

# UCRAB Newsletter

University of California Retirees' Association at Berkeley

## Executive Board

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## UCRAB Summer Luncheon

Tuesday, June 10, 2008

Berkeley City Club

### “SHINING A LIGHT ON HUMAN RIGHTS”

I encourage all UCRABers, significant others, and friends to come to our summer luncheon at the Berkeley City Club on Tuesday, June 10th. The buffet lunch will be, as always, sumptuous. You will also get the chance to chat with acquaintances you might meet only at these gatherings. And, perhaps most rewarding of all, we will hear from a speaker who will focus on something that strikes the hearts of us all.

Rachel Shigekane is Director of Programs at the Human Rights Center on campus and Lecturer in Peace and Conflict Studies. Prior to joining HRC, Ms. Shigekane practiced law, focusing on access to health and welfare benefits for immigrants, children, and people with disabilities. The topic of her talk to us on June 10 will be the treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay.

This issue and the controversies surrounding it seem to have been forgotten as the war in Iraq continues and as Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, and John McCain dominate each day's news stories. But the detainees are still in Guantanamo and Ms. Shigekane, for one, has not forgotten them. So please come to the luncheon, one and all. While the Olympic torch, wending its way around the world, is shining a light on human rights issues in China, Ms. Shigekane will shine a light on human rights violations on the part of our own government. All of us, I think, need to see this light.

Meet and greet your friends during the social hour beginning at 11:00 am. Remember that our June luncheon always includes the official annual meeting of UCRAB. We'll have elections (see President's Letter) and the requisite 10 minutes—no more—of business!

Enclosed is the reservation form which also contains information about the luncheon. Please send in your reservation by June 5th. See you all there!

*Milt Elbogen*

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### ***New Home for the UC Berkeley Retirement Center***

The Retirement Center has moved from Boalt Hall to 1925 Walnut Street. The Center now has more space for staff, a conference/seminar room where UCRAB board meetings are held and more space for you to come in and browse the resource library.

The Center is located on Walnut Street off of University Ave., one block west of the entrance to campus. Please note that the disabled access ramp is now fully operational.

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 the UC Berkeley Retirement Center, 1925 Walnut Street.

The coming schedule:

May 21  
June 19  
July 16  
September 17  
October 15  
November 19

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

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The UC Retirees' Association at Berkeley is located at:

1925 Walnut Street #1550  
Berkeley, CA 94720-1550

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  
Senior Administrative Analyst

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

Editor: Open  
Email: ucbrc@berkeley.edu

## *President's Message*

This is a "Farewell" letter in a couple of ways. First, I want to say "Farewell" and "Thank you" to Shelley Glazer, Director of the UC Berkeley Retirement Center since its inception. Shelley is retiring from the University, and we wish her well! She has done an amazing job in developing programs for retirees, arranging discounts and other benefits with other campus units (library, Cal Performances, et al), and just "being there" when we needed advice or support. We shall miss her greatly.

I, too, am "leaving," but only in the sense that, after six years as UCRAB president, I will not run for re-election to that position at our June election. It's been an honor, as well as great fun, but as I have taken on the position of Chair of CUCRA (our state-wide UC retirees' organization), it's time to relinquish the UCRAB presidency. I will continue to serve on our Board of Directors, either as an elected Member-at-Large or as a permanent guest at board meetings. But I believe that we need to involve as many people as possible in leadership positions – and I'm finding that the CUCRA job is taking huge amounts of time! Iola James, our wonderful trip planner and Vice President of CUCRA, has agreed to stand for election as President. I know she'll do a wonderful job.

Looking back, the board held a Retreat in August of 2002 to assess where we were and where we'd like to go with our organization. We developed a number of "action steps." Some still seem viable, others not. For example, #1 was to "Organize an East Contra Costa County Regional Group" within UCRAB. Most of our activities – luncheons, campus events – take place in the Berkeley area while we have a substantial membership "over the hill" in Walnut Creek (including Rossmoor), Lafayette, and nearby communities. We have never fully tapped the potential of these retirees, and this Action Step saw little action in the past 6 years, unfortunately. If anyone would like to help organize a luncheon or other event (theater party at the Leshner Center? wine and cheese with the Rossmoor UCB alumni group?) in that area, we might attract new members.

