

UCRAB Newsletter

University of California Retirees' Association at Berkeley

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UCRAB Spring Luncheon

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Kimi Okada

Associate Choreographer, Oberlin Dance Collective

“Making All the Right Moves”

Spring, the season of welcome changes, will soon be upon us. But big changes are already underfoot for Kimi Okada and the Oberlin Dance Collective (ODC). Ms. Okada, nominated for Broadway's 1989 Tony Award for Best Choreographer with Bill Irwin, is one of the founding directors of this San Francisco dance collective that took its first steps thirty years ago at Oberlin College in Ohio. Join us in welcoming Kimi as the speaker at our spring luncheon on March 28, at Spenger's.

ODC recently moved into its new space at 351 Shotwell Street in the Mission District. And spacious it is, occupying 23,000 square feet of a completely renovated warehouse. As director of ODC's school, Ms. Okada can now give her students all the room they need to move. This extra space, in fact, has made it possible for the school to triple its classes. Also, visiting dance companies will be welcomed at its five studios and performance space. The collective also houses a Healthy Dancers Wellness Clinic and a Town Hall space for artists to meet and exchange ideas in a comfortable setting. So, these are exciting times for Kimi Okada and ODC.

UCRAB itself has been making artists feel at home at its luncheons. Thus Kimi Okada will be joining the likes of Poets Laureate Robert Hass and Al Young as a luncheon speaker. She will discuss her long and rewarding career as a choreographer and will feature videos of her work. This promises to be an exciting event, so be sure to make your reservations early! And, as you know, guests are always welcome.

Milton Elbogen, Events

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This organization would not exist without dedicated volunteers.

The UC Berkeley Retirees' Association invites its members to attend the executive board meetings, which are held on the third Wednesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. in Room 256, University Hall.

The coming schedule:

March 15
April 19
May 17
June 21

Please note that no meetings are held in August or December.

The UC Berkeley Retirees' Association is located at:

Two Boalt Hall, # 7200
Berkeley, CA 94720-7200

Hours: 9:00am—4:00pm
Closed Noon—1:00pm

Telephone: 510/642-5461
Fax: 510/643-1460

Retirement Center Liaison
to UCRAB:

André S. Porter
Administrative Specialist

The UCRAB Newsletter is published approximately three weeks before each quarterly luncheon:

Editor: Sondra Jensen
Phone: 510/526-7595

President's Message

I'd like to invite all of you to participate fully in the activities of our Association. We have between 500 and 600 members in UCRAB and generally see about 10 percent of you at our luncheons and on our trips – and the same people tend to come again and again. I'm happy that they (we!) enjoy these events, but I want to be sure that all of you know that we welcome your participation at our events and as contributors to this *Newsletter* and in other ways.

For example, elsewhere in this issue you'll find articles by members who are willing to share their retirement experiences, whether at home or while traveling – and we'd like to hear from others. As another example, we've thought about holding luncheons or other events outside the Berkeley area, perhaps nearer our members in the eastern parts of Alameda and Contra Costa counties (I've been told not to say "over the hill..."). But we need your suggestions about suitable venues and activities and perhaps help in making arrangements. If you know of a good place for a luncheon or another activity, or have ideas for speakers, please let board member Milt Elbogen know. Contact information for all UCRAB board members is on the cover of each newsletter.

And I always welcome your suggestions as to how UCRAB can best advocate for all UCB retirees at the campus, university, and state levels.

Marian Gade, President, UCRAB

Retirement Support Group

If you would like to share your concerns and feelings about retired life and hear those of others, call Karl Slinkard. In September 2004 Karl retired from the East Asian Library. At that time many of his friends were also of an age that they were retiring, contemplating retirement or were spouses/partners of retirees. A group of them decided to combine social evenings with informational and emotional support for retirees and those thinking about retirement.

Currently the group meets about every other month for a potluck dinner in someone's home, and then the host leads a discussion on a particular aspect of retirement (this month's topic was Social Security). The next scheduled meeting is March 18, 2006, beginning at 6:30 p.m. The group is open to anyone who feels they might benefit. For more information you can reach Karl at 510/849-3655 or kslinkar@sbcglobal.net.

Doing New Things

In several past newsletters we have asked if anyone would like to submit an article about their life after retirement from UC. In this issue we have a few such articles from colleagues (myself included) who have found themselves in unexpected places and new roles. Many thanks to Mary Breunig and Nancy Axelrod for their interesting stories.

If you would prefer to write about your recent travels or recommend good books, local cultural activities, or your favorite recipe for chocolate cake, that would be great too. If there is a specific topic you would like included in the next newsletter, please let me know!

*Sondra Jensen, Editor
sjensen@berkeley.edu
510/526-7595*

Five Years Later...

Mary Breunig, College of Engineering/Alumni Society

Having a long “to do” list, it was easy to decide to retire just 17 years after arriving as an employee on the Berkeley campus. Now, five years after retiring, my “to do” list is even longer. Where has the time gone? I review the calendar I rely on so heavily and realize that friends, chores, meetings, exercise appointments, travel adventures and family celebrations make up my retirement routine.

