

EX-Ls

EX-PRESS

Volume 26 Number 3
Summer 2008

In this issue:

President's Message	2
Luncheon announcement for August 21	3
From our May luncheon.....	4
Editor's note	7
New (vegetarian) luncheon option	7
Help wanted! You?.....	8
EX-Ls EX-Peditions.....	8
News of our members	9
Keeping up with the Lab	10
Teamwork in Martinez.....	10
Trip Report: Macao & Hong Kong - ii.....	11
The Berkeley Retirement Center.....	14
The <i>ethical will</i> : A way to pass on values.....	14
Diminished Expectations.....	16
Recent travellers.....	17
Luncheon Reservation Slip	19
Playland <i>Not</i> at the Beach Reservation Slip.....	19
In Memoriam.....	19
New Members	19

The EX-Ls Board of Directors and members gratefully acknowledge the
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory Administration
for their continuing support.

President's Message
Jose Alonso

Summer is settling in nicely, though the haze and smoke is truly daunting! Flying over the Sierras on a recent return from South Dakota I couldn't see the usually crisp, clear high granite peaks. Let's hope the rest of the fire season isn't this bad! Maybe we could pipe some of the water in the Homestake mine out here, they sure have enough of it! May and June have broken 100-year precipitation records, with – now get this! – 50 inches of snow on May 2. Took me 3 hours with a snow-blower to clear 20 feet of driveway. It was all gone in a few days as the temp climbed back into the 70s right afterwards. Even had another 10 inches the week AFTER Mothers' Day...so much for local lore. Ah, the Black Hills! Beautiful place! Come visit!!

But on to EX-Ls business: Many thanks to John Kadyk and Vicky Jared for carrying the EX-Ls flag at the annual Wellness Fair outside the LBNL Cafeteria on June 5th. Vicky reports that "It was good to see 'old' friends and talk them into joining EX-Ls when they retire." You'll recall that last year's Fair brought us many many new members, and I anticipate that this year will not be any different. I'm sure it's in large measure due to the wonderful home-baked cookies that John brought both times. Again, many thanks to John and Vicky and all who came and provided support.

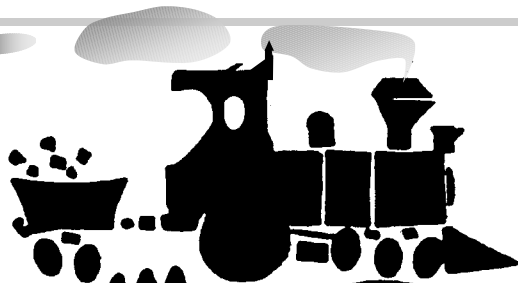
The Lab's Summer Lecture Series is in full swing. One more still to go: Arun Majumdar on global energy (July 29, at noon in the 50 auditorium, free). Contact Beverly Harris (510-486-5183) in the Public Affairs office if you want to attend for gate passes into the Lab.

Our wonderful secretarial team of Eleanor and Per Dahl has decided to retire after 5 years of dedicated service. Per, you will recall, also served as President of the EX-Ls in 2001. We are most grateful to Eleanor and Per for their faithful service, and certainly expect to continue seeing them at our luncheons and activities. We also now have a vacancy on the UC Berkeley Retirement Center Policy board. We are allowed two representatives; Gene Binnall will continue as one, but the other seat is currently vacant. We're looking for volunteers! E-mail any of your cheerful board members if you're interested.

Speaking of activities, from the poll taken at our last luncheon, we do seem to have an eager and enthusiastic membership that really wants to get out there and kick up its heels! Lots of folks expressed interest in EX-Ls' organized events. Many thanks to Vicky Jared for getting the ball rolling now. Read in this Newsletter the plans we are developing for our first outing in September, to Playland *Not* At The Beach, in El Cerrito. We'll have more information as well at our August Luncheon.

Which, by the way (Dave Stevens will I trust forgive my terrible grammar here), will be at Spenger's on August 21st. Send in your forms without delay! See you all there!

EX·LS Ex·press



2008 Summer Lunch

Date: Thursday, August 21, 2008

Where: Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto ←←←Note: We're back at Spenger's
1919 Fourth St.
Berkeley

Time: No-host Bar: 11:30 AM
Lunch Served: 12:15 PM

Speaker: Natalie Roe, LBNL Physics Division

Subject: TBA

Menu: Petrale Sole (lunch salad)
Shrimp Louis w/ 1000 Island dressing (clam chowder)
Chicken Linguini (lunch salad)
Vegetarian: Pasta Primavera or Grilled Vegetable Platter (specify at
time of order)

Cost: \$25 per person (PREPAID)

Reservations: Please make checks payable to EX-Ls. Send to
Vicky Jared
4849 John Muir Road
Martinez, CA 94553

For regular mail, the reservation slip is on page 19. You may
also reserve via e-mail to jaredrv01@aol.com, or telephone at
925-228-2145.

**It is absolutely imperative that Vicky receive your
reservations by August 18, 2008.**

From our May Lunch

Reported by Don Grether, who also was our speaker. [So one must assume that any differences between the talk you heard and the one reported here are intentional. ed]

Watch Out for the Snakes! 21 Biologists and One Physicist in a Rain Forest in Nicaragua

What it was all about

In May 2007 Don, his wife Becky, and their granddaughter Briana (then 10 years old) participated in the rain forest portion of a UCLA Field Biology Quarter (FBQ). In a FBQ undergraduates spend the first 1/3 of the quarter in lectures and seminars, 1/3 undertaking research projects, and a final 1/3 preparing reports and giving talks. This FBQ was led by two UCLA faculty members: Greg Grether (Don and Becky's son and Briana's father) in the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department and an expert in animal behavior; and Peter Narins in the Physiology Department and an expert in animal communications.