Continues on next page

### **Note from the Editor**

This will be my last issue as Editor as I no longer have the time that I feel the newsletter deserves to keep it interesting and informative. Who would like to become our next editor? The next issue must be written and ready for layout by late July. You'll need to have writing and editing skills, an interest in researching various topics, an ear to the ground on what might be relevant to UCB retirees, and time to do this writing, editing, and researching every 3 months. Please raise your hand and let one of the UCRAB Board members or Andre Porter at the Retirement Center know that you can take on this task.

I have truly enjoyed my two-and-a-half years as Editor and hope we have provided you with some news you could use!

*Sondra Jensen*

## *President's Message (...continued)*

And some of us might make the reverse commute and go over that hill, or through that tunnel, to join in.

We talked, in 2002, about providing some proof of UCRAB membership – a membership card, or pin, but somehow this has never taken off. Perhaps it's not needed. Your thoughts?

We talked about a membership directory, but were concerned about folks not wanting their personal information disseminated. As identity theft has become ever more rampant, this is probably an idea that should no longer be pursued. Rather, making sure the Retirement Center has our e-mail addresses is a more secure way to communicate within UCRAB and to send out last-minute notices and reminders.

We talked about work opportunities, both paid and volunteer, for retirees. The Center has developed the Retiree Work Opportunities program that has garnered national acclaim and served both the campus and our retiree community well. UCRAB can't take credit for this, but I'm very pleased with the result. And we, as retirees, can continue to remind campus units that we are available to help with, e.g., disseminating information to parents of new students on move-in day, or (as did occur) helping with surveys of classroom use or other one-time tasks on campus.

As yet, retirees are not recognized as an integral part of the campus community by those at the top administrative levels. The Retirement Center Policy

Board has been working to change this, with limited success. Alumni are assumed to be part of that community although most spent just a few years of their lives on campus. Many retirees – faculty, staff, researchers, librarians— spent thirty, forty, or even more years at the university. We know it, we love it, we support it with our time and dollars, and we want to continue our association with it, perhaps more than do many alums. This is unfinished work.

Successes in completing our 2002 agenda have included putting out the newsletter in a timely fashion, and Sondra Jensen, who is also saying “farewell” as our editor after this issue, has greatly enhanced its content. Another success is increased UCRAB membership, which stood at 436 paid-up members in August 2002 retreat and now numbers approximately 640. August Manza and subsequently Isabelle Revoir, our membership chairs in recent years, deserve kudos for their successful efforts in promoting membership and retention.

And thanks to all who have served on the hard-working UCRAB board over the last six years! It's true – I couldn't have done it without you!

See you at the luncheon, and let me know if there are issues you'd like me to bring to the attention of other associations around the state or the President's Office.

*Marian Gade, UCRAB President*

### **UCB Disability Access Services**

If you plan on attending an event and need mobility accommodations, try to make your service request at least 72 hours prior to the event by calling (510) 643-6473 or completing the form which can be found at:

<http://access.berkeley.edu/mobility.html>

The service will locate accessible transportation for you and provide information on disabled parking, most convenient paths of travel, and location of accessible building entrances and restrooms.

Another resource for obtaining information on accessibility is Facilities and Spatial Data Integration (FASDI) which is a multi-faceted program focusing on Berkeley campus facilities related issues. FASDI has produced an Access Guide which highlights accessibility issues regarding building interiors, paths of travel, disabled persons' parking slots, etc. Their goal is to help everyone access the services provided by the campus to the public and the campus community. Check out the Access Guide at:

<http://fasdi.berkeley.edu>

## *Trips and Events*

### **UCRAB Summer Luncheon**

**SAVE THE DATE!: June 10**

Rachel Shigekane, Program Director of the Human Rights Center on campus will talk on “The treatment of detainees at Guantanamo” at the Berkeley City Club.

**“MATRIX/REDUX”**

**Every Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday in the Berkeley Art Museum through July 20.**

Celebrate thirty years of the MATRIX Program for Contemporary Art spotlighting the vibrant and diverse work of many of the cutting-edge artists featured in the program over the past three decades.

