

President's Message



Deborah Seiler

President

The Renaissance Society
of Sacramento

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Renaissance Website:

<https://csus.edu/rensoc>

Key Dates

Tues. Feb. 27

Estate Planning Webinar

March 1

First Friday Pizza

March 4

*Board of Directors Meeting
(Zoom)*

March 18 -22

*Spring Break
Campus Closed*

April 1

*Cesar Chavez Day
Campus Closed*

❖

Taking Nothing for Granted

Filled with Gratitude

As I write this message to you, I am sitting in candlelight.

The wind is raging, and our entire street is engulfed in darkness due to the loss of electric power in our neighborhood.

There is a Renaissance Society Board of Directors meeting tomorrow and I'm feeling unprepared, unable to navigate the darkness to fully review, once again, all the Board reports from our dedicated committee volunteers.

I'm hungry.

Our new convection cooktop, our oven, and the microwave don't work without electric power.

It makes me think more than I usually do about the basics in our lives: family, food, shelter, warmth, and purpose. For many, even our furry companions.

It reinforces my concern for the people I see every day lining the streets in tents or sleeping openly on blankets and wonder how they survive at all.

My husband, Jim, has long questioned why I have so many candles but he now appreciates how their illumination enables us to move about our house.

On occasion I've overlooked the importance of his battery backups and internet hotspots. I should have been more appreciative sooner, and now I am.

Sometimes it seems that only when an emergency happens do we understand and appreciate all that we take for granted.

I do not take our Renaissance Society for granted.

I don't take all of you as members for granted.

I don't take our relationship with Sac State, our wonderful new President Luke Wood, our fabulous liaison Dean Dianne Hyson and the deans, for granted.

I appreciate the many gifts we have from this relationship and I'm grateful to spend time on the beautiful campus.

I don't take for granted the dedicated volunteers we have...you, who step up to inform us, care for and contribute to the Sac State students, join hands as we welcome new members, serve on vital committees, and help in so many ways, both humble and magnificent.

Continued next page

President's Message continued

I don't take for granted the relationships I've formed with you and those you have formed with each other. In the twilight of our lives, what more could we desire?

By the time you read this, our power will surely be restored. I'll have had a hot meal, and our February 5 Board meeting will have occurred.

Spring flowers will be emerging and a few butterflies may even make an appearance.

I invite you to share in gratitude for our many blessings and for our Renaissance Society.

May we never take for granted the simple basics of life.

May we share our gratitude for Renaissance by inviting others to join and by volunteering to help with programs, leadership, and sustainability as we serve our members, students, and the entire community.

The candles burn down, but the passion and commitment still glow.

Deborah



Volunteer Highlights
Dr. Rick Atkinson: "Just Do It"

By Deborah Seiler

Our Renaissance Society is fortunate to have so many talented individuals within our organization.



Folks like Richard Atkinson, who grew up in Texas, received undergraduate and MD from Stanford University, worked as a neurologist for Mercy and Sutter where he developed stroke programs, and even had a side job as a medical commentator for

Channel 3 KCRA and Channel 10 KXTV.

When Rick finally retired in 2020, he searched for something to fill his time. Sure, he was in a book club and has four grown sons he's close to. But he was searching for relevance in his life, something meaningful and useful to do. He came to Renaissance with an open mind, a sense of curiosity, and a willingness to serve.

To fill a great need, Rick stepped up, first as co-chair, later as chair of the Communications & Marketing Committee. In that role he taught himself to post Renaissance messages on X (Twitter), and attracted new people to help with the Weekly Update and the Recorder newsletter. Witty and well-spoken, he retains volunteers on his committee by running efficient meetings, handling challenges with calm dignity, and giving ample praise for jobs well done.

As a committee chair, he serves on the Board of Directors where his comments and observations as a relative newcomer are met with great respect.

He dutifully serves on the Forum Committee where he contributes valuable suggestions for prominent featured speakers, and he attends Program Committee meetings to stay current on that committee's activities and ensure they are reported in Renaissance communications. When the location of our Orientation and Open House changed, Rick offered to stand by at the original location to redirect any folks who failed to hear the news. Recently he even stepped up to staff the Help Desk on the first two Fridays of the semester.

