

# UCRAB Newsletter

University of California Retirees' Association at Berkeley

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## UCRAB Spring Luncheon

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Berkeley City Club



### *Empathetic Sensibilities*

## UCRAB Welcomes Thomas Lynch

Thomas Lynch has been an actor in the Bay Area since 1969, when he came from Los Angeles to be part of the beginning Berkeley Repertory Theater. He was there for five years and during that time founded the Pyramus and Thisby Children's Theatre Company.

Though he retired in 2007, he has kept his hand in the theater world producing and directing short stories at the Berkeley City Club on the first Monday of every month. With his close to sixty years of performing, he has some interesting things to say about acting.

Reservations must be received at the Retirement Center no later than Monday, March 14.

UCRAB lapel pins will be available at the luncheon to members who have not yet received this special membership perk.

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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 the UC Berkeley Retirement Center, 1925 Walnut Street.

The coming schedule:

March 16  
April 20  
May 18  
June 15  
July 20

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 UCRAAB:

Patrick Cullinane, MS  
Director

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

Editor: Marcelle Baxter  
Email: ucbrc@berkeley.edu

### ***Editor's Notes***

Are you looking for ways to lend a helping hand to our beloved University in these troubled times? Have you thought about playing an advocacy role in promoting fund raising, encouraging the retention of vital programs, or offering volunteer assistance? Every effort makes a difference. Every person can be heard.

Write letters to the editor of local and nationwide newspapers eliciting support. The University of California reaches far and wide. You will be heard.

You can also join Cal Advocacy, an association that brings together friends of the University including retirees, alumni, students, parents, faculty and staff, to convey their support for UC Berkeley to decision makers in government. Find more information about Cal Advocacy online at <http://alumni.berkeley.edu/services/advocacy>.

*Marcelle Baxter, Editor*

### ***Report from UCRS - February 15, 2011***

The University of California Regents approved the changes to the retirees health and pension programs in December 2010.

UC annuitants' pensions will not be affected. Pension benefits for retirees and current employees are protected by law and cannot be reduced or revoked. The changes the Regents decided to implement will only affect new employees hired as of July 1, 2013 and those who are not vested by that date.

However, since the cost of health care is expected to increase in the future, one of the changes that the Regents voted for gradually reduces the amount which UC will contribute toward the cost of retiree health insurance. In the year 2011, UC pays about 86% on average. That amount will reduce over time to a 70% floor. For more information the website is <http://universityofcalifornia.edu/sites/ucrpfuture/>.

Please remember that New Dimensions, the UCOP publication, continues to look for articles by retirees. If you would like to contribute, contact Anne Wolf at [annewolf@ucop.edu](mailto:annewolf@ucop.edu) with your articles.

*Antonia Sweet*

### ***Yudof Testifies before Assembly***

On February 7, 2011 University of California President Mark Yudof testified before the California Assembly Budget Subcommittee. In his testimony, Yudof warned that the current state budget situation threatens UC's core values of access, affordability and excellence. For a transcript, see <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/24945>.

**Day at the Races****April 21, 2011 \* \$36 per person**

Join us for food and fun times in the elegant Turf Club at Golden Gate Fields in Albany. \$36 registration fee includes: preferred parking, complimentary racing program and buffet lunch. We hope you will be able to join the festivities! Remember, a portion of the proceeds from this annual event are set aside for the UCRAB scholarship fund.

Gates open at 11 am; the buffet is open from 11:30 am until 2 pm. First race is at 12:45 pm, last race around 4:30 pm.

To register, complete and return the orange form enclosed in this newsletter. Deadline to reserve a space is Friday, April 15. Don't miss out!

