



The Renaissance Recorder

Learn, Connect, Share

California State University, Sacramento



February 2021

Lifelong Learning for over 30 years

Issue 202



President's Corner

By Ken Cross

The Renaissance Society Spring 2021 semester has arrived. RS programs begin the week of Monday, February 8th. The Spring Catalog has a new, record number of seminars, presentations, and SIGs (Shared Interest Groups). The midyear RS member-

ship portal is open. Please invite your friends, family, and acquaintances to join RS this semester in the ZOOM classroom. Feel free to forward our RS flipbook & PDF Catalog versions and website links to share the myriad of lifelong learning opportunities available online this spring. Check out our new 60 Second "Program Sneak Previews" on the RS website. Seminar leaders share a brief "elevator speech" video on the content highlights of their spring courses.

On December 21, 2020 members of the RS Executive Committee conducted an annual leadership ZOOM meeting with Sac State President Robert S. Nelsen. The RS Board members updated President Nelsen on the 2019-2020 Annual Report highlights and our transition to the fall 2020 semester virtual classroom. President Nelsen previously spoke on "Sac State's Evolution in Response to the Pandemic" at the November 6, 2020 Forum. During the question and answer session, Nelsen was asked two or three ways that RS could support him, Sac State students and the campus. President Nelsen shared three areas in which Sac State needs RS assistance: 1) The Antiracism and bias initiative; 2) The Anchor University initiative; 3) and continued RS volunteer and philanthropic support for students.

During our December meeting, the President expanded on his antiracism and bias and Anchor University initiatives, appreciating the Society's willingness to participate in both programs. He also promised to include the Society in the planning of his initiatives. Nelsen was aware of the volunteer and philanthropic support provided by the Society and indicated his appreciation of these efforts.

RS Board VP Barbara Davis-Lyman shared the initiatives the Society has begun regarding diversity in the curriculum, including seminars and forum presentations. Barbara mentioned the continuing support for Sac State Student Scholarships, the ASI Food Pantry, and Gerontology mentoring. President Nelson commented on the importance of mentoring and encouraged the Society to increase its commitment in this regard. RS Board Secretary Bob Benedetti

shared the growing interest of the Society in community outreach with the goal of partnerships that increased the diversity of our membership.

As Board President, I thanked President Nelsen for the university's support from the Division of Information Resources & Technology (IRT) for our ZOOM accounts, the College of Continuing Education (CCE) for our membership and registration site, and University Enterprises, Inc. (UEI) as our fiscal sponsor. We also expressed our appreciation for CSUS Liaison and Dean of the College of Social Science and Interdisciplinary Studies (SSIS) Dianne Hyson and her staff's support. I stressed once again that our RS members are eager to return to the Sac State campus to have face-to-face programs and social interaction as soon as he and the CSU system determine that it is safe to gather in public. The Board leadership's collective sense was that our Sac State-RS relationship is healthy and on solid ground.

I look forward to seeing you and your friends on the spring 2021 virtual campus! Please be safe and well in mind, body, and spirit!

Ken

Ken Cross, President

The Renaissance Society of Sacramento
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February Forums

Fridays, 3:00—4:00 p.m.**

February 12: Maeley Tom - "Breaking Through Glass Ceilings In The California State Legislature!" Ms. Tom will share her story as presented in her new book: *I am not who you think I am: An Asian American Woman's Political Journey*. **Dr. Barbara O Connor**, Emeritus Professor of Communications and Director of the Institute for the Study of Politics and Media at CSUS, will interview Ms. Tom.

February 19: Dr. Juan Carlos Ruiz-Guajardo - "Mexican Culture in the Context of the Complex USA-Mexico Relationship." Dr. Ruiz-Guajardo is the Cultural and Educational Attaché at the Mexican Consulate in Sacramento.

February 26: Detective Matthew Deaux - "What You Need To Know About Computer Crimes and Elder Fraud." Detective Deaux has been with the Sacramento County Sheriff's office for 18 years and has served on the Sacramento Valley ID Theft and Hi Tech Crimes Task force for the past five of those years.

****Registration is required to attend Forums.**

Member Profile

By Judy Lewis

Carol Goodman is Never Idle



Starting as a journalism major at San Diego State University, which she completed at CSU, Sacramento, Carol Goodman began a career that included 35 years both as an independent management consultant and in State employment, specializing in health and human services. Her tenure with the State included serving as Chief of both Medi-Cal Eligibility Operations and Medi-Cal Eligibility Policy for the State of California.

