The Emeritimes

Publication of The Emeriti Association, California State University, Los Angeles

Fall, 1989 **Volume X, Number 3**

Monday, September 18, Is Opening Day '89

Traditionally, whether they operate on the semester or quarter system, colleges and universities begin each new year in the Fall. "Opening Day" at Cal State L.A. will take place on Monday, September 18. It will mark the beginning of the University's 43rd year.

The celebration of the new year begins with a University Convocation, addressed by the President. This is followed by school and department meetings, attended by new and returning faculty, and in a number of instances retired faculty members who wish to renew their ties with the University.

President's Message

Mary Gormly

On behalf of the Emeriti Association, I invite all emeriti, particularly the new emeriti, to participate in the activities of the Association during this coming academic year. Those of you who are not yet members of The Emeriti Association, I encourage you to join. It is an excellent way to maintain contact with the University and with each other.

The Fall meetings and luncheon on September 18, opens a year of activities. Several playnights, with dinner at the University Club, are planned, as well as the major event, Emeriti Week, 5-9 February 1990. Emeriti Week honors all emeriti

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Fall Luncheon Reservations Required

Those wishing to attend the Fall Meeting luncheon of the Emeriti Association on September 18 should send a note, accompanied by a check made out to the Emeriti Association ($9 per person) to Carol Smallenburg, 840 S. Sunset Canyon Drive, Burbank, CA 91501, preferably not later than Tuesday, September 12.

Emeriti to Hear Report On Changes in Medicare Catastrophic Coverage

A major event on the Opening Day calendar will be the Annual Fall Meeting of the Emeriti Association, which will take place in the Monterey Room of the University Student Union with a luncheon beginning at 12:30 P.M.

The major portion of the meeting will be devoted to a report and discussion of the efforts being made to persuade the U.S. Congress to make changes in the funding structure for the 1988 Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act. Presenting a report on these efforts will be James Ryan, a retired Professor of Technical Education at Cal State, Long Beach, who has been actively involved with people at the state level who are working to bring about changes in the Act. The subject of his talk will be "The Background and Current Status of the Medicare Catastrophic Act."

A native of Kansas, Ryan earned his BS at Kansas State and pursued a career as a high school teacher and journeyman printer and served in the army in World War II before returning to college for a MA in Education at Cal State Long Beach in 1954. He joined the faculty of the CSULB Technical Education Department, where he developed the University's graphic arts facilities and curriculum.



James Ryan

Jim was active in campus organizations, serving at one time or another as president of the CFA, chairman of the Academic Senate and CSU Long Beach representative to the Academic Senate of the California State University. Since retirement in 1983, he has been active locally and at the state level in affairs of the emeriti and retired faculty.

Schedule of Falltime Entertainment Events Now Being Arranged

Members of the emeriti faculty who enjoy getting together for occasional social events should be on the lookout for first class mailings about upcoming events from Carol Smallenburg, our energetic Vice President for Programs.

Carol has already lined up two of the familiar dinner-and-theatre parties on the Cal State campus for November and December. She is also exploring arrangements for an overnight trip to Catalina in the second half of September. Anyone interested in joining such a party of emeriti is urged to call or write Carol to encourage her to proceed with her plans.

HEALTH REPORT

Harry K. Thrasher (Education) is recovering rapidly from gall bladder surgery, performed August 1.

Vernon Leidig (Music) is recuperating at his South Pasadena home after undergoing successful tri-pas heart surgery August 1.

The EMERITI ASSOCIATION
California State University, Los Angeles

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The Emeritimes is published three times yearly (Fall, Winter and Spring). Send communications to the Association c/o Administration Building Room 815, California State University, 5151 State University Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90032.

Professional and Personal

Our thanks for all the interesting items of news received from emeriti faculty, either about their own activities of those of others. These items about former colleagues, now seldom seen, are read with great interest. Keep them coming!

WILLIAM LEARY (English), who retired in 1978, writes from La Selva, Ca.:

"This account of one retiree's literary odyssey during the past five years is in direct response to your winning invitation to tell all that appeared in the Spring, 1989 issue of *The Emeritimes*.