This was the fourth FBQ that Greg had co-led and he had promised Briana, his daughter from his first marriage, that she could go this time. The original plan was for Greg's second wife, Debra, to go along to be with Briana when Greg was working with the students. Then Debra became pregnant and there was no way that she could go with a two year old (Greg and Debra's daughter Paria) and a newborn son (Wiley). So Don and Becky were Debra's substitutes.

Caveat

Don's presentation consisted almost entirely of photos taken by himself, Becky, and Greg. Thus, the following is at best an attempt to give some of the flavor of the trip.

Getting there

The group (22 in all) flew on American Airlines from LA to Miami, and then to Managua, Nicaragua. Half of the group then flew on the La Costena Airlines morning flight to the town of San Carlos on Rio San Juan, with the rest coming later that day. The airplane was a one engine Cessna that held 12 passengers. There were no flight attendants, no seat assignments, and the pilots spoke not a word to the passengers.

From the one room airport at San Carlos we went by taxi through the dusty and poor town to the dock area where we boarded *River Girl*, a "panga" -- a small boat with a large engine -- for the trip on Rio San Juan to Refugio Bartola, which was to be our home (the Field Station) for the next 2 ½ weeks. Along the way we had to disembark at El Castillo, a small river town named after the Spanish castle that is on the top of a hill overlooking the river. There are rapids at El Castillo, which the panga had to carefully maneuver through while we passengers walked through the town and picked up the panga on the other side of the rapids. Which also explains the castle, as when Spain owned much of South America pirates would come up the river to steal the Spanish gold. When the pirate ships had to slow down for the rapids, the Spanish would use large cannons to bombard the ships from the castle.

Refugio Bartola – the Field Station

Refugio Bartola is at the conjunction of Rio San Juan and Rio Bartola, right across Rio San Juan from Costa Rica. The center of activities was the Pavilion – a 12-sided polygon with open sides and a thatched roof. Our rooms had shutters but no windowpanes, no electricity, no hot water, and usually (but not always) cold running water. The beds had mosquito netting, but there were actually very few mosquitoes. More annoying were bites from other types of insects.

Half of each day Becky and Don would be at the Field Station with Briana. She was out of school for almost three weeks, so Becky's role was the rain forest equivalent of "home schooling". Don caught up on his reading. The other half of the day we would go with Greg on either a hike in the rain forest or a trip up Rio Bartola in a dugout canoe.

The Field Station had a Diesel generator that would power lights in the Pavilion in the evening and also provide power to electrical outlets so that we could recharge batteries for computers and cameras. In the evenings there was enough light that we could read, play games, and the students could work on their projects.

Although the kitchen was primitive by our standards, the food was very good and plentiful. We had red beans and rice every meal, but also chicken, beef, fish, eggs, vegetables, fruits, cereal, and breads. The staff spoke only Spanish, and the only English word we ever heard them speak was "Briana". Fortunately, Peter Narins is fluent in Spanish, and Greg and several of the students are reasonably conversant, so communications were usually not a problem.

Bartola is at about 100 feet above sea level and about 10 degrees north of the Equator. While warm and humid, it was rarely uncomfortable and then only in advance of a rainstorm.

The Rain Forest

The rain forest was literally a short walk from the field station. There was a network of trails marked with colored tapes – thus the red trail, the blue trail, etc. The forest consisted of tall trees that formed a canopy, and smaller trees, bushes, and plants that made use of what little sun filtered down through the canopy. The vegetation was thick enough that venturing off the trail could be a problem in that there were no landmarks and one could easily get disoriented. Using a compass was the way to navigate back to the trail. Don's image of a rain forest was that the ground was flat, which turned out not to be the case. Another title for this talk could have been "hills of mud" given the almost daily showers and humid conditions. Don and Becky were thankful that they had followed Greg's advice and brought their "senior citizen" walking sticks.

The forest was laced with streams, Rio Bartola was accessible to the dugout canoes (with some shallow parts that required us to get out of the boat), and there was a pond close to the Field Station. Flowers were relatively scarce, but for the most part very different from what we are used to in the US. Given the humid conditions and many fallen logs, fungi were abundant, ranging from the ordinary to the truly exotic. But the "critters" were the focus of attention. There were many varieties of insects, frogs, lizards, snakes, and birds, as well as some "one of a kind" species that defied easy classification. The rivers and the pond had caimans, which are in the same family as alligators and crocodiles. There were three species of monkeys: spider, capuchin

(the organ grinders' monkey), and howler. The monkeys tended to stay in the canopy but made their presence known by the thrashing of leaves and branches as they moved from branch to branch and tree to tree. The aptly named howler monkeys would start howling at 5:30 am, then throughout the day when disturbed. Mammals tended to be timid and elusive, but we did see a couple of wild cats and large rodents.

Several of the critters were particularly memorable. One is the basilisk lizard, a member of the iguana family. The adult male could have been the role model for the dragon. But they are best known as the "Jesus Christ Lizards" for their ability to scamper across water to avoid predators. Another was an ocelot, a beautiful wild cat, that while not captive hung around the ranger station across the Rio Bartola. There were strange insects so tiny that they could only be appreciated under magnification. Don dubbed one the "fiber optics bug" as it looked as if it had a bundle of fiber optics sticking out of its rear end. Finally, there was the oropendola, a large bird whose nests hang like pendulums from tree branches and whose "song" is a classic jungle sound.