Among the states which received assistance from Carol were Kansas, Arizona, Hawaii and Ohio, as well as Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. "It seemed like I was never home," she reports. "You think traveling is exciting until you do it."

In 1990, Carol decided to start her own consulting practice. She also returned to Sac State, where she earned an M.A. in Graduate Liberal Arts in 1997.

After 10 years of working independently, Carol decided that since she had left all of her retirement and medical benefits with the State of California, it would be beneficial to return there. She spent three years at the Department of Mental Health, and three years at the California Housing Finance Agency, as a Housing Finance Officer, where she was responsible for underwriting multi-family loans to developers who were building apartments that served individuals with disabilities. She retired from the State of California in 2006 and returned to working for herself until her final retirement in 2018.

Doubles tennis and running have both been part of Carol's life. She has belonged to the Sacfit group for ten years and normally runs one or two marathons per year. Plantar fasciitis has currently slowed down that endeavor, although she did participate in the Run to Feed the Hungry in 2020.

As a volunteer at Kaiser Permanente's Folsom Ambulatory Surgery Center, prior to the pandemic, Carol interacted with family members and explained how their day would likely transpire. She looks forward to returning. She is also participating in a two-year Coronavirus vaccine study through Kaiser, along with 44,000 other persons worldwide. Carol received her first injection in September, and the second in October. Every six months, participants receive a blood draw. Eventually, the results will be unblinded and she will learn whether she received the placebo or the vaccine. So far, she has not experienced any reaction.

(Continued on Page 5)

Clinical Pearls

by Dolores Eitel BSN, MA, NYCFNP

Eye Problems: Blepharitis

Blepharitis is an inflammation of the eyelid that can affect the inside or outside of the skin that lines the eyes. Symptoms include swollen, red, itchy, crusted eyelids that sometime look greasy. Eyelids may stick together when waking from sleep. The main cause of blepharitis is the extra growth of the normal bacteria on the skin. Other causes that increase the risk of increased bacterial growth are allergies, viral infections, blocked oil glands, mites, certain skin conditions like dandruff or rosacea. Blepharitis can lead to other eye problems such as a sty, a chalazion, damage to the cornea, and most frequently dry eye.

Blepharitis is a chronic, sometimes lifelong condition affecting 200,000 people a year: National Institute of Health (NIH). Daily eyelid hygiene can prevent flare-ups. This consists of the following sample routine:

- Prepare a solution of warm water and baby shampoo 1/2 & 1/2.
- Mix with a warm soft washcloth.
- Hold and gently press the cloth against your eye for enough time to loosen any crusts.
- Gently rub the cloth across where the eyelashes and eyelids meet.
- Rinse your eyes with clean warm water.
- * Commercial eyelid non-allergic cleaning wipes and/or make-up remover wipes may also be used.

Treatment for blepharitis may include antibiotics and/or medications to reduce inflammation and to keep the eyes moist.

Consult with your Primary Care Provider or your Eye Healthcare Provider for diagnosis and treatment of this condition.

References:

www.mayoclinic.org/blephoritis 3/28/20

www.aoa.org/eyeconditions. 12/1/20

www.webmd.org/eyehealth 4/16/20

(Reprints may be made with the permission of the author. Please contact Dolores Eitel at doloressurvived@gmail.com)



And more... From The Associated Students of Sac State, Inc., guaranteed bring a tear to your eye!

THANK YOU
Renaissance Society
FOR YOUR DONATIONS SUPPORTING THE 2020 THANKSGIVING

"Thank you for providing us holiday cheer in time of need. The holidays can be hard especially now that we are in quarantine again and have to social distance from our families. This year especially is hard on me for the holidays as this is the first holiday season without my last grandparent who we lost in April. This will help remember what the holidays are all about to give thanks and gratitude for what we have."

"Thank you so much for your kindness. Celebrating Thanksgiving would not have been possible without your generosity. Being a full time, financially unstable college student is really rough; so, I am so happy that you are able to help me out. You have my eternal gratitude."



"Hello donors of my Thanksgiving Food Basket, I just wanted to take this time to let you know how much my family and I appreciate your generous gift. This year has been one of the hardest for us financially. Therefore, I find myself worrying a lot more about how we are going to get money for our bills and necessities. This donation has eased some of my worries and greatly helped us make this year's Thanksgiving dinner possible. Thank you."