**“From Plugs to Bling: A Century of Cal Student Fashion”**

**Every day through August 29** in Doe Library, Bernice Layne Brown Gallery.

Exhibition explores the lives of students at UC as told through the clothing they once wore.

**“The Chinese of California: A Struggle for Community”.**

**Every day through August 30.**

Co-sponsored by the California Historical Society, the Chinese Historical Society of America, and The Bancroft Library, exhibit is located at 678 Mission Street in San Francisco and looks at the unique challenges faced by Chinese Americans in maintaining full access to civil rights.

**“Joan Jonas: The Shape, the Scent, the Feel of Things”.**

**Every Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday in the Berkeley Art Museum through July 31.**



Since the late 1960s Joan Jonas has been a pioneer in video and performance art.

**“Trees in the Garden: A Family Tour”**

**June 7 from 1 to 2:30 PM** at the Botanical Garden.

Discover how a tree is different from other plants, how they adapt to their environments, make food from sunlight, grow and reproduce

**Yosemite Trip**

It is known that Yosemite National Park is considered to be one of the most beautiful parks in the world. Several of our retirees enjoyed the beauty of this great national park on our recent overnight trip via train and bus into the valley. March appears to be

the perfect time to visit. We experienced ideal weather and we were surrounded by numerous abundantly flowing falls and of course the granite domes and snow-capped mountains.

One couple, Sheridan and Betsey Warrick, celebrated their 63rd anniversary dining at the famous

Ahwahnee Hotel! Those of us that dined at the Mountain View Room, adjacent to Yosemite Lodge, were privileged to a direct view of Yosemite falls while dining. And the food was delicious! Group members enjoyed time together and time exploring the area and sites on their own. It has already been requested that this be an annual trip.

*Iola James*

More Events on page 6

## *Volunteer Opportunities*

**United Nations Association (UNA)** – one of 175 chapters nationwide dedicated to building support for a strong United Nations with constructive U.S. leadership, the East Bay Chapter of UNA-USA in Berkeley needs volunteers to perform a variety of duties:

- Staff the Center for 2-3 hours per week, Tues – Sat 12-5 PM
- Coordinate volunteer schedules, recruit and train volunteers
- Manage the sales of UNICEF and UN-related merchandise and gifts
- Coordinate all aspects of the UNACenter including financial management
- Volunteer with other committees of the East Bay Chapter

The East Bay UNA-USA Center is located at 1403B Addison Street in Berkeley. For information visit [http://www.unausaeastbay.org/unicef\\_center.htm](http://www.unausaeastbay.org/unicef_center.htm), or contact Suzanne Llewellyn to volunteer: [llew@berkeley.edu](mailto:llew@berkeley.edu) or (510) 643-4422 or (925) 935-6621

**People's Grocery** in Oakland needs help in their new herb and vegetable propagation greenhouse in West Oakland. Contact [max@peoplesgrocery.org](mailto:max@peoplesgrocery.org)

**Odyssey Hospice** in Hayward invites you to bring your pets to visit terminally ill patients and give them a welcome change from their routine.

Call Melanie Woike at (408) 626-4868.

**Playland-Not-at-the-Beach** in El Cerrito is a new non-profit family fun museum which celebrates America's bygone amusement parks. They need a variety of volunteers including docents, web master, gardener, and administrative assistance.

Call Richard Tuck at (510) 232-4264, Ext. 25

**UC Botanical Gardens** needs volunteers and training is provided. For information call Perry Hall at 643-1924 or [perry@berkeley.edu](mailto:perry@berkeley.edu).

**Oakland Police Department** has a variety of volunteer jobs available that can be filled by citizens. A few hours a week spent helping the force serve and protect the community is not only satisfying, it can be a lot of fun. Call Paula White, Volunteer Coordinator, at 238-4530 for an appointment or for information.

## *Service Provider*

### **Recommendation for Service Provider**

In our Summer 2007 issue, we listed several people and organizations who provide a variety of services and had been recommended by UCRAB members. Again this year we want to mention Paul St. Amour, a young man who offers his services as a companion, has a car, drives his clients to appointments, helps with their exercises, and is very thoughtful and careful. After reading the newsletter last summer, UCRAB member Mertis Shekeloff contacted Paul and has been using his services for the past year. Mertis hopes that more UCB retirees will become his clients. Paul can be reached at (510) 658-8108.

