PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

WOW—incredible. In my wildest dreams I did not expect our members to bring forth such a range and quality of things. Our First Annual Crafts Fair was a wonderful success. From Dana Levine’s photo of a Monarch and Child to Marsha Korobkin’s Still Life with Onions to Herb Wolfson’s African safari pictures—lions, tigers, elephants, and even a lion kill. I am glad they didn’t get too close because I like Herb and Laura in one piece. Then there were photographs by Gary Hirsh and beautiful woodwork—bowls and other lathe work by Russell Duff and Eloise’s ink drawings of their trips and even an illustrated book. I can’t name everyone; I think Frances Simon sold many wood cutouts of difference images and even the 12 months of the year. There were scarves and lots of jewelry—even jewelry that Marsha Janger designed while in Africa and were made by Masai women. John van Roekel had two novels (sorry John, I bought through Amazon Kindle). There were Richard Ruppert’s railroad cars and a sundry of other collectibles. My apologies to those I have not mentioned. All the crafts, photos, paintings and scarves were outstanding. (see Carol’s comments on page 8).

They want more space next year to display even more. My deepest thanks, and the thanks from all participants, to Carol Roberts and Amy Patterson who planned, advertised, and organized this event.

At the same time, Osher Theater World was struggling through laryngitis to present Guys and Dolls. Herb Roth fell but still managed to drag himself to the dress rehearsal, but another fall sidelined him and Dick Dahlberg became a General. Wednesday’s performance was postponed a week and Bob Young substituted for Reed Sullivan on Saturday so the show could go on. From the response of the audience Saturday, I would say it was a great success. Osher Theater World, under Al Korobkin’s leadership has grown and developed into a talented company of players with many ideas for new ways to entertain us in the future. We plan a photo spread for both the Saturday and Wednesday performances in the next Osher Observer.

We are now video recording all of our room 129 lectures (that we can get permission to do) and I have been pleased at the number of people who have told me that they have watched them, and others who have asked how soon a particular lecture will be available so they can see it again (1 week). We have expanded our outreach to other senior living facilities and some people have joined us for Friday Live Music and other events as well as regular showings of lectures at their facilities.

I have been hoping that we could start a Poetry Cafe Hour. Maybe quarterly we could gather in room 128 after Live Music on Friday afternoon to hear members read poetry, short stories, and other narratives, or listen to original music composed by Osher songwriters or Osher instrumentalists playing and/or singing their favorite tunes. Let me know if this interests you. There are so many talents in our group.
THE BEAUTY AND POWER OF CLASSICAL SINGING—Prof. Susan Narucki

by Carol Roberts

Susan Narucki, Professor of Music at UCSD, and Associate Chair of the Department of Music, and UCSD Faculty winner of a Chancellor’s Associates award for excellence in the performing and visual arts, presented an enlightening lecture on the beauty and power of classical singing. Her enthusiasm and commitment to classical singing were evident as she talked about her research and shared some of her most recent performances.

We learned that bel canto (classical singing) dates from the 17th century, and is still taught and performed around the world. Today’s classical singing is a fusion of poetry and music. Prof. Narucki challenges her students to spend 24 hours without music, to see how much it affects their lives.

OUR BELOVED PHYLLIS ROSENBAUM

Picture Room 128, on a Tuesday afternoon, opposite one of the wonderful lectures in Room 129. But you have decided instead to attend a small group discussion about a difficult book you have always wanted to read, although you hate missing the lecture in the large room.

It’s still 10 minutes to one o’clock, but when you open the door room 128 is packed, and you can see that every person there is holding a copy of the book, so no one is leaving. You wedge your way in, cram into a seat.

It’s Phyllis’ class. 25 or more joyous Phyllis acolytes spend the next 2 hours discussing the part of the book for that day’s portion, lovingly guided by Phyllis’ meticulously prepared questions, and her graceful and intelligent leadership.

She was the best reader, the best teacher, the best discussion leader I’ve ever known (and I was an English major at Harvard/Radcliffe, and I have known many good teachers). She was so tactful, seeming to appreciate every comment. “Well, that’s an aspect I hadn’t thought of…” Everyone in the class felt that he/she was Phyllis’ favorite student, and good friend.

Phyllis was a high school English teacher for 23 years in Chicago, where she received the Distinguished Teacher Award in 1999. After moving to Cardiff, she was an active member of League of Women Voters, a tutor of international students at UCSD, and taught classes at Osher in Modern and Contemporary Literature and Poetry.

Her luminous spirit lingers there as long as there are Osherites who took her classes. We miss her and revere her memory. By Martha Kaplan
Who is that “senior citizen” in the mirror? When did I begin to shrink? On January 20, 2015, Dr. Heather Hofflich provided Osher members with current research on why our bones lose calcium and become brittle and the potential medications and treatment options available. She also reviewed new techniques in diagnosing osteoporosis and fracture prevention techniques. Dr. Hofflich is a board certified endocrinologist and internal medicine doctor at UCSD Medical Center.