"Words cannot even express how grateful I am for these baskets and the gift card. As a low-income college student, this will definitely aid my family during these uncertain times. The staff when I went to pick up my baskets were so friendly and welcoming, and literally almost brought my friend to tears when they handed us our Target gift cards. This will support my family in a tremendous way since we can now use our funds to buy essential items for our household rather than spending it all on our Thanksgiving meal. I just want to say thank you so much for all the hard work and time that you all dedicated to putting this together. This was definitely a blessing, that was not expected."

"I am a senior at Sac State graduating in May and I will be continuing my education in the credential program after. I have been going to the food pantry since my sophomore year when it used to be a small room in Yosemite. Ever since, I've always appreciated the efforts of ASI and food donors who supply students with necessities. I was so excited to receive the Thanksgiving box this year and my family is going to enjoy all of the goodies. From my family to yours, we are so thankful for all of your generosity and your efforts do not go unnoticed. Happy holidays and stay safe this season!"

"Thank you very much for the items you provided for me and my family for Thanksgiving dinner. I'm looking forward to cooking a pumpkin pie which I haven't done before, and was able to get some other essentials at Target, always appreciated. Thank you to whoever donated, these items truly uplifted me and my family."

"Hello, and Thank you. This is the first Thanksgiving I will be able to cook a turkey dinner again in six years, and I can't wait! So many of us are isolated and without loved ones this year, and your kindness is especially touching in these difficult times. I wish you and all your loved ones be safe and have a very Happy Holidays."

"Thank you for the food and gift card. My mom has mental health issues and the quarantine has made them a lot worse so I've had to be the one to make sure we have food lately. Thanksgiving doubles as my little sister's birthday so I'll be able to make dinner and get her a gift thanks to you guys. It is appreciated and I really mean that. Happy Thanksgiving and I hope you all have a great Holiday."





Remember when someone helped you when you were in college with a scholarship or a financial gift that really made a difference. Now is your chance to pay it forward with a contribution to the Renaissance Scholarship Fund. Renaissance member Bob Benedetti shows his gratitude for the scholarship he received by “paying it forward” with annual donations to the Renaissance Scholarship Fund.

“I went to graduate school with little money. I thought I would see if I could do well enough to convince myself teaching should become my career. After the first year, though my grades were good, my resources were exhausted. I applied for multiple scholarships both to survive and to see if an objective observer would feel I had sufficient promise to invest in my future. I never forgot my joy when I opened an acceptance letter. It renewed my faith in myself as well as replenished my pocketbook. With this memory in mind, I try to be generous when the Renaissance Society invites scholarship support for Sac State students. I hope you will join me this year in making a contribution to the scholarship fund.”

Bob Benedetti
Secretary, Renaissance Society
Emeritus Professor of Political Science
University of Pacific

Donate online at <https://tinyurl.com/RSSpecialProgramFund>.

Donate by check made payable to University Foundation at Sacramento State with Renaissance Scholarship in the notation line. Mail to The Renaissance Society, Sacramento State, 6000 J Street, Mail Stop 6074, Sacramento, CA 95819-607

Reflections From the 2020 Holidays

Members Shared Their Gratitude

End of the year holidays are a time of reaching out, reflecting on the past year, and sending greeting cards and notes to family and friends. This past year was noteworthy in many ways--good and bad--and Renaissance members took the time to express their appreciation for the survival of the organization during extraordinary times.

Donna sent her thanks to President Ken Cross and to all in the organization who made the transition to virtual learning possible:

“Hi Ken, I want to express my appreciation for the wonderful job you did in presenting the Top 10 Domestic Issues class. The presentations were thought-provoking and informative. My husband and I both really liked the opportunity to attend classes virtually. We have not attended Renaissance classes for a couple of years because of the logistics of getting to Sac State. I think we took 10 classes this fall semester. I know some people miss the in-person camaraderie, but for us the virtual classes made it possible to fit many classes into our schedules without transportation issues. Thank you to everyone involved in a successful semester of great classes. Regards, Donna.”

Cindy sent a beautiful handwritten note to the Renaissance office to express her thanks:

“Thank you for all the wonderful classes and lectures, etc. that you have given us this past spring, summer, and fall.

I did not think I would renew my dues because I do not get around as well as I use to. Going to the campus is a burden. You saved the day! I hope when COVID is over Renaissance will consider continuing some virtual classes.

Thanks to the hard-working group who put this opportunity together for the members. – Cindy”

Well said, Donna and Cindy! Thanks for sharing.