Getting Back

We essentially reversed our steps, taking *River Girl* from Refugio Bartola to San Carlos, the one-engine Cessna to Managua, and American Airlines to LA. In Managua we had one and a half hours to shop in a market before it closed. The little shops were filled with all manner of colorful items, too many to really see and too little time to do more than buy a few presents for the folks back home. We finished our FBQ experience that evening by, of all things, eating in a Chinese restaurant with a sound level that made talking to the person next to you almost impossible. A far cry from the gentle sounds (aside for the howler monkeys) in the rain forest.

Post Script

While there were some glitches along the way, all in all we thoroughly enjoyed the experience and look forward to another opportunity for a similar adventure.

Luncheon Attendees:

Jose Alonso	Sybil Donn	Vicky Jared
Shirley Ashley	Andy DuBois	A. David Johnson
Bob Avery	Tom Elioff	John & Ann Kadyk
Dick Baker	Ed & Pauline Fleischer	Joseph Katz
Winnie Baker	Robert & Valerie Fulton	Guest Joanne Lambert
Tom Beales	Paul Gee	Rich LaPierre
James Bettencourt	William Gilbert	Bud Larsh
Gene & Myrna Binnall	Don & Becky Grether	John & Barbara Lax
Jerome Bucher	James Haley	Branko Leskovar
Geores & Katie Buttner	Bob Harvey	Katherine Lucas
Jim & Ann Carroll	Ingeborg Henle	Priscilla Magee
Franklin Choy	Winnie Heppler	Bob Miller
Winifred Corniea	Guests Ted Hittell & Cap	Donald Miller
Donald & Pat Cowles	Capra	Ken Mirk
Per Dahl	Egon & Annette Hoyer	Sandy Mocco
Janis & Ned Dairiki	Ron & Marijean Huesman	Victor & Nancy Montoya

Gerry Moore
Mack & Ann Morgan
Marty Morimoto
Bob & Jeanne Mortiboy
Torlief Myhrer
Fred & Eleanor Perry
Susan Quarello-Schuch &
Bernie Schuch
Stephanie Roth
Clay Sealy
Rich & Joan Sextro

George & Reni Shalimoff
Brenda Shank
Starr Shulman
Robbie & Mary Smits
Frank & Marie-Agnès
Stephens
Dave & Sally Stevens
Robert Stokstad
Suzanne Stroh
Louise Vogelsberg & guest
Linda Beroza
Grace & Ron Walpole
Dick Wolgast

Allan Zalkin
Special Guest John Keller,
100 years old (photo
below)



Editor's Note

We may have an *EX-Press* first with this issue: The luncheon-speech reporter is reporting his own luncheon speech. My apologies to Sandy Mocco, who should have been on April's "new member" list; the omission is rectified in this issue. I'd like to thank Janis Dairiki for sending me the articles that formed the basis of the ethical will and diminished expectations notes in this newsletter. The response to our questionnaire about local expeditions was sufficiently positive that the Board is planning an initial outing for the next quarter; see the note on *EX-Ls EX-Peditions*, below. If that is successful, we shall consider scheduling some of the more out-of-the-way or more expensive options over the next several months. We are also starting a new column with this issue: *Recent Travellers*, in the hopes that this might facilitate a useful exchange of information between those who have recently returned and those who might soon be going. This is definitely NOT limited to exotic climes and distant countries; domestic and off-beat local trips are of interest, too. And we shall continue to put pad and pen on the tables, and we encourage you all to scribble us a note as to what you are doing; we would like to maintain – and expand – the "news of our members" – but we can't do that unless you tell us what you're doing. As always, articles or ideas for articles are welcome; the deadline for each issue is ten days after the preceding Board meeting (a full year's schedule is listed on the back cover; notice that the meetings now start at 3:00 on the dates listed). You can contact me at david_stevens@comcast.net, at 1107 Amador Ave, Berkeley 94707, or 510-524-2904. // dfs

New Luncheon Option

Spenger's has graciously allowed us to add a vegetarian option to our luncheon choices, with the added advantage that you can choose between *pasta primavera* and a *grilled vegetable platter* at the time of ordering.

Help Wanted! You?

Up to two UC system retirees from the EX-Ls membership may be appointed by the EX-Ls Board to serve as representatives on the UC Berkeley Retirement Center (UCBRC) Policy Board. They represent the EX-Ls in support of the UCBRC, and provide liaison between the UCBRC Policy Board and the EX-Ls Board. The terms are normally for two years, but we are seeking someone to fill a one-year term replacing one of the current representatives. Meetings are held on campus, usually in the Faculty Club. They are typically held about once per quarter, although leadership changes at the Retirement Center have necessitated more frequent meetings recently. Our representatives get to keep up on the latest services and activities of the Center that benefit our members and to be aware of the larger picture of changing UC retiree benefits. Interested? Please contact Gene Binnall at 234-8135 or Suzanne Stroh at 524-1953.

EX-Ls EX-Peditions

The comments received at the May luncheon expressed sufficient interest in additional activities that Your Board has decided to schedule one or two field trips on a trial basis. We shall begin relatively inexpensively and close to home with a visit to **Playland (Not at the beach)**, at San Pablo and Jefferson in El Cerrito (approximately halfway between the El Cerrito and Del Norte BART stops, but slightly closer to Del Norte).