"In 1947, when Cal State L.A. was being born, I was attempting to put together a one-man American Studies program at Cal Poly and was looking for contemporary writing to round out my course syllabus. I came across Jean Stafford's just-published *The Mountain Lion* and thought it the best American fiction about adolescents since *Huckleberry Finn*. In 1984 I reread this remarkable book and promptly decided to look up the rest of Stafford's published fiction — two more novels and over 40 short stories. Struck by the autobiographical note that was sounded in much of ther fiction, I began, almost casually, to inquire into her life.

"Because she was born in Covina, my researches were easy to begin. But soon I found myself in Portland, interviewing a living sister, in Boulder, where Jean's papers repose in the University of Colorado's library, and by this declension to places where she lived and about which she wrote, including New York City, Boston, towns in Connecticut and Maine, her final home near East Hampton on Long Island, to Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, where a collector has placed important letters, and then oversees to London for an interview, to the island of Arran off the Scottish coast near Glasgow, where Jean's ancestors lived, to Heidelberg, where she studied during 1936-7, and even to to the University of Clermont-Ferrand, the sister university of our own English Department with whom we have exchanged teachers ever since Norman Fruman paved the way many years ago, and where I gave two lecture-readings to their students of Amercian literature.

"In between my travels I wrote, finally, nine articles, some of which appeared in the very literary quaterlies where Stafford's own pieces were published. And, of course, I wrote countless letters. Because Jean knew everybody, some of these were directed to such luminaries as Robert Penn Warren, Peter Taylor, Paul Horgan, Richard Wilbur, Robert Heilman, and Cleanth Brooks. Unfailingly, they all generously reported their recollections.

"There was serendipity, too. Somehow I learned that Howard Wilkening had once sat next to Jean in a French class at Boulder during the early 30s. He responded gloriously to my eager inquiry with a long, and fascinating letter printed on a seemingly endless roll of paper from his computer printer, confessing that my questions had tapped a vein of memories he had forgotten but now happily recalled. Small world.

"Talk of tapping veins, Great Caesar! My mining for lore about Stafford was not unique. Since 1983, a book-length bibliography, two biographies, and a critical study of her fiction have been published, and two more biographies are said to be in the works. I have come to feel a little like my two-year-old son when years ago he asked us to stop at a Canadian park so that he could get a drink and found himself on the edge of Niagara Falls. All good wishes, Bill, to you and other former colleagues."

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RICHARD LILLARD (English), who retired in 1976 and who served nobly for several years as a creator of this column, continues to receive honors for his writing. On May 9, at a banquet held by the Historical Society of Southern California at the Athenaeum in Pasadena, he was presented a medallion as a Fellow. The citation emphasized certain of his books: Des*ert Challenge: An interpretation of Nevada; The Great Forest, Eden in Jeopardy, The Great Southwest* (with Elna Bakker), and *My Urban Wilderness in the Hollywood Hills*.

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Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act Under Fire

California State Groups Protest Surtax Provision

As this issue of *The Emeritimes* goes to press in early August, pressure is mounting in Washington for the U.S. Congress to modify the funding structure voted last year to finance the Medicare Catastropic Coverage Act. Imposition of a 15% surtax on federal income taxes of recipients of Medicare benefits age 65 and older is being protested as unfair to many.

Here in California, the State Coalition of Retired Public Employee Organizations is spearheading efforts to bring about Congressional action. Nationally, pressure for reforms in the legislation is being exerted on Congress from the labor unions and organizations representing retired military and federal civil service personnel.

Assemblyman Dave Elder, Chairman of the Committee on Public Employees, Retirement and Social Security, described the nature of the problem at a Sacramento news conference reported by the *RPEA Newsletter*, as it affects retired public employees in California.