Our Four Levels of Schooling

by Christie Braziel, Freshman Senior

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

I remember I was a wet-behind-the-ears high school freshman when an older classmate chose to explain to me the four levels of high school. She said, “*Here’s how you know the difference between the four grades of high school:*”

Freshman...Don’t Know They Don’t Know
Sophomores...Don’t Know They Know
Juniors...Know They Don’t Know
Seniors...Know They Know

I never forgot this maxim and thought it was so filled with deep wisdom and aspiration, all wrapped into one saying. Most importantly, it provided my goal: I so wanted to “know.” Know what I wanted to be when I grew up. Know why the world works the way it does. Know all those important things about living life that adults seemed to be in on as “secrets.” Spoiler alert. Senior year didn’t provide those answers and I’m still waiting for understanding on a breadth of the world’s workings.

As the decades rolled on, through marriage, divorce, job losses, financial downturns and personal challenges, I kept waiting for some life-changing insights.

My 20’s were focused on finishing college and starting married life with home purchase and career advancements. The 30’s were trying to get a foothold in the adult world and consider my long-term goals or consequences of my choices. “Life begins at 40,” they say, and I remember wondering why that was considered a truism. The best I could think was that I was beginning to feel like I might be an official grown-up now and starting to be less concerned about what others think of me and more about what I might be in my increased self-awareness. The 50’s meant it was really time to make hay while the sun shone because retirement was rapidly approaching and I best be prepared

both financially and psychologically for that next passage. Then the 60’s. How did this happen? Soon I’ll be able to say I survived the 60’s...twice. The plan was to make the transition into retirement in my late 60’s but it came a bit earlier. Everything turned out fine and I’ve never been happier.

I have always been a lifelong learner and when a friend told me of the Renaissance Society a few years before retirement, I put it on the top of my bucket list.

I’ve been happily rewarded and continue to reap the many benefits of this group. Especially gratifying is to share time and learning with such a vast array of sharp, capable, diverse, now retired career professionals who also value lifelong learning. Most of all, I get to “hang out” in the quad (literally or virtually) with four decades of awakened classmates. This is where that high school maxim comes back into play.

I’m one of the younger ones of this great school of learning. It’s like I’m a freshman and I’m willing to admit, once again, I don’t know what I don’t know. I’m a Freshman-Senior.

The 70-year-olds are my sophomore schoolmates and they’ve got a touch more time on the planet and offer me the next bump up. They are the Sophomore-Seniors. (Plus, I’m dating a Sophomore-Senior so, that must mean I’m kind of cool.) 😊

Then the 80-year-olds are the juniors, sharper still and wise beyond my years. They are the Junior-Seniors.

But the last group, the Senior-Seniors of 90 years on this planet is my true inspiration. Humble, gentle and inspiring. They’ve learned which battles to take on and which to pass by. Plus, the Renaissance Society equally values their contributions and it provides a membership-free standing.

So, you see, I can still look ahead to learn more and someday, I too will know what I know, because I remain teachable.

(Member Profile continued from page 2)

Carol also looks forward to again volunteering one day weekly in the Congregation B’nai Israel gift shop once the pandemic is over.

Carol describes herself as “a big theater buff,” subscribing to local and Bay Area theater companies, and says she has only missed two years of performances with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival since 1976 until 2020.

Currently Carol serves on the Renaissance Society’s Friday Speaker Series Committee. She reports that her husband, Tony Gane, is “the Zoom dude for the New Yorker group.”

Doing What Doesn't Come Naturally: Senior Citizens Getting a Zing Out of Zoom

By Ivy Hendy

When the state of California first began announcing their quarantine orders, organizers of the Renaissance Society, a seniors' life-long learning organization in Sacramento, started switching to a digital platform. Despite the fact that the majority of the 1,600 members are over sixty, Renaissance Society participants have been meeting in classrooms on the campus of Sacramento State University for the past thirty-five years. Now, the group would have to offer their extensive classes and presentations online. Were they up to the task?

You bet! The members of this large senior citizen's group were used to learning new things and educating themselves.

A big help was that the Renaissance Society community was already established and so once they had set-up tech support, they pushed each other to give Zoom, the video communications platform, a try. Right on cue, the Renaissance Society volunteer coordinators were able to recruit numerous members who were tech savvy and could offer technical help to others. Within a few weeks the group was transformed into a senior's organization able to meet the moment. As a result of the fast-online pivot, the members of this volunteer organization have been able to continue to offer dynamic learning experiences.

With their feet planted firmly on the ground, the coordinators of the Renaissance Society understood that for a while their heads must remain in the cloud. The covid pandemic has reshaped the world and the new normal includes Zoom, a cloud-based communication app that allows for the set-up of virtual videos/audio meetups, and other collaborative capabilities.

