

# SILVER BULLETIN

Newsletter of CSU, Sacramento Emeritus Association

Fall - 2003

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BOB BESS

I hope that summer was good to you and yours and that you are now enjoying the cooler evenings and the beginnings of color change. I recently visited northern Minnesota and experienced the first frost in mid-September. As I write this, I am off to Southeast Asia, just for fun.

On July 1, I assumed the office of Association President, thanks to an affirmative membership vote at the spring luncheon. Thank you for giving me this opportunity, but more importantly, thanks to Jerry Tobey for his many years of service. I am pleased to say that he remains a board member as past President (or "graybeard"). Believe me, I am happy about that.

In addition to carrying out the continuing duties of the office, I have set two special goals for the year:

First, I am exploring ways which will make actual membership in the Association more meaningful. To date, I have received positive response from several University departments concerning a program of free or reduced admission to athletic and cultural events and I am conferring with several other entities about other benefits.

I expect to have a concrete package ready for consideration in the spring. This sort of change does not come without cost and we are paying more and more for our mailings. Thus, I believe we need to consider a dues increase for next year.

The second effort is aimed at emeritus staff participation. For some time, mailings have gone to this group, but we have seen little result. When I return from my trip, I am going to contact several key staff emeriti and confer with University Affairs staff to explore a more deliberate and targeted approach. I encourage each of you to be ambassadors in this regard.

Please share your thoughts on these two matters as well as anything else you consider relevant. My e-mail address is: [rbess@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rbess@sbcglobal.net)

All of us on the Board are looking forward to our November 14 dinner event featuring President Alex Gonzalez. Please do your best to join us.

Peace,

Bob Bess, President



NEED RX FOR RETIREMENT DOLDRUMS?

See Wilma Krebs' exciting volunteer opportunity on page 4

Meet interesting folks, exercise your mind, Help your colleagues in CSU!

**ANNUAL FALL DINNER**

**RESERVE THIS DATE:**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2003**

REMARKS BY:

**PRESIDENT ALEXANDER GONZALEZ**

SEE PAGE 7 FOR MORE DETAILS

## PETER'S PEREGRINATIONS

Peter Shattuck

At once an island, a nation, and a continent, Australia offers endless fascination. But instead of narrating the usual list of Sydney Opera House, Great Barrier Reef, and Uluru (Ayers Rock), let me offer three less than awesome vignettes from our visit in September: the Sydney Harbour (I first wrote "Harbor," but the British influence is still evident) Bridge walk, an inn shaped like a crocodile, and the Birdsville Working Museum.

Some years ago, a group of entrepreneurs proposed a plan to lead tours to the top of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The city fathers scoffed: they'll fall and their heirs will sue us, they'll drop stuff, nobody will do it, and it's ridiculous. Many millions of dollars later, the proponents won out, and now the Bridge walk is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Sydney.

To participate, you need to don a gray jump suit, fully velcroized so that nothing – not even a Kleenex – can fall out. Next, you hook up to a cable so that even if you are intent on self-destruction, or just prone to vertigo, you can't inflict yourself on innocent pedestrians. Then, along with ten or twelve other people who have been foolish enough to fork out \$150.00 for the privilege, you trek along catwalks and up ladders to the very top of the structure. From there, you have a magnificent view, if you can manage to open your eyes. Then you have to descend. One night, watching from a restaurant, we saw the tiny lights of the walkers on their way down. Suddenly, a violent thunderstorm cracked open the sky, and the tiny lights moved faster and faster.

(They survived.)

Did I do that? Of course not! I sat in the Jacuzzi by the pool on the roof of our hotel and waved to the poor souls toiling on their way up, linked like prisoners on a chain gang. Then I went and ate a dozen small oysters, washed down with Penfolds Eden Valley Reisling.

In the Northern Territory of Jabiru, adjacent to the Kakadu National Park, stands the Gagadu Crocodile Inn. Owned and operated by Aborigines, the hotel provides air-conditioned comfort, decent food, and appropriate amenities.