This Playland includes everything you expect *except* the salt air, including a penny arcade, active pinball and video game machines [bring lots of change!], two Laughing Sals, and antiques and artifacts from the Sutro Baths, Whitney's Playland, Coney Island, and Riverview. We expect to have a slot on Thursday, September 11, but as *PNatB* is a volunteer organization, there may be difficulties in ensuring enough docents. Should that be the case, we'll have to reschedule, perhaps on a Sunday, and will let all those who have reserved as well as everybody on our e-mail alert list know what's happening. You will find the reservation form below the luncheon reservation form on page 19. Assuming we get at least 15 attendees, the cost is \$8 for youth (up to 14) and seniors (55 and over), and \$13 for everyone else. You can get an extensive preview of what they have to offer at their website: playland-not-at-the-beach.org.

There was also significant support for a *Potomac* cruise, a docent tour at the Blackhawk auto museum, and a day at the races (Golden Gate Fields), but they were thought to be either too pricey or too far away for our initial effort (but we may try to do one of them in the Fall). Other suggestions included the SF Ferry Building, Yosemite, the Culinary Arts Academy [should manage to get a good lunch out of that one!], CA Academy of Sciences, Taos House (Eugene O'Neill's) in Danville, a walk in a(n unspecified) park, the *Jeremiah O'Brien*, John Muir House, EBMUD, Santa Cruz, the Sundial Bridge in Redding, SF City Hall, and "the rooftops of San Francisco" [which sounds interesting, but a brief web search elicited no hits].

News of our members

Lost Life Member: We have lost track of Life Member **Esther Colwell**; if you know her current address, please contact Suzanne Stroh, 530 Curtis St, Albany, 94706, 510-524-1953, scstroh@gmail.com.

Bud Larsh & Brenda Shank reported enjoying **Nylan Jeung's** "fantastic paintings at the El Cerrito Community Center" in April.

The indefatigable **Geores Buttner** is planning on representing "Seniors in Motion" in the Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon on August 24. That involves a swim from Alcatraz to Crissy Field in SF (about 2 miles), then a one mile run to his bike, followed by a 13-mile bike ride to and in the Presidio, and finished off (one hopes not literally) by a 10K run. He says that if he doesn't drown he'll probably make it.

May was the month for appletalk at one table: **George & Reni Shalimoff** talked about how the hot weather we were having was not good for growing apples on their property. **Frank & Marie-Agnès Stephens** chimed in about how wonderful the apples tasted on a farm they used to visit toward the end of the year. And **Dick Baker** told how they made apple pies in the winter in Kentucky after cutting the apples up and drying them on their roofs in the summer. **Bernie & Susan Quarello-Schuch** were core members of the group.

Unless we include **Don & Becky Grether's** adventures in Nicaragua, the only self-reported travelers at this luncheon were **Janis & Ned Dairiki** (Petra ("incredible"), in Jordan, and Rome.) Post-luncheon, **Dave & Sally Stevens** did some wine-tasting and birding (puffins at Haystack Rock, Cannon Beach) in Oregon. The week after they were there, a peregrine that is probably nesting on the rock severely damaged a bald eagle that was foraging in the neighborhood: stooped down and broke the eagle's wing. Also, as reported after the luncheon, **Bob & Valerie Fulton** took a couple short side trips while en route to the April CUCRA meeting at UC Riverside. About 20 miles north of Mojave is Red Rock Canyon State Park. It has several highly eroded, layered cliffs that are fascinating to see. The softer layers are eroded into columns that look like hooded figures straight from the cathedrals of Europe. These are easily seen from the road, but there are also several hiking trails into some of the smaller side canyons. Then, too, April is the month to see the Antelope Valley California Poppy Preserve west of Lancaster. They hit it at just the right time, and the poppies were spectacular. Many hillsides covered with poppies, with occasional lupine for contrast. A number of trails wind through the poppy fields, and there is an interpretive center.

We hear through non-EX-Ls sources that **Helen Tryon** has had a difficult quarter: She fell in mid-April and suffered a hairline fracture, and her husband **Warren** passed away in early July.

Keeping Up with the Lab

The 3% Club: The recent election of George Smoot to the National Academy of Sciences, brings Berkeley Lab's representation in the NAS to just under three percent of the total membership.

LBNL on the Web: The Public Affairs Department has redesigned the Lab's homepage and created a new suite of web pages, including a News Center (accessible through the homepage), and an Employee News Center and a YouTube website, both accessible through the News Center *Web Feeds* link.

Foreign Relations: Both Chile and China have been seeking the Lab's advice on energy conservation and sustainable energy technologies.

Bet you didn't know this: The inventor of the neoprene wetsuit, Hugh Bradner (who died on May 5 at the age of 92), once worked at LBNL.

In addition to the above, regular Lab publications may be scanned at the following URLs; links to all three are available through the EX-Ls home page on the web (www.lbl.gov/ex-l-express). **Warning:** As indicated above, the Lab is changing its Web presence, so one or more of these URLs may become obsolete at any time. We shall provide the new URLs as they become available.

The Berkeley Lab VIEW Newsletter
<http://www.lbl.gov/Publications/Currents>

LBL Today (Daily news from LBL)
<http://www.lbl.gov/today>

Science @ Berkeley Lab
<http://enews.lbl.gov>

Teamwork in Martinez Geores Buttner

The 40th Martinez Luka Sekulich Brickyard Race (4-mile or 8-mile run/walk): 300 or so participants; estimate at least half did the 8-mile run; only one of them (*guess who?*) was over 70. As evidenced at the award ceremony, there were at least three runners in the 4-mile, 70-year-old division. A touching moment occurred during announcements at the start line when the race's founder, Luka Sekulich, was introduced. He is very tiny, and very old, and, judging by the tears shed and the hug given him by the announcer, who was three times his size, apparently very well loved by those who know him. (I discovered later that Luka, for 29 years, taught classes at Alhambra High School and was their cross-country-running coach as well.)

