The Emeritimes

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President's Message

What an "exciting" year this is shaping up to be. As I write this column, the economy has grown by 3.5 percent during the July through September quarter, the first rise in a year. Home sales, manufacturing, and retail sales are showing signs of life, but unemployment has jumped above 10 percent. Our own benefactor, CalPERS, is repeatedly making it to the front page of the newspapers with embarrassing revelations about overpayment to intermediaries. Health care reform might actually happen this time around.



Although we are still hemorrhaging jobs, the general consensus is that the recession is over and that we are in a (very) gradual recovery mode. Of course, you can't really tell that to the current faculty and staff, who have suffered a significant pay cut due to furloughs. You can't tell it to students, who have had to contend with fewer classes and much higher fees. You can't tell that to our students' parents, who are struggling to keep their children in school.

The CSU Emeriti and Retired Faculty Association (CSU-ERFA) continues to play a major role in protecting our rights and benefits at the statewide level. If you do not currently belong to CSU-ERFA, I strongly urge you to join. Besides knowing you are helping advance our positions, you will receive very useful information regarding statewide actions and legislation. Please don't think that joining our own Cal State L.A. Emeriti Association automatically makes you a member of CSU-ERFA. We are separate entities with different, though related, goals and objectives.

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EMERITI TO OBSERVE 32ND ANNIVERSARY AT FEBRUARY 9 ANNUAL SENATE VISIT

Marking the 32nd anniversary of the founding of the Emeriti Association, Cal State L.A. emeriti will be recognized by the Academic Senate at its scheduled meeting on Tuesday, February 9. The Emeriti Association was established on February 9, 1978, led by Sidney P. Albert. The longstanding tradition of honoring the emeriti at this time was begun by the executive committee in 1980.

Following the meeting, emeriti, senators, other faculty, and guests will gather at a reception in the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library's conference room and patio, Library North B530, on the basement level. Martin Schiesl, emeritus professor of history, is the featured speaker. The title of his talk is "Fighting for Municipal Equality: The NAACP and the Desegregation of the Los Angeles Fire Department, 1950-1956."

Refreshments will be served.

Call for Judges: Student Research Symposium

The 18th Annual Symposium on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity, sponsored by the Office of Research and Development, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and the Gamma Epsilon Chapter of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, will take place on campus on Friday, February 26. This event is held annually to provide a local forum for Cal State L.A. students to gain experience in delivering a professional presentation. The Symposium is juried, and 10 local winners will be selected to represent Cal State L.A. at the systemwide competition, where they will be eligible for cash prizes.

Judges are always hard to recruit, as many faculty have their own students compete in the event. A number of emeriti have served as judges in the past, and have already volunteered to do so again this year. If you are interested in volunteering as a judge for your discipline, please contact Ellen Stein at estein@cslanet.calstatela.edu or 323-343-3798.

Emeriti Fellowship Recipients Celebrated at Luncheon



Courtesy of Ellen R. Stein

Front row: Carol Smallenburg, former Fellowship Fund Committee chair; Back row (l. to r.): Janet Fisher-Hoult, current chair, and Fellowship recipients Aiken Lenh, Kezia Gopaul-Knight, Deborah Laurin, Jeffrey Bryant, Aditya Mohanty, and Pedro Quijada.

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Panel Shares Outlook on State Budget, CalPERS, and Retiree Pensions at Fall Event

On October 9, an attentive audience of 61 emeriti and guests at the fall Emeriti Association luncheon heard and questioned a panel of well-qualified CSU faculty on the prospects for California's budget, the financial health of CalPERS, and pensions for CSU retirees. Panelists Ted Anagnoson (Los Angeles), expert on public policy, especially in the health care area; Don Cameron (Northridge), executive director of CSU Emeriti and Retired Faculty Association (CSU-ERFA); and George Diehr (San Marcos), vice chair of the CalPERS Board made a number of points worth passing along.

CalPERS' current holdings cover more than 70 percent of its current and future obligations to those already enrolled. Increases in employer and employee contributions may be warranted in the future. Those already retired have pensions guaranteed by law and/or constitution; those in the system, but not as yet retired, will continue to stay on track for their current pension scheme. It is possible that a "two-track" pension scheme will be introduced for future CSU hires.

Health care costs, on the other hand, are an area of greater uncertainty. As costs increase, it is likely that health care benefits will be affected. Employee contributions may increase, and co-pays for services and medications may increase for retirees.

Emeriti Association Fellowship Fund Donors: 2009

Following is the list of donors to the Fellowship Fund for the last calendar year. Names in parentheses show the person or fund commemorated by the corresponding donor.

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Campus News

José L. Galván Named Dean, Extended Ed and Research

José L. Galván was appointed dean of extended education and research, effective October 1, 2009.