Nevertheless, I found it a trifle disconcerting to enter the lobby through the left front leg, to take the elevator to the upper jaw, and especially to catch a glimpse of the eyes, shining red under the moonlight. It does stand in the middle of an incredible population of crocodiles, many of which we viewed from a boat on the Alligator River, so named by a 19<sup>th</sup> century Englishman who didn't know the difference. The live crocs, as opposed to the imitation, grow up to fourteen feet long, and they eat the occasional tourist who ignores the warning signs.

Birdsville, in the extreme southwestern corner of Queensland, defines the middle of nowhere. We flew from Alice Springs over what has been characterized as "miles and miles and miles," a vast emptiness marked by little other than parallel ridges of wind-driven sand and a few lonely spinifex. Once a town, Birdsville is now little more than an airstrip, a small dusty hotel with a bar, and the Birdsville Working Museum.

Elizabeth's journal entry refers to the "Museum full of thousands of Old Things." The sign outside gets more specific: "Harness Maker. Wheelwright Shop. Coach Builder. Horse Gear. Mule Skinner. Thoroughbred Waggon. Roadside Relics. Washing. Ironing . . ." And so on and on. Our guide, wild-eyed and harsh-voiced, toured us through a myriad of stuff, collected from defunct gas stations, abandoned sheep and cattle stations, and I'm quite sure from roadside trash barrels.

All the brands of motor oil, types of laundry soap, varieties of barbed wire ever sold in Australia, plus a poor old horse that plodded in circles to power a machine that did something agricultural. It's not a place I would seek out again, but I wouldn't have missed it.

Oh yes, we went to the Opera House – even heard an opera there, in fact – and walked around Uluru (five miles), and swam in the Indian Ocean at Broome. Still, I'm particularly fond of the memories of these three eccentric institutions. G'day, mates!

**JOIN ERFA,  
YOUR STATEWIDE EMERITUS  
ORGANIZATION**

**ERFA WORKS FOR LEGISLATION TO  
SUPPORT YOUR HEALTH AND SECURITY IN  
RETIREMENT.**

**(Ed. note)** The following article was submitted by Gene Barnes too late for the Fall edition of the Bulletin – perhaps Gene’s thoughts are even more timely now that we are at war in Iraq.



### The Nuclear Threat

by Gene Barnes

In 1949, when I was 14, I gave an oral report in Junior High School on the damage caused by the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima four years earlier. (Having decided to become a physicist during the previous year, I thought it might be useful to inform the other students about these recently released details.) Even though I referred mainly to statistics rather than eye-witness accounts, the report seems to shock both the students and the teacher.

Now, 53 years later, I am a retired physics professor, and I note that the issue of nuclear weapons has again become prominent in the news. The possibility that Iraq might develop nuclear weapons was a major argument in President Bush’s efforts to justify action against Saddam Hussein.

More recently, North Korea has announced plans to become a nuclear power. The continuing conflict between India and Pakistan has some potential to become nuclear. Concern has also been raised as to the possibility that Israel might use its nuclear weapons if attacked.

As a physicist, I shall try to take a dispassionate look at the important question of what country is most likely to use a nuclear weapon in war. These are some of the facts:

The only country that has ever used a nuclear weapon in war is the United States. The country having the largest stockpile of nuclear weapons is the United States. The country which has performed the largest amount of testing on nuclear weapons is the United States. The country proposing to scrap the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty is the United States. The country that recently issued a manifesto declaring that it must remain the only super power in the world is the United States. The country whose legislators recently gave its president the authority to use “all necessary means” to disarm Saddam Hussein is the United States. Do you follow my line of argument?