Elder explained that California's Public Employees Medical and Hospital Care Act provides health insurance for all active and retired state employees and many local government employees. He pointed out that the healthy care benefits coverage exceeds the benefits in the Medicare Castastropic Coverage Act for many retirees. However, these people "will have to pay the Medicare surtax even though they never need nor use the benefits provided by the act."

"While the benefits offered through the act will undoubtedly aid those who have no other alternative health insurance, some dispensation should be made for those who have foregone other benefits in the collective bargaining process in order to obtain health benefits for retirement. They should not have to pay twice. In addition the act as written falls woefully short in that it does not provide long-term care coverage for the elderly."

In an accompanying article, written especially for *The Emeritimes*, Wilma Krebs, a retired member of the faculty of Sacramento State, reports on a number of bills being considered by the U.S. Congress that would change various features of the Catastrophic Coverage Act. Those interested in keeping informed and being actively involved in what is happening are urged to read about developments in their daily papers. Those who feel that they need to express their views about what is being proposed in Washington are urged to write or call their Senators or Representatives. We are told that our legislators are indeed responsive to messages from their constituents.

Congress Debates Medicare Surtax Changes

by Wilma Krebs,
***Vice President*, Emeriti and Retired Faculty Association**

Responding to long and hard pressure from seniors all over the country, Senator Lloyd Bentsen held two hearings in July. The Fairness to Seniors Coalition, to which many of you have contributed, sent a representative to Washington to lobby for our interests. Bentsen now talks about making participation in the catastrophic care program voluntary. He also proposed a cut in the surtax, since it will generate surplus revenue above program costs, of from $2.5 to $4 billion a year.

The latest development comes from the House Ways and Means Committee (Rostenkowski, chair). On a 19-17 vote they passed an amendment to cut the surtax in half, from 15% to 7.5% next year, rising to 14% in 1993 rather than 28%, and to make participation in the catastrophic program voluntary. The catch in the "voluntary" proposal is that it would require the individual to drop all of Medicare Part B (medical) coverage, not just the Catastrophic Act benefits under Part B. If our retirement did this they would be forced out of the PERS Supplement to Medicare program, which requires us to sign up for both Part A and Part B of Medicare.

If the retiree dropped Part B without waiting for an open enrollment period, that person would be totally without coverage. In a PERS open enrollment period it may be possible to step down to the Basic Plan, with much lower benefits. (PERS has been asked to investigate the ramifications).

The Rostenkowski amendment makes up for the drop in surtax rates by raising the monthly Part B charge by yet another $3.50 a month, on top of next year's $34.90 a month charge. It would also increase deductibles, and delay Medicare payments. Overall, this amendment has serious flaws, and it also retains the surtax whch we have opposed.

A sizable group of Democrats have sponsored S. 1125 and H.R. 2547 (Bonior, Larkin) to repeal the surtax and replace the revenue by raising the income tax rate for individuals making more than $109,000 a year and couples more than $209,000 from 28% to 33%, while at the same time reducing the tax on capital gains, which is expected to boost revenues in the first year.

Several Republicans have sponsored bills to delay implementation of the surtax and provide a year for a bipartisan commission and the Congress to review the whole catastrophic program. HR 63 (Archer) ans S. 335 (Senators John McCain, Pete Wilson). Others seek outright repeal of the entire Catastrophic Act HR 169 (Fawell).

The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare proposal is to rasie the cap on the Medicare Hospital payroll tax, now at $48,000, add some coverage for long-term care, and reduce the surtax so that seniors would lower their share in finacing the program from 100% to 25%.

A proposal of particular relevance to us comes from the United Auto Workers. It would allow employers, including state and local governments, to purchase Catastrophic Act benefits at actual cost, and then exempt their employees and retirees from the surtax.

Our position has been for repeal of the surtax, and for a fair alternative method of funding the benefits of the Act, preferably restoring the social insurance approach. It is important to write or phone your Congressional representatives now (you can phone before 8:00 am for less than a dollar).



Mary Gormly

President's Message

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with Academic Senate recognition and a reception. This year, an emeritus member of the Association will be the speaker at the Faculty Colloquium on 6 February. All of you are invited to attend these events.