He has overall responsibility for the Division of Extended Education and serves as the Chief Research Officer for the University. His Extended Education duties include running self-support professional education and workforce development training programs. He is also responsible for developing community engagement activities that provide opportunities for area residents to participate in educational and training programs on campus. He also oversees international academic program activities for the University, including Extended Education's intensive English Language Program. Galván's research administration duties include working with the director of research and development to increase the volume of competitive grant and contract proposals. He was appointed acting dean of extended education and research in June 2008, after having served as dean of graduate studies and research since 2005.

See CAMPUS NEWS, Page 8

New Emeriti Named

The following recently retired faculty member has been awarded emeritus status:

NAOMI J. CAIDEN
(Political Science, 1993-2009)

We congratulate her and hope to welcome her into the membership of the Emeriti Association.

Professional and Personal

Walter Askin (Art) had a show of 33 of his paintings, titled "A Trio of Four," at the Kauai Museum from July 23 to September 17. Several of his works from the Norton Simon permanent collection were on display there from April 16 to August 31, in an exhibition entitled "Exceptionally Gifted."

Richard Dean Burns (History) has recently begun publishing again. He has authored *The Evolution of Arms Control: From Antiquity to the Nuclear Age* (Praeger, 2009), and co-authored *Reagan, Bush, Gorbachev: Revisiting the End of the Cold War* (Praeger, 2008) and *Historical Dictionary of the Kennedy-Johnson Era* (Scarecrow, 2007). Two more coauthored studies are due in 2010: *America and the Cold War, 1941-1992* and *George W. Bush and Missile Deployment*, both for Praeger. In addition, his small press, Regina Books, which publishes four to six university-oriented books a year, is celebrating its 30th anniversary next year.

Stanley Burstein (History) was featured on a Discovery Channel program, "Cleopatra: Portrait of a Killer," on November 15.

Daniel Crecelius (History) and Gotcha Djaparidze, Ambassador to the Republic of Georgia from Egypt, had their article, "Georgians in the Military Establishment in Egypt in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," published in *Annales islamologiques,* (Cairo), #48, 2008.

Donald O. Dewey (History) has been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in History for his book, *James Madison: Defender of the Republic* (Nova Science Books, 2009).

Harold Goldwhite (Chemistry) conducted an interview of Robert Grubbs, professor of chemistry at California Institute of Technology and a Nobel Laureate in Chemistry in 2005, for the archival oral history project of the California Institute of Technology. Goldwhite has also recorded a set of 40 introductory chemistry lectures, including examples and problems, for the website educator.com. This for-profit site presents material for Advanced Placement high-school students and beginning college students in a range of subjects.

Lawrence P. (Pete) Goodman (Theatre Arts) has had his first mystery book published. *Smoking Frog Lives,* a P.I./action adventure novel set in the Yucatan, is available in bookstores now.

Margaret Hartman (Academic Affairs and Biology) and **Robert Zahary** (Accounting) continued to travel to interesting places in 2009, including a trip to Thailand in January to visit the temples and museums of Bangkok, coupled with a trip on the Chao Phrya River to Ayuthaya, the ancient capital of Siam, and Chiang Mai in the Golden Triangle area, where they squeezed in some elephant riding, river rafting, Celadon shopping, temple hopping, too many massages, a drive up to the Burmese border above Chiang Rai, and a quick hop by boat across to Laos (see Bob's *Pacific Dispatch,* beginning on page 4). In May, they toured China's Jiangxi province, where they viewed the limestone karst peaks made famous in Chinese scroll paintings; the city of Jingdezhen, porcelain center of China and the site of ancient Imperial kilns; and villages where Ming Dynasty double-horse head houses are still in everyday use. They also did a 10-mile, six-hour hike up Mt. Sanquingshan, including more than 5,000 stone stairs, for fabulous views, often among the clouds from paths cantilevered into the cliffs. September found the pair in Sumatra, returning from Panang the day before the earthquake, where their visit focused on the hill country of Bukittinggi, particularly the Harau Valley, with its high limestone cliffs, and Lake Maninjau set in its own volcanic crater. In November, they enjoyed three weeks of birding in the Western Ghats in south India, home to a large number of species of birds found nowhere else in the world. They viewed about 300 species of birds, including about 70 new species for them, plus a lot of other wildlife.

Richard W. Hurst (Geological Sciences) received the 2009 Sandra Lamb Award in recognition of his contributions to the American Chemical Society California Los Padres Section (CALPACS; Ventura to San Luis Obispo region). He served, contemporaneously, as the chair of CALPACS and as both the general and program chair of the 2001 Western Regional Meeting (WERM) of the American Chemical Society. The meeting was held in early October 2001 at the Fess Parker Doubletree Hotel in Santa Barbara, and took place in the wake of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. In his acceptance speech to CALPACS members, Hurst acknowledged the significant contributions of his organizing committee, comprised of chemists from local universities and colleges (UC Santa Barbara; Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo; Westmont College; and Cuesta College), as well as chemists in the private sector (Computer Software Designs). He was further honored for his contributions to environmental [geo]chemistry, where his expertise in the use of naturally-occurring stable isotopes of lead have been used to estimate the year of leaded gasoline releases throughout the U.S. and to evaluate the potential impact of anthropogenic lead from a variety of sources, such as leaded paint, on human health.