Ready/set/go! There were absolutely no level stretches on the race course more than 10 feet long. Of the grades, there were more that went ^ than went v. Mathematical proof of the up/down ratio became evident when a particularly attractive young damsel crossed the finish line in front of yours truly, who had been passing her on the downhill slopes, but falling behind her the on the uphill slopes.

The 4-mile race had a turn-a-round at the 2-mile mark; after that point, the lack of competition in the 8-mile, 70-year division, became apparent; which seemed like a good excuse to slow down and enjoy the scenery. The vast majority of the course follows along Carquinez Scenic Drive within the confines of Carquinez Strait Shoreline Park. The road originally was the only route between Martinez and Port Costa, but has since been closed through the park and now ends at an old brick manufactory, known as, appropriately enough, The Brickyard, a convenient four miles from the start of the race. Between negotiating the many potholes and cracks in the pavement, the curves in the road (and some of the curvy competitors) and the rest of the scenery got to be enjoyed as well. It definitely was a beautiful day to peruse the waterway: Across the Carquinez Strait is the shoreline home of Benicia; looking east was the broadside view of the graceful arc of the Benicia-Martinez Bridge with the vast and sky-reflecting blue Suisun Bay as a background. There were lots of smarter folks, who were just out for a stroll, taking in the panoramic view (plus saving the cost of an entry fee) that morning. But none of *them* received a used brick trophy with a little brass plate stuck to it and with "First Place in the 70's Division" professionally engraved on it for free. Well, maybe not quite for free. But the camaraderie was definitely free, free and easy and plentiful: Running is a team sport, no doubt about it; in fact it's a team sport bordering on the 4th dimension.

Never have been aware of the Blue & Gold at Memorial Stadium cheering on any other colors, nor the Crimson & Gold at Candlestick Park, nor even the jolly Silver & Black, including their friendly fans of course, pumping up the opposition with cheers during that team sport competition. Yet, as personally witnessed by this middle-of-the-pack runner, in a race with two turnarounds in it providing face-to-face confrontation with the competition, what you hear from the also-ran contingent is encouraging comments directed at the opposition, who are on their way back to the finish line. Then, at the finish line, and even before the finish line when the victors are doing their cool-off jogs back along the race course, the scenario is reversed, with the winners shouting inspiration; great job, good run, go for it, and, Luka! Luka! Luka!

Trip Report: Macao & Hong Kong – ii
Tracy Baker

[Note: This is the second of two excerpts from the journal of an extended tour of China taken by Winnie and Tracy Baker. The first excerpt was published in our April issue, and the full journal is available from Winnie, winevelyn@sbc.global.net. //ed]

Kicking Buddha's Gong In Old Hong Kong

After a hearty breakfast we jumped on the turbojet ferry and headed off for a day in Hong Kong. I should clarify that there is no such thing as “jumping” on the Turbojet or any other way you choose to leave or reenter Macau and Hong Kong. They are still run as separate entities and, as such, you must go through customs every single time. This is a huge pain in the backside as the lines can be horrific, tying you up for hours just to make a daytrip. You have to keep filling out custom forms and hand over your passport, then wait for the rest of your group to make it through. It is maddening and is obviously the Communist Government's way of keeping mainland Chinese from fleeing the country in droves.

We docked and started our own little tour with a trip through the 1906 Beau Arts Western Market building. We then wound our way up to Hollywood Street and then down to Ladder Street. It was like a little homecoming as this part of Hong Kong reminded me a lot of parts of San Francisco. Ladder Street consists of steps that go up, up, up, just like Telegraph Hill in North Beach.

We stopped and explored the Man Mo Temple (a temple a day keeps the bad luck away!) and then made our way down to the Star Ferry terminal for the crossing to Kowloon to meet up with our tour.

The tour guide picked us up at Renaissance Hotel and we were whisked off back through the Cross Harbor Tunnel to the Hong Kong side again. If we had known we would have just stayed on the Hong Kong side and met the bus at our first stop, the Victoria Peak Tram. This little engine that could has been traversing Victoria Peak since 1888. One could just picture the prim and proper Victorian English colonists boarding the tram for a little jaunt to the top. Nowadays, a jaunt to the top will land you in midst of a slew of tourist shops and restaurants, but the view is spectacular.

Back on the bus, we went to the far side of the island to Stanley Bay and the famous Stanley Market. Winnie and I found a series of signed prints from local artist Lee Ngo on closeout and decided to splurge on five of them. Other than that, the Stanley Market isn't much different from most of the other Chinese markets we had frequented throughout our trip. The bus continued on its round-the-island tour past Repulse Bay and Aberdeen. We wrapped up and parted ways with some of our group who decided to stay on for more. We chose to rush back to Macau to catch the dinner that night and were we glad we did.

The buffet included table after table of traditional Portuguese and Macanese foods including delicious lamb chops and pastais, a wonderful custard tart that we had come to love in Portugal. It is rare to have buffet-style food that is soooo good!

After dinner, the music started up, the dance floor cleared, and we were treated to a talent show of Portuguese and Macanese singers and bands followed by traditional folk dancing. What fun! We didn't make it home until the wee hours of the morning.