If you have favorite vendors or service providers that you'd like to recommend to other retirees, please send your suggestions, with contact information, to the Retirement Center so that we may share them with other members.

Also, the North Berkeley Senior Center and the Berkeley Commission on Aging have compiled and updated a very comprehensive booklet called the "Berkeley Older Adult Resource Guide" dated August 2007. This guide contains information and resources on advocacy, counseling/support groups, food, health, stay-at-home care, housing, legal and money matters, recreation/education and exercise, and transportation. You can get a copy of the guide at the North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, or read it on the web at <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/seniors/resourceguide2007.pdf>

### **New Volunteer Coordinator**

May I introduce myself as the "designee" for the UC Berkeley Retirement Center's desire to begin anew with a Volunteer program to serve the needs of our retiree community. Andre Porter and I are working to develop a basic plan for how to proceed with building a program.

After twenty seven years on campus coordinating the College Work-Study program I believe I can get the bare bones of the program set so that we can begin advertising the beginnings of a program which will begin matching volunteers with "work" site volunteer opportunities.

*Allan L. Jensen*



## The Spotlight — Put Your Photo Here!

We're always looking for stories about retirees who have found interesting ways to spend their time after retirement. How about yourself? Or a former colleague? Send us your story and share your new life with others! Contact the Retirement Center at (510) 642-5461.

### *News & Reports*

#### **Report from UCRS**

The UCRP transfer of funds to the Lawrence Livermore National Security LLC defined benefit pension plan trust has been negotiated and the Advisory Board will be informed when the final transfer takes place. Benefits for lab employees will be similar to those offered at the Los Alamos Labs.

A proposal to restore purchasing power for the UC-PERS Plus 5 Plan annuitants to the same level as their UCRP counterparts is being considered by The Regents. There are approximately 770 annuitants in this group.

The plan for UC employees to again contribute to the pension plan has been put on hold by the University because of the state budget deficit which has not permitted the state to fund its portion of contributions. The plan is currently funded at 105%. It is estimated that without contributions the funding will go below 100% within five years.

The State's portion of the UC budget has been reduced but the University won't know the exact amount of the reductions until the May budget is announced.

The Office of the President is exploring new business models for performing administrative services for retirement benefits including the administration of retiree health and welfare plans.

The July 1, 2008 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for those who retired on or before July 1, 2007 will be 2%. Purchasing power for all annuitants remains above 75%.

Log in to UC's Human Resources and Benefits website for information of particular interest to you: <http://atyourservice.ucop.edu>.

New Dimensions, the UCOP publication, is looking for articles by retirees. If you would like to contribute, contact Anne Wolf at [annewolf@ucop.edu](mailto:annewolf@ucop.edu) with suggestions or articles.

*Toni Sweet*

#### **Campus News**

Located just north of the Doe Library, the brand new C.V. Starr East Asian Library opened this year and contains one of the most comprehensive collections of materials in East Asian languages in the United States. The Starr Library is the first freestanding structure built to house an academic East Asian collection on an American university campus.



Another new UCB building is in the works since the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive building was found to be seismically below standard in 1997. Their Board of Trustees has proposed building a new museum at the corner of Oxford and Center Streets, the site of the now abandoned UC Printing Plant in downtown Berkeley. In September 2006, BAM/PFA announced that Japanese architect Toyo Ito has been selected to design the new building and UC officials hope to break ground in mid-2009.

#### **Five Faculty elected to American Academy of Arts & Sciences for 2008**

Five UC Berkeley faculty members are among 212 scholars, scientists, artists, civic, corporate and philanthropic leaders elected to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious honorary societies and independent policy research centers.

## *“Ask Adrian”*

Adrian Harris, Vice Chancellor-Planning Emeritus at UCLA and pro bono annuitant financial advisor, has a regular column in UCLA’s retiree and emeriti associations’ newsletters in which he responds to questions about University benefits and other topics of importance to retirees. Questions can be sent to him at the Emeriti/Retirees Relations Center via email (emeriti@errc.ucla.edu) or fax (310) 825-1572.

Vice Chancellor Harris has offered his column to all campuses and we are reprinting excerpts from two recent columns here. Feel free to send him questions of your own and the UCRAB newsletter will continue to print columns of generic interest.