Young C. Kim (Civil Engineering) edited the *Handbook of Coastal and Ocean Engineering*, which was published by World Scientific Publishing Company in October. This 1,500 page handbook contains a comprehensive compilation of topics that are at the forefront of many of the technical advances in ocean waves, coastal engineering, and ocean engineering. More than 70 internationally recognized authorities in the field of coastal and ocean engineering have contributed articles on their areas of expertise to this handbook. These international luminaries are from highly respected universities and renowned research and consulting organizations from all over the world. The handbook provides a comprehensive overview of shallow-water waves, water level fluctuations, coastal and offshore structures, ports and harbors, coastal sediment processes, environmental problems, coastal hazards, physical modeling, and other issues in coastal and ocean engineering.

Patricia Martz (Anthropology) was quoted in "Burial ground gets national destination," *Orange County Register,* on November 8.

Louis Negrete (Chicano Studies) served as moderator of a panel discussion of academic research papers at the 2009 Conference on Mesoamerica, "Continuity and Change in Mesoamerican History from Preclassic to the Colonial Era." The panel focused on Mesoamerican society, beliefs, and myths in film, and modern Chicano and northern Mexican literature. The international conference was held at Cal State L.A. on May 15. He also moderated a panel discussion of Chicano men and women book authors at the 12th Annual Los Angeles Latino Book and Family Festival on campus on October 11. The panel was titled "Barrio Stories: Inspirational Stories of Survival."

Vilma Potter (English) received a letter of commendation for her poetry series given at the South Pasadena Senior Center under the Lifelong Learning Program.

Martin Schiesl (History) compiled an exhibit, "Freedom's Vanguard: The NAACP and the Struggle for Racial Equality in California, 1945-1970," for the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library, from August to December 2009. He also organized a panel, "Fighting Against the Establishment: Civil Liberties, Civil Rights, and Progressive Politics in Los Angeles, 1945-1950," on campus on November 9.

There is an exhibit in the name of **Leon Schwartz** (French) at the 100th Bomb Group Memorial Museum in Thorpe Abbotts, England, containing samples of his letters home during World War II, photos of his crew, and other war memorabilia that he donated to the museum. An account he wrote of his wife Jeanne's clandestine activities spiriting Jewish children out of occupied France and escaping to Switzerland from her home in Grenoble when the Vichy police came looking for her was published in the *100th B.G. Memorial Museum Bulletin* in Spring 2009.

Pacific Dispatch

Impressions of Laos: The Land of a Thousand Elephants

By Robert G. Zahary

We arrive at Vientiane late in the evening, the air is cool and crisp, and an aura of peace and friendliness seems to have settled over even the officials at the airport. A pleasant drive through quiet, darkened lanes, and soon we turn off the pavement on a short track to a lovely small guest house facing the Mekong, where we have booked the second story room that looks across the unpaved road, over the picnic tables and under the trees to the river. We drop our bags and head down to the outdoor tables for a cold Beerlao, the treat that all travelers to Laos (officially the Lao People's Democratic Republic) look forward to. It is the dry season of late January, and the Mekong has died to a distant ribbon that shines occasionally in the light of a half-moon hanging in the clear sky. The air carries a fragrance of wood smoke and dust and last year's leaves, and the lights of Thailand gleam from the opposite bank nearly a mile away. The enormously wide riverbed winds into the distance under the cool night sky, a seemingly endless stretch of sand with little evidence of water. Cats play under the bushes while puppies tussle nearby, and I am glad to be back and to find that the same sense of serenity that I experienced on my first trip to this lovely country almost a decade ago is still in evidence. It is all too easy to forget that such serenity still exists when living in the sweltering mass of humanity, concrete, cars, and noise that is Singapore, and all that much more pleasant to return to it now.



Courtesy of Robert G. Zahary

The limestone karst peaks on the road to Vangvieng tower behind the tropical greenery.

Sleep comes quickly under the slowly revolving overhead fan that circulates the cool night air spilling through the open doors and windows of the balcony. Even though we are facing the "street," there is a total absence of mechanical sound, and the next thing I experience is the rosy light of dawn coming through the trees, and the lovely note of a gong from somewhere far away, followed by the crowing of a rooster. In that pleasant, dreamy haze of awakening, the dry air and the dusty smells first lead me to think of Santa Fe, and then of Africa, and I somehow half-expect to see grey hornbills hopping around and weaver bird nests in the trees. When none of those appear, I realize that I am once again in Laos and happy to be here. Soon the dogs and puppies start to awaken, I hear women speaking in low tones as they sweep the street in front of their homes, a motorbike starts and leaves, then another, and the day is under way quietly and peacefully in the largest city in Laos.

