In my last column, I had hoped to report a concrete outcome as we seek a few campus benefits for retired staff. We had a meeting with the relatively new Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Ann Sherman, and Henry McCoy, Director of Faculty and Staff Employment Services to explain our proposal. Because she is so new to campus, Sherman was not familiar with our organization or the others that include many retired members. We provided information to her and outlined the multiple ways that retired faculty and staff continue to be involved in the life of the University and provide support through travel grants and volunteer work. We explained the benefits provided to emeritus faculty and described our efforts to seek complementary benefits for actively involved staff.

After AVP Sherman returns from chaperoning a trip to China, we will submit a written proposal to her and Mr. McCoy. I am hopeful that we will be favorably received given the University’s renewed interest in fostering stronger connections to a wide community.

On a personal note, I continue to be amazed at the loyalty and dedication the University has fostered in so many of us. I know the bonds are with colleagues, in large part, but it is also with an educational institution and with students that can be inspiring. I’m still working part-time after 42 years because I get to work directly with those students and I’ve watched so much growth in each one over their time here.

I also spend too much time behind a computer so those same students can actually find something in the Library!

Elsewhere in this issue—look for upcoming events. Suggest an event. Send in a note about what you have been doing. Keeping in touch is a two-way street.

LaVonne Jacobsen, President
My husband Bob and I are just back from a five week trip to Europe, from Istanbul to Spain. After some badgering from Kay McGough, I sat down at my computer and began to type this travel article for the Bulletin. I can’t hope to cover the entire trip in a few paragraphs, but since a lot of people are talking about Istanbul these days, I thought I’d focus on the first few days of our trip, our brief stay in that fascinating and historic city.

Given the world situation, I was a little uneasy about traveling to Istanbul right now, especially after I learned that we would be there during the “blessed month of Ramadan” when Muslims all over the world abstain from food and drink during daylight hours and re-evaluate their lives. I wasn’t certain what that would mean to us as tourists. However, with reassurances by travel articles and friends who had spent time in Turkey, we ventured on—prepared to abstain from food and drink ourselves (in public) during daylight hours. As it turned out, they do not expect tourists—or non-Muslims—to adhere to their customs.

We spent our first full day in the city on a highly recommended tour of the Bosphorus—a city ferry that took us all the way from Istanbul’s Gold Horn to the distant Asian side. The trip was two hours in each direction, with a three hour lay-over in the middle where we ate seafood freshly hauled out of the Black Sea. The cost of the ferry was less than $10/person, plus a few dollars extra for the excellent audio guide and map in English. Probably as good as the more costly tours, with the exact same views. The Bosphorus Tour, Ferry of Istanbul City Lines.

Over the years, our travels have focused more and more on eating, and on our last day in Istanbul, true to form, we went on a private food tour, Culinary Backstreets: www.culinarybackstreets.com. They offer similar tours in several major cities around the world. This proved to be one of the highlights of our entire five week trip. The tour began at 9:30 am and ended at 3:30 pm, and we walked nearly 7 miles through the back streets of Istanbul.

On our fourth morning, we packed our bags and left Istanbul. We had a wonderful visit, very different from what I had anticipated. We wandered like lost tourists through the Ramadan festivities on more than one occasion. We explored our neighborhood with its small alleys and unique shops until late at night. We felt safe the entire time. It was all good. We were sorry to be leaving so soon, but we had a cruise ship to catch—headed for Mykonos, Malta, Sicily, and Rome, the next leg of our trip. But that’s another story.....
Zelinda Zingaro,
Retired from Asset and Space Administration

I took an amazing trip to Peru this year. For two weeks we visited friends in Lima doing trips to historic central Lima, the ruins of Pachacamac, the ruins of Caral, and a night tour that included the Parque de Fuentes (Park of Fountains)—great fun! The highlight of our third week of touring was Lake Titicaca, Altitude: 12,500 Ft. and the Islas Uros. We were welcomed to an island where families live in communal style, teaching traditional crafts to their children. The islands are floating islands, made of totora reeds that grow on the shores of the lake. These Aymara-speaking peoples have been living in this manner for hundreds of years. Fascinating. Did I mention, no cell phones, no TV, no electricity, although we did see solar is slowly making inroads.

A family from Eros.

Can You Top This??