Members like Rick help our organization survive and thrive. His contributions are valued and appreciated.



March Forums

Forums are a special category of highly acclaimed and high-profile speakers addressing current topics of special interest to a wide variety of our Renaissance members. These esteemed speakers are also seasoned experts in their fields. They bring a diversity, depth, and breadth of topics to inform us about critical issues facing us and our society on an ongoing basis.

All Forums occur on Friday afternoons from 3 to 4 pm when few other Renaissance seminars, Shared Interest Groups, or presentations are offered. Speakers encourage the audience to ask probing questions about their topics.

Forum speakers for Spring 2024 will give in-person presentations in Mendocino Hall 1005. In addition, the new hybrid technology will enable these presentations to be simulcast via Zoom and viewable in real-time from home. Note: To access any of the previous Forums that are on our YouTube Channel, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/@therenaissancesociety-foru8188/featured>

March 1

DR. JOHN GRAY: Psychedelics in Medicine: Past, Present, and Future



Dr Gray's lab has shown that psychedelics have the potential to facilitate the resetting of dysfunctional brain circuits. He will discuss the history of psychedelics in Western medicine, from discovery and early clinical trials through

prohibition and the current medical renaissance, as well as where we go from there.

March 8

KENN ALTINE: Honoring our Commitment to Domesticated Animals



Kenn Altine has been the CEO of the Sacramento SPCA since 2016. Prior to working in animal welfare, he spent more than three decades in journalism, having served in an executive role with Hearst, along with other publications. He was a Michigan

Merit Scholar and graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1983. He has been profiled in several publications, including US News & World Report, Columbia Journalism Review, Editor and Publisher, the UK Alumni Magazine, and the Sacramento Bee. His presentation will consider how important it is to give our companion animals as much as they give us.

March 15

ARTHUR ANGEL LUNA: Entrepreneur of Luna's Café & Juice Bar, 1983–August 2023



Arthur Angel Luna moved to Sacramento in June 1965. He entered Jesuit High, Class of 1969, tutored grade school children, and volunteered with the Society for the Blind and Head Start. Arthur attended American River College and Sac State but dropped out in 1972. He managed Hotel Santuario

in Talpa de Allende Jalisco, from 1972-1973. He worked for Harrah's in Reno and Tahoe from 1973-78 as a craps dealer while finishing courses at Sac State. He opened Luna's Café with his sister, Chris Luna Mi, in 1983, presenting healthy café fare, coffees, and fresh juices, all with vegan options. His presentation will cover his experiences and observations from 40 years of running a business in downtown Sacramento.

March 29

RANDALL HAGAR: Mental Health Care in California, the Long Road to Reform



Randall Hagar is the chief legislative advocate for the Psychiatric Physicians of California and has helped write much of the state's major mental health legislation. He holds a bachelor's degree in behavioral studies from UC Davis. He will be interviewed by Sacramento

journalist and Sac State Lecturer Emeritus Sigrid Bathen, who has long covered mental health and related issues for several publications.



Dimensions of American Diversity
March is Women's History Month

By Darryl O. Freeman

Since 1987 the month of March is annually designated **Women's History Month**. Typically, US Presidents have issued proclamations celebrating the contributions women have made in the political, cultural, scientific, entertainment and sports history of the USA.

In 1870, the **15th Amendment** to the U.S. Constitution gave African American men the right to vote; however, it would take another 50 years in 1920 with the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution that in theory gave all women the right to vote. However, it took another 45 years when the U.S. Congress passed the **1965 Voting Rights Act** to guarantee women of color the right to vote, invalidating the numerous State laws suppressing minority voting rights. Today there are more women executives of corporations and more women college graduates are working in the medical and legal professions than ever before. The U.S. Congress since 2018 has become the most diverse law-making body in the country's history. There are now the **first two Muslim women** as well as the **first two Native American women** elected to the House of Representatives.



Public domain image © Shutterstock, Inc. demonstrating for right to vote.

