Douglas N. Cook Joins Emeritus College

Degree in fine arts from the University of Arizona in 1955. He also earned a degree in Fine Arts from Stanford University in 1957 and did postgraduate work at the Lester Polakov Studio of Stage Design. He is a past president of the American Theatre Association.

During his tenure at Penn State, Professor Cook held the summer post of Producing Artistic Director of the Tony Award-winning Utah Shakespearean Festival, an annual event in Cedar City. When he retired from that post, the festival’s 2002 Souvenir Program opened with a photograph of him and an article titled “Douglas N. Cook: Exit, Stage Left.” It began with, “The birth and growth of any great organization requires the concerted effort of many hearts and many hands. Nowhere has this been more evident than with the Utah Shakespearean Festival, and very few can claim to have had more heart or lent a greater hand in this acclaimed theater’s success than Producing Artistic Director Douglas N. Cook.”

Guide to Lecturers and Courses under Revision

The Emeritus College Academy for Continued Learning is the college’s arm that provides members with opportunities to lecture and teach in the community on their fields and interests. The academy’s offerings are announced in its Guide to Lecturers and Courses. Published first in the fall of 2008, the guide was distributed to a variety of organizations known to sponsor lectures, talks and classes. Dean Len Gordon said the response was good and the second edition of the guide is in preparation for publication in September of this year.

Lecture and course topics are generally of an academic nature, and the level of presentation is roughly that of a university general studies introductory class. Audiences consist mostly of college-educated individuals, many of whom are retired.


2009 Symposium Theme Announced

The Fourth Annual Emeritus College Symposium will address the subject of “Advancing Midlife Identity and Experience.” An announcement of this theme and a call for presentations from the Symposium Organizing Committee were mailed June 3 to all college members by Dean Gordon. This annual event will be held on Saturday, November 14, in the Memorial Union, ASU Tempe campus. The theme reflects research showing that retirees currently in their 60s and older are more educated and have greater economic resources than previous generations; hence they tend toward a more active lifestyle.

All college members are welcome to submit papers and other presentations to the symposium’s program, which will include two parallel sessions of contributed papers in both mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Presentations may be in the form of research papers or other topics of interest, performances, or the display of creative works. Each paper or performance will be allotted 25 minutes, including time for questions and discussion; displays will be given space in meeting areas throughout the day.
2009 Symposium (from p. 2)
The chair of this year’s organizing committee is Susan Mattson (nursing and healthcare innovation); other members of the committee are Jay Braun (psychology), Matt Hassett (mathematics and statistics), Elaine Katzman (nursing), Gary Kleemann (technology management), Richard Loveless (fine arts) and ex officio member Len Gordon. The deadline for submitting titles and abstracts to the committee is Sept. 28, 2009.

Guide (from p. 1)
New lecture titles also will be listed as the number of academy faculty increases.

The revised guide is being edited by Dick Jacob and Mary Laner; its new cover was painted by Paul Jackson. There still may be time for additional contributions to be accepted between the distribution of the current issue of this newsletter and the guide’s final editing, but its late September publication date should be born in mind. The form for submission of lectures and courses can be found at http://emerituscollege.asu.edu/eforms/shortcourse.html/ Submissions should be sent to the Emeritus College office.

Editor’s Note: The following true story was written for an Emeritus College creative writing workshop in March 2009.

Down but Not Out
I left home early on the day of our meeting, because the rest of my committee had not been informed that Wilson Hall would be locked. As chair of the committee, I had been given a key to its outside door, and I wanted to arrive in time to let the other members of the committee into the building. It was the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. in 2006, and Arizona State University was closed for the holiday. Unfortunately, I was delayed by an encounter with a City of Tempe bus while crossing University Drive – right in front of the main entrance to the campus.

I had been walking as quickly as I could toward the entrance, after leaving my car in a parking structure, when the incident occurred. Having reached the intersection of University Drive and College Avenue, I waited on the curb until the walk signal lit up and then stepped into the crosswalk. I was more than halfway across the street when a bus turning left off of College Avenue plowed right into me.

When the bus hit me, I had no idea of what was happening, only that I was being shoved relentlessly from behind. At first I thought another pedestrian was rudely pushing me forward, but that could not explain the pressure across my entire back. I tried to walk faster to get away, but my shoes felt like lead weights and I could not lift them up high enough to take full steps. Slowly, or so it seemed, the realization came over me that I could not possibly walk fast enough to escape whatever was pushing me forward. By then I knew that I was going to fall; instead, I felt myself being hoisted up into the air and thrown to the right.

While all of this was happening, I did not make a sound. My reflex action was to curl myself into the fetal position and to protect my head by ducking it down upon my chest and bunching up my shoulders around my neck. Before I could do so, I was dumped onto the pavement. When in the air, I glanced at the walk light and saw that it was still on; it had not even started to flash the warning signal for clearing the crosswalk. I also glimpsed out of the corner of my left eye some sort of curved metal bars which were looming up over my left shoulder and head. The thought crossed my mind that I might have been hit by a motorcycle, even though the metal bars were too far off the ground for that to make any sense. Alas, I was completely confused as to what was going on. I only knew that I had ended up on the ground, unable to get back up.