A Geographic Primer

If, like many, your knowledge of Southeast Asia is a little sketchy, let's get the necessary geography in place. Imagine that the rectangular brass plate containing your front doorknob is a map. Now ignore the doorknob itself, imagine the keyhole as Laos, and the entire brass plate as Indochina. Laos has common borders with five countries: immediately above (north) of Laos is a short border with China, on the upper left (northwest) is Burma, to the left (west) is Thailand, to the right (east) is Vietnam, and below the keyhole (south) is Cambodia. The meandering of the Mekong makes up all of the Lao border with Burma, the greater part of it with Thailand, and a tiny part of it with Cambodia, so it is a defining presence in this country, flowing generally in a southeasterly direction. The region where northern Thailand, eastern Burma, China, and northwestern Laos come together is the infamous "Golden Triangle" of opium-growing, drug-smuggling fame.

This "keyhole map" is critical to understanding both the history and the current economic development of Laos. While Laos (aka "the land of a thousand elephants" and Lan Xang, historically) is today a minor player in the economy of Southeast Asia, this was not always the case. Nor, in my personal opinion, will it likely stay the case in the near future. Laos' "keyhole" position makes it a vital link in any land-based transport and distribution systems, and has virtually assured conflicts, armed and otherwise, with Thailand and Vietnam, its powerful neighbors, throughout history.

A Thumbnail Sketch of Lao History

The historical record of human culture in Laos dates back at least 2,500 years, as evidenced by the age (subject to some question) of the megalithic stone vessels in the Plain of Jars, sometimes referred to as "the most important iron age site in Southeast Asia."[1] Little is known, however, of the people or their society during this period, and, indeed, until the founding of the Kingdom of Lan Xang in 1353. There is considerable debate among historians of Southeast Asia as to when to begin a history of "Laos" as a definable entity versus a history of the various peoples in the region as individual groups. I have no interest in that debate, but here are a few highlights that you can label as you will.

As early as the sixth century, Chinese chronicles refer to a temple guarded by a thousand soldiers, where the king offered an annual human sacrifice. The reference is believed to be to Wat Phu in southern Laos, possibly one of the oldest Khmer-Hindu religious sites in existence. Wat Phu predates its more famous Cambodian relative, Angkor Wat, to which it was later connected via a stone "highway" thought to be for elephant travel. Wat Phu's Buddhist artifacts date to the 11th and 12th century, suggesting that it may very well be Southeast Asia's oldest Buddhist temple as well.[2]

From the 1600s forward, power and control in the region have changed hands more rapidly than loot in a grade B gangster movie. The great Burmese invasion of 1763 overran virtually all of both Thailand and Laos as we define them today.

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Following that, the Siamese ousted the Burmese and moved back in, and in 1802, the Vietnamese attacked the Siamese and totally destroyed Vientiane. The city was rebuilt and was then razed again in the Siamese attacks of 1827. The Sisaket Museum in modern Vientiane is one of the sole surviving buildings of this period.

As a modern geographic entity, most seem to agree that Laos owes its existence to the animosity between the French and British colonialists in the region, during whose reign most of the current borders were established.

Laos' keyhole position again played an important part in its history during the war between North Vietnam and the United States. The infamous Ho Chi Minh trail that was a vital lifeline of supplies for the North Vietnamese armed forces led through Laos to North Vietnam and, secretly at the time, the United States heavily bombed it, as well as other areas of Laos thought to be of strategic military significance. As a result, there was more ordnance dropped on the Plain of Jars alone than was dropped by the entire combined Allied forces in Europe during all of World War II. An excellent and very readable book on this chapter of history that I recommend highly is *The Ravens: Pilots of the Secret War of Laos* by Christopher Robbins, 1988.

Finally, when the U.S. military withdrew from the region in 1975, a coalition government was formed, including the pro-Vietnam Pathet Lao. With that, many of the Lao supporters of the U.S. retreated into the hills to become anti-Pathet Lao guerillas. When the communists subsequently defeated South Vietnam, the Pathet Lao took total control of Laos, forced the abdication of the king, and formed the current Lao People's Democratic Republic. The last of the Lao resisters to the new rule did not surrender until late in 2006, and the enormous volume of unexploded ordnance (UXO) remaining to this day has, and continues to, generate untold injuries to the local populace.