The expansion from local to national and from week to month was the result of a lobbying effort that included hundreds of individuals and dozens of women's

educational and historical organizations. It was an effort mobilized and spearheaded by the **National Women's History Alliance**. National Women's History Month is now recognized throughout the world. Women from Germany, China, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Japan, Russia, the Ukraine, and diverse African nations have visited the National Women's History Alliance's website and attended their events.

For this month's issue we are going to highlight lesser known achievements of women in the history of the United States in the areas of governing, science, entertainment, and the arts.

Ms. Victoria Woodhull was the first American woman to run for President of the United States in 1869.

Woodhull and her sister became the first women stockbrokers and first female founders of a Wall Street brokerage firm. In the same year, she also became the first woman to publish a women owned weekly

newspaper, advocating social reforms for women. Then, two months after opening her firm on Wall Street, Woodhull announced her intention to run for president of the United States, at a time when she couldn't have even cast a vote for herself. She received no electoral votes.

Patsy Takemoto Mink was the first women of color and first Asian American to serve in the U.S. Congress, serving the constituents of the state of Hawaii in 1964. She is best known for shepherding the passage of **Title IX**. By eliminating sex discrimination in federally funded educational programs, sports programs for girls and women have received equitable funding which has resulted in the worldwide achievement of American women in international competition, exemplified by the dominance of the U.S. Women's soccer team.

Ms. Margaret Ives Abbott was the first American woman to win an Olympic event at the 1900 Summer Olympics. While studying art in Paris France she signed up for a women's golf tournament without realizing that it was the second modern Olympics. Abbott won the tournament with a score of 47 strokes. Her mother tied for seventh place. Abbott received a porcelain bowl as a prize.

In the entertainment world, in 1973 **the first women owned and operated Olivia Records Company was founded by Ginny Berson, Meg Christian, Judy Dlugacz, Jennifer Woodul, and Kate Winter.** It is still operating and is celebrating its 50th anniversary producing and archiving LGBTQ+ music.

African American photographer **Sharon Farmer** was the first woman to be hired as the **White House Photographer and Director of the White House Photographic Office**. In 1993 as photographer for President Clinton she captured the famous handshake between the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

In March of 2019, **Ms. Kaywin Feldman** was appointed as **Director of the National Gallery of Art**, Washington DC. She is the first woman to hold the job in the museum's 77-year history. The National Gallery of Art is the second-most attended museum in the United States, boasting 5.2 million annual visitors.

A fitting end to this article is to recognize **Ms. Kamala Harris** as the **first female Vice-President of the United States** in 2021.



Let's Get Social!

Renaissance Social Committee
By Debbie Martinez



Every year we throw a few parties and events to have some fun and get to know each other better. Members say they love our social activities almost as much as the seminars they take!

We kick off the Fall semester with a picnic or BBQ at a local park, followed by a holiday dinner at Engrained Restaurant at Sac State and an end of year party in May. We also hold a Welcome Dinner or Happy Hour to welcome our new members each year.

Allan Keown has done an outstanding job of chairing our social committee for the past few years, but it is time to recruit a new chair and a few more volunteers.

If you like throwing parties and have some good ideas on social activities for Renaissance, we would like to hear from you. Contact

Debbie Martinez at 916-802-6530 or
Debralyn78@pacbell.net
for more information.



Tanka, Cousin to Ancient Haiku Poem

Tanka on Another Raining Day
By Theo Goodwin

Last month we discussed the ancient Japanese format of Haiku. Tanka is a cousin to the haiku poem. It consists of five lines with the following syllable distribution: 5,7,5,7,7. It can be used to tell a story, paint a picture, focus on nature or on some aspect of the human predicament. The tanka allows the poet two more lines and 14 more syllables than the haiku. It allows the author to express a more detailed story with even room for drama or humor.

I invoked the tanka format to imagine what I would see in one tiny zone at the ocean beach where waves come into shore and vanish.

Busy Beach

Wind lifts grains of sand
to beach strip where waves roll in,
push, pull, evaporate,
gulls gather, jump into air,
sand crabs burrow butts to sky.

Now it is your turn to write a tanka poem to lift your spirits as March comes to Sacramento.