Plans are in the works for a "winging" to help raise funds for our Emeriti Fellowship Fund. We hope to select a winner by the end of the Spring Quarter.

The Executive Committee, as are many emeriti, is concerned about the funding of the new Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act. (See articles elsewhere in this issue of *The Emeritimes*.) We encourage all of you to write your senators and congressman about your concerns.

Many of us are members of the Cal State L.A. Chapter 76 of the Retired Public Employees Association (RPEA) which is concerned about this unfair tax. This organization also keeps watch on PERS and on what is going on in Sacramento. I would like to invite all of you to consider joining RPEA as well as the CSU state-wide Emeriti and Retired Faculty Association (ERFA). This latter organization is also concerned about the Medicare Catastrophic Act. We all are working on getting the tax repealed or, at least, enactment of a more fair funding. As the saying goes, "There is power in numbers."

I wish to thank my predecessor, Laird Allision, for his superb leadership of the Emeriti Association and for being my mentor. Last, but not least, I, on behalf of the Executive Committee, wish to thank President Rosser for his support of the Association.

Professional and Personal

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ROBERT HAHN (Education), who has resided in Aptos, California, since his retirement in 1980, writes:

"My activities since you last heard from me:

"Presently teaching at San Jose State in the School of Education. One course in Educational Sociology and supervising student teachers.

"Attended and spoke at the first International Conference of Upton Sinclair at the University in Bremen, Germany in the summer of 1988.

"Always enjoy reading your publication."

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ALICE THOMPSON (Psychology), who retired in 1979 and served as the fourth president of the Emeriti Association in 1981-82, has received the Woman of Distinction, 1989 from the Orange County Chapter of the Soroptimist Club. We trust she will be on hand for the University's Opening Day festivities on September 18 to receive our congratulations.

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LLOYD FERGUSON (Chemistry), a current member of the Association's Executive Committe who retired in 1986, is included in an exhibit which showcases the achievements of more than 100 historical and contemporary Black achievers in science. Funded by Citicorp/Citibank, the exhibit is touring the United States through 1991.

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MARY GORMLY (Librarian), current president of the Emeriti Association, traveled to the Northwest during August to attend the Circum-Pacific Conference on Prehistory in Seattle (August 1-6) and the Native American Art Studies Association Conference at the Univeristy of Biritish Columbia in Vancouver (August 21-25).

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KENNETH SWEETNAM (Industrial Studies), who retired in 1983, has returned to campus to serve as Chairman of the Department of Technology, the new name given to his department since his retirement.

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JOHN HOUK (Political Science), who retired in 1983 and is currently serving on the Emeriti Association Executive Committee, has taken on the additional task of serving as Treasurer of the statewide Emeriti and Retired Faculty Association, known as ERFA.

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CAROL SMALLENBURG (Education), 1985 retiree and Emeriti Association Vice President for Programs, spent the first week of August in Honolulu, Hawaii, as program coordinator for the annual summer seminar of the California Association for Counseling and Development.

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MARY HUBER (Speech), who retired in 1971 but returns frequently to campus to attend Emeriti Association meetings and social events, has lived with her husband, Henry, in Palm Springs for the past 12 years. There she is active in community affairs, doing volunteer work for the Desert Hospital, the Palm Springs Stroke Activity Center, the Valley Players Guild and the Navy League. She has served as president of the latter organization, still is a member of its board of directors and editor of its monthly newsletter, "Sand & Sail Lore."

Mary travels once a year to New York to visit her daughter, Kathleen, who is a playwright, actress and producer, and most recently has had a major role in the New York production of "Tamara."

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KENNETH STROBEL (Audio-Visual), and his wife, Louella, who have continued to live in Arcadia since his retirement in 1975, moved in August to Casa de Las Campanas, a major retirement facility operated by the California Teachers Association near Lake Hodges and about 15 miles outside downtown San Diego. Their now address is 18755 W. Bernardo Drive, Unit 1239, San Diego, CA 92127.