Did you know that Christy Armstrong, husband of Mary Herman, a member of SFSURA, and retired from the Education Department, Frederick Burk School, celebrated his 100th Birthday last March? He was feted at the Green Hills Country Club with many friends that included our own Bob and Sue Craig. Christy and Mary live in Burlingame and stay active with regular exercise and dancing.
A Man for All Seasons: Robert A. Thornton

By Meredith Eliassen

Robert Ambrose Thornton, 1897–1982, born and raised in Houston, Texas, became a powerhouse at San Francisco State. Thornton was the son of a black laborer who worked pressing oil out of cottonwood seed at a processing plant, Frank Thornton, and Cherokee/African-American mother who worked as a midwife in affluent white homes. From an early age, Thornton accompanied his mother on jobs and was allowed to explore her clients’ libraries and discover new ideas. After attending segregated schools, Thornton earned his BS degree in mathematics and physics at Howard University in 1922. He was inducted into the Alpha Chapter of service fraternity Phi Beta Sigma, which was based upon the belief that members should be judged upon “his own merits, rather than his family background or affluence... without regard to race, nationality, skin tone or texture of hair.” Thornton earned his MS degree from Ohio State in 1925 and Ph.D from University of Minnesota in 1946. Thornton was a gifted bass singer; while living in New York’s Greenwich Village, he was offered an audition to replace Paul Robeson, 1898–1976, in the African American musical review Shuffle Along after attending Howard, but his mother frowned upon the idea of him being an entertainer.

Conversations with Einstein

Thornton studied three years with Albert Einstein at Princeton University’s Institute for Advanced Study during the early 1950s where they had conversations on mathematical techniques. He told reporter Joseph Torchin in an interview: “...I felt – that my being black and Einstein’s being Jewish helped our relationship tremendously...I told him some of the hardships that I suffered as a black man and his responses were always directed toward making me feel that in some sense these hardships were stimuli for doing creative things.” Thornton debunked the notion that scientists are detached and logical: “Although a scientist may talk like a bookkeeper, he creates like a poet.”

Thornton joined the faculty of San Francisco State in 1956 specializing in the field of theoretical mechanics and astrodynamics, and in 1963 was the first black faculty to be named a chairman of the Division of Natural Sciences, and subsequently becoming the first dean of the School of Science in 1964. Thornton supported student activism, asserting in an interview with Pat Pierard: “Students today are asking us to change our rigid, orthodox views in order to implement the traditional values on which we say democracy is based.” However, he cautioned activism should not interfere with learning.

Honoring Thornton as a Master Teacher

On July 8, 1981, the California State University Trustee resolved to dedicate the Physical Science Building to Robert A. Thornton. Then President Paul Romberg asserted in a letter to Chancellor Glenn Dumke: Despite the demand of his administrative assignments, Bob Thornton remained a teacher. His colleagues
cannot recall a day when they did not see at least one student in his office receiving help with class work; nor have many faculty in science escaped his late evening or weekend calls asking that they provide assistance to some student who needed help in their particular field of expertise.”

**Thornton as an Aging Scholar**

Speaking to the Academic Senate on March 16, 1982, shortly after Thornton’s passing, now Emeritus Math professor Frank Sheehan remembered Thornton as a “cheerful optimist.” While Thornton retired from San Francisco State in 1969, after the five-month student-led strike, at the age of 72 years, he did not fade into the woodwork; he simply crossed town to teach physics at the University of San Francisco until his formal “retirement” at age 79, only to continue teaching folks over the age of 50 at USF’s Fromm Institute.

**Thornton Hall**

The building honors Robert A. Thornton, the first dean of SF State’s School of Science, and the University’s first African American dean. A theoretical physicist, Thornton worked with Albert Einstein before joining the SF State faculty in 1956.

This is home to our College of Science and Engineering, and its departments of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Computer Science, Geosciences, Mathematics, and Physics and Astronomy.

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**Long-Time Members**

**New Benefit for Long-Time Members**

At the Association Board meeting in June, we voted to “appreciate members who have belonged for a long time by providing complimentary membership”. If you are a member paying annual dues, age 90 years or older, we thank you for your service to the University and membership in the Retirement Association. All we ask is that you stay in touch and keep us updated on address and contact information. To let us know that you have reached 90 years of more, please contact me at 415.338.6953 or send a note to me at 146 Lisbon Street, San Francisco, CA 94112.

LaVonne Jacobsen, President
New Members

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<th>Membership Info</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Members</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bolinger, Jim</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3733 Market Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco, CA 94131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 415.206.9169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:jimk@bolinger.me">jimk@bolinger.me</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Retired from Management</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bob and Sue Craig,</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:suemc@comcast.net">suemc@comcast.net</a></td>
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**Updates to 2013 Directory**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Goodfield, Ilze</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayside Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1440 40th Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emeryville, CA 94608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 510.338.3223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Directory is being updated. Be sure to send us any changes to your contact information NOW.