On the other hand, there are two main arguments against the possibility that the United States would use nuclear weapons again. The first is moral. It holds that the American people and their elected representatives are too humanitarian to take such a step. This view has many adherents here at home, and some abroad. From a logical point of view, it is difficult to evaluate the strength of this argument. The other argument is a practical one. With such a large arsenal of conventional weapons, why would the U.S. ever need to use a nuclear weapon? However, the conduct of war seems to involve “efficiency” rather more than “need,” as the concept of “carpet bombing” illustrated in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, I realize that this line of argument may be disturbing to some people, and that no definitive proof has been given. Yet, unless we are willing to sometimes think the “unthinkable” we shall not always be among the survivors.

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## ATTENTION!! EMERITUS STAFF

For some time the Association Board has been encouraging membership and participation in our activities by emeritus staff. It is no mistake that we call ourselves simply “the Emeritus Association.” To date there has been very little response and the cost of mailings is prohibitive given our very modest annual dues of \$10.00

Consequently, this will be the **last** general mailing of the Silver Bulletin to all staff emeriti. If you inform us, we will continue mailing to you, even if you do not join immediately; at least for the time being. Of course, we would be very happy to receive your dues. Even if you

are not ready to join right now, please give serious consideration to attending our annual dinner on Friday, November 14, 2003 at the Alumni Center. New president Alex Gonzalez will be our special guest and speaker. It promises to be a very nice evening and we are sure you will enjoy the opportunity to learn of new directions and to rub elbows with former colleagues.

**Please see the reservation form on page 7**



## Fun Job - You are Needed!

Wilma Krebs

Our state organization, CSU-ERFA, represents all of us retired faculty by supporting beneficial legislation, and opposing bad legislation. ERFA also follows closely CalPERS actions that affect us through our health plans, supporting better benefits and opposing changes that would worsen our healthcare or unduly raise our share of the cost.

To do this, ERFA needs to maintain a presence in Sacramento - ideally one person to watch legislation, and one person to watch PERS health benefits deliberations, and participate in the decisions.

Wilma Krebs has been doing both jobs for many years, and really enjoys interacting with lots of interesting people, and working with representatives of other retiree organizations. She offers to train you until you feel confident, and introduce you to everybody. This year should be really interesting as Arnold takes over the job of governor!

The CSU-Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association (called ERFA) subsidizes our local Emeritus Association, and wants as many as possible to be members of our state organization. In numbers there is strength! Please join now, if you are not already a member.

If you want to know more about these two vital jobs, call Wilma at 916-489-6919. She needs to find one or two successors because the aging process is making it necessary. She guarantees that you will really enjoy helping your fellow retirees, and that you will enjoy working with other retiree reps at the State Capitol and/or CalPERS.

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### "When Grandma Learned to Fly"

Subtitled "A Flight Instructor's Nightmare," Earline Ames provides us with this amusing and gripping account of her achievement of learning to fly an airplane at the age of 75. The book's jacket asks: "Has a dream ever captured your imagination and continued to haunt you as the years passed?"

Earline's saga is available from The Leap Frog Press, P.O. Box 21351, San Jose, CA 95121.

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## IN MEMORIAM

Available information indicates that the following colleagues have died since our last IN MEMORIAM published in our Spring, 2003 newsletter. Date of death and departmental affiliation were not accessible for some. The Association will schedule time at the Spring Luncheon for brief oral tributes for these colleagues.

Milton Baum, Economics	09-08-03
Roger Biston, Education	06-21-03
Bob Good, Psychology	
Irl Irwin, Psychology	07-07-03
Miled Sawiris, Education	10-30-02
Robert Smart	
Duane Spilsbury, Journalism	02-24-03
Willard Thompson	09-06-03

(Ed. Note: Jim Saum has informed us that he can no longer provide the information needed for the Bulletin's In Memoriam feature. The Board of Directors of the Association extends its thanks to Jim for his many years of service in providing this important information. We need a volunteer to replace Jim' services.)