Down the Mekong

The river crossing at Chiang Khong (Thailand)/Houyxia (Laos) in the Golden Triangle is about the furthest point north for easy entrance to Laos, and is also a site where the giant Mekong catfish, frequently weighing hundreds of pounds, used to be caught with some frequency. When I first entered Laos here almost 10 years ago, the drill went like this: you left your luggage on the river bank on the Thai side, hired a long-tail boat to take you across to the Lao side, and then rented a houseboat that would take you back across the river for your luggage and, complete with a cook and lounge chairs, take two days to float down the Mekong to Luang Prabang, with an overnight stop at a small riverside lodge at Pak Beng and a short stop on day two to see the Pak Ou caves that are filled with Buddha statues. I am sorry to say that a bridge across the river at Chiang Khong/Houyxia has been in various stages of "planning and construction" for years, and the tone of the crossing has changed somewhat.[3] Even though this trip has been "discovered" by Lonely Planet, et al., and is now something of a backpacker's destination, it is still, in my opinion, a delight. The stretch of the Mekong down to Luang Prabang[4] has either had less disturbance than other parts of Laos, or the disturbances were longer ago, for the forest along the banks is quite lovely, and there are virtually no towns or villages along the route other than Pak Beng. There is, however, a virtual absence of birds both here and throughout Laos–anything that can be caught is fair game for the pot, and bird traps and snares are common. Even pigeons are few and far between in the cities.



Courtesy of Robert G. Zahary

Bob poses alongside two ancient megalithic stone vessels on the Plain of Jars.

The Ancient Plain of Jars

It's an easy two-day drive from Vientiane to Phonsavon (frequently Phonsawan), the capital of the northern province of Xiengkhouang (sometimes also Xieng Kwang), where the mysterious Plain of Jars is located. Even if the jars were not there, it would be worth every bit of two days just for the scenery.

Leaving Vientiane, the road winds slowly up into lovely, rugged limestone peaks that rise as rocky crags from the tropical greenery as far as the eye can see. About lunchtime, we are driving along the shore of an enormous lake that is actually a man-made reservoir with a most interesting story. The reservoir was constructed somewhere in the '80s or '90s and, when completed, flooded an expansive valley of mature teak. As you probably know, teak is a very valuable timber tree, but, as you may not know, one of the properties that make it so valuable is its resistance to water damage. The submerged teak forest soon became so valuable that a Japanese firm successfully developed pneumatic chainsaws and other tools for an underwater logging operation, and nearly all of the submerged teak has now been harvested. When the logs from this submerged forest were sawn up, they were found to have developed lovely graining and tones, and it is my understanding, although I have no facts to support this, that the teak was used for such fine furniture and other things that it justified its high cost of retrieval.

Lunch is a variation on the common soup/stew of whatever fish got caught with whatever vegetables are available, plus lots of chile. Be very careful, however, about the many fish pastes that are a Lao favorite, as they frequently use raw fish, and liver fluke infestations are a serious, yet common, medical difficulty here.

The peaks continue to get higher and steeper, and in the afternoon, we descend into a lovely valley where the town of Vangvieng is located astride a clear river. The peaks are karst, the river appears to be relatively clean, and the weather is noticeably cooler than the lower elevations. For all these reasons, Vangvieng has become something of a destination for rock climbers, cavers, swimmers, and rafters, as well as those who just like to relax and watch other people pursue more vigorous activities.

Leaving Vangvieng on day two, the peaks lose their sharpness, the valley floors seem to rise, and soon we are on an expansive high plateau that stretches all the way to the Anamite Mountains that separate Laos from Vietnam, and you can see for miles. As with so much of the world, however, some of these long views are the result of ecologically devastating practices, and the plain was, not so many years ago, heavily forested.

Sadly, virtually the entire country of Laos has been deforested, with most of the timber having made its way across the current difficult network of roads and waterways to Vietnam and Thailand after having been cut illegally. From the mills in Vietnam and Thailand, most of the former forest makes its way to the West (mainly to the U.S. and Europe) in the form of cheap furniture sold at large discount stores. Current estimates are that "at least 500,000 cubic meters of freshly cut Laotian timber" from the few remaining pockets of forest makes its way to Vietnam annually. Some estimate the cut at rates as high as 2,000,000 cubic meters annually, even though the government limits are set at 20,000 cubic meters. As in many developing nations, Laos has an array of environmental protection laws and regulations on its books, but enforcement is another question, and graft is rampant.[5]

Arriving in Phonsavon, the small and dusty provincial capital, we abandon the car and walk the mile from our hotel into town to stretch our legs and see what there is to see (answer is "not much"). As evening comes on as thick fog rolls in, the temperature drops, and the small bucket of firewood in our room becomes very attractive. Early the next morning, we drive about 12 kilometers to one of the three jar sites that are accessible. While there are more than 300 "jar fields" known, and over 3,000 jars catalogued, only three fields have had enough ordnance removed to make them at least relatively safe for careful visitors. There is no one there when we arrive, and the fog is still thick and cold. As we walk past the signs warning in many languages of mines, cluster bombs, and other UXO, I half

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Health Briefs

'Tis the Season for Vaccinations

By Marilyn Friedman

With the arrival of H1N1 ("swine flu"), many seniors are understandably confused about how to protect themselves against the flu this year. Updates on the two flu vaccines (seasonal and H1N1), as well as two other important vaccines, are summarized here.

