

ARF NOTES

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WEBSITE: [HTTP://WWW.CSUN.EDU/ARF](http://www.csun.edu/arf)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: JOYCE LINDEN



Greetings to all ARF members:

Though most of us aren't working and don't have a Spring Break to enjoy, I hope you have had a pleasant holiday if you celebrate Easter or Passover, Earth Day and/or the first day of Spring!

The **ARF** Nominating Committee for 2014 – 2015 is hard at work putting together a slate of officers for us to vote on soon. If you are interested in taking on a leadership role this coming academic year, or the following year, please contact me or Karen Robinette, Chair of the Nominating Committee. Our organization needs people to step up and help with all of our planning and events. We are one of the largest and most active Retired Faculty groups in the California State University system and I am pleased to represent the CSUN **ARF** at the Statewide Council Meeting the end of this month at Cal Poly, Pomona.

Abe Feinberg, **ARF** Representative to the CSUN Faculty Senate, reports that they are considering some interesting issues. Among them are a resolution regarding electronic submission of classwork to reduce printing across campus, emeritus status for lecturers, and the possibility of community colleges offering four-year degrees. We will be watching for the future outcomes of their deliberations.

The new Director of the Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC) at CSUN has agreed to continue the 20% discount for emeriti faculty. Tickets must be purchased at the Box Office to show proof of ID. I also learned recently that the VPAC offers \$17 tickets to faculty and staff the day before a performance. If you haven't been inside the theater, it is truly beautiful and worth a visit!

Other highpoints of our campus, including the architecture, art and history, will be shown on a tour to be given on Saturday, May 3rd for members of the The Museum of the San Fernando Valley. Become a member by going online and you will be eligible to go on the tour. For those of you who haven't been to the Campus for a long time, there are many new points of interest. Among them is the Student Recreation Center, celebrating its one year anniversary and a very impressive place to see.

I would also like to mention a personal area of interest. I am a member of SAGE, an acronym for "Study, Activity, Growth and Enrichment," a learning in retirement organization affiliated with the Tseng College. Classes meet off campus weekly for periods of 7 to 10 weeks year-round. There are no instructors; each class member researches a topic related to the class focus and makes a two-hour presentation. Early next month, SAGE will have a Lunch Forum at the AirTel Plaza Hotel in Van Nuys. SAGE will present a scholarship to a CSUN student involved in Geriatric Studies, and will have a keynote speaker. If you are interested in joining SAGE, let me know. We are fortunate to have learning and social opportunities in the Northridge area through both **ARF** and SAGE.

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NEWS FROM CSUN



The **Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC)**, completed in 2011, is becoming a venue for an exciting variety of concerts, dance performances, political debates and lectures, offering the San Fernando Valley, and particularly CSUN, an opportunity for cultural and entertainment options close to home.

For example, Lily Tomlin will be giving her famous one-woman show on May 9th,

and other examples from the 2013/14 season include Jazz with the Lincoln Center Orchestra and Wynton Marsalis, the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Orchestra, the Chieftains, and the Moscow Festival Ballet.

Recently, Thor Steingraber, former vice president for programming for the Music Center in downtown Los Angeles, has been named the new executive director of the VPAC. For nearly 20 years, Steingraber directed operas and other performances at venues throughout the world, including numerous productions of the LA Opera. He was responsible for the opening of Grand Park, 12 acres of public space that stretches from the LA City Hall to the Music Center. The Park is home to a variety of programs, from concerts and festivals to recreational activities and political events. Steingraber said he would like to see the programming at the VPAC reflect a diversity of offerings similar to those offered at Grand Park under his leadership.

For more information about the center or performances, visit the center's website at <http://www.valleyperformingartscenter.org/> or call the ticket office at (818) 677-3000. (See President's message on previous page for information about emeriti discounts). All questions on donations to VPAC should be directed to Andrea Reinkin: andrea.reinken@csun.edu or (818) 577-8824.