Gradually I became aware of a cacophony of sounds surrounding me that seemed to come from far away, but grew louder and louder until I could make out human voices and the screech of automobile tires. Then I could clearly hear pedestrians around me screaming, “STOP,” “STOP,” “STOP,” while nearby cars were blowing their horns. I wanted to see what was behind me, but I had difficulty moving. At last, I rolled over enough to see that a bus had knocked me down. Then, to my horror, I saw that it was still creeping slowly toward me. It finally dawned on me that the bus driver was completely unaware that he had hit me. Only after a rising chorus of people were yelling, “Stop!” did he finally jam his foot on the brake pedal. The bus came to a stop, and I watched as its right front tire came within a few inches of my face. Those who had witnessed the accident rushed to my assistance while shouting, “Call an ambulance,” “Phone 911,” and “Call the police!” Others offered to drive me to the hospital, and several of them said they would be glad to testify on my behalf in court. In the meantime, the driver had opened the door of his bus and stepped out. I shall never forget the look of shock and fear on his face when he saw me lying on the pavement. I felt a bit sorry for him; I knew he would probably lose his job if I reported the incident, and I did not want that on my conscience. I was sure that he had learned a hard lesson and

YIPPING PUPPIES
(pour les dames du certain âge)
my breasts used to be yipping puppies
leaping at the full moon
as it peeped over the back fence
now, they are an old bassett hound
snoring on the gray stoop

Linda Stryker

See Down on p. 9
Writers Group Begins in September

The reorganized Advanced Writers Group of the Emeritus College will begin monthly meetings on September 9 and continue throughout the academic year until May 12, 2010. Meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month, excepting Veterans Day on November 11.

This forum is designed for active writers who wish to engage in serious conversations about their writings and those of other emeriti/ae, within a group setting. Sessions may include critiques, topical discussions, questions and answers, and advice, allowing for flexibility according to each of the participant’s goals.

The group will be limited to 10 to 12 Emeritus College members, including associate members and the spouses or partners of members. As of June 29, nine individuals had expressed an interest in joining the group. Serious writers wishing to become a part of this group should contact Maureen Graff at Maureen.Graff@asu.edu.

Submissions to Emeritus Voices Solicited

Eric vanSonnenberg, the new editor of Emeritus Voices (EV), our college’s online/print journal, invites all members of the Emeritus College to submit their works for its fifth edition. Original fiction and non-fiction manuscripts, memoirs, vignettes, poetry, photography and images, videos, and book reviews are all being accepted. Previously published material or excerpts also will be considered. Both the hard copy published version and the online version of the journal are available to authors.

Submissions for EV No. 5, which will appear in October 2009, must be received by early September for their consideration. Any Emeritus College member who has an idea which he or she would like to discuss with the editor is encouraged to contact him at ericvansonnenberg@yahoo.com.

To aid contributing members, guidelines for submitting material to this journal are available online and in bound form. Dr. vanSonnenberg says, “We welcome your submissions and ideas for your journal, Emeritus Voices!”

Charles Brownson has served as editor of Emeritus Voices since its founding in 2007, with vanSonnenberg assisting him as associate editor for the April 2009 issue. Their roles are now reversed for EV No. 5; after its publication, Charles will step aside.

The cover art for the April issue of Emeritus Voices shown here was done by college member Jerry Buley. This and all earlier issues of the journal are available for purchase at the Emeritus College office.

College’s Move to Old Main Funded

It’s official: The ASU administration has approved funding for the Emeritus College to be relocated to Old Main on the Tempe campus this summer. This was announced to Dick Jacob on July 10 in a letter from Carrie Jo West, Office of the University Architect. In it she wrote, “We hope to meet with you soon to further develop the attached plan and confirm that your needs have not changed. We are in the process of working with ASU FACMAN and the existing Old Main tenants to establish a construction schedule. Once this has been confirmed we will work with the Emeritus College to identify a move date that will not be too disruptive to your work.”

Details of the plans and photographs of the college’s new setting will appear in our fall newsletter. Dick is chair of our Space Committee; other committee members are Elmer Gooding and Liz Prather. Dean Gordon wrote, “The new quarters will be a great asset for the College in our growing programming and membership’s base, now approaching 400.”

Commencement (from top of page)

College members who braved the 102 F temperature in black robes and mortarboards, and who stood almost five hours waiting for the ceremony to begin, were not disappointed by Obama’s inspiring performance. Len carried our gonfalon and sat in the first row near the platform; council members sat in section 30, which provided an excellent view of the whole stadium, including the huge TV screens showing the speakers. The controversy over failure to award Obama an honorary degree is addressed by Lou Weschler on page 4.
A communication came into our Emeritus College office which reminded me that a university advances its valued intergenerational connections through shared historical campus experiences. The communication was from Patricia Olsen, Senior Architect/Historic Preservation Coordinator, Office of the University Architect. Dr. Olsen had received an inquiry about the origin of the gazebo which provides an inviting stop between the University Club and the short walk to the former ASU president’s residence — now home of the Virginia G. Piper Center for Writing. While I could not recall any information about how the gazebo became part of ASU, I sure remember stepping into it a few times to kiss my high school sweetheart wife, Rena, who came with me and our three precocious children to Arizona 40 years ago. Over the years, the gazebo also became a place for picnics with other faculty members and their families and a place for nurturing collegial friendships.

I discussed the gazebo inquiry with our newsletter editor, Winifred Doane, and administrative assistant, Maureen Graff. Stemming from this conversation was the suggestion that it might be a good idea to tap into the collective memory of our Emeritus College membership to learn about the history of not only the gazebo, but other such mystery-cloaked structures on campus. Therefore, I invite you, the readers of this newsletter, to send in information you might have about structures of little known record at ASU, as well as some of the unique experiences you may have had at ASU that relate to its history.