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### BROKEN PROMISE OF THE MASTER PLAN

Citing his own personal experience as a 1970 community college student from our-of-state, Michael Fitzgerald, CSUS Journalism professor, wrote an opinion piece in the Sacramento Bee in its Sunday, October 12 issue. The article, "must" reading for all of us who came to this campus as faculty or students or both under the exciting promise of California's Master Plan for Higher Education. Fitzgerald points out that 20,000 people seeking higher education will be shut out, at least for a year, and behind them, 20,000 more will "stack up like planes over the Denver airport," due to changing priorities and the ongoing budget crisis.

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**(Ed. Note:** In the 22 page print-out from Governor-elect Schwarzenegger's web-site, [www.joinarnold.com](http://www.joinarnold.com) there is only **one** question/answer about higher education.)

## Baseball: Fathers and Sons...

by Dave Humphers

Peter Shattuck's reminiscence about baseball and the "Splendid Splinter" at Boston's Fenway Park (Silver Bulletin, fall '02) reminded me to write about my brief, but exciting career playing against some of baseball's old pros. I have not had the pleasure of visiting Cooperstown and the Baseball Hall of Fame, but I can honestly report that back in my entire baseball career, there are only two pro-pitchers who have struck me out. They are Vida Blue, (wearing the LA Dodgers Blue on White uniform) and Jim Barr (SF Giants) whose record for pitching the most hitless innings is yet to be broken.

It happened on a hot, summer day in 1999 at Hughes Stadium, Sacramento. My first at bat came late in the second inning. The batting coach (from the San Diego Padres?) gave me a pat on the shoulder and quick instructions "NOW, KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BALL; LET HIM WALK YOU; DON'T SWING AT BAD PITCHES; AND, BE SURE TO LOOK OVER AT ME BETWEEN PITCHES — I MAY GIVE YOU A SIGNAL. IF THIS BATTER GETS ON BASE I MAY SIGNAL YOU TO BUNT." Because the batting coach only said it once, I forgot everything he said by the time I stepped into the batter's box to face Jim Barr.

I heard someone in the stands behind me saying that Jim Barr's fast ball wasn't as fast as it used to be, but it was a blur to me. The catcher was throwing the ball back toward the mound well before I completed my swing. Three times that blur of a baseball came hurdling toward the middle of home plate at belt buckle height. Three times I swung the bat ... late. After the umpire called "STRIKE THREE" I walked away from the plate with my pride intact ... I took three good swings at that blur of a baseball ... I didn't stand at the plate with the bat on my shoulder and let Jim Barr sneak it by me!

My next at bat, I faced Vida Blue, and let me tell you about his curve ball (or maybe it was a "curve ball with "sinker" tendencies...first it drops, then the ball twists and climbs toward the high inside corner of the plate... I stepped back, afraid that I was about to be hit in the nose, and then heard the umpire call out "STEEEEERIKE." I swung at the next two pitches, but watching Vida Blue's sinking/twisting/climbing curve ball, I felt that I needed something as wide as a tennis racquet if I was to make any contact at all. It was over quickly; two strike outs.

But my son, Dave, whose career is coaching football, hit a double off Jim Barr (a line drive over second-baseman Kurt Flood, the St. Louis great who initiated free agency).

Dave got a well earned round of applause from the stands, and that appeared to energize him further. On the first pitch he took off sprinting for third base; applause and cheers sang out from the stands, and that was when I realized that my son was wearing shorts that provide absolutely no skin protection for the imminent slide into third. The throw from the catcher was high and Dave went into a slide, the dust flew up and the umpire yelled "SAAAAFE."

Another round of applause and I could see my son's happy smile. After hanging out at third base for two pitches and at the moment the catcher cocked his arm for the throw back to the pitcher, Dave sprinted for home. The stands went wild with yells "RUN," "GO BACK," "RUN FASTER," "SLIDE," as I watched my football coach son charging toward home, head and shoulders forward like he was again the Mira Loma High School offensive right guard about to throw a full body-block on a line-backer.

