

California State University, Fresno
Emeriti and Retirees Association

CONNECTIONS

Newsletter #14

Fall 2018

Fall Luncheon November 8, 2018

Smittcamp Alumni House

11:00 Social, 11:30 Lunch and Speaker

Lunch Details

The *Fall* luncheon is scheduled for **Thursday, November 8**. It will be at the Smittcamp Alumni House on Matoian Drive of the Fresno State campus – west of the SaveMart Center complex. The “meet and greet” period starts at 11:00 AM and we sit down for lunch at 11:30 AM. The meal is free to ERA members; prospective joiners are welcome as non-paying guests. If you are planning to attend, please R.S.V.P. to David Quadro <davidq@mail.fresnostate.edu> in order to give University Catering an accurate count in a timely manner.

ERA President David Quadro will welcome attendees with brief remarks regarding organizational matters. Then, after the luncheon main course is finished, the guest speaker will be introduced. Following the subsequent Q&A session with the presenter, the President and/or officers of the Executive Committee will update members on vital issues being tracked by the statewide ERFA and our local affiliate ERA. The luncheon ends by 2:00 PM (at the latest).

The **guest speakers** are Rei Hotoda, Music Director and Conductor of the Fresno Philharmonic, and Stephen Wilson, Executive Director and CEO of the Fresno Philharmonic. Background at <https://fresnophil.org>.

Key quotation from Hotoda: “By combining exciting and innovative works by Aaron Jay Kernis, John Adams, Kenneth Froelich, Jennifer Higdon and Tan Dun with beloved pillars of the symphonic repertoire by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and Debussy, we will demonstrate how the great orchestral tradition has evolved and been enhanced by new voices from the United States and around the world. We will embrace together these extraordinary works and champion them as new staples of the classical canon.”

“A great artist leaves us with the feeling that something is right in the world.”

Leonard Bernstein

“The pauses between the notes - ah, that is where the art resides.” Artur Schnabel

SPRING 2018 Speaker Recap

Jim Boren, recently retired after 48 years at the Fresno Bee (from ages 19-68), was our Spring speaker on "My Love Affair with Newspapers: A Five Decade Journey from Print to Digital." He was hooked on journalism at the age of 10 when his name appeared in the paper as part of a baseball battery. He wrote sports for Hoover High School, then his career at the Bee began while still a student at Fresno State, first as a vacation relief reporter, then sports reporter, general assignment reporter, political reporter, editorial page editor and executive editor. He won journalism awards for his investigative reporting and column writing. He led the newspaper into the digital transition.

His advice for reading stories: check out the story, the url link, your and the author's biases; google the author; and fact check. Credibility is the heart of journalism. He was Executive Editor and Senior Vice President for the last five years at the Bee. Over the years, the Fresno Bee has downsized its news staff from around 200 to 45 employees. Currently stories start with digital, then some are picked for print (perhaps 1/3), the amount depending on the amount of advertising. Advertising is leaving print, not only in newspapers, but also in retail. The Fresno Bee is now printed in Sacramento consolidating printing on a new printing press, with earlier deadlines for stories, 5:30-6:00PM. Readers notice more errors (perhaps due to a less rigorous editing process). The Bee remains committed to public service journalism (slumlord project, human trafficking, teen pregnancy), but a smaller news staff means these time-consuming projects won't be done as often.

Many younger folks will never read a print article, most news comes via their phone. Most content will be online, but print versions will still exist for those of us who need our coffee and paper in the morning.

Much current journalism is the "journalism of affirmation," where one reads what they reaffirms their own vision. Much of Jim's presentation affirmed the audience's view of newspapers and journalism! "Read Stories, good for Democracy" Jim Boren

As usual, a good Q&A followed the presentation. Money seemed to be a hot topic, as in "Why does the Bee subscription cost so much?" Annual rates ranged from \$800 down to \$200, mainly dependent on whether the subscriber had called and requested/negotiated/demanded a lower price. Your assignment: call the Fresno Bee for a lower price.

Many thanks to Jim for an excellent luncheon presentation!