Much of our history goes well beyond what is listed in our CVs. I, as others, would look forward to reading about your collegial histories in the Emeritus College Newsletter, and Winifred, its editor, has agreed to include selected articles in future issues. By doing so, we would advance our academic community connections — both past and present.

I encourage you, our emeritus faculty, to submit recollections related to the history of ASU to Winifred, c/o Maureen Graff (addresses on page 12), either in the form of articles or letters for the Mailbox section of this newsletter.

Len Gordon, Dean

Arizona State University announced the establishment of a scholarship program named for President Barack Obama at its graduation ceremony on May 13, 2009. Six high school seniors, among the first recipients of the President Barack Obama Scholars program, met the President and were introduced on the platform.

President Obama graciously acknowledged the program and said: “What a wonderful gift, to open the doors of education for students of every background.” He made the need to open education to all a major theme in the balance of his address at the commencement ceremony. He suggested that the program could serve as a model for universities across the country.

The President Barack Obama Scholars program was decreed by ASU’s President Michael Crow, in lieu of an honorary degree. In his introduction of President Obama, Dr. Crow outlined many of Obama’s numerous achievements, commitments, visions and intellectual contributions. He noted that the President has taken many bold steps to change America for the better, particularly in fostering educational opportunity for all. He announced the President Barack Obama Scholars program as part of ASU’s pledge to the future of education in America.

President Obama in good humor discussed the controversy about his not achieving enough to qualify for an honorary degree. He noted no matter how much one has done, there is always more to learn and more to do. He made not resting on past achievements a challenge to graduates to keep on growing and achieving.

In 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson and President Adolf Lopez-Mateos of Mexico both addressed UCLA students at the graduation ceremony, and both received honorary degrees. Like President Obama did later at ASU, they emphasized the importance of education and knowledge in the pursuit of freedom. The Mexican president was quoted as saying, “Knowledge and freedom cannot be kept apart.” He declared that students were the future leaders of not only the country, but also the world and they were the ones who would have the power to change the wrongs that burden society.

Like President Obama, they were the first sitting Presidents invited to speak at a UCLA commencement. The University of California Regents and the Chancellor of UCLA were nimble and perceptive enough to honor the two sitting politicians by bestowing honorary degrees on them. There was some controversy that day because of Viet Nam, but common sense and honor carried the day.

When President Obama accepted an honorary degree at Notre Dame on May 17, 2009, he noted that he was “one for two” in the honorary degree game. Even in typical humor, President Obama indicated he was well aware of the disrespect shown him and the office he holds.

Given his coolness under stress and his capacity to shrug off slights, President Obama in all probability has moved on. Nonetheless, ASU and President Crow missed an opportunity to go two for two. President Obama could have been honored by the scholarship and a degree. Dual honors: a decree and a degree at the same time. What a concept.

Louis Weschler
Many members of the Emeritus College visited the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix to see the “Chihuly: The Nature of Glass” exhibit. Above is one of the many dazzling displays of colored glass sculpture designed by Dale Chihuly and integrated into the garden’s desert flora. The exhibit, which opened on November 22, 2008, ended on May 31. Information about the artist is available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dale_Chihuly/

VOICES FOR ECCLESIASTES

I
“Whatever is has already been,
And what will be has been before.”
(Ecclesiastes, 3:15)
The sea was always in me,
I just never knew her maternity
Until her salt perfume seeped in,
As nearing her placid summer body
I sniffed her and stiffened in reverence.
We share her large womb
That spawned swimming life--
Gills and noses, pulsating hearts,
Quivering livers--to recognize
Species partners for the land dance
Before sliding back to her
Warmth and gestation,
Homecoming sons and daughters,
Slipping in tiny tissue envelopes
Through mouths of abundant sea progeny,
Each waiting for the right instructive
Organic combination to return,
Molecular cousins never met,
Extended future family in dreams,
Now scattered bits in galactic time.

II
“The fight is not to the strong . . .
Time and chance happen to all.”
(Ecclesiastes 9:11)
The secret story is not my mother
But how mothers began,
How predators survived
To create pregnancies.
We know how magma obsessions
Run hot in veins
And links and orifices
Combine for renewed animation.
Over eons each new cycle
Mimicked older forms of chance
Duplicating the blueprint,
Alive for the briefest snapshot,
Before clouds were dreams,
Before earth convulsed
Without anyone’s consent,
Before appointments mattered,
Before finally losing fur or feathers
In bigger jaws or pools
Of methane-filled ooze
And entombing in pickled shale,
Witnessed only by savannahs,
Incubating rain forests,
Divine amniosis gestating
Enlarged brain cargo.
So measure breath carefully
Until the next colliding asteroid
Extinguishes poetry and history
And rocks and gases rule again.

Don Sharpes

Fall-2009 Courses Scheduled by Tempe Connections

The relationship between Tempe connections and the Emeritus College will continue during academic year 2009-2010 and will include some new course listings given by college members. In the fall semester, these four-week courses will be offered in two separate blocks starting September 9 and held in the Tempe Public Library. The schedule for courses presented by college members is listed here.