Also, much of my time is spent at the Berkeley City Club. Swimming at their beautiful indoor pool for the last 20 years, I fell in love with this building by Julia Morgan, California’s first licensed woman architect. Little by little I began to volunteer, working to promote Julia Morgan’s legacy and preserve this very special Berkeley landmark. Now I spend more than 20 hours per week there volunteering for the Landmark Heritage Foundation... I believe the “little castle” holds me captive! There are many other women and men who contribute time as docents, writers, exhibit creators, project managers and fund raisers. Even when I’m not “working,” I find myself at the Club eating in their restaurant or attending plays, lectures, book club meetings, musical performances, and teas – what a special place.

At home in one of Berkeley’s early 1900s homes built when the flatlands were small farms, I enjoy

the usual pastimes – reading, sewing, working on the house, and gardening. Our three dogs take me walking early each morning only allowing a break in the routine when it rains! Sometimes I prefer to curl up for a few hours with a good book.

It’s good to take a break from Berkeley now and then, so my husband and I have a second home in Cedarville (northeast California) that is a great escape. We love the high desert and the Warner Mountains that are at our front and back doors in Surprise Valley. And what is retirement without travel? We’ve been to Bolivia, Panama, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Italy and last fall enjoyed a two-month car trip across Canada and back through the southern route of the U.S. No new destination is on our list, but we are known for last minute travel plans.

Retirement is great... I am thankful for good health and wonderful family and friends. If you are looking for an interesting outing, try a tour of the Berkeley City Club...I’ll be happy to be your guide! You can reach me at maryb6@sbcglobal.net.

Off Stage at Cal Performances

Nancy Axelrod, Bioscience Library

Since I was raised in a family very committed to reading and education, it isn’t surprising that my first job was in the University of Illinois at Chicago library-or that I retired from the UC Bioscience Library 35 years later. I never imagined, however, that I would develop such a passion for the performing arts that I would eventually join the Board of Trustees of Cal Performances.

Since the series subscriptions give such a wonderful discount I subscribe to every series, trusting the judgment of Robert Cole that each performer meets his high standards. Exchanging tickets when necessary is very easy. People introduce themselves to me now saying “Every time I come to a performance I see you”– they probably remember the colorful caps I often wear in lieu of a hairstyle. Dance, music, theater – I love it all. I’ve started reading the program notes in advance by means of the e-mail club because when I get to Zellerbach Hall I spend so much time visiting with new friends I have made in this very welcoming community. It’s wonderful to have so many thrilling

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Doing New Things, continued

performances to look forward to during the rest of this season--and next season, and the next, and the next...

Moving Smoothly

Sondra Jensen, Residential and Student Service Programs

That's how I pictured retirement – gradually easing into my unplanned, open-ended, sleeping-late new life. First, however, I had committed to a year of part-time work coordinating the move of my department (Housing) into their new office building at Channing and Bowditch – not exactly a retired life yet, but surely a significant change from the 8 to 5 routine. What fun – 170 employees were consolidated from 10 campus locations into the new building and I was in charge of making sure no details were overlooked. Once they were moved and settled I told myself “Do nothing for six months – be retired!” I said this to myself several times.

Not yet. Another UC department (IST) called to ask if I would coordinate their move into the new building at Hearst and Oxford. Oh why not, I said – but this time I called a friend who had retired from her job as a travel agent and asked if she wouldn't just love to start a new business with me – move coordination. Why not, she said, and thus “Smooth Moves” was born.

During the next twelve months we managed IST's move and dealt with construction delays, architectural changes, and staff resistance to change. Somewhere along the line we decided we could also help private citizens prepare for moves, especially seniors who were leaving their homes of many years and moving into retirement communities.

What a rewarding niche Smooth Moves seems to have created. We have worked for such warm, lovely, fearful-yet-determined seniors who need help sorting their belongings, arranging donations, organizing the timetables for their moves, packing their things, supervising the movers, and setting up their new residence to feel like home. One couple's movers had packed everything for them but neglected to label any boxes. When we got an emergency call for help, they were sitting in a darkened apartment with no idea which box might contain a lamp, their

clothing, or even a box of crackers! Another woman moved from her two-bedroom house after 27 years into one room in a retirement community. With grace and courage she asked us to go through every closet, every drawer to help her decide what to “downsize.”

Sadly, there are many seniors in the Bay Area who have no help available as they make this huge transition to a new living environment. I surely never pictured myself in this role, but as long as we can pack those boxes my partner and I will continue to do what we can to smooth the process and relieve the stress that comes with any move. How lucky we are.

UC Associations Mix It Up

UCRAB and the Berkeley Emeriti Association (UCBEA) have agreed to invite each other's members to association events. We're also open to retirees from the LBNL and the UCOP: why not have a good crowd enjoy an excellent lunch and speaker, or a great trip!?