**Filoli Gardens****May, 2011 - Date to be Announced**

We hope you will be able to join us for a trip to the beautiful and famous Filoli gardens. Filoli is a country house set in 16 acres of formal gardens in Woodside, California. The estate was donated to the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1975, and it is often used in television and movies. The gardens are structured to provide long axial views. Profuse naturalized plantings contrast with lawns, paving, formal reflecting pools, framed-in walls and clipped hedging and are punctuated by many narrowly columnar Irish yews. Attractions include self-guided tours, guided tours, and nature hikes. The gardens are largely maintained by local volunteers.

Call or email the Retirement Center at 510/642-5461 or [ucbrc@berkeley.edu](mailto:ucbrc@berkeley.edu) to receive more information about this trip as it develops.

**The Two Cultures: Science and the Humanities****Tuesdays, April 19 & 26, 1pm - 3pm**

Fifty years after C.P. Snow's lecture on science and the humanities set off a violent controversy in England, it continues to arouse debate. Today the continued disparities between science and the humanities are increasingly apparent. Join us for a panel discussion to discuss how, in the world's pursuit of a civilized and enlightened society, the two cultures need each other. Contact the Retirement Center at 510/642-5461 or [ucbrc@berkeley.edu](mailto:ucbrc@berkeley.edu) to register.

Those of you who have been members of our organization for several years will probably know a good deal of the following information, but sometimes one is asked "What's UCRAB?" and here's a brief "cheat sheet" to allow you to give a good answer.

UCRAB is the slightly odd acronym for the University of California Retirees' Association at Berkeley. I sometimes comment that "you crab – and sometimes I do, too!"

It was founded in 1988 on the model of the Emeriti Association, UCBEA, and now has some 650 dues-paying members. UCRAB is open to all Berkeley retired staff, both academic and non-academic. UCRAB and UCBEA were instrumental to the formation of the UC Berkeley Retirement Center. The association is governed by an elected board of 10 members and is represented on the Retirement Center's Policy Board.

UCRAB serves several functions: First, we're a social and educational group, offering our members and guests quarterly luncheons with speakers, many current or retired faculty, but also community members from the arts, media, and so on. The association also offers trips: local jaunts by bus to the SF Academy of Sciences, to art exhibits, the Monterey Aquarium, the wine country; and overnight train trips to Yosemite, Hearst Castle, and the Grand Canyon, for example.

UCRAB members serve the campus: as donors, as volunteers, and as ambassadors to the public.

But UCRAB also has another very important function: advocacy for university retirees. We mainly accomplish this by joining with similar associations on the other UC campuses in CUCRA, the Council of University of California Retiree Associations (of which the author of this piece is elected chair). CUCRA works with the Office of the President on matters relating to retiree health and other benefits; a CUCRA chair serves on the university's retirement system advisory board and Post-Employment Benefits Task Force; and CUCRA, with the Emeriti counterpart, CUCEA, work together on the Joint Benefits Committee (JBC) to monitor changes in UC's benefits programs and to advocate for needed changes. Our association gives retirees a voice in advocacy efforts.

*Marian Gade*

## ***From Our Members - Alzheimer's Reign of Terror***

Yesterday's mail brought heartbreaking letters informing me that not only one, but two, close friends have been diagnosed with advanced Alzheimer's. In both cases it was family members who revealed the grim news -- one a husband, the other a son. The cases are eerily similar, with both victims themselves recognizing that their thinking is confused.

My one friend, who I'll call Mary, willingly agreed to seek diagnostic assistance from the University of California San Francisco Center for Memory and Aging. The results of a very thorough medical, neurologist, and cognitive diagnosis conducted by the Staff of UCSF CMA showed that Mary has a combination of Alzheimer's and Lewy Body Disease -- an affliction that causes her to believe that her husband of 48 years is an imposter! Mary has long expected to be afflicted by Alzheimer's as her mother died of this disease 20 years ago. At the suggestion of her doctor, she's trying out the drug Aricept to see if this will help with her memory problems. Her understanding and compassionate husband advises against extending well-meaning expressions of condolences, but rather "to interact with her in as normal and respectful manner as possible and to let any anomalies we hear from her float by as gracefully as possible."