Question: Please explain how the MRD (Minimum Required Distribution) works and what you suggest as decision rules for such distributions.

Excerpt from Response: MRDs are mandatory by April 1st of the year following the year in which you reach the age of 70-1/2 unless you are on the University payroll during the distribution year in which case you do not have to take a distribution from University tax deferred accounts. Distributions are computed using the balance in tax deferred accounts on December 31 of the previous year, divided by life expectancy (in years) shown in an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) produced Uniform Distribution Table that shows your expected longevity for each age from 70 to 115 and older.

You have the option of deciding from which investment fund or funds the distribution will come, and when the withdrawal will occur. The default option for the University is to take the distribution proportionally from each fund you have and to issue the payment at the end of the year.

Question: Retirees have the option of leaving 403B funds in the 403B or converting to an IRA. Two stockbrokers have advised me to convert to an IRA as they say that the IRA will offer more flexibility. Is there any advantage to moving the funds, other than giving business to the broker?

Excerpt from Response: Very good question and well timed since I have had a number of people call about the same advice they were getting from their

brokers. The 403(b) fund options are almost unlimited at this time including the following: an expanded group of UC options administered by the UC Treasurer’s Office, with newly included age-sensitive diversified funds; the Fidelity funds; and most recently, other investment funds you may want to use through the establishment of a self-directed brokerage account.

Now for two important reasons why a 403(b) account is generally superior to an IRA. One major difference comes from the formula used to determine the required minimum distribution from such tax deferred accounts by April 1 of the year after you reach the age of 70-1/2....In addition, University rules allow you to forego any withdrawals from the fund for as long as you are employed by the University. That means, if you are ever reemployed by the University in the future, you could continue earning tax deferred income on the entire remaining balance.

In addition to the “Ask Adrian” columns, Adrian periodically presents a seminar called “Planning Today for your Fiscal Tomorrow.” Here he discusses financial management for retirees and those soon-to- retire, covering topics such as personal and estate planning; wills, trusts, and charitable gifts; organizing records for survivors; the broad spectrum of investment opportunities and strategies; Social Security; real estate issues; and converting assets into income streams. Most recently offered to UC Santa Cruz retirees ([http://www.ucsc.edu/news\\_events/text.asp?pid=1990](http://www.ucsc.edu/news_events/text.asp?pid=1990)), the UC Berkeley Retirement Center is planning to offer this program in May or June. Watch for an announcement from the Retirement Center in the mail or your email in-box.

### **Dues are Due!**

As you may know, June 30 is our dues expiration date for members each year. To find out of your dues are due, check the number above your name on the mailing label. If your label says “07-08,” your dues are due this June. Future years are represented by dates such as “08-09”, “10-11,” etc.

University of California Retirees' Association  
1925 Walnut Street #1550  
Berkeley, CA 94720-1550

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**Events** (Complete Listings at <http://events.berkeley.edu>)

**Berkeley Lawn Bowling**

Many thanks to the Berkeley Lawn Bowling Club for hosting some of our members on April 9<sup>th</sup>! It was a beautiful day, a lovely location, and a sport that can obviously be enjoyed for many, many years. There was another “newbie” there trying it out who will be 90 in a month or two, and our instructor is 86!

Free lessons are given every Wednesday and Saturday morning, from 10 to 12, and all are invited. “Just wear flat shoes and a smile,” we were instructed. The Lawn Bowling Club is located at the corner of Bancroft and Acton in Berkeley.

*Marian Gade*

**Elderhostel Comedy Programs**

A couple of years ago Dorothy Snodgrass wrote a delightful article about an Elderhostel comedy program she attended in Burlingame. Dorothy has now shared a new Elderhostel schedule which includes the following lively programs again scheduled in nearby towns.

**In Burlingame:**

Colossal Comedy: A Laugh Riot, June 29 – July 2  
Come Laugh With Us, September 26-29

**In Napa:**

Tickle My Funny Bone – Marvelous Comedy, September 1-4

Besides comedy, Elderhostel also offers programs as diverse as “Napa: Tale of the Vine” and “Colorful Characters of the Gold Rush Era” in Nevada City, California. Call (877) 426-8056 for information.