Hong Kong, Redux – Light Shows, Fishing Villages and One Big Buddha

We returned to Hong Kong the next day for some in-depth sightseeing on Lantau Island and to see Hong Kong at night. After the turbojet to Hong Kong, we transferred to a ferry to Lantau and caught the bus to the Po Lin Monastery with its giant bronze statue of Buddha on a hill overlooking it. This is the largest outdoor statue of Buddha in the world and was finished in 1993. We climbed the nearly 300 steps up to the pedestal base where you can buy tickets for a vegetarian lunch to help support the maintenance of the grounds and the Buddha. It is huge!

We then made our way to Tai O, the fishing village built on stilts that sits over the mouth of the Tai O River. People continue to live here as they have for hundreds of years, although the small sampans have been replaced by motor boats. While dried and fresh fish is still sold, many market booths have given way to tourist tidbits. We toured the small history museum noticing that it wasn't all that long ago that this village was isolated and frozen in time. With the building of the new airport and the subway connecting Lantau to Kowloon, it has become so popular that a big bus depot and parking lot take up nearly as much area as the village itself. Time flies when you are having fun and we were surprised to find how late it had gotten. We boarded our bus and our ferry and headed back to Kowloon.

Once on Kowloon, we decided to take the subway out to the famous Night Market. Following the signs we found the steps down to the subway only to find ourselves in the middle of a shopping mall. I retraced my steps following the signs that said TRAIN...and ended up at the train station where we nearly bought tickets for the train to the New Territories. A helpful local redirected us and after walking for what seemed like forever, we finally ended up on the Subway for the 10-block ride to the Night Market. Underground Hong Kong is one huge maze of shops and walkways! After we walked around the night market for a bit, we jumped back on the subway for the return trip back to the waterfront.

At 8:00 every night, Hong Kong puts on a dazzling light show that originates from both the Hong Kong and the Kowloon sides. Upon arriving we climbed onto the harbor overlook and claimed a spot. I set up my camera and within two clicks of the shutter the battery went dead! With only 10-minutes before the scheduled start of the show, I ran down the steps, headed across the plaza and luckily spotted a 7-11 across busy Salisbury Road. I ran into the store and grabbed a package of batteries, a snack or two and a Tsing Tao beer, threw my money at the clerk and barely made it back in time for the show. When I returned the nearly empty overlook was packed with people and I had to elbow my way back up to Winnie.

The tall office buildings are equipped with laser and exterior lights that are then coordinated with a musical score that is played over loud speakers. It was as amazing and wonderful as any fireworks show. On the water brightly lit junks and restaurant boats circled the harbor adding to the spectacle. All in all it was a fantastic experience that I would highly recommend.

We made our way back to the turbojet and back to Macau. Taxis were scarce at the terminal and we ended up walking back to our hotel, falling into bed exhausted from our long day.

That's A Wrap

Our final day was wide open and we decided to make a quick jaunt with fellow travelers Mark, Diane, and Dorothy (who had all gone a few days earlier) to the Barrier Gate and cross the border into Zhuhai, China. Diane and Dorothy went for a massage while Mark showed us around the markets. We were getting pretty worn out though and decided to cross back over to Macau early. We shopped a little and then had lunch at the Grand Lisboa before heading back to the hotel to get ready for the closing ceremonies and dinner at the Venetian Hotel's Grand Ballroom.

Once again the meal was fantastic. Small loin lamb chops, roasted pork, shrimp, chicken and a hundred different desserts overflowed at the artistically set buffet tables. Wine, beer, and cocktails flowed freely from the hosted bars, with music and dancing after all the speeches were done.

December 2nd and it was all over. We were shuttled to the turbojet and made our way through the maze of customs and baggage checks before plopping down in our seats for the long flight home.

Winnie and I have always found travel to be a mind-opening experience and China nearly blew our lids off. Make no mistake that I am well aware we were not allowed to see China's skeleton closet. It does and will continue to have its problems, but change is picking up speed. Soon, the old-guard Communists will no longer be able to stop the train that is coming down its tracks. Whether that train will bring democracy in the form of a representative government or simply another form of dictatorship backed by corporate greed will be up to the young. I'm betting on the former, but fear the latter.

From the Berkeley Retirement Center Andre Porter

The search goes on for a Center director, and should be completed by the time the next EX-Press is published. We do not yet have a schedule for fall classes, but can provide an advance notice of what should be an interesting event, an election symposium at the Faculty Club on September 15; the time was not certain as we were going to press, but if you are interested, you can check directly with them (510-540-5678).

The ethical will: A way to pass on values *Adapted from an article by Helen Dennis*

As our life expectancy increases, we may find (a) that we have less material wealth to pass on to our heirs than we had expected, and (b) that we may have moral, spiritual, and historical legacies that we wish to preserve. There's not too much we can do about (a) except to prepare our heirs for the eventuality that we might outlive their inheritance (see the article on *Diminished Expectations*, below), but we can do something about (b). One approach to creating such a legacy is to create an *ethical will*, a nonlegal document that expresses our views and advice on

life, morals, and values, and preserves the family stories we want to pass on to the next generation.

Ethical wills are becoming more popular as many realize that the dispersion of families has made the passing on of values more difficult than in the days when children and grandparents were in daily contact.

An ethical will is typically a written document, but it doesn't have to be. It can be recorded or videotaped, if that is easier and more comfortable than writing (though a script should be included since technologies become obsolete). The ethical will may be shared during your lifetime or stored with documents such as your will. It need not be a single, well-organized document, it need not be grammatically correct, and it need not be high-minded. A collection of reminiscences and advice, recorded at random times as they occur to you, may be easier to deal with than a formal document, and may also be more meaningful to your audience.