As we age, our bones have impaired bone strength and mineral loss which leads to an increase in the risk of bone fracture. This is critical as it could lead to hip and spine fractures. It also explains why we shrink as we get older. Women should get a bone density test starting at age 65. Men are not immune to this problem and should also get screened after the age of 70. These tests lead to a “t-score” and a “z-score”. The t-score is compared to a standard deviation of what is normally expected for a healthy young adult of the same sex. Your Z-score is the number of standard deviations above or below what’s normally expected for someone of your age, sex, weight and ethnic or racial origin.

The good news is that Medicare covers a bone density test every two years. Be sure and have the test always done on the same machine. Comparing results across different machines may lead to erroneous conclusions as different vendors have unique machine calibrations.

One of Dr. Hofflich’s first recommendations is to get your blood checked to see if your diet is deficient in certain vitamins, specifically vitamins C and D. In these cases, she recommends vitamin supplements to aid your bones. Men over time lose some of the testosterone and she may recommend supplements. As we age, we tend to lose our balance and brittle bones can lead to a fracture. Interestingly, prior fractures may lead to more fractures. Some additional facts that Dr. Hofflich provided are that smoking is bad and three or more alcoholic drinks per day do not help your overall bone state. Soda like cola can lead to a loss of phosphoric acid. Caffeine is OK as long as calcium supplements are taken. One of the best things you can do for your bones is exercise. Walking at least 30 minutes per day is actually better than swimming or biking as walking stimulates new bone growth. There are many things you can do to prevent falls from occurring: good lighting, handrails along steps, rubber mats in showers, etc.

Dr. Hofflich reviewed the status of the different medications available in the marketplace and their side effects. Some medications only prevent more bone loss while only one, Evista, helps to produce new bone. Long, continuous use of medications (over 10 years) such as high doses of prednisone or Fosomax can actually hurt and make your bones more brittle and increase the risk of bone fracture. Research has shown that certain cancer medications have detrimental effects to your bones.

Dr. Hofflich covered a lot of data and provided many useful facts. I highly recommend that you review her presentation on the Osher website at http://olli.ucsd.edu/video.
What is International House? Most of us at Osher know it only as a building with a beautiful Great Hall, where programs on international subjects are presented that are open to the community as well as students, and (usually) with lots of good free food. But in reality, UCSD International House (I-House) is a multi-function organization which is a member of International Houses WorldWide (IHWW), an affiliation of 18 International Houses in several countries on several continents, including the US, Australia, Canada, the UK, and France. IHWW started about 100 years ago, at Columbia University, when a professor greeted a foreign student who told him that that was the first time anyone had spoken to him since he arrived on campus. That conversation led to Sunday night dinners, still a continuing tradition, and all of the programs at I-House chapters world-wide.

Here at UCSD, I-House is part of Eleanor Roosevelt College, (ERC) which is one of the six colleges that comprise UCSD undergraduate. Each college has its own focus, mission statement, and core curriculum. ERC’s focus is on social justice, and its mission is global citizenship. Its core curriculum is a series of courses collectively called Making of the Modern World.

When a student applies to enter UCSD as a freshman, he or she must also apply to one of the six colleges. The college system at UCSD combines the intimacy of a small institution with the intellectual breadth and resources of a large research university. Each of the six colleges has its own residence and dining halls, where freshmen and sophomore students who are enrolled in that college live and dine. But juniors and seniors must find other housing. The mission of I-House is to build community and promote international awareness, intercultural understanding, and global citizenship to foster a more tolerant, sustainable, and peaceful world.

As a residence, International House accommodates 350 juniors and seniors, half international from over 35 countries, and half from the US—it is the only place on campus where students from all six colleges live together. There are also 10 visiting international post-docs and scholars who live at International House, in apartments that bridge I-Walk, the central walkway down the middle of I-House. In order to encourage interaction between foreign and US students, each apartment has two foreign and two US students. Students who wish to live at I-House must apply separately to I-House directly and are expected to take part in its many diverse programs, all designed to encourage international awareness and understanding. The mission of I-House is “to build community and promote international awareness, intercultural understanding and global citizenship to foster a more tolerant, sustainable and peaceful world.”