DINING TOGETHER

By Cheryl Nelson

Dining Together will meet at
Sumer Nights, (<https://www.sumernights.com>)
2316 Watt Ave, (near El Camino Ave.)
at 5:30 PM on March 13, 2024.



Dining Together members should RSVP to Cheryl Nelson at slynnsearch@yahoo.com no later than March 8, 2024. Separate checks will be provided and credit cards are accepted.

Parking is available.



Member Profile

Court Systems Throughout the U.S. Have Benefited from Dale Good's Expertise

By Judy A. Lewis



Growing up in a small suburb of Chicago, Dale Good enrolled in Iowa State University in 1963. Upon graduation, while against the Vietnam War but with the likelihood of being drafted, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He was assigned to an electronic intelligence ship which toured the coasts of Africa with shore time in Abidjan, Ivory Coast; Luanda, Angola; Accra, Ghana; and Lourenco Marques (Maputo), Mozambique. All were current or former colonies of Europe. The experience of observing colonialism was "eye-opening for someone from a small town," he remembers.

One day Dale noticed a plaque on a bulkhead that had the bio of the Commanding Officer, indicating that he had also graduated from Iowa State University. This connection resulted in Dale being recommended for Officer Candidate School. He was flown from Mozambique to Newport, Rhode Island, and after four months of OCS training, was commissioned as a Beach Master, Assault Landing Officer-in-Charge, responsible for a role in possible conflicts in Europe and Caribbean.

Dale feels the responsibility of his experiences has guided him through his life. For example, while working the midnight to 4 a.m. shift as Officer of the Deck, he was in charge of the ship, while underway, steaming in formation with five ships. Whenever the captain was not on deck, Dale remembers his knees shaking as a 23-year old with that much responsibility for the safety of over 1,000 men below deck.

Desiring to pursue a PhD, he was awarded a teaching assistant position in the political science department at the University of Kentucky for the four-year duration of his studies. His PhD studies had an emphasis on judicial process – foreshadowing his later career.

After completing his studies but not completing the dissertation, Dale moved to Minnesota, where he served as the Research Director for the Minnesota Supreme Court and was tasked with a first-ever study to collect the amount of time judges spent on the many case types and court proceedings, to determine how many judges were actually needed in various large and small courts. He "crunched numbers" and reported to the Court and the State Legislature which created new and moved existing positions, as the study indicated.

In 1985, he was appointed Information Technology Director for the Minnesota Judicial Branch. Dale taught criminal justice evenings for seven years as a community faculty instructor at Metropolitan State University in Saint Paul while employed by the Supreme Court. In 2003 Dale was recruited to Sacramento by the SEARCH Group, the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, to provide training for leaders and staff of justice and public safety organizations nation-

wide. He traveled throughout the country, including working with four Native American tribes in New Mexico.

The next year, he found himself back in Minnesota, filling the position of IT director in the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA), which he describes as a state version of the FBI. Being able to work remotely allowed Dale to spend two weeks in Minnesota and two weeks at his home in California each month, an early experience with remote work.

In 2007, Dale retired from Minnesota but immediately accepted a contract, and then a senior manager position with the California Judicial Branch, where he continued until 2012 to assist Superior Courts and the county and state justice and public safety partners improve the sharing of justice information. In 2008, he presented his work to an Executive Session on Sentencing and Corrections at the Stanford Law School. Representing the California judicial Branch, he was also sent to the FBI National Instant Check (NICS) office in West Virginia to work to improve the sharing of justice information with NICS background checks for gun purchases.

2012 found him retiring again, although not permanently. Santa Clara County requested his assistance in 2014 in replacing all of their justice and public safety technology and improving data sharing. "I guess I'm kind of a geek," he says.

During his career, Dale discovered that most of the agencies operated with different self-developed or commercial computer systems that often could not share data in a timely and accurate fashion. The goal was to develop computerized processes which could be accessed by all state and local agencies and the FBI for sharing nationwide. An example of the disconnect he discovered was in the State of Mississippi, where only 6 percent of their felony conviction records were available to NICS, therefore to other state and local law enforcement agencies. This flaw involved the tracking of criminal dispositions that were not available to gun dealers when they ran a background check on a potential customer, thereby allowing the sale. Also, that information is used for employment-related background checks, such as for employment of teachers, coaches, social workers and many other positions.