Going Remote Needn't Mean Being Cutoff

Of the nearly 13.8 million Americans over the age of 65, about 28% live by themselves according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

There is always a possibility that seniors living alone may be susceptible to loneliness. But the feelings of loneliness are not limited to seniors who are single. The ramification of social isolation is an elemental problem spanning the ages.

One of the most popular aspects of the Renaissance Society is that of going to their Friday on-campus classes taught by member volunteers. Talk to their mem-

bers and you will find that it has been an exhilarating experience. This popular weekly event allowed seniors to not only attend Renaissance Society classes and presentations but also to have spontaneous, organic conversations with a variety of people who they might not have met any other way.

For senior citizens who were involved in these on-campus, life-long learning classes, the change to electronic at-home courses was as radical for them as it was for the younger students. At colleges that have gone remote like Sac State, there will now be a minimum of a year of online learning. Though this pandemic is a once-in-a-hundred-year event, it might be slow in resolving itself.

Fortunately, trying a hand at a Zoom meeting can have its own form of enlivening and uplifting reward.

Not surprisingly though, the research into older people taking at-home classes electronically indicates that at first there is a reluctance to switch to virtual learning.

The Three Stages

Studies show that for people ready to take the plunge, there are three stages that they may go through as they process this new way to stay connected. The *first stage* is reticence about setting up Zoom for viewing a virtual classroom. The *second stage* is more hopeful as people get used to using Zoom at home and eventually like it. But in *stage three*, which comes three to six months later, many people start feeling isolated and missing some of the people they were used to being with. Ironically, some of the people who are missed are the ones who ruffled feathers and left people in a fit of pique!

Embracing the new electronic learning opportunity has proven fulfilling for the majority of the Renaissance members. For instance, it is possible with the basic membership fee to now sign up for many more classes and presentations. Also, the online format allows the physically challenged more freedom to participate. Discriminating factors such as physical appearance, hearing disabilities, race and gender are largely absent. The gist of the online courses eliminates most of the human foibles and interruptions focusing on the material at hand.

zoom (Continued from Page 6)

A New Routine

When this pandemic ends the coordinators at the Renaissance Society think that some members might still be nervous to return to the same on-campus routine. Preferred choices will differ, but there will be some who will want to continue with Zoom for their life-long learning experiences.

For senior citizens, the initial challenges of learning remotely are likely to get better with time; it can be expected that there will be more and more opportunity for high-quality experiences. Though electronic at-home learning won't stop the pitfalls of being around the pesky apparatuses of the bed, the refrigerator, and the television, being able to navigate the deep ocean of online courses offered by the Renaissance Society continues to open new doors and can be central to a new-found confidence.

(Editor's note: Ivy's article was originally published in the Land Park News on December 10, 2020.)

www.valcomnews.com



In Memoriam



Elizabeth R. Solomon died On October 11, 2019, age 97. She was an accomplished artist whose work received many awards in recognition of her talent.

**February's "First Friday" is actually
Second Friday, or February 12!
Stay tuned, check the weekly updates,
for February's virtual get together!**

Come Join Us!



Contributing to *The Recorder*

The Recorder editors would like to get more contributions from you members!



Submissions can include announcements regarding your group's function and/or accomplishments. We LOVE pictures (in *.jpg or similar format) with each person identified, if possible. Other items include: short stories (limited to space available), announcements of upcoming events regarding The Renaissance Society, and informational articles (i.e. "Clinical Pearls" and "Member Profile"). The submissions should be in WORD form (preferably 12-point Times New Roman, but we can adapt).

Submissions to *The Recorder* should be e-mailed to each of us (as we share editor duties): Jennifer Cummings at jennifer1945@hotmail.com, Cheryl Huffman at chuffman79@aol.com. And what better time to introduce our newest editor, Lorraine Murphy at ltara626@gmail.com. Please welcome her!

Deadlines are monthly, by the second of each month (**for the next following month**). Example: February 2 is the DUE DATE for the March issue. We PREFER that you do not wait UNTIL the second of the month to submit longer articles, as we need more time to plan space requirements. Additionally, a "heads up" to the editors in advance, with approximate space requirements of your article, will assist us in planning and placement.

Note: all due dates, plus a year's worth of back issues, are available on our website: <https://tinyurl.com/y9gpyyln>

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Changes have been made to the Program Enrollment system:

The ZOOM link is now included. Look for this new document,

"How to Enroll in Programs and Find the Zoom Link."

on the Renaissance website at: <https://tinyurl.com/y9gpyyln>.