The batter, seeing the incoming runner, stepped out of the box; the pitcher threw fast, aiming at the catcher's mitt just two feet off the ground. When he was about ten feet from home plate, Dave dove head-first, hands and arms outstretched toward home plate just inches above the ground, the dust flew up and Dave slapped home plate just as the catcher swung his mitt toward the third base line, too late for the tag!. The umpire spread his arms and hands like a landing mallard and called out "SSSAAAFEEE"; loud cheers rang from the stands and it was music to my ears.

As my son gathered in his dusty, scratched limbs, and arose through the cloud of dust hanging over home plate, I saw the happiest, big smile since his first home run in Little League many years earlier. He got a hit, stole two bases, and scored a run against that great team of old pro's. It was a good day for baseball' it was a good day for fathers and sons!

"I had a great time, thanks Dad" my son said, and as we rehashed the game — his hit, stolen bases and score, and my two strikeouts, I realized that I had earned bragging rights and an enduring truth in the batters box that day .....  
 .....*the only two pro-baseball pitchers who ever struck me out are Jim Barr and Vida Blue.*

## “EDITOR’S MEANDERINGS”

Alan Wade, Editor

On one of my increasingly rare visits to the campus—this one to help Bob Bess and Jim Jolley stuff 900 envelopes for Emeritus Association President Bob Bess’ October 8 invitation to all of you, I found myself in the newly refurbished Sierra Room, or what used to be the Sierra Room...a disorienting experience to say the least...I thought I’d accidentally wandered into the Inner Sanctum of some multi-national conglomerate...President Alexander Gonzalez’s new digs, I am told...also learned that the totally refurbished meeting room, complete with a black, flat panel LED screen facing the person at the head of the table, is “off limits” to faculty, presumably because they (we?) would be challenged by the Sanctum’s new high-tech capabilities!...Learned also, courtesy of the **State Hornet**, that the president’s newly remodeled digs carried a price tag of \$265,000., \$100K more than the original estimate...but fear not, the extra tab didn’t cost the taxpayers a penny—it was picked up by a \$102,853 donation from the CSUS Foundation...**Silver Bulletin** doesn’t wish to be picky—we all like nice things and presenting a good face to “the public” is always good (no doubt Sacramento Hall, which we used to call “The Administration Building”, will soon be overwhelmed with throngs of ordinary citizens checking the campus out, to say nothing of the corporate executives who might also be impressed)...still, we can’t help but wonder about the message that this kind of expense sends to the people of the State at this time???

But then, our newly appointed president, hand-picked as it would appear by the Great Football Coach at the Golden Shores, can now get on with other challenges that await him...the cost of remodeling his offices pales

in comparison with the salaries of CSU, Sacramento’s 17 vice presidents and 15 deans whose salaries range from \$100,000 to \$177,000...by cutting administrative bloat, President Gonzalez could quickly make up for the cost of his new campus home...Are these minions all really necessary? Will Gonzalez retire some of them? Or will he appoint more of his own?

Your editor also found himself wandering on campus to purchase two elusive \$15 tickets to the “Causeway Classic” football game at Hornet Stadium on October 4...having purchase the ticket in advance, we spent at least a half hour waiting with a patient mob to get into the one narrow entrance gate - manned by three overwhelmed students).....there was an even longer line for the throng who didn’t buy tickets in advance—to this, our Director of Athletics says something to this effect: one wouldn’t expect to get tickets at the game at Notre Dame, Ohio State, or even Cal or Wisconsin...though treated to a hard-fought and down-to-the-last-second exciting contest, we suffered two major indignities—first, for our fifteen buck apiece, we had to sit with 10,000 arrogant, screaming Davis fans on “their” side of the field (despite at least a couple of thousand empty seats on the Hornet side); and second, the Aggies, although it wasn’t easy this time, ended up smashing the Hornets yet again...

Hope to see many of you at our Annual Dinner on November 14 (you have now received two invitations), where we will welcome President Gonzalez to “our” campus and hear what he has to say about his hopes and plans.