I-House offers two types of programs: programs to enrich the lives and experiences of its residents and programs open to the UCSD and larger San Diego community. I-House residential programs range from weekly fireside gatherings, trips, volunteering opportunities, international sports, discussions, language conversation tables, culture nights, publishing, formal dinners, and social events. I-House also sponsors 4 student organizations: Model United Nations (MUN), Prospect Journal (an online journal focused on international and global issues), Rotoract and the International Studies Student Association.
In addition to its residential programs, I-House collaborates with several community and international organizations to present public programs to encourage global awareness. Community partners include the World Affairs Council, the San Diego Diplomacy Council, and the United Nations Association of San Diego. I-House’s premier program is the weekly Global Forum, held each Monday evening at 7:00 pm in the Great Hall, is always free and open to the public. There are many, many such programs, both single events such as lectures presented by international VIPS, such as the former Prime Minister of France (Leonel Jospin), foreign ambassadors, the Inspector General of India, and many others, and annual continuing series such as this year’s Degrees of Freedom series of programs held Wednesday evenings for several weeks. All events are open to the public but for some events pre-registration is desired to ensure you can get a seat. Upcoming events include an event about the United States’ new relationship with Cuba on Monday, April 20th, and another event on careers in the State Department and the UN; the United States’ relationship to the UN in sustainable development on Monday, April 27; and a special guest event with Ari Shavit on Wednesday, April 29.

To find out more about I-House events, go to http://ihouse.ucsd.edu/programs/public/globalforum.html

By Martha Kaplan

Osher ski pals Steve Serepca and Steve Clarey at Vail, Colorado, where they bagged 20,300 vertical feet of skiing in one day!

PARTICIPATING

By Martha Kaplan, Osher Observer editor

Everyone knows this—some people can’t be bothered to do anything —whatever you ask, they have excuses at the ready. Other people step up, always say “yes,” and somehow do a great job of multiple tasks. When I was at the Osher performance of Guys & Dolls, it was obvious what a fabulous time the cast and crew were having. Multiple rehearsals and an amazing amount of work, yet you could tell that each and every one of them benefited 100 times more than the huge amount they put in. The audience loved it, of course, and it was completely great, but the people who worked on it just really glowed with joy and accomplishment, as well as the enjoyment of each other’s companionship and attachment to the group.

Science says that socialization and doing new things are keys to successful aging.

I mention this because there are always reasons to say “no,” yet I want to encourage Osher members who never do anything except come to classes to jump in and participate. I guarantee you will get like 100 times as much as you put in. You will have new people to talk to at break, new friends who really, really care about you, so much fun and sense of achievement, as well as all those brand new brain cells.
After a short two-week break, our spring quarter begins on April 6, 2015. Each quarter, the volunteer curriculum committee seeks speakers and topics that are of current as well as historical interest. Master Class I “Plague and Pestilence” will address the Ebola virus and other infectious diseases from a variety of perspectives. Master Class II will update us on some of the exciting research at Scripps Institute of Oceanography in a five-lecture series: “Ocean Science: Revealing the Invisible.”

Our International Relations program will examine modern India, its people, economy, and geopolitics, in a four-lecture series. Science and Medicine features scientists from some of the more prestigious local research centers including the Sanford-Burnham Research Institute, Craig Venter’s Human Longevity, Inc., and the Shiley-Marcus Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center. Law and Society returns the ever-popular David Glazier from Loyola Law School to discuss “Guantanamo Detention: Will it Ever End”, as well as a look at the gang scene in San Diego and physician discipline via the California Medical Board. Spring quarter also features a number of multi-lecture series including a brief look at California History, 21st Century German Art, the History of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and a combined lecture/film series on directors and producers in the New Wave American Cinema from 1966-1982.

Humanities and the Social Science series will bring us a wide range of preeminent speakers, and small-classroom seminars will again inform and stimulate their loyal participants. Once again, we will hear from a number of our accomplished colleagues as Osher Presenters. Reed Sullivan’s Live Music performances will continue to entertain us, including a return to Osher of the popular Bruno Leone, who will discuss and play the music of George Gershwin and Cole Porter.

Two special Osher activities are scheduled next quarter: In late April, a San Diego Neighborhood lecture and Saturday walking tour of Mission Hills American Prairie-style homes. On the 1st of May, Derrick Cartwright will lecture on the special Rembrandt etchings exhibition that has been assembled from around the world at the University of San Diego. A special Osher tour of the exhibition has been arranged for Thursday afternoon, the 7th of May.

A reminder: If you miss a lecture or would like to review it on your own computer, most of our lectures are recorded and posted in our private on-line video library, which is accessible via the Osher homepage: olli.ucsd.edu.

OSHER CALENDAR

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* Opens at 12:00 a.m. ** everyone invited

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ollo.ucsd.edu
In the 1970’s, Institute for Continued Learning (Osher’s predecessor) members showcased their art during the year in Room 128. Osher member Ann Tartaul remembers the walls being hung with paintings for everyone to enjoy.

On Friday, March 6 Osher members showed how talented they are by participating in the Osher Craft Fair. Photographs, paintings, books, knitting, wood working, watercolors, glass and jewelry were displayed in Room 128 and on the patio outside. It was so much fun seeing what our fellow members do in their spare time. Lots of suggestions were made for a repeat event, including scheduling before Christmas so that works of art can become your favorite holiday gifts.