Block I – September 9 – October 7
“Politics in Art” by Lou Weschler, Ph.D.: Tuesdays, 1:00-2:30 PM, 9/8, 9/15, 9/22, 9/29.
“Islam and the West” by Donald Sharpes, Ph.D.: Wednesdays, 10:00-11:30 AM, 9/16, 9/23, 9/30, 10/7.
“Advanced Radiology – Interesting and Innovative Imaging and Intervention” by Eric vanSonnenberg, M.D.: Thursdays, 2:00-3:30 PM, 9/10, 9/17, 9/24, 10/1.

Block II – October 8 – November 22
“Your Brain” by Jay Braun, Ph.D.: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00-2:30 PM, 11/3, 11/5, 11/10, 11/12.

In Memory
Rosa Boykin Harris
Spouse Member of the Emeritus College since its founding year and wife of the late William Harris, ASU Professor Emeritus of Marketing
March 21, 2009
Mrs. Harris was born in North Carolina in 1918 and lived in Ohio before moving to Arizona. She lived in Sun City and was 90 years old at the time of her death.
NANKAI MIDDLE SCHOOL

I go back to the classroom of my teen years again and again. Something my teachers said and the manner in which they said it beckons me.

My English teacher transported me to Charles Dicken’s London—narrow winding streets, Madame Defarge knitting…

My Math teacher coordinated numbers, lines, circles… and moved them to the unused space in my mind, and I began to see more ways to approach a problem.

One teacher dramatized Socrates and made us to say or ask what we thought. Anything was okay.

The school campus was built in Sichuan Province after Japan occupied northern China when Nankai University’s president and many faculties fled from Tianjin to a suburb in Chonqing and founded Nankai Middle School, coeducational in the Confucian manner.

Boys and girls were kept apart by a bowl-shaped soccer field, the size of Pasadena’s Rose Bowl.

Two large three-story buildings—mirror image of each other were built on opposite sides of the soccer field: one for the boys, one for the girls.

Women students’ dorms were behind the main building: six rows of one-story dwelling, each had a narrow corridor separating the face-to-face small rooms each held six cots made of wood. Each cot was made of four planks, measured one foot by six feet and one and a half inches thick, propped by two wooden benches.

Twice a semester I would carry the planks, one by one, to the front of the main building, across a hundred-yard space to the road next to the soccer field—the top of the bowl—that separated the men’s main building from the women’s—mirror images of each other.

For each plank I would descend the steps for at least seventy feet, cross the soccer field to the other side where the men’s main building was, ascend the seventy-feet steps to the boiler room behind the men’s building where empty buckets and pails were set out for me to fill them with boiling water to pour over the bedbug-infested planks I had to sleep on night after night.

I would fill my pails with boiling water pour the water over the planks and watch the blood-red bugs turn beet-red and die.

Afterwards, I would haul the sterilized boards, one by one, back to where I came from, first descend then ascend the soccer field steps until finally I reached my room.

Frances New

College Member Studies Spiritist Doctors

Joan Koss-Chioino, ASU Professor Emerita of Anthropology and Research Professor at George Washington University, was funded for the year 2009 by the John Templeton Foundation to do research titled “Medicine and Spirituality in the Clinic: A Comparison of Spiritist and non-Spiritist Doctors and their Patients in Puerto Rico.”

Dr. Koss-Chioino writes that, “Despite a bourgeoning interest in the role of spirituality in medicine, few studies have examined how [the] doctors’ own spirituality affect their relationship with patients and how their patients perceive these spiritual doctors.” Hence she is studying, “… how medical doctors in Puerto Rico, trained in diverse medical disciplines (excluding psychiatry), integrate a particular kind of spirituality (spirits and spiritist beliefs) into their lives and clinical practices, and how this integration affects their clinical work with patients.” She is comparing spiritist doctors to a matched group of doctors and their patients who do not incorporate spirits into their lives and medical practices.

A secondary focus of this research is the relationship between science and religion as integrated into the lives and work of medical doctors. Her research is, “… augmented by an exploration of the ways in which spirituality, which often involves personal/spiritual transformation, may initiate and frequently enhances […] altruistic and compassionate clinical behavior in medical professionals.”
Emeritus Profile: Len Gordon

Dean Len Gordon

It’s official: The provost’s office has stamped its approval on the election of Len Gordon to his second term as Dean of the ASU Emeritus College. This is an appropriate time to present a profile of Len’s life and accomplishments because many of our college members are unfamiliar with them.

Len’s parents were Russian Jews who immigrated to the U.S. in the 1920s. His father, Abe Gordon, and his mother, Sarah Rosen, met and married in Detroit, MI. Len was born on December 6, 1935 – a year the Detroit Tigers won the World Series, the Detroit Lions won the National Football League Championship, and the Detroit Red Wings won the Stanley Cup. The “City of Champions” imprinted on him a life-long love of sports, especially baseball.

On arrival in the U.S., Len’s father Anglicized his surname to Gordon, a familiar name in Russia dating back to the 1690s when Peter the Great befriended a Scottish general named Gordon and made him Chief of Staff of the Russian Army. Russian Jewish immigrants often chose “Gordon” because of its familiarity. Len was named Leibel (Leonard in English) after his Grandfather Rosen. Later, when registered in the graduate program at the University of Michigan, this posed a problem. There was an unrelated Leonard Gordon of Russian Jewish descent also enrolled. UofM officials could not tell them apart: neither had a middle name, their handwriting was similar, and both were getting the same grades. Len, being younger, had to provide a middle name, so he chose Leibel, but had not spelled it out. Thus the name on his diploma is “Leonard Label Gordon.”