To stay in shape, Dale walks his dog for an hour each morning and works out at a local gym every other day. Prior to the COVID epidemic, he volunteered at the Shriner's Children's Hospital where he assisted families with the circumstances they encountered when their child was brought in for care.

He checked out the Renaissance Society before COVID when offerings were mostly only on Fridays, and decided to join when he discovered that classes were being offered almost every day via ZOOM in addition to on-campus sessions.

For Spring semester, Dale will teach a class entitled "The Three T's: Truth, Trust and Technology." The course explores how the internet, and social media with their algorithms affect truth and trust, and what artificial intelligence (AI) portends for the future of our socio political order, especially with the underlying corporate economic philosophy that monetizes everything without regard to consequences, let alone AI's use by bad actors, domestic and foreign.

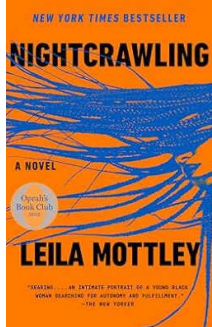


READINGS ON DIVERSITY

By Robert Benedetti and Roberta Gleeson

Nightcrawling - A Novel

by Leila Mottley.



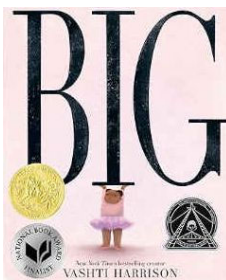
Kiara and her brother, Marcus, are scraping by in an East Oakland apartment complex optimistically called the Regal-Hi. Both have dropped out of high school, their family fractured by death and prison

But while Marcus clings to his dream of rap stardom, Kiara hunts for work to pay their rent—which has more than doubled—and to keep the nine-year-old boy next door, abandoned by his mother, safe and fed. One night, what begins as a drunken misunderstanding with a stranger turns into the job Kiara never imagined wanting but now desperately needs: nightcrawling. Her world breaks open even further when her name surfaces in an investigation that exposes her as a key witness in a massive scandal within the Oakland Police Department.

Rich with raw beauty, electrifying intensity, and piercing vulnerability, *Nightcrawling* marks the stunning arrival of a voice unlike any we have heard before.

Big

by Vashti Harrison.



A children's book about a second grader who feels she is not right sexed. Winner of the Caldecott Medal, A Coretta Scott King Award Author and Illustrator Honor book, a National Book Award finalist, and a New York Times

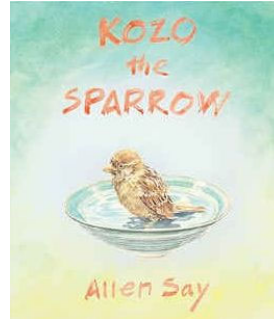
bestseller. This deeply moving story shares valuable lessons about fitting in, standing out, and the beauty of joyful acceptance, from an award-winning creator.

The first picture book written and illustrated by award-winning creator Vashti Harrison traces a child's journey to self-love and shows the power of words to both hurt and heal. With spare text

and exquisite illustrations, this emotional exploration of being big in a world that prizes small is a tender portrayal of how you can stand out and feel invisible at the same time.

Kozo the Sparrow

by Allen Say



A children's book about a child in post war Japan. Caldecott Medalist Allen Say's tale of a young boy who saves a baby bird from the local bullies is filled with compassion and empathy. Based on a true story and gorgeously illustrated, this story from an iconic picture book creator is not to be missed.



Tell People About Renaissance Society!

By Dave Harzoff

To increase Renaissance Society membership we are assembling a distribution list of organizations to send announcements about upcoming Renaissance Society semesters.

A brief summary, key upcoming dates, and contact information will be included.

Hopefully, the announcements will be republished for their membership.

If you are aware of any organizations such as retiree employee organizations, social service providers, retirement communities, clubs, churches and media or online calendars that might be interested in what Renaissance has to offer please forward the name and contact information to:

Dave Harzoff at dharzoff@sbcglobal.net.



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April Submissions Due: March 2

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