My other friend, let's call her Jane, has also showed evidence of dementia, particularly in her short term memory. Her daughter therefore took her to a specialist for cognitive assessment. It was determined that she should have round-the-clock companionship. But, given her social nature, the idea of a good group living setting seemed far better than a home-care attendant. Fortunately her daughter found an excellent facility in Alameda, where no more than fourteen women live in their own wing. Jane has a large, lovely room with her own art and furniture and a private bath. She enjoys communal meals with other women and leads the group in songs, and is alight with joy -- still the positive and loving person we all know.

By coincidence, with the distressing news about my two friends, I received an appeal from the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center in Berkeley pointing out that Alzheimer's has become America's sixth leading cause of death, with more than five

million Americans in the grip of this disease. All of us live in fear that WE will become the next victim! We can only hope and pray that a cure will be found to end this sinister reign of terror.

*Dorothy Snodgrass*

## ***Wait, Wait! There's Hope***

Research is progressing at a rapid pace, but is woefully underfunded. Thirty years ago, scientists believed that infections could only be transmitted by DNA or RNA-based life forms: bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites. That assumption was upended in 1982 by Dr. Stanley Prusiner at UCSF, who discovered a new class of infectious particles, made entirely of protein. Dr. Prusiner called the particles prions (PRE-ions) and proved that they cause bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or "mad cow" disease and play a role in fatal neurodegenerative human diseases - including Alzheimer's disease (AD).

Dr. Prusiner received the Nobel Prize and, last October, a National Medal of Science from President Obama.

The Gladstone Institutes at UCSF is launching a new Comprehensive AD Research Center that will have two complementary and well-integrated components: one component will focus on innovative AD research and the other will focus on AD drug discovery. The Center will carry out high-risk and potentially high-gain research to achieve Gladstones Vision 2020: to identify therapeutic strategies that can prevent, halt and possibly even reverse AD within the next 10 years.

*Marcelle Baxter*

## ***Care Services - Maintain Your Brain***

**Thursday, April 7, 12:10-1:30 pm**

**UCB Tang Center**

This research-based workshop, applicable to both caregivers and elders, will be both informative and fun. Features nutritional and lifestyle advice, strategies to keep memory sharp, and interactive exercises and activities. Presented by the Alzheimer's Association.

Contact the Elder Care program at UCB to register: 510/643-7754. For more information, see <http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/facstaff/care/eldercare/index.shtml>.

## ***CUCRA - Sponsored Travel Opportunities***

The Council of UC Retiree Associations (CUCRA) has an arrangement with Collette Vacations under which it receives credit when UC retirees use this travel agency. There are usually between 10 and 30 people on each tour. The tours involve a lot of walking and Collette's representatives are happy to provide information on how strenuous a particular tour is.

Contact Collette Vacations at 800-770-6740, provide the Sales Representative with the tour number, identify yourself as a UC Retiree and they will be happy to supply you with more information.

- **Costa Rica: A World of Nature (#435673)** Basic tour is \$2,779.
- **Alaska Discovery Land & Cruise (#436295)** Balcony cabin rate is \$5,044; inside cabin rate is \$4,444; and outside cabin rate is \$4,844.
- **Legendary Waterways of Europe (#436307)** Middle outside cabin rate is \$6,149, and the upper outside cabin rate is \$6,599.
- **Spain's Costa del Sol & Portugal's Riviera (#435676)** Basic tour is \$3,579.
- **Europe's Christmas Markets (#436321)** Basic tour is \$2,649.
- **From the Outback to the Glaciers (#436314)** Basic tour is \$6,179.

The cost of all tours is per person, double occupancy and includes round-trip airfare from Los Angeles, hotel transfers, air taxes and fees/surcharges (subject to increase until paid in full), majority of your meals and some additional charges depending on the tour.