Growing up in Detroit, Len was surrounded by a large, close-knit family. “On my way to school I could go by six aunts and uncles and many cousins, and my Gordon grandparents lived across from the school. I could stop and get something to eat anywhere along the way.” Family members were big baseball fans because, “the star first baseman of the Tigers was Hank Greenberg, the first Hall of Fame Jewish ball player.”

Because of Greenberg, Len entered into the sport of baseball in his pre-teens. As a teenager he played in the Detroit Baseball League, but his parents did not want him to get too serious about it. Like many cousins, he could earn more money as a pharmacist or an attorney at that time. His father envisioned buying a building in which Len would have second-floor offices and he would send patients downstairs to fill their prescriptions at his older brother Bill’s pharmacy on the first floor. When Len told his father that he, “didn’t like that idea,” his dad shook his head and said, “I really need you in the family haberdashery store because it’s the family business.”

Hence, while Len was accepted at the UofM, he initially enrolled at Wayne State University, and his high school sweetheart, Rena, went off to the UofM. He got his B.A. in 1957 and earned a M.A. in history from the UofM a year later. After teaching three years at Oak Park, MI, High School, he was lured back to Wayne State and completed his Ph.D. in sociology in 1966. Len married Rena in 1955, while they were undergraduates, and their first child was born in September, 1957. The story of their lives together for 50 years is poignantly told in his 2008 memoir titled “Rena and Me” (Emeritus Voices, No. 2). While working on his doctorate, Len was an instructor at Wayne State (1960-1962), supporting a growing family. He then became Research Director of the Metropolitan Detroit Jewish Community Council (1962-1964) and Michigan Area Director of the American Jewish Committee Institute of Human Relations (1964-1967).

Upon receiving his Ph.D., he learned of a position open at ASU. ASU was seeking Research One University status, and more than 90 percent of its Ph.D. programs were begun between 1965 and 1975, including sociology. Len, who had a NSF research grant and both teaching and administrative experience, was offered the position of Assistant Professor of Sociology in 1967. He accepted, moved his family to Arizona, and settled in Scottsdale, thinking that Arizona was next to Texas.

After three years at ASU, Len received an early promotion to the rank of associate professor, presenting a dilemma for the Tenure and Promotion Committee: He had been promoted two years before coming up for tenure, so how could he be evaluated for not having gotten tenure? The resulting edict, known for years as “The Gordon Rule,” stated that one could not come up for promotion without also being considered for tenure. In 1977, he was appointed full professor and later served as President of the ASU Academic Senate.

Len served as chair of his department for nine years, starting in 1981, and then as Associate Dean for Academic Programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for 11 years. Upon retirement in 2002, he was named Professor Emeritus of Sociology. He was a founding member of the Emeritus College Council, and the college has been fortunate to have him as its dean since 2007.

Len Gordon loves to teach and lecture, and he continues to do so through the Emeritus College. He continues to address topics covered by his course titles, such as Racial and Ethnic Relations, Collective Behavior and Social Movements, Research Methodology, Contemporary Theory, Modern Social Problems, and many more. How many undergraduates has he taught at ASU? “They’d be in the thousands.” How about graduate students? “Hundreds of them.” He is also respected for his mentoring and service to the community.

Len has received many honors and awards and is well known for his publications, including those about the 1967 Detroit race riots – especially the aftermath.

His 1978 textbook, Sociology and American Social Issues, has been used extensively by students and researchers. Yet he considers election to the presidency of the Paciﬁc Sociological Association in 1979 the highlight in his career: He became a role model for non-west coast aspirants to that ofﬁce, which had previously been dominated by larger west coast schools like Stanford and UC-Berkeley. He also savors having been chair of the sociology department when its ranking rose to 37th in the nation. “We were in the big league!” he exclaimed.

Len and Rena raised three children. The oldest, Melinda Sue, is an accomplished cinematographer who, in 2007, won a lifetime achievement award for Production Still Photography in Hollywood. Their son Matt is a radiation oncologist who practices medicine in Salem, OR, and their youngest, Melissa Gail, is a well known silk artist in Maui, HI. Matt and his wife have three children – Len’s “precocious” grandchildren.

Len traveled extensively during his career, spending many months at London University’s Goldsmith College, University College London, and The Hebrew University in Israel. Upon retirement, he and Rena enjoyed excursions to Bangkok, Singapore, Hong Kong and Mexico. After her passing in 2005, he returned to baseball – now softball – and says, “All of a sudden I was playing center field and hitting again.” Dancing is another favorite pastime; recently he danced with the Ann Ludwig Dance Company at the Temple Center for the Arts. He also enjoys theater, especially Broadway musicals, and, for reading, particularly likes biographies and history books.

Recently, Len exchanged rings with Dorthy Herzberg, a special friend with common interests who retired and moved to Scottsdale a few years ago. We wish them well in this new relationship.
In June, Winifred Doane (life sciences) was interviewed at her second home in Vermont by Florence Minnis, who is funded by a grant from Yale University to produce an oral history of women at Yale between the 1930s and the 1970s. Winifred’s day-long interview will become part of Yale’s permanent historical records and will be available to researchers after 10 years. Although she greatly benefitted from her association with Yale from 1956 to 1977, she had much to relate about sexual discrimination there - first as a graduate student, then as a NIH postdoctoral trainee, later as a faculty research associate and lecturer, and finally as an associate professor. Minnis, a native of Northern Ireland, had been a TV Director and Producer for the BBC before moving to the USA with her husband, who holds an endowed chair in medieval art history at Yale.