There are as many possible reasons for creating an ethical will as there are for having a conversation:

- We want to be remembered, and we want our ideals and values to be carried forward.
- We may be the last person to know the stories; after us, they are gone forever.
- It helps us clarify our most important values, and can provide a sense of completion and peace.
- It helps us come to terms with our own mortality, knowing that we are leaving something meaningful that will have a life after we're gone.
- It's an opportunity to say things we couldn't - or didn't wish to - say earlier, or that our children didn't have time to hear.

What is it that we want to say to our loved ones that we haven't told them? (Or that we don't want them to forget?) Possibilities include personal values and beliefs, hopes and blessings for future generations, lessons from life, spiritual values, love, forgiving others and asking for forgiveness.

A widowed grandmother in her early 60s wrote an ethical will to her children and grandchildren in which she discussed "my family, learning and knowledge, taking and giving, appreciation and love." Another woman, approaching her 80th birthday, earning her college associate's degree, wrote her ethical will to her children, grandchildren and their spouses. She included stories of Ellis Island, becoming a "Senior Citizen", how she felt as a young girl, plumbing in 1916, the birth of her children, high school graduation as Charles Lindbergh flew the Atlantic, the Depression, and her hopes and prayers for her family. Her personal wish was to complete her degree before her 81st birthday.

Although the writing is personal, you might want to form a group to help with motivation and exchange ideas. Venues might be a church, synagogue, senior center, or in your home with good friends.

(Helen Dennis is a specialist in aging, with academic, corporate and nonprofit experience. You can send her your questions and concerns in care of the Daily Breeze, 5215 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503-4077; or fax to 310-540-7581, or e-mail to features@dailybreeze.com.)

Diminished Expectations

Adapted and abridged from an article by Ron Lieber, New York Times, June 21, 2008

“I’m spending my children’s inheritance!” It’s not just a bumper sticker seen at expensive resorts any more: It’s a statement of choice and necessity in a world where people are living longer. Retirees have a lot of demands on their savings. Out-of-pocket health care costs, for one, are rising fast. At the same time, many people are not waiting until they die to help their children and grandchildren financially. And some are finding creative ways to draw on money that would otherwise be part of their estate.

For these - and other - reasons (eight are listed below), it might be a good idea to start preparing your putative heirs for diminished expectations. It also might be a good idea to rephrase any bequests for an absolute number of dollars into a specified fraction or percentage of the estate, or something like “X%, but not to exceed \$Y”; if the value of the estate changes significantly, the use of absolute amounts can sabotage the decedent’s wishes.

--People who make it to 65 will live a lot longer. Want to get a sense of how long you or your relatives may live? Drop the phrase “How long will I live” into a search engine and play with some of the longevity questionnaires that pop up on the results page.

--Social Security and Medicare will probably change, and for the worse. Medicare premiums will rise, and the program may cover fewer procedures or not cover emerging ones. Meanwhile, taxes on Social Security benefits may rise, and everyone may have to wait longer to collect.

--Fewer people will have pensions, so they’ll be more wedded to the markets. The last six months on Wall Street should be all the warning you need about that.

--Out-of-pocket health care costs for retirees may soon hit seven figures a couple. And while those of us with full health insurance benefits from UC will have some shelter from that particular storm, things are tightening up for us, as well.

--Divorced individuals may pass on less money. Splitting up can be expensive in itself, and maintaining two households for decades afterward will often cost more than sharing a dwelling. Even if the parents have money left over, the ones who didn’t have custody of the children may be less inclined to pass an inheritance on to them.

--It’s getting easier to drain a home’s equity. The growth of reverse mortgages raises the likelihood that large portions of family homesteads in America will end up belonging to banks, not heirs, and HELOCs that are not paid down before death reduce the distributable equity.

--There are two potential drains on life insurance. It's now possible to sell a life insurance policy to an investor who pays some fraction of the value to the policy holder, and becomes the beneficiary. Meanwhile, the popularity of term life insurance is increasing, and many people stop buying term life insurance after their children become adults or a spouse dies. The heirs get nothing in the way of a payout.

--The transfer of wealth will increasingly happen while the older generations are still alive: financing college tuition for grandchildren, chipping in when children or grandchildren graduate with five and six figures in student loan debt, supplying down payments in a tightening mortgage market, bailing the younger generations out of a host of other financial calamities. Sometimes, this is part of a concerted effort to reduce an estate that could be subject to taxes. Other times, it's pure necessity. Warning to the young: It may well be everything you'll ever get. If you put it to good use now, perhaps *you* won't have to choose later between selling your life insurance and draining your home equity.

Recent Travellers

The purpose of this column is simply to provide the names of recent (covering only the last calendar year and this one) travellers, so that those who are considering these same destinations might have a potential source of useful information and helpful hints. (Not all of these have been previously reported in the EX-Press.) Please let me know if you think this is a useful addition to the EX-Press. Also, please let me know if you have taken an interesting trip in the last year or so.