## ***North Oakland Village***

Our aging population represents the fastest growing segment in the nation and most older adults prefer to stay where they have long resided. The village concept of aging in place, which provides a cost effective alternative to moving to a retirement community while providing enhanced social networks, is growing throughout the nation.

North Oakland Village is a membership based support network for people who want to stay in their home as they age.

Service areas include Alameda, Glenview, Montclair, Piedmont, Rockridge and Temescal.

The Village commits to priority services like reliable transportation to shopping, appointments and activities, home repair specialists and home healthcare providers, all qualified, safe resources.

Contact North Oakland Village 510/450-4805, northoaklandvillage.org, or PO Box 21573, Oakland, CA, 94620 for more information.

## ***Volunteer in the Garden Shop***

### **Garden Shop and Plant Deck Volunteers Needed!**

Do you like plants and botanically themed books and gifts? Do you enjoy working with the public? Would you like to support the UC Botanical Garden? Volunteer in The Garden Shop, which generates revenue for the Garden! Volunteers sell gifts, plants, and books; greet visitors and provide information about the Garden.

Requirements: Work a minimum of two three-hour shifts per month and commit to one year of volunteering. Find substitutes if unable to make shift. Willingness to provide excellent and friendly customer service. Transact sales using the cash register and charge machine. Greet visitors and provide information about the Garden and local community. Regularly familiarize yourself with the Shop's merchandise - gifts, plants, and books. Full training and staff supervision provided.

The Garden Shop is open daily 10:30 AM - 4:30 PM; volunteer shifts are available 10:30 AM - 1:30 PM or 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM weekdays and weekends. Contact Perry Hall for more information at perry@berkeley.edu.

## ***Thank you! From the Retirement Center***

The Retirement Center would like to thank all of you who took part in our recent retiree survey. 1242 retirees responded, 196 of whom indicated UCRAB membership.

It is our hope that your preferences and interests, as indicated in the survey, will influence the future direction of the Retirement Center during these challenging times. Some survey findings will be published in the next issue of *the CenterPiece*, due this summer.

Reminder: UCRAB does not accept cash payments. Please make payments for luncheons, dues, etc. by check or money order.

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

### *Upcoming Events*

**UCRAB Luncheons** | Berkeley City Club | March 17, June 16, September 15, December 15

**Echoes of the Past: Qing Dynasty Chinese Painting** | through June 26, every Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday | Berkeley Art Museum. See the BAM's collection of works by Ming and Qing dynasty artists working in traditional formats, including the Four Wangs, which exemplify the great tradition of Chinese ink painting.

**University Gospel Chorus: Gospel from the Windy City: Noon Concert Series** | March 9 | 12:15-1 p.m. | Hertz Concert Hall. "Gospel from the Windy City: Celebrating the Chicago Style" - An afternoon of music from "sweet home" Chicago, the home place of Gospel Music. For more information, contact [kkarn@berkeley.edu](mailto:kkarn@berkeley.edu), 510/643-7495

**Death and the Maiden** | March 18 | 12:15-1 p.m. | Hertz Concert Hall. Tammy Lian, violin; Vivian Hou, violin; Alexey Drobizhev, viola; Rio Vander Stahl, cello. Schubert: Death and the Maiden Quartet; String Quartet No. 14 in D minor. For more information, contact [kkarn@berkeley.edu](mailto:kkarn@berkeley.edu), 510/643-7495

**The Conservator's Art: Preserving Egypt's Past** | through December 31, every Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday | Hearst Museum of Anthropology. Explore techniques and see results of extensive conservation carried out on pieces including crocodile mummies, statuary, mummy portraits, amulets, and stela. Free to the public.

**Paths to Development in Asia: South Korea, Vietnam, China, and Indonesia** | March 2 | 4 p.m. | Institute of East Asian Studies (2223 Fulton, 6th Floor). Tuong Vu, Political Science, University of Oregon, will discuss why some states in the developing world have been more successful at facilitating industrialization than others.