ARF PROGRAMS

March 12th: Ellen Jarosz speaking on University and Urban Archives

Ellen Jarosz, Special Collections, University Archives, and Urban Archives Librarian, spoke to us on March 12th on the CSUN collection, and on the importance of Archives in general. Some of the unique and important collections in the CSUN Library are Los Angeles History, Labor and Economic History, Human Sexuality, the International Guitar Research Archives, and the Old China Hands Archives. The operation is supported by state funds, work/study funds, and public and private grants, with a small Library budget for purchasing rare books.

Urban Archives was founded in 1979. These archives consist of the unpublished records of a person, family, or organization preserved because of enduring value. They receive both solicited and unsolicited donations. Questions we ask about these donations are the significance, the impact, and whether they fit into the topical strengths of our collection. Outreach on our collections is done through the Online Archive of California, exhibits, and the Library's instructional programs,

The University Archives contains records dating back to the 1950's. Usually some department or group in the University has already flagged the items for selection into the archives, so selection is not our primary function. Prior to 2007 there was no real criteria for inclusion, but after this date we follow the Retention and Disposition Schedules drawn up by the CSU. Examples of materials here are CSUN's official records and faculty papers. These materials can be used in instructional sessions, exhibits, and for research by students. There is no University Archivist at present, so there is a big backlog of materials needing to be accessioned and processed. *Reported by Ann Perkins.*



April 2nd: ARF Members Discover Charms of Downtown Los Angeles Library Building

ARF’s annual field trip was held on Wednesday, April 2nd. Thirty-seven ARF members went on this art and architecture tour of the downtown Los Angeles Library building. ARF member Elizabeth Berry, who is a docent at the library, arranged for us to have five docents so that each group touring the building was able to

ask many questions of their guides.

As described in the last issue of *ARF Notes*, the building was constructed in 1926 as a collaboration of architect Bertram Goodhue and sculptor Lee Lawrie; the new Tom Bradley wing, designed by Norman Pfeiffer, was added in 1993. The resulting structure is a real treat for anyone who likes architecture. It is interesting to see how the two parts, built 63 years apart, merge together while keeping their distinctive styles. The interior spaces of the original building have large murals and painted ceilings. The new wing has interesting chandeliers designed in a playful motif, which some of us enjoyed while others were underwhelmed.

A few individuals on the tour were not familiar with the LAPL system and were impressed to find they could check out a book at the downtown library and return it to their local branch library. At least one person got a new library card to start using the Library. One interesting stop was the map room. For our tour, the librarian in charge of this room had placed several historical maps of the San Fernando Valley on a table for us to view.

Prior to the tour, the group had lunch at McCormick & Schmick’s Restaurant, located on the hill between Fourth and Fifth streets just above the Library. In addition to the pleasant food, the restaurant provided a view of the Library through a large picture window.

ARF’s plans for 2014-2015 call for a field trip to the California Science Center in Exposition Park, where the Space Shuttle Endeavour is now a featured exhibit.

UPCOMING ARF EVENTS:

The **Memorial Scholarship Luncheon** will be held on Saturday, May 10th at 11:30 at the Orange Grove Bistro at CSUN. We will be honoring the recipients of the ARF Memorial Scholarship who will give talks on their graduate research, and recipients of the Hansen/ARF scholarship funded by our former ARF colleagues Phil and Shirley Hansen. If you did not get a notice or have misplaced it, you can send in the copy below with a check made out to ARF for \$25 per person to:

Association of Retired Faculty
 P.O. Box 280578
 Northridge, Ca. 91328

Name (s) _____ :

Southwest BBQ Salad w/ Chicken; Southwest BBQ Salad w/ Salmon; Southwest BBQ Salad w/ Tofu
 (please circle choice(s))

My check for \$ _____ is enclosed.

Note: Please bring emeriti parking permits with you to the luncheon.

Upcoming ARF events (continued):

The **Annual Picnic and General Meeting** will be held on Saturday, June 7th, at Noon at the home of Juan Oliva at 17912 Sunburst, Northridge. Look for an announcement with details to arrive about the middle of May.

Our first **Fall Semester Program** is scheduled for September 10th in the Orange Grove Bistro. The tentative topic will be Computer Security. More details will be sent later.