FRIENDS OF LIBRARY  
ANNOUNCEMENT:

“MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND JOIN  
FRIENDS OF THE CSUS LIBRARY AT  
A VALENTINE’S EVE AUCTION,  
FEBRUARY 13, 2004.”

**Coming Soon:**

**In the Spring, 2004 issue of the Silver Bulletin:**

An article by Jerry McDaniel concerning legislative developments from his vantage point of the Task Force on ***Older Driver Safety***.

## MY BOOK REPORT

Jerry Tobey

Recently I subscribed to *Scientific American* and as a thank you I received a booklet, *If Humans were Built to Last*. The authors are S.J. Olshanky, Bruce A. Carnes, and Robert N. Butler. The booklet was fascinating on many grounds, but to me it was most important as a refutation of the Intelligent Design version of creationism.

Classical creationism (as in Biblical inerrancy, the Lord did it in six days, not more than 10,000 years ago) seems to have faded from campus and media attention. Intelligent Design, creationism's successor, argues that the world is billions of years old, that development has been governed largely by natural selection, but that natural selection does not explain every thing: God, or some supernatural force, has intervened to make crucial "decisions" in the evolutionary process. The gift booklet I received shows what I have previously read: Any decent engineer could have come up with a better design for the human body. I cite only a few examples from the booklet.

\* Were we designed to last, we would be shorter, have shorter limbs, reversible knee joints, extra padding around joints and walk leaning over to spare stress on our backs.

\* Our eyes would be different. The optic nerve would be thicker and more firmly attached to the back of the retina, thus reducing the chances of a detached retina.

\* We would have thicker vertebrae and thicker bones, larger hamstrings and tendons. We would have additional ribs to protect our innards.

\* We have two kidneys, so why not two hearts?

The human body is not evidence of divine design; it is a refutation of the concept.

Notice that the booklet said, "If Humans were Designed to Last." "To last" is the crucial expression. Any God would want us to last because we are wise from our experience (Why do you think that the Constitution requires that presidents be at least 30 years old?), and certainly we are better able to run the world than sex, booze and drug-crazed young people. The point is that we are not designed to last; we are designed to reproduce and then move on. This theme is incompatible with any idea of divine intervention, but is completely compatible with natural selection, which uses the material at hand, cobbling together materials which allow an organism to compete and reproduce.

### Dinner Reservation and Dues Form

#### **Emeritus Association Fall Dinner - Friday, November 14, 2003 - Alumni Center**

Reception beginning at 6 p.m. (no host bar) Dinner following at 7:15 p.m. Remarks by President Gonzalez.

Dinner includes salad, dessert, wine and coffee. Inclusive price: \$23.00.

Please indicate choice of entree and number of persons for each.

Beef Bourguignon \_\_\_\_\_ Stuffed Portobello Mushroom (vegetarian) \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address/P.O. Box: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form with payment which may also include your 2003-2004 dues. **Make checks payable to: CSUS Emeritus Association** and mail to James Jolly, Treasurer, 4618 Crestridge Road, Fair Oaks, CA 95628

**PLEASE REPLY BY NOVEMBER 7**

**Emeritus Association #117480  
 California State University, Sacramento  
 6000 J Street  
 Sacramento, CA 95819-6026**

**Emeritus Association Board of Directors  
 California State University, Sacramento**

**2003-2004**

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**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:**

The Silver Bulletin will be much more interesting (and maybe more fun) if more members will send news items (about you and your colleagues) to Alan Wade, Editor - 2916 - 25<sup>th</sup> Street - Sacramento, CA 95818 (e-mail & fax listed above). **PHOTOS** from trips etc., can be included and will be used if space permits. Black and white photos are best. Photos will be returned upon request.

**ATTENTION:** Articles for the Spring, 2004 issue of the Silver Bulletin should be in the editor's hands by: **March 5, 2004.**