Below you'll find a schedule events for the rest of this year. Please attend any or all that interest you. You'll need to sign up ahead of time for the luncheon directly with the Faculty Club. Make your check for \$15, payable to “The Faculty Club.” Enclose a note stating whether you want to order the regular “chef's choice,” vegetarian entrée, or luncheon salad, and mail to:

Emeriti Association, c/o Faculty Club
The Faculty Club, MC 6050
Berkeley, CA 94720-6050

Don't forget to let others, retirees from Berkeley or other UC units as well as your friends and neighbors, know that they're welcome to attend UCRAB events, too.

- March 11: UCBEA Luncheon
Professor John Heilbron: “Astronomy and Politics in a Roman Bath and Basilica”
- April 21: UCBEA Special Event
Dr. Antoni Tomsia, LBNL: “How to Build Better Bones”
- April 27: UCRAB's “Day at the Races” Our Annual fundraiser for the UCRAB Scholarship fund.

The UCRS Report

On December 21, 2005, the Department of Energy awarded the new Los Alamos National Laboratory management contract to the University of California-Bechtel team which is called Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS). During the UCRS Advisory Board meeting on January 27, the recommended measures for facilitating the LANL transition to LANS were presented. For a concise view of what the plans will be and how the transition will take place you may want to check the Transition-Closeout Process Model at the following website: <http://transition.lanl.gov/team.shtml>.

As a result of the proposals to divest from four companies doing business in Sudan the Regents formed a committee to study the effects of divestment on the retirement system.

Another agenda item regarded the search for a company to provide financial and investment education services. Lastly, the annual report on lump sum cash-outs shows that the total number of lump sum cash-outs increased by 43.5% in FY 04/05 while the total amount of the lump sum cash-out payments increased by a little more than 33% for the same period. AND, last but not least, the good news is – the Treasurer’s Office reported that UCRS investments were up for both the quarter and the year.

Toni Sweet

Elderhostel

Would you like to have a learning adventure while traveling with interesting people from all walks of life? Maybe you would like to try Elderhostel, America’s first and the world’s largest educational travel organization for adults 55 and over.

A not-for-profit organization, Elderhostel offers nearly 8,000 programs a year in more than 90 countries to nearly 170,000 older adults each year. Costs include accommodations, all meals, lectures, field trips, cultural excursions, gratuities, and medical or insurance coverage.

Programs are led by expert instructors and experienced group leaders. *Traditional* programs venture to every corner of the globe and investigate subjects ranging from the ecology of the Everglades to the architecture of New York to 2,000 years of history in India. *Exploring North America* programs include American Heritage, American Landscapes, Cultural Arts, Food & Wine, Houses & Gardens, National Parks, and Signature Cities. *Active Outdoor* programs reserve one-third of the program time for outdoor activity – hiking, kayaking, biking, walking, camping. *Service Programs* involve both learning and hands-on community service work. *Adventures Afloat Programs* explore waters from the Aegean Sea to the Mississippi River, Antarctic waters to French canals. *Intergenerational* programs are for Elderhostelers and their grandchildren or young companions of a certain age to study subjects including dinosaurs, hot-air ballooning, and Yellowstone wildlife.

Visit elderhostel.org for more details. And let us know about your experiences with Elderhostel!

We All Dread Mental Decline

A modest amount of exercise – as few as three sessions a week – may reduce the risk of dementia in people over 65, new research shows.

From a group of 2,581 participants in a health maintenance organization in Seattle, researchers selected 1,740 people over 65 who showed no evidence of mental decline. They interviewed the subjects about their exercise habits, assessed their general health and then traced their progress for an average of about six years, periodically testing their memory and other mental abilities. The study was published recently in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

People who exercised more than three times a week developed dementia at a rate of 13 per 1,000 patient-years, compared with 19.7 per 1,000 patient-years for those who exercised less. (A thousand patient-years is the equivalent of 100 patients observed over a period of 10 years.)

The study shows that low levels of exercise cause a 30 to 40 percent reduction in risk for dementia. One of the authors states, “If someone is starting to decline, it looks like exercise may significantly help.”

Excerpt from *The New York Times*
called to our attention by Susan Irvin-Tripp

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NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
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Free Noon Concerts This Spring

March 8 – All Beethoven
Rachel Li, piano; Christy Kyong, violin

March 10 - Dvorak, *Dumky Trio in E minor*
Michael Lam, violin; Clarion Tung,
Cello; Jessie Lee, piano

March 15 – Kurt Weill, *The Seven Deadly Sins*
Faculty Recital: Deborah Benedict,
soprano; John Shumway, Jordan Eldredge,
Joachim Hines, & Steven Hankle, vocal
Quartet; Meredith Wilson, dancer; Inara
Morgenstern, piano

March 22 – Mozart, *Clarinet Concerto in A
major*
University Symphony, Davic Milnes,
conductor; Umesh Shanker, soloist

April 5 – Copland Piano Quartet
Linda Wang, piano; Christy Kyong, violin;
Jacob Joseph-Hansen, viola; Gabriel Trop,
cello
Copland, *Vitebsk* (Study on a Jewish Theme)

April 7 – Chamber Music
Music majors' performance

April 12 - Japanese Music

April 14 - Chamber Music

April 26 - Javanese Gamelan

April 28 - Jazz Improvisation

May 3 - New Music from Graduate Composers