See also FresnoStateNews: <http://www.fresnostatenews.com/2018/05/04/celebration-of-ethical-leadership-event-at-fresno-state-honors-boren/>

"Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than one generation away from extinction." Ronald Reagan

Fresno State Institute on Media and Public Trust

Fresno State has established the Institute for Media and Public Trust to study media literacy and "fake news," and develop strategies to restore trust in all forms of media. In announcing the Institute, Fresno State President Joseph I. Castro said the First Amendment will be at the center of its work. "The Institute will study the current state of newsgathering and reporting and develop solutions to the challenge of credibility in the news media, its impact on voters and their participation in our democratic institutions. It will also examine how social media networks impact these issues," Dr. Castro said. The Institute will be housed in the Department of Media, Communications and Journalism in the university's College of Arts and Humanities. Jim Boren, the former executive editor of The Fresno Bee, will be the inaugural executive director of the Institute.

"It is always a risk to speak to the press: they are likely to report what you say."
Hubert Humphrey

Once again: Paying too much for Medicare?

If you are paying more than \$134 per month, you might be eligible for a reimbursement from PERS. Even if it looks like you are paying this amount, go through this process anyway. Members at our May meeting received between \$5000 and \$15,000 reimbursement! Don't assume PERS is just getting it correct in your case. Check the first page of your November letter from Social Security to see if the monthly cost exceeds your PERS reimbursement (found in the Itemized Gross section of your pay stub). If it is, request a reimbursement from PERS. Details in the statewide CSU-ERFA Reporter, March 2018 (p. 4), for details. csuerfa.org --> The Reporter --> March 2018 (<http://csuerfa.org/pdf/Reporter-Mar-2018.pdf>) Do not assume you will not get anything. Think of it as an extra credit assignment - always do it.

CSU-ERFA Small Grants

The CSU-ERFA announces its 2018 Small Grants Awards Program. Applications should be sent electronically to the CSU-ERFA office at csuerfa@csun.edu no later than October 31, 2018. Awards will be announced in December 2018.

Grant applications and guidelines can be downloaded at the CSU-ERFA website, by calling the office at (818) 677-6522, or by emailing your request to csuerfa@csun.edu. If you have questions about the grant proposal application, contact Marshelle Thobaben, Chair, CSU-ERFA Foundation Grants Committee, at mt1@humboldt.edu.

Congratulations

One of our own, Gerald McMnamin, Emeritus Professor of Linguistics, has been named the Top Dog for the College of Arts and Humanities for 2018. He will be honored at the Top Dog Alumni Awards Gala October 26.

Many Thanks to the Office of Faculty Affairs for mailing our newsletter.

Sweet Sixteen Sculpture

An engineering achievement, the Sweet Sixteen sculpture east of the Phebe Conley Art Building catches your eye as you park near the Peters Building. Many of us just think of it as "that triangle statue." It does have interesting angles, which can fascinate observers looking through the work from either end. Who hasn't spent some time admiring it? And, let's admit it, who hasn't peered at it from different perspectives, trying to grasp how it seems to change depending on a viewer's perspective.

The name of the sculpture, while it might call to mind romantic notions, is actually mathematical. In fact, Sweet Sixteen is so named because many of its dimensions are multiples of the number 16. The shapes are twisted 16 degrees off of zero degrees horizontally. The supports are buried eight feet. Each section weighs about 6,000 pounds and is three feet apart.

The monument is a gift to the campus by the artist, Greg O'Halloran, a graduate of Fresno State who earned his M.A. in 1974.

From Fresno State Campus News, Oct. 1, 2018 (Traci Obata)
<https://campusnews.fresnostate.edu/october-1-2018>

By the numbers

6076 students eligible for graduation at May 2018 Commencement

25,200 students enrolled for Fall 2018, our 108th academic year

60 new tenure track faculty are joining the university this year

The "new" Madden Library Extension is 10 years old

The Smittcamp Family Honors College welcomed its 20th class

800,000 ears of corn sold in 2017 at the Gibson Farm Market.

4,100,000,000 robocalls received in the USA in May 2018. (no, you did not get them all)

Fresno State ranked #17 (in 2017) and #24 (in 2018) among public universities by Washington Monthly

Fresno State ranked #3 (in 2018) among public national universities in graduation rate performance by U.S. News and World Report, #205 overall

Looking ahead Our Spring luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, May 30.

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