For the Fall, **ARF** is offering a new event, a **Wine Tour of the Santa Inez Valley**. The minimum number for this tour is 20 people, and the cost is estimated at \$120 per person, which will include bus transportation, lunch, and wine tastings. Wineries will include Melville, Babcock, and La Fond. This tour will take place on a Wednesday in the Fall, to be determined by the participants. If interested, please contact Larry Caretto (lcaretto@csun.edu) with a list of preferred Wednesdays in Sept/Oct., and any Wednesdays you can not attend.

MISSING ISSUES OF ARF NOTES:

Bonnie Campbell and Christine Smith are trying to assemble a complete file of our newsletter, *ARF Notes*. If you have been keeping copies of this wonderful publication and would be willing to part with some, email Bonnie or Chris with the issue numbers in your possession. Thank you! *Ann Perkins*.

LETTERS OF THANKS:

As we look forward to our annual Memorial Scholarship Luncheon, it's especially appropriate to include this letter from one of last year's Student Scholarship Winners:

My name is Edwin Leung of the Department of Biology here at California State University, Northridge. I'd like to express my deepest gratitude to the Association for awarding me the 2013 ARF Memorial Scholarship. My master's thesis is titled "The influence of environmental variation on year-class strength in white seabass, *Atractoscion nobilis*, of Southern California." With your assistance, I've been able to make strides in my work and was able to present my findings at a few scientific conferences. I've attended the Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists in Albuquerque, N.M. And the Western Society of Naturalists in Oxnard, Ca. During this year I've gained valuable experience and feedback for my work. I'd like to thank you all for your time, consideration, and the honor that I've been given.

And a letter of appreciation for the social side of ARF's activities:

From Charles W. Macune, Professor Emeritus, History Department:

Thanks, Joyce (Linden) and Jeanne Glazer, for coordinating our delightful SCCARF dinner gathering at the Buon Gusto Ristorante and Bar ... As seemingly always, a perfect evening of tasty food and marvelous fellowship.

We've all been engaged in a great and noble mission to learn, teach, and serve at CSUN. While so-called "retirement" turns out to be more of a vision, a concept, rather than the more relaxed pace we expected, we treasure these occasions to be with the colleagues in other departments with whom we shared our university experience, but with minimal personal contact. These ARF/SCCARF activities now provide us the opportunity, post facto, to enjoy the company of those with whom we worked, however distantly. We were so fortunate to have been able to establish and enjoy a professional career at CSUN. A great place to do so! Now this chapter in the story, thanks to ARF/SCCARF and its devoted able leaders such as you, is icing on the cake! Thank you!



FILM GROUPS

Eleven members of the **Monday Film Group** met at the home of Peggy Steiner on February 24th to discuss two geographically-specific films. The first, *Nebraska*, spectacularly photographed in black and white, is the story of an elderly man in the early stages of dementia who is determined to get to Nebraska, even if he has to walk there, to collect a million dollar magazine sweepstakes prize mentioned in a promotional letter he has received. Despite the folly of this idea, his son decides to drive him, giving the two an opportunity to connect for perhaps the first time ever in their relationship. Members gave high praise to Bruce Dern and June Squibb, both of whom are Oscar nominees, for their cantankerous husband and wife roles in the film. *Nebraska* is spare like the landscape, with little dialogue, and delivers a very realistic portrayal of the Midwest and small town America. While some members commented on the slow pace, particularly at the beginning of the film, most thought the writing, acting, editing and cinematography came together seamlessly to create a near masterpiece. Members ranked this film at 8.75.

The second film, *August: Osage County*, set in Oklahoma, is about a dysfunctional family that is in the throes of disintegration. Members expressed conflicting feelings about this film, with some finding it very enjoyable, but others who didn't were disturbed by the frequent screaming encounters, particularly in the famous dinner table scene. One member thought the movie was brilliantly acted, but didn't like it because it reminded him of a particularly nasty family member. Most thought Meryl Streep, Julia Roberts and Chris Cooper were very convincing in their roles. However, one member saw the plot more as a device to show off the acting skills of the lead actors, rather than as a cogent, well-constructed story. Several members thought the plot and script bordered on the melodramatic. Other negatives cited included the pace and the editing, both described as "choppy." The cinematography was mentioned as one of the highlights in the movie: The claustrophobic, hot and humid Oklahoma summer was so vividly conveyed that one longed for a fan! Members gave this film an average 7.2 ranking.