<u>Destination</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Traveller(s)</u>
China	2007	Bob & Valerie Fulton
China/Macau/Hong Kong	2008	Winnie & Tracy Baker
Japan	2007	Bob & Valerie Fulton; Dave & Sally Stevens
Jordan (Petra)	2008	Janis & Ned Dairiki
Lancaster (CA) Poppy Reserve	2008	Bob & Valerie Fulton
Mexico (Maya Riviera)	2008	Bob & Valerie Fulton
Nicaragua	2007	Don Becky Grether
Oregon Wineries	2008	Dave & Sally Stevens
Philadelphia and environs	2007/8	Dave & Sally Stevens; Brenda Shank & Bud Larsh
The Pinnacles (CA St Pk)	2008	Geores Buttner
Red Rock Canyon (CA St Pk)	2008	Bob & Valerie Fulton
Rome	2008	Janis & Ned Dairiki
Rhine/Main/Danube Cruise	2008	Polly & Ed Fleischer
St. Martins	2008	Bud Larsh & Brenda Shank
Salt Lake City (Mormon Library)	2008	Sally Stevens
South Dakota	2008	Jose Alonso
US Highway 69	2007	Geores Buttner
Utah (parks)	2007	Bob & Valerie Fulton

Entries from the “Dark and Stormy Night” Contest
(allegedly from real high-school essays)
From the Internet

1. He spoke with the wisdom that can only come from experience, like a guy who went blind because he looked at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it and now goes around the country speaking at high schools about the dangers of looking at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it.
2. She grew on him like she was a colony of E-coli and he was room-temperature Canadian Ham.
3. She had a deep, throaty, genuine laugh, like that sound a dog makes just before it throws up.
4. Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.
5. He was as tall as a six-foot-three-inch tree.
6. The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.
7. It hurt the way your tongue hurts after you accidentally staple it to the wall.
8. Her hair glistened in the rain like a nose hair after a sneeze.
9. Long separated by cruel fate, the star-crossed lovers raced across the grassy field toward each other like two freight trains, one having left Cleveland at 6:36 p.m. traveling at 55 mph, the other from Topeka at 4:19 p.m. at a speed of 35 mph.
10. He fell for her like his heart was a mob informant and she was the East River.
11. Even in his last years, Grandpappy had a mind like a steel trap, only one that had been left out so long, it had rusted shut.
12. Shots rang out, as shots are wont to do.
13. The plan was simple, like my brother-in-law Phil. But unlike Phil, this plan just might work.
14. The young fighter had a hungry look, the kind you get from not eating for a while.
15. He was as lame as a duck. Not the metaphorical lame duck, either, but a real duck that was actually lame, maybe from stepping on a land mine or something.
16. The ballerina rose gracefully *en pointe* and extended one slender leg behind her, like a dog at a fire hydrant.

SEE YOU AT THE AUGUST 21 LUNCHEON

**To: Vicky Jared
4849 John Muir Road
Martinez, CA 94553**

Be sure to make luncheon reservations by August 18

From: _____

I plan to attend the EX-Ls luncheon >> \$25pp << PREPAID

I will bring guest(s). Name(s) of guest(s): _____

Menu: Sole: ___ Chicken: ___ Shrimp Louie: ___ Vegetarian: ___

Willing/wish to carpool: As driver: ___ As rider: ___

Need to sit closer to speaker & screen? _____

Please make check payable to EX-Ls Total Enclosed:

To: Vicky Jared (as above); Vicky must receive this reservation by August 31, 2008

From: _____

Please sign me up for *Playland Not at the Beach*

___ General Admission @ \$13 \$ ___

___ Youth (up to 12 years) @\$8 \$ ___

___ Senior (55 years and up) @\$8 \$ ___

Willing/wish to carpool: As driver: ___ As rider: ___

Please make check payable to EX-Ls Total Enclosed:

In Memoriam

**Miguel Barraza Larry Belote
Bruce Birdsall Jay Brown
Mario Chavez Jean Hancock Colton
Billie Hagar David Moussa
Annie Murphy John Otvos
Warren Tryon**

Welcome New Member

Sandy Mocco

LBNL EX-Ls
530 Curtis Street
Albany, CA 94706

Time Critical First Class

FIRST CLASS

US POSTAGE
PAID
BERKELEY CA
PERMIT No. 1123

EX-Ls EX-PRESS – Summer 2008

Published Quarterly at the end of January, April, July, and October

Editor: Dave Stevens

Deadline for newsletter submittals is 10 days after the preceding Board meeting

EX-Ls BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

President:	Jose Alonso
Vice-Pres #1:	Don Grether
Vice-Pres #2:	Rich Sextro
Secretary:	Eleanor Dahl
Treasurer:	Suzanne Stroh
Activities:	Vicky Jared
LBNL Rep:	Beverly Harris
CUCRA Reps:	Bob Fulton
	Tom Beales
Berkeley Ret Ctr Reps	Gene Binnall
	<vacant>
BRC Liaison	Andre Porter

Past Presidents

Al Amon	Paul Hernandez
Tom Beales	John Kadyk
Gene Binnall	Ken Lou
Bob Birge	Ken Mirk
Igor Blake	Conway Peterson
Janis Dairiki	Sig Rogers
Per Dahl	Clay Sealy
Bob Fulton	

Calendar of Board Meetings & Luncheons

	L: August 21, 2008
B: October 9, 2008	L: November 20, 2008
B: January 8, 2009	L: February 19, 2009
B: April 9, 2009	L: May 21, 2009
B: July 9, 2009	L: August 20, 2009

Board meetings take place in the LBNL cafeteria at **3:00** on the dates listed above; we welcome attendance by interested members.

EX-Ls Life Members

Shirley Ashley
Esther Colwell
Inge Henle
Bud Larsh

Official Address

LBNL EX-Ls
530 Curtis Street
Albany, CA 94706

Website: www.lbl.gov/ex-l-express/

Webmaster: Richard Baker [robaker@lbl.gov]