In her latest publication, “Five Fabled Fellows,” Patricia A. Etter (archives and special collections) describes how the Forty-niners heading to California on southern trails came in contact with Indian tribes representing varied cultural traditions in Indian Territory, Texas, and Arizona. They would not have reached their destination without the assistance of Native people, and the “five fellows” were: Wild Cat (Coacoochee), a Seminole leader; Black Beaver (Sucktum Mahway), a Delaware guide; Wolf’s Shoulder (Is-a-keep), a Comanche Chief; Little Mountain (Dohasan), a Kiowa leader; and the well-known Pima, Chief Antonio Llunas.

On August 17, Patricia will leave for Loveland, CO, to attend the board meeting of the Oregon-California Trails Association. She will take a day-long tour of the Cherokee Overland Trail, and one stop at the Cherokee/Stonewall/10-Mile Swing Station, which was the setting for Louis L’Amour’s novel, Cherokee Trail.

Denis Gillingwater (art) reports that The American Academy in Rome recently placed into its Rare Book Room Collection the photo case of images produced during his visitation at the Academy during March and April of 2008. The case and final printing of images was created in his home studio. It contains 40 photographic prints, an artist statement, and a respondence by Deborah Sussman Sussner. The title of the case is “CULTURAL STRATA/PERCEPTUAL SCREENS/OBSERVATIONAL GROUNDS.” An Emeritus College Grant funded the project for the Phoenix based work. The work from Rome was part of a presentation on Denis’ last 20 years of work given in July at the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art. It was part of an on-going series of power point presentations titled: “Artists on Artists: Rooted in Reality.”

Len Gordon (sociology) wrote an invitational essay in honor of Tom Hood, the Executive Officer of the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) who is retiring after 19 years. The essay appeared in this summer’s issue of Social Problems Forum under the title, “A Tribute to Tom Hood as He Leaves the SSSP Executive Officer Position at our 2009 SSSP Annual Meeting.” Len also is serving as chair of the SSSP User’s Guide Committee. In August, he will take part in the History of Sociology Section at the American Sociological Association Meetings in San Francisco. In addition, he will give lectures to two SOC 101 classes on “Sports, Politics, Race, and Gender” on August 31 and on September 1. The lectures are aimed at advancing student understanding of the larger aspects of the meaning of race and gender in American society.

Marina Stock McIsaac (educational technology) was appointed to the Discipline Peer Review Board, Fulbright Senior Specialist Program, US Council for International Exchange of Scholars for 2009-2010. She also has been active in the Open Education Resource movement and was certified in June as a Wikieducator. Wikieducators are among the growing number of teachers who promote Open Education Resources by teaching and developing materials that are available online free and open to all. Anyone interested in online collaboration and in developing free content for e-learning, should visit http://www.wikieducator.org/

In July, Marina participated as a consultant and trainer for the EUROPA Comenius-Grundtvig Training Project, “Effective Communication in ESL Classes: Language, Communication and Culture”, in Antalya, Turkey. The project aims were to enhance teachers’ communication and technology skills. Complete course and links are at: http://www.wikieducator.org/Language_Communication_and_Culture/

J. Jeffries (Jeff) McWhirter (psychology in education) taught a group counseling course for the State University of New York at Buffalo in their Singapore Masters program last January and February. In June 2009 he also taught a short course and delivered a series of lectures on youth violence for the Department of Special Education and Counseling at the University of Alaska-Anchorage.

Chuck Merbs (anthropology) was a keynote speaker at a workshop titled Musculoskeletal Stress Markers (MSM): Limitations and Achievements in the Reconstruction of Past Activity Patterns which was held at the University of Coimbra, Portugal, July 2-3. The title of his presentation was “MSM - Perhaps Not a Superstar but an Important Member of the Team.” He was also a member of the workshop’s Scientific Committee and an Annotator in the final Plenary Session. Chuck noted that the term Musculoskeletal Stress Marker (MSM) was introduced by Diane Hawkey and himself in a 1995 publication dealing with Canadian Inuit.

“While at a reception held at Coimbra City Hall, I decided to try out the mayor’s chair and someone took this picture. The mayor wasn’t there at the time.”

Shannon Perry (nursing, SFSU) attended the International Council of Nurses Congress in Durban, South Africa, in July. Approximately 6000 nurses from more than 100 countries participated; the scientific sessions and entertainment were excellent. She also visited Lesotho, had lunch in the highest pub on the African continent, and visited clinics and a hospital in Swaziland. Then she spent a week in Ukwala, Kenya, providing nursing care in a clinic. She learned that many baby girls there are named Michelle, Sasha, and Malia. While in Kenya, she visited Mama Sarah Obama, President Obama’s stepgrandmother – a very gracious lady.