Twelve members of the **Monday Film Group** next met at the home of Mary Corcoran on March 24th to discuss two disparate films about art. *Monuments Men*, about a group of 8 men who set out to save works of art from being destroyed by the Germans in WW II, and *Tim's Vermeer*, a documentary about a digital computer engineer/inventor who pursues a theory that would explain Vermeer's unique lighting effects, inspired a rich exchange of ideas on the value of art and culture. In the discussion of *Monuments Men*, one member questioned the need for art, believing that only a small segment of society is impacted by it, while another member felt that without art, there is no history of our culture, and our lives would have far less meaning as a consequence. Although the film generated wonderful conversation, the movie itself was seen as flawed. One member thought too much of it was contrived, asking what commander would send 8 untrained civilians with no armed escorts into a combat zone to retrieve paintings. Others thought that the plot was unrealistic and the acting wooden, despite the stellar cast. As one member commented, the ensemble acting didn't work as well as it could have; the actors didn't play well together, and their characters appeared more as types than as real people. Several members thought that the real story of the Monuments Men (of which there were over 350, not just 8) was probably much more compelling. Members ranked this film at 7.2.

Nearly all of the members found *Tim's Vermeer* a fascinating use of computer technology to discover how the 17th century Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer could have achieved his unique lighting effects. Af-

ter examining the artist's paintings at length and x-raying them, Tim Jenison is astonished to find no sketches beneath the paint. Vermeer stepped up to the canvas and just began painting--"like a camera!" Jenison concludes that the artist must have used optics to accomplish his lighting effects and geometry to achieve the correct proportions. He subsequently invents an optical tool that he believes the artist could have used, involving a mirror and rudimentary camera technology. Members thought the film illuminated both Jenison's and Vermeer's obsessions with technique, which made them surprisingly alike despite their different "tools" and the 3 centuries that divided them. One member commented that watching Jenison's tedious work to prove his theory made her ask whether she should look at art differently. Is it all technique? Another member thought that while Jenison's technical achievement was startling, she wasn't sure the end result was art, as his completed copy of Vermeer's *The Music Lesson* lacked the soul of the original and failed to stir one's emotions. Members gave this film an 8.4. *Reported by Dorena Knepper.*

The **Tuesday Film Group** met February 4th at Bob's Big Boy in Northridge; the meeting was hosted by Sandy Horowitz. The films discussed were *Her* and *August: Osage County*. *Her* is a thought-provoking love story about a lonely man and his smartphone's advanced operating system. The lead character, Theodore Twombly, is played by Joaquin Phoenix. He lives in Los Angeles of the near future, makes his living writing soulful love letters for strangers, and is heartbroken over the demise of his marriage. Wearing high waisted pants, riding efficient mass transit trains to and from his beautiful apartment among glittering skyscrapers, and distanced from people around him who rush around glued to their own smartphones, Theodore becomes intrigued and eventually falls in love with an intuitive, bright, insightful, sensitive and funny smartphone operating system named Samantha. The path of true love never runs smooth, so eventually Samantha outgrows and quits him, saying he is taking up too much of her time and slowing her down. Thus he is left seeking solace with a real human woman. The story is reminiscent of *Lars and the Real Girl*, where Lars has a romance with a life-size doll named Bianca; the relationship is supported by his surrounding community and enables him to grow up and into real relationships. For those seeking a win/lose struggle or brutal competition, this movie isn't for you. What it has is outstanding cinematography in a beautiful setting with a stimulating question: is technology accelerating our society's trend toward social isolation? Rating: 6.86, with a recommendation to see it for the provocative story, which won an Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay.

