountain terrain before reaching the drill site beyond the perimeter of the re. The setup was a pretty routine drilling operation extracting three-inch cores. I spent a while chatting with the site geologist and a few of the drill crew before heading home.

The drive back was through a surreal landscape that had just been burned over a few weeks earlier. All the terrain I had become so familiar with my work decades before was nothing but bare rocks, blackened soil and gray ash forming big spots where individual yuccas had gone up in flames. It was sad to see so many burned out ruins of homes that, of course should never have been built in the high dense chaparral characteristic of the area.

It was sad to see all the devastated vegetation, but good to know that this plant community is re adapted and that it would soon be sprouting and growing a healthy cover again (that is, if we ever get more rain).

This experience provided me with a great trip back into familiar areas and well-known geology even if it didn't take me to some far-flung destination.

Scholarship Winners Honored at Luncheon

Friday the 13th was a pretty good day for the student scholars honored by the PCC Retirees' Association. The retirees' board hosted the winners at the group's rst scholarship luncheon.

The scholarship winners, their guests, 13 retirees' board members and special guest of honor, Alison Vickers, attended the event. Alison represented her late mother, Majorie, who taught Life Sciences at PCC and left the Retirees' Scholarship Fund \$20,000.

The students were seated with the retirees, and they chatted while they enjoyed a lunch of assorted salads and sandwiches, cookies and iced tea. "We tried to make this a memorable day for these deserving students," said Alan Lamson, chairman of the scholarship committee. "Instead of the normal paper plates and plastic ware at most of these college events, we had table cloths, cloth napkins and real plates and silverware to make the occasion special."

During the short program, members of the scholarship committee: Lamson, Mikki Bolliger, Harry Kawahara, Kathy Rodarte and Pat Savoie introduced the students at their tables, and presented them with letters recognizing their efforts. They were also informed that they would be receiving a \$1,000 scholarship check—not a bad way to end the luncheon.

All of the winners spoke to the group detailing all the struggles they had to over- come to get where they are today being honored as outstanding scholars.

Every year many worthy students are turned away because the association doesn't have enough money to fund more scholarships. The Retirees' Scholarships are dependent on donations from members. The committee tries to give at least 10 scholarships. We don't want to send deserving students away empty handed.

In Memoriam

Dorothy Kolts, Former Courier Adviser

Dorothy Kolts, adviser to the Courier newspaper for nearly 20 years, died on April 13 in Altadena. She was one month shy of her 91st birthday.

Dorothy worked as one of the advisers to the Courier from 1972 until her retirement in 1990. She was a professor of English when she started teaching at PCC in 1965. At that time, the Courier was part of the English department.

She co-wrote the textbook "Grammar: The Writer's Tool" with Dr. Esther Davis, which was published in 1988 by the University of LaVerne press.

Mikki Bolliger joined Dorothy as a Courier adviser starting in 1973 soon followed by Wilhelm Bleckmann and Lee Reinhartsen. Bolliger said, over the years, Dorothy and the other advisers moved the paper from hot metal printing into the computer age.

Gone were the days of manual typewriters and the Linotype. In the 1970s, the Courier was a four-page paper, but when Dorothy retired, the students produced eight to 12 pages a week.

I can still remember when we bought our first computer, if you could call it that, Bolliger said. The students could type their stories into the computer which had a two-line display. When they were finished typing, the machine punched out a tape, which was then taken to the print shop. Dorothy was thrilled with the new time-saving computer because it was such a monumental change from the manual typewriters.

Dorothy loved teaching, loved the students and spent a lot of time with the students individually. She described herself as "the momma bear of the department," a title that fit her perfectly. She was very nurturing with the students.

During her tenure at the college, Dorothy also was adviser to the college's yearbook, something that is long gone from PCC.

Laura Holty, Counselor

Laura Holty, former counselor, passed in April of 2015. She often said, "I have had a wonderful life. I had a career that I loved, a wonderful family, friends and experiences that were amazing for a woman of my time."

That is all true. While her family moved from the East Coast to California during the Great Depression, Laura did most of the driving though she was still underage.

During her scholarship college days, when one of her employers didn't have the money to pay her wages, she was given flying lessons in small airplanes instead.

She received her master's degree from USC. She went to Tibet when few could enter. She traveled extensively.

One of her favorite trips was taking the mail boat around Norway. For her 90th birthday, her family took her up in a hot air balloon.

Laura is survived by two daughters, a stepson, eight grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. She was an integral centerpiece keeping all parts of the family in communication regardless of geographic separation.

Laura dedicated her life to education. Through her career she happily gave her all to Pasadena City College. She stressed the value of education to her students, her family and the community.

Upon retirement, she spent years of her efforts helping to fund the Laguna Beach Senior Center known as the Susi Q.

Sam Kazarian, Refrigeration Specialist

Sam Kazarian, who just retired after working more than 22 years as a refrigeration and ventilation specialist at the college, passed away in July after a short battle with cancer. He was diagnosed in December, and he retired in February.

Everyone on campus knew Sam because that's whom you would call when the air conditioning or heating in the office was acting up.

Co-workers described him as dedicated and hard working. Others said he was one of the nicest people working on the campus. Sam loved working for PCC, and it showed in the way he went about his work and how he dealt with people.

Sam was devoted to his family, his wife Rose and his son. Sam just turned 70, but his son was still in high school. Everything he did was to ensure a good life for his 16-year-

old son, Aren. The love he had for his son was beyond measure.

Sam wanted to see his son graduate from high school and get into a good college. Unfortunately, that was not meant to be.

He will be missed by all who knew him.

Bruce Gill, Theater Professor and Sailor

Bruce Gill, theater professor who directed more than 100 productions at PCC, passed away on April 28, 2016. He was born in the heart of Los Angeles in 1935 into an immigrant family from Finland.

Bruce started his teaching career in 1967 at Muir High School, before moving to PCC where he spent 24 years inspiring students to work in the entertainment industry.

A lot of students who were in Bruce's classes at Muir followed him to PCC here they starred in his plays and musicals including "Fiddler on the Roof" and "West Side Story." Most of students who took Bruce's classes went on to work in acting or screen writing. Few students went through his classes without being inspired to make a career in some area of theater, television or motion pictures.

While most people on the campus knew Bruce for the professional shows that he and his students produced over the years, few knew the other side of the man. Bruce spent four years in the Air Force

but he was really a sailor at heart. His sailboats, and he had several over the years, allowed him to relax on the water. When he wasn't sailing, he was working on his boat. He even competed in the California to Ensenada Boat Races. If he hadn't chosen theater as his career, he probably would have been racing sailboats. However, he didn't stop with sailing. Bruce was an avid golfer, cyclist and marathon runner. He once rode his bike from British Columbia to Los Angeles.

Bruce is survived by his brothers Bob Gill and Terry Keown. The two organized a fitting sendoff for their brother. After a short service, where "Fiddler on the Roof" music was playing and the entry was lined with Bruce's play posters, family, friends and former students boarded a boat and scattered Bruce's ashes along with his son's in the ocean he loved so much.