Jim Kohn: jkjohn@comcast.net

**Humor**

The Mechanic and the Cardiologist

A Lexus mechanic was removing a cylinder head from the motor of a LS460 when he spotted a well-known cardiologist in his shop. The cardiologist was there waiting for the service manager to come and take a look at his car when the mechanic shouted across the garage, "Hey Doc, want to take a look at this?

The cardiologist, a bit surprised, walked over to where the mechanic was working. The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag and asked, "So Doc, look at this engine. I opened its heart, took the valves out, repaired or replaced anything damaged, and then put everything back in, and when I finished, it worked just like new. So how is it that I make $48,000 a year and you make $1.7 million when you and I are doing basically the same work? The cardiologist paused, leaned over and whispered to the mechanic, "Try doing it with the engine running".
Let's go to the Oakland Zoo!

Thursday
November 5th
10:30 a.m. to 12 Noon

9777 GOLF LINKS ROAD
OAKLAND, CA 94605

Our own member, Elogeanne Grossman, will be our docent for the day!

The zoo is wheelchair accessible (wheelchairs are available for rent) but it is hilly. Wear comfortable walking shoes, sunscreen and a hat. Transit and other details will be sent when your reservation is made.

Mail your check for $20 (payable to SFSURA) by November 2nd to:
Zelinda Zingaro, 19164 Christensen Court, Castro Valley, CA 94546

We appreciate the donations made by the following contributors to the Retirement Association Travel Grants Endowment Fund to help fund travel/professional development for current faculty and staff.

Laura Ware
Frank Sheehan
Alicia Weeks
Tuesday,
November 17, 2015
SFSURA
Annual Meeting
& Luncheon

Basque Cultural Center
599 Railroad Avenue
South San Francisco CA 94080

11:30 a.m. No Host Reception
12:00 Noon Luncheon followed by brief meeting

Menu Choices: Turkey, Salmon, Veggie Pasta, Cobb Salad
Cost: $35 per person
Name __________________ Lunch Choice: __________________
Name __________________ Lunch Choice: __________________

Mail your check (payable to SFSURA) and menu selections to:
Zelinda Zingaro, 19164 Christensen Court,
Castro Valley, CA 94546 by November 11, 2015.
2015 DUES REMINDER

Unless you are a life member, or have already paid your $30.00 annual dues for 2015, your dues payment is now due. Your dues paying status is shown on the top line of the mailing label. “Life” indicates you are a lifetime member; a number indicates the last calendar year you paid annual dues (e.g. “13” means 2013). We are very much in need of your support to make our programs and activities a success. If you have any questions about your dues status, you may contact Membership Director Jim Kohn at 415.821.7475 or by email at: jjkohn@comcast.net. In accordance with our By-Laws, those who have not paid for two years will be dropped from our membership rolls.

If you have recently changed your address, phone number, or email address, please provide the new information on the below form and mail to Membership Director Jim Kohn, address below, or send an email to jjkohn@comcast.net, so we can keep our membership records current. If you would like to receive SFSU’s weekly Campus Memo by email, please complete the form below and provide your email address to Jim Kohn.

We now distribute our newsletter, the Off-Campus Bulletin, by email to those for whom we have an email address. If you would prefer an email instead of the printed version, please complete the form below and provide your email address to Jim Kohn. If you wish to make a donation to our Travel Grants Endowment Fund, to fund future travel/professional development grants to faculty and staff, please write a separate check and mail with the below form.

Name: ___________________________ Phone: ___________________________

Address: __________________ City: __________________ State: ___ Zip: ______

Email address: ___________________________________________________________________

Would you like to receive SFSU’s weekly CampusMemo by email? Yes ☐ No ☐ ☐

Would you prefer to receive the Off-Campus Bulletin by email? Yes ☐ No ☐ ☐

I would be willing to help organize functions and/or serve on the Board of Directors Yes ☐ No ☐ ☐

Amount enclosed: _________ $30 Annual dues for 2015 ☐ $200 Life Membership ☐

Contribution to Travel Grants Endowment Fund: $ _________ *Please write separate check*

Please make check/s payable to: SFSU Retirement Association

Mail to: Jim Kohn, 23 Topaz Way, San Francisco, CA 94131
What Are We Up To

Now it’s your opportunity to share some news of your travels and plans with our members. Please complete the form and send to Kay McGough, 3742 Brunswick Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080 or email her at krmcgough@comcast.net. You can also FAX her at 650.878.4728. We eagerly look forward to your participation. It will appear in OCB Winter 2015.

• Name: 
• Department retired from and when: 
• Brief description of your adventures:  

• Add your photo here or attach a .jpg file separately. A picture can be worth 1000 words!!
• Refer to Pages 2 & 3 to see what “others” have been up to.