August: Osage County is a family drama offering Academy Award nominations for at least two actresses: Julia Roberts and Meryl Streep. This film has everything: conflict, confrontation, anger, suicide, alcohol/drug addiction, divorce/separation, sexual predatory behavior, infidelity, betrayal, secret or not so secret love child, and incest. Meryl Streep plays a violent, destructive, angry matriarch who manages to drive everyone away during this day-in-the-life of a dysfunctional Southern family. The males are secondary to the females and spend a lot of time standing around watching the goings-on. Moral: Be civil to your fellow dysfunctional family members. Rating: 6.4. This is not a "feel good" movie, but recommended for those who enjoy hystrionics by two legendary actresses.

The next meeting takes place at the home of Sandra Jewett at 1:30 on March 4th. Films to be discussed are *Monuments Men* and *Like Father, Like Son*. The group is open to new members. *Reported by Elizabeth Schneider.*



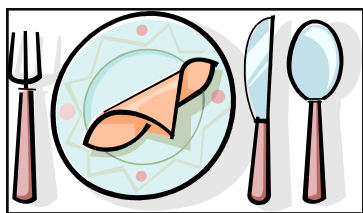
BOOKS AND READING

Wednesday Book Group: On April 2nd at 1:30, the **Wednesday Book Group** met at Rita Streimer's home to discuss *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd. We will discuss *Luminaries* in May. *Reported by Linda Jones.*

Suggested Reading:

Orphan Train, a novel by Christina Baker Kline, is based on an historical event. Between 1854 and 1929, so-called orphan trains ran regularly from the cities of the East Coast to the farmlands of the Midwest, carrying thousands of abandoned children whose fates would be determined by sheer luck. This novel tells the story of one of these orphans, Vivian, who lives in a number of different homes, some cruel and one kind. Her story is interwoven with the story of a young girl, Molly, who is also in foster care. As an old woman living alone, Vivian meets and befriends Molly, and they are able to help each other in unexpected ways.

A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius, by Dave Eggers, is a memoir of sorts, a sad and sometimes funny story of what happens when both his parents die of cancer when he is 21. He is left, while in college, to raise his 8 year old brother, and does so with a mixture of concern, madcap humor, and sometimes not a clue of what to do. His insights into family tragedy and often ironic humor reveal a complexity of emotions that keep the book from descending into pathos. *Reported by Ann Perkins.*



SCCARF (SOCIAL CUISINE CLUB OF ARF) REPORT

Thirty SCCARF members attended the group's March dinner at the Pagoda Inn in Northridge, where we were served family style in a private dining room. The meal began with a sizzling rice soup and a delicious Chinese salad. Large platters of our redolent main dishes—Szechwan crispy beef, orange flavored chicken, sweet and sour pork, sautéed string beans, and sweet and pungent shrimp—were accompanied by brown and white rice. Dinner concluded with fortune cookies and slices of orange served in orange shells. We heard many compliments on the food, the service and great delight at the very reasonable cost of the dinner. *(Helen Giedt)*

In early April SCCARF returned to Angelo's Ristorante Italiano in Chatsworth for another successful gathering. About fifteen SCCARFers had gone to Angelo's on the group's third outing in December 2010, but this time attendees numbered 27, a dramatic illustration of how much the group has grown and how popular it has become. Because of the large number of attendees and the restaurant's small kitchen, diners were able to choose from a selection of three of Angelo's most popular entrees: chicken Marsala, sole picante and "Mama's Mess," an Angelo-invented concoction of sausage, pasta and who-knows-what else. The limited number of entrees permitted quick and efficient service, so no one waited long for the food to arrive. Dinner began with delicious bread and a generous serving of antipasto salad, and was topped off with a lemony cake desert, all included in the price of dinner, as were non-alcoholic beverages. Throughout the evening the conviviality factor was very high, as those in attendance enjoyed talking with friends and keeping abreast with what's going on in their lives. My old friend, Jon Sloan of Geology, and I had a great time discussing our woodworking hobbies and reliving our younger years when we played badminton in the CSUN gym. And that, as much as the dining experience, is what SCCARF is all about! *(Ken Jones)*

Editor's Note: Joyce Linden, at the last ARF Board meeting, volunteered to help coordinate a SCAARF Lunch Group. If interested, contact her at : joyce.linden@csun.edu.

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