Shannon wrote, “We are in the final stages of revision of the 8th edition of Lowdermilk, Perry, and Cashion, Maternity Nursing, See Faculty Notes, p. 10
Emeritus College Newsletter

Summer book reading

One advantage for Emeritus Professors is that we can reread books from decades ago with pleasure and increased illumination, as well as enjoy new books on old or new themes. I’ve spent most of my 40+ postdoctoral years in Utah and Arizona, high and low – in our cabin near Capitol Reef, Utah, I have been rereading some books from my 1960s years at the U of Utah. Since Capitol Reef is near the 1890s headquarters of the Butch Cassidy “Wild Bunch,” I started with my (somewhat yellowed) copy of the book with that title written by James D. Horan in 1958. Then I reread Edward Abbey’s signature book, Desert Solitaire, written in 1968 and concerned primarily with his thoughts as a park ranger in 1958 at Arches National Park near Moab, Utah. Everyone in the Southwest, or at least everyone who goes walking outdoors, knows of his later, iconic book, The Monkey Wrench Gang. In Desert Solitaire, Abbey combines the insights of a naturalist with some of his own adventures, which keep the book moving. He also refers to the book, The Voice of the Desert, 1954, by Joseph Wood Krutch. Krutch wrote many books from a naturalist’s perspective which are quite interesting for anyone who gets outdoors into the desert and elsewhere. I noticed during this rereading that his base was Tucson, a place unknown to me while I lived in Salt Lake City, but all too familiar after I moved to ASU in 1986!

Lastly, moving beyond summer nostalgia, I have just read Blood Memory, by Margaret Coel, 2008. Coel is the author of the popular Father O’Malley/Vicky Holden Wind River Reservation mysteries and here she begins a new series about a Denver reporter, who discovers her Arapahoe roots. The book is well written, moving between the Indian’s plight in 1864 and today, casinos, land disputes, old time families in Denver and the whole American panoply comprising what I’d call the “manifest destiny” crowd.

Robert Barnhill

New Members

We welcome 12 new members who have joined the College since the Spring 2009 issue of this newsletter. They are: Robert B. Cialdini (psychology), Douglas N. Cook (associate member, theater, Pennsylvania State University), Robert Gryder (secondary education), Sandra R. Harris (associate member, University Counseling Services, California State University), Barry Leshowitz (psychology), Albert McHenry (electronic systems), James Mitsui (affiliate member, languages, cultures and history), Elina Mooney (dance), Larry E. Penley (business), Shannon Perry (associate member, nursing, San Francisco State University), David Schwallm (English), and Robert C. Williams (human evolution and social change).

The college now has 392 members: 340 regular ASU members, 24 associate members, four affiliate members (ASU, non-emeriti/ae), and 24 spouses of deceased ASU emeritus professors.

W. Walsh Doane

Down (from p. 2)

would not make any more left turns without first checking for pedestrians in the crosswalk.

Therefore, I shook my head to waive aside all suggestions that would have brought the law into the picture. (I explore the idea of ambulance chasers and how some people use litigation after minor accidents as a means to line their pockets at the expense of others.) Actually, my head had not hit the ground, and I did not think that I had been injured enough to require immediate medical assistance. I also knew that I had an appointment the next morning with my family physician for my annual physical examination, so I decided to wait until then for a medical opinion.

While all of this was happening, one overpowering thought kept going through my mind: I could not be late for my meeting. If I were, the committee members would be unable to get into Wilson Hall and would disperse, thinking that the meeting had been called off due to the holiday. I could not let that happen because we still had a lot of work to do on organizing the Emeritus College’s First Annual Symposium.

The encircling bystanders kept asking how they might assist me, so I finally said, “Well, you can help me get up.” At last, arms stretched out on both sides of me, and I was lifted slowly and gently to my feet. I had been trying to get up by myself, but was unable to do so because my right arm was pinned under me. It was just my luck to have landed on my right side – the side that was due for shoulder replacement surgery in two weeks.

Once on my feet, I deduced that I had no broken bones, although I expected to suffer from some large bruises on my right leg and arm, thanks to baby aspirin and a blood thinner I was taking. I also anticipated some extra pain in my arthritic joints. However, all I could think about was leaving the scene of the accident as soon as possible. So I dusted myself off, picked up my handbag, thanked everyone who had helped me, and limped away to my meeting.

In retrospect, I actually was pretty lucky. The metal bars which I had seen over my left shoulder, as I was falling, turned out to be a bicycle in the rack on the front end of the bus. Together, they had acted like a cattle guard, lifting me up and tossing me far enough to one side so that the bus did not run over me upon contact. I mentioned this to my doctor the next day while he was measuring my two largest bruises, which were quite colorful, but looked rather ghastly. He recorded a “22 x 26 cm hematoma” over my posterior lateral right hip, and an “11 x 7 cm hematoma” on my right forearm. Then, he shook his head and said, “You’re the only person I know who would get up and just walk away from an accident like that.”

“Maybe so,” I replied, “but I was down, not out; besides, I was determined to get to my meeting on time.”
French composer Anthony Girard, who is Director of the Conservatoire de Darius Milhaud in Paris, France, recently completed a new work dedicated to saxophonist Joseph Wytko, who will present its premiere performance, and others, in Paris during Fall 2009, where he will also conduct a series of master classes. Dr. Wytko will serve as guest professor at several U.S. universities.

Recent Emeritus Faculty Publications


McWhirter, J.J., 2008. What a difference a year makes? Well, think about 29: The Fulbright program and Turkish experiences. APA Division 17: International Section Newsletter, 3(Fall):10-12.

Mailbox

Letters to the Editor and opinions may be sent to emerituspress@mainex1.asu.edu or Winifred W. Doane, The Emeritus College, PO Box 875203, Tempe, AZ 85203. Submissions longer than 200 words will be edited. We reserve the right not to print inappropriate letters. Anonymous letters will not be printed, but names will be withheld upon request.