The heightened media attention to H1N1 and vaccine availability is detracting from the need to get a seasonal flu shot each year. AARP and public health experts strongly encourage older Americans to protect themselves and those in their care by getting vaccinated against the seasonal flu. Seasonal flu claims an average of 36,000 lives and hospitalizes more than 200,000 Americans every year. Many of those dying and hospitalized are seniors.

Experts also recommend that people 65 and older get a pneumococcal vaccination, which they can get at the same time as their seasonal flu vaccination. Pneumococcus is a bacterium that can cause a range of conditions, including pneumococcal pneumonia, blood infection, and meningitis. Young children and people over 65 are the hardest hit. The pneumococcal vaccine does not need to be given each year. One dosage of the vaccine is usually sufficient, especially if given to those 65 and older. People over age 65 who received the vaccine prior to age 65, along with individuals with certain serious medical conditions, are generally given a second dose. Regarding the H1N1 vaccine, a federal panel (the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices) has issued guidelines on who should get the vaccine. This is particularly important given the shortage of the vaccine. The priority groups include pregnant women, health care and emergency services personnel, children, adolescents, young adults up to the age of 24, household and caregivers of children younger than six months, and healthy adults with certain medical conditions. About one-half of Americans fall into one of these five main target groups. Because supplies of the vaccine are still limited, the Committee recommends that all the high risk groups be given priority. Once sufficient supplies exist, the vaccine will be offered to healthy adults ages 25 to 64. Once those needs are met, vaccinations would be recommended for people older than 65. Seniors, according to public health authorities, have the lowest risk of contracting the "swine flu." Studies have found that many older Americans carry at least some antibody protection against the new virus, probably because it is similar to flu viruses that circulated widely in the 1920s through the 1950s.

Concerns about the safety of this new H1N1 vaccine have circulated widely. Flu researchers, however, play down safety concerns. They believe that the vaccine is quite safe because it is created in exactly the same way that the seasonal vaccines are created each year.

Finally, some positive news about the shingles vaccine. In a previous *Health Briefs* article, I wrote about the importance of getting the shingles vaccine, but it was not initially covered by Medicare or CalPERS. CalPERS has just informed its members that Zostavax (the shingles vaccination) is covered for all CalPERS members age 60 and over. Their advice is to have your physician fill out a prescription for you and have your local in-network pharmacy fill the prescription. You can then receive the Zostavax injection by a pharmacist certified to administer vaccines. The administration fee will also be covered if administered at an in-network pharmacy.

Remember When: Pat Brown Institute Annual Awards Dinner Circa 1990



Posing with guest speaker Henry Kissinger (front center) are: front row (l. to r.): ?, John Tomaske, Bernie Codner, Margaret Hartman, Bob Zahary. Second row, seated (l. to r.):Harry Hall, ?, Ben Smith, John Kirchner. Third row (l. to r.): ?, ?, Dawn Patterson, Ed Goldberg, Jo Ann Johnson, ? ?. Back row (l. to r.): ?, ?, ?, ?, ?. Can you fill in the blanks?

Profile

Janet Fisher-Hoult: Global Accomplishments

By Harold Goldwhite

Janet Cameron Fisher-Hoult recently retired as chair of the Cal State L.A. Emeriti Association's Fellowship Fund Committee, a position that she held from 2000 to 2009. In recognition of her extraordinary service to the Association and the University, the Executive Committee of the Association unanimously agreed to appoint her as an Honorary Life Member of the Executive Committee–an honor granted to only a very small number of Association members. When we examine the contributions she made to the Fellowship Fund Committee, the University, and the academic community, it is easy to understand why she was chosen for this singular honor.

Janet has lived and worked all over the world: high school in Iran; university posts in Lebanon, France, and the United States; and teaching assignments in Germany, Korea, Japan, Thailand, and China. Her professional qualifications include degrees from the University of Washington, University of Grenoble, UCLA, and USC. She was an English instructor in Tehran, a Fulbright Fellow and Lecturer for two years in France, and she taught for a year in Japan, among other positions.

In her capacity as an adviser on educational matters, Janet worked with the Los Angeles Unified School District for 17 years as an instructional team leader, providing guidance in school improvement; as the director of career units for English as a Second Language (ESL) students and an adviser in the same area; and as a teacher at King Junior High School.



Courtesy of Ellen R. Stein

She was associated with the University of Southern California as director of the USC Public Schools Program, as coordinator of continuing education and undergraduate recruitment for USC's School of Education, as a visiting associate professor in the Asian master's program in Japan and Korea, and as director of the ESL training program in Munich.

Janet's service to our campus has been extraordinary. In addition to her role as a faculty member in the then Division of Educational Foundations and Interdivisional Studies in the Charter School of Education, she served as acting assistant vice president for academic affairs, with responsibilities including faculty policy, program review, student assessment, Honors Convocation and Commencement, and faculty development. As acting associate vice president for academic affairs, she coordinated the University international academic programs, revised the computer information technology planning process, and planned and organized the new Faculty Instructional Technology Support Center, among other responsibilities. Many faculty recall with a sense of obligation her effective terms as director of the Center for Effective Teaching and Learning.

At the system level, Janet was director of the California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP to its friends), working out of the Chancellor's Office and providing leadership to a statewide program of cooperation between the CSU and public schools funded by the State Legislature to the tune of over $1,500,000 a year.

As an active member of the Emeriti Association, Janet took the lead in spearheading the Fellowship Fund Committee. Concerned about the processes for student applications for all fellowships and decisions about awards, she worked closely with the Scholarship Office and the Development Office in a process that led to clarification of the application and award processes for scholarships, revised application forms, and clearer criteria for awards. She also worked with potential fellowship donors and helped to greatly increase the amounts and numbers of fellowships awarded by the Emeriti Association.

Not surprisingly, Janet's distinguished career at the University, which began in 1986, has earned her honors as a Cal State L.A. Distinguished Woman of the Year in 2000 and a Cal State L.A. Outstanding Professor Award in 1992-93.

All of Janet's interests cannot possibly be covered here, but several are especially noteworthy. Janet and her husband, Charley, have a long-term commitment to undergraduate and graduate research, and have served as judges for the annual Student Symposium on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity for many years. They also conduct a workshop each year for the 10 students selected to represent the University at the systemwide Student Research Competition, critiquing each student's presentation and working with them to improve their presentation skills. Janet and Charley are also indefatigable in their travel abroad schedule, which includes the unusual hobby of chasing total solar eclipses. Stories of their voyages have embellished previous issues of *The Emeritimes*.

Recently, Janet has turned to writing and publishing verse. Her collection *Body Parts*, which deals with the joys and sorrows of aging, has appeared, and a second volume has been completed. All proceeds from the sale of *Body Parts* go to the David Cameron Fisher Memorial Scholarship established in memory of Janet's son, a marine biologist. This Emeriti Association scholarship is open to all undergraduate biology majors, and at least one recent awardee is, appropriately, planning to specialize in gerontology.

Cal State L.A. and its Emeriti Association owe a great deal to this extraordinary woman. Long may she continue to serve.

President's Message

(Continued from Page 1)

On a positive note, our Emeriti Association hosted a highly successful and very well attended fall luncheon at the Autry National Center of the American West. The event, planned by our vice president for programs, Hildebrando Villarreal, included a panel discussion with George Diehr of the CalPERS board, Don Cameron from CSU-ERFA, and our own Ted Anagnoson. The topic revolved around the question of the security of our pensions and health benefits. We left the meeting with reasonable confidence that our programs are not in any immediate danger, although health care coverage could experience some erosion (e.g., higher co-pays). My thanks go to all of the people who helped to make this event such a success.

Also on a positive note, we awarded scholarships to deserving and very appreciative students. These were given just prior to the panel discussion, and all of the student awardees were in attendance to receive their recognition.

As we move into the new year, we look forward to Emeriti Day at the Academic Senate (see lead story on page 1). We will be marking the 32nd anniversary of the founding of the Emeriti Association on our campus. I sincerely hope you will join us for the various activities on that day.

With continuing though challenged optimism,

Martin S. Kochen

Impressions of Laos *(Continued from Page 5)*



Courtesy of Robert G.Zahary

13th century Buddhas in the woods.

expect to see the Hound of the Baskervilles emerge from behind a tree, but concentrate on staying on the path between white rocks (if you see red ones facing you it means you have wandered off of the cleared path and into a danger zone). Soon we see some of the enormous jars emerging from the fog, and then they are all around us–some upright, some not, some broken, some whole, a few with lids. As the fog slowly lifts and the day warms, we see jars scattered over the hillsides in every direction, mingling with slit trenches and bomb craters left from the war. The experience is really quite peaceful and contemplative.

The jars themselves are huge, generally unadorned vessels carved from solid sandstone or limestone: the largest so far discovered is more than 10 feet tall and weighs in at well over six tons. No one knows for sure what they were used for or who made them, although the most commonly espoused theories involve various burial rites typical of Iron Age sites. Some of the quarry sites where jars were made have been located, but the method used to transport them throughout the high plain remains a mystery. Based on other megaliths found as far away as Bangladesh, one prominent archaeologist believes that the Plain is part of an ancient roadway that linked the Red River Delta of Vietnam with Southern India.[5]

Champasak and the 4,000 Islands

It is a short flight on Lao Air from Vientiane to Pakse, the subtropical Chinese trading town that is the capital of the southern province of Champasak, but the "main attractions" still lie a few hours further south by car. The once daily flight arrives about 8:00 a.m., so the timing is excellent to simply change transport and move on. (The last time I checked, Lao Air still had only two planes, so there are not a lot of scheduling options.)