To: Members of the Emeritus College

In the Spring 2009 issue of “Your Retirement,” published for retirees by the Arizona State Retirement System (ASRS), there appeared an article on page 5 titled “The AZ Constitution and Your Pension Benefits.” This article informed its readers that:

- The ASRS Defined Benefit Plan is protected by the AZ State Constitution, Article XXIX.
- Article XXIX states in Paragraph 1.C that “Membership in a public retirement system is a contractual relationship that is subject to Article II, Paragraph 25, and public retirement system benefits shall not be diminished nor impaired.”
- Article XXIX also states, “Notwithstanding the current national and statewide economic downturn, your retirement trust fund is financially sound,” and, as the state constitution says, “your ‘benefits shall not be diminished nor impaired.’”

The article does not mention the fate of the benefits of the small percentage of ASRS members who do, or will, receive their benefits according to the pre-1974 plan, namely, the System Defined Contribution Plan, referred to as the old “System” plan. On July 1, 1981, members covered by the old “System” who had not converted to the new Defined Benefit Plan (or new “Plan”), were involuntarily transferred to the latter. The funds from their accounts were co-mingled with those of members with the new Plan so that the ASRS investment funds could be uniformly invested.

In October 1995, however, the old System members were informed that they were entitled to choose the method used to determine their retirement benefits. The choices were the “current Plan formula or the old System method.” Under the new Plan, benefits would be computed by the formula: “(total credited service) times (2%) times (your average monthly salary).” The alternative was for benefits to be computed under the old System method and “paid as an annuity based on the member’s total account balance including the member and employer contributions, plus all interest and supplemental credited to the account.” The deadline for choosing was December 31, 1995.

The October 1995 letter also said: “To assist you in your decision, we have enclosed estimates of your retirements calculated by both the Plan and System methods. Regardless of the method you choose, you are considered to be retired from the ASRS Plan and entitled to all Plan benefits. If you elect the System method, however, you will not be entitled to any automatic or ad hoc cost of living increases authorized by the State Legislature. You will be entitled to any supplemental credits (13th check) which may be payable to System retirees. Please mark your ballot to denote your election and have your signature notarized.”

A subsequent letter dated September 26, 2006, to “All System members” from Director Paul Matson provided disconcerting, foreboding, and upsetting news to all those members who had decided to take their benefits by the old System method. It stated: “...With a declining System population and increasing concentration of longer-living retirees, the System is expected to experience increased volatility in its funding status. Additionally, because a portion of System members’ benefits are derived from investment earnings, there is exposure to investment risk. Unlike the Defined Benefit Plan, the System Defined Contribution Plan does not fully guarantee benefits. In fact, as of June 30, 2005, only 37.25 percent of System benefits are guaranteed. Negative impact from risk can result in a reduction of future benefits to you.”

To my mind, there are several inconsistencies associated with the above paragraph which cannot be satisfactorily resolved. They are:

1. Article XXIX of the Arizona State Constitution says that “your benefits shall not be diminished nor impaired.” (Diminished means “to make less” and impaired means “to make worse, to diminish in quantity, value or strength.”) Therefore, our benefits cannot be made less or made worse or diminished in quantity, value or strength.

2. The (undated) letter from the ASRS sent in October of 1995 states, “Benefits under the System were paid as an annuity based upon the member’s total account balance, including the member and employer contributions, plus all interest and supplemental credit accrued to the account.” Based upon this information we were required to submit a notarized ballot by December 31, 1995, with our irrevocable choice of how we were to receive our benefits.

How many of us would have chosen to receive System benefits if we had been told that only 37.25% of those benefits were guaranteed?

3. Section 411 of the Internal Revenue Code deals with vesting rights for the qualified pension, profit sharing, and stock bonus plans described in Section 401(a) and related following sections. There are two types of vesting plans: (A) a 5-year plan and (B) a 3 to 7-year plan. In both cases, after the employee has completed the requisite five or seven years of service, the plan satisfies the requirements to be a qualified trust “if the employee has the non-forfeitable right to 100 percent of the employee’s accrued benefit derived from employer contributions.” It follows that if only 37.25% of our accounts are guaranteed, the ASRS does not have a qualified pension plan. This would mean that we should have to pay taxes on all those wonderful deductions over our working years that were being put into our retirement accounts tax free.

According to the ASRS letter of October 1995, “Regardless of the method you choose, you are considered to be retired from the ASRS Plan and are entitled to all Plan benefits.” I would not classify paying back taxes on several decades of retirement a “benefit”; yet that appears to be the so-called “benefit” enjoyed by everyone in the ASRS Plan (including, but not limited to, former old System members).

4. As I understand it, the funds for both System and Plan members are invested as a unified whole. That supposedly was the reason we were involuntarily made Plan members back in 1981. Only later, when it came time to pay pension checks, did the distinction between Plan and System become applicable. If that is indeed true, then what does it matter if the number of System members, a minute percentage of the total ASRS population, is diminishing and living longer? We are supposedly entitled to “All Plan Benefits” (except for the ad hoc cost of living benefits). One of those benefits should be participating in the investment history of the total Plan funds.

Sincerely,

Dick Jacob

Editor’s note: Our apologies to Elmer Gooding for omitting his name from the Emeritus College Council list on page 12 of the last two issues of this newsletter.
Mission of The Emeritus College
The purpose of The Emeritus College is to give a home and a focus to continued intellectual, creative and social engagement of retired faculty with the University. The Emeritus College fosters and promotes the scholarly and creative lives of its members, prolonging fruitful engagement with and service to the University and community. The Emeritus College provides the University a continued association with productive scientists, scholars and artists who have retired from their faculty positions but not from their disciplines.

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