From Pakse, our road leads first to the Bolaven Plateau, which is home to the expanding coffee- and tea- growing industry first started by the French colonials in the early 1900s. With an average elevation of about 4,000 feet and lots of rain, it is an ideal agricultural area, and the numerous rivers with lovely waterfalls make it a favorite with travelers as well. Many different ethnic groups call the Bolaven home, and the trails leading to the mountainous border with Vietnam are still on my list of places to explore.

Next day, back in Pakse, we catch a boat down the Mekong about an hour and a half to Champasak proper and pick up a vehicle there to Wat Phou, one of the most significant religious sites in Laos, dating back to the sixth century, as mentioned earlier. The ruins face the Mekong, with steep stone stairs climbing a forested hill to and through various altars and buildings. At the top of the hill is also a spring, some lovely Buddhist statuary, and a large stone in the shape of a crocodile, which is reputed to be the sacrificial site referred to in early Chinese texts. The mix of religious iconography represented (proto-Khmer, Hindu, Buddhist) is spectacular. Don't expect much in the way of signage or explanations, as almost nothing has been restored, although there was a small Italian archeological team working occasionally on two of the buildings when we were there. By the same token, however, there is something very refreshing about not having to view history from behind a fence.

Two hours south of Champasak by car is the area known Si Phan Don (the 4,000 islands), where the Mekong widens to almost nine miles during the rainy season and slows to a lazy meander before it plunges over the falls at Konephangpheng. The falls are frequently referred to as the "Niagara of the Mekong," and are said to be the largest in Southeast Asia and the widest waterfall in the world. Below the falls, the river becomes wide and lazy again, and forms the frontier with Cambodia. It is in this area that the highly endangered Irrawaddy dolphin still survives, and we hire a fisherman and his skiff to take us out for a look. We tie off to a branch at mid-river, and are soon treated to a few views of the lovely animals as they playfully leap clear of the water. What a great way to end a day and a trip to this lovely country.

What Next?

At least temporarily, its "keyhole" location seems to be propelling the Lao economy into an ascending arc. The Chinese (and others) have infused huge sums to build bridges and improve roads, with the aim of turning Laos into a viable overland truck route from Thailand and the rest of Southeast Asia to Vietnam and through to China. Although this will add a further dimension to the environmental havoc that has already been wreaked through deforestation and remaining UXO, its perceived benefit to the economic growth of a currently very poor nation seems welcomed by the populace at large. Were "Uncle Ho" (as he is affectionately referred to by many Vietnamese) still alive, I wonder what he would think about this mechanized concept of his transport trail?

End Notes

1 Richard Engelhardt, UNESCO archaeologist, as cited by the *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 2003.

2 *Insider's Guide To Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia* – 1995.

3 The Chiang Khong/Houyxia crossing gained additional notoriety when Paul Adirex, an ex-Thai government official turned mystery writer, laid a portion of his murder, drug-smuggling mystery titled *Mekong* here during the building of the bridge. While I quite enjoy his mysteries, they are published in Bangkok and I don't know if they are available in the U.S.

4 The World Heritage site of Luang Prabang has had many volumes written about its beauty and history, and I won't try to match those here.

5 Data from published reports and undercover films released by the British-based Environmental Investigation Agency and Jakarta-based Telapak as reported by Nirmal Ghoshh in the Singapore *Straits Times* (2008).

Campus News *(Continued from Page 2)*

Jennifer Faust Appointed AVP for Academic Affairs

Jennifer Faust was named assistant vice president for academic affairs–academic personnel, effective October 1, 2009. Faust, who previously served as acting director of faculty affairs, now has primary responsibility for all faculty and academic student employee matters within Academic Affairs. These include faculty personnel and salary issues, labor relations, and faculty development. She is also responsible for maintaining all policies and procedures pertaining to academic personnel in compliance with collective bargaining agreements, systemwide regulations, and executive orders. Faust came to Cal State L.A. in 1993 and was a professor and director of graduate studies in the Department of Philosophy.

2009-10 Outstanding Professors Announced at Fall Faculty Meeting

On September 21, the following faculty were introduced as recipients of the Outstanding Professor Award for 2009-10: Manuel Aguilar (Art), Laura Calderon (Kinesiology and Nutritional Science), Lili Tabrizi (Electrical and Computer Engineering), and Wayne Tikkanen (Chemistry and Biochemistry). Roberto Cantú (Chicano Studies/English) was honored as the President's Distinguished Professor for 2009-10.

In Memoriam

Word was received at press time of the death of Paul M. Zall , emeritus professor of English, on December 16. An obituary will appear in the spring issue of *The Emeritimes.*