

The Senior Sentinel

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Newsletter of the IUPUI Senior Academy

A SALUTE TO THOSE WHO GET THINGS DONE

Dottie Swinney, who provides part-time secretarial support for the Senior Academy, comments that each year she has been associated with us it seems the activities grow and the organization becomes ever more vibrant. The strength of the Senior Academy comes from its members and there are people who work really hard to build our organization to serve the interests of the campus and our more personal interests.

As we think about the recent contributions of our members, several come to mind. Ed Robbins brought organizational skill to the Academy, first as a board member and president. You now hear from him regularly as editor of this newsletter and you have seen the results of his efforts to improve this element of our communications. The Senior Academy now has a new web page, thanks to the persistent and determined efforts of Judy Silence. It has taken many hours of effort for her to present this new resource to us. Carl Rothe has seriously studied where email fits into our communications. Bob Kirk, chair of the Program Committee, and Compare and Share organizer, Kent Sharp, respectively, devote hours each month to delivering their programs. Barbara Zimmer, chair of the Service Committee, tracks the myriad service opportunities available to us and chooses the ones that seem most appropriate to our mission. Cay Palmer has given long service as chair of our Social Committee and continues to deliver programs appreciated by our membership. Art Mirsky carries the important responsibilities of chairing the Scholarship Committee, and Carlyn Johnson, immediate past president, still works with major assignments and seems always ready to accept some of the smaller less visible tasks that keep the organization clicking.

The organization is not propelled by these people alone, and we are aware of the danger of starting to list credits because one can never list all the people who deserve recognition, but the purpose of these comments is to remind our membership that all these activities happen because someone cares enough to make them happen.

We thank these members for their service along with board members, officers, and many committee members who are not listed. From our ranks have also come contributors in the form of program presentations – in fact, most of those presentations come from our membership. Listing all the presenters would, indeed, make a long list.

So, please, sometime when you are asked to contribute a little time and effort to the Senior Academy, and you hesitate, just remember what these people are and have been doing for us all. Please consider the request seriously and know that much satisfaction can come through a willingness to serve your fellow retirees. Marvin Ebbert, President

SEMESTER AT SEA

The following article by Dick Fredland is the second in our series on adventures of Academy members. Dick shares his unique experiences as an instructor on the University of Pittsburgh's historic Semester at Sea program.

BEATS WORKING? IT WAS WORKING

Imagine a semester with nine spring breaks and you have some idea about teaching on the University of Pittsburgh's Semester at Sea last fall. The pervading reality was the inexhaustible supply of 600 students – three for every four feet of the 800 foot long Universe Explorer, the 50-year-old, former cruise ship that was our floating campus for 100 days.

From more than 250 campuses, students came to experience the world in ways impossible to imagine in a land-based classroom. We discussed “economic disparity” but nothing drives home that concept as effectively as walking the streets of a township outside Cape Town or visiting a Brazilian favela. What is China like? Or Vietnam? How about the fabled tunnels of the Vietnam War? (Anyone who explored the tunnels or the Mekong Delta would promptly understand the unwinnability of that ill-fated war.) Or the “conversation” with Fidel? All of this was available to students sufficiently intrepid to eschew fraternities, dorms, friends and classrooms -- whatever constitutes a traditional university setting – and embark on the 82nd voyage of the Semester at Sea.

The faculty is reconstituted each voyage (fall, spring and summer). Among our 27, were Indian, Canadian, Serbian and US scholars from the arts and sciences. My US foreign policy class met every other day while at sea, thus six classes between Vancouver and Kobe, our first stop. Alternate days, my other two classes met. Classes were suspended in port, resuming upon departure – after five days of frolicking exploring Thailand or Brazil or Hong Kong.

Profiting from long experience, SAS organized multitudinous optional activities in each port; for example, a city tour in Kobe including the earthquake museum, a flying tour of Beijing and Xian departing from Hong Kong, a baseball game in Havana, a trip to a Brazilian turtle sanctuary for the biologists as well as many other options.

Elaborate trips were reserved in advance; day trip participation was flexible, depending upon seats on the bus. Some trips were essentially entertainment, e.g., a five day safari to the Ngoronogoro Crater and Serengeti National Park in Tanzania. Others were more edifying, such as university visits.

At 59 cents per minute, Internet access was prohibitive and a modest library (housed in the former casino) made standard research paper writing futile; students drew upon experiences to illustrate principles from class and extract comparisons. Evidence of emerging capitalism in Vietnam, class discrimination in India, or remnants of apartheid in South Africa became notable and pertinent topics.

Shipboard life with 600 students is not home! Nor does it approximate alternating between one's quiet office and classroom on a commuter campus. Students were in evidence without pause. They joined you at meals, jogged outside your cabin, and otherwise populated every square inch of the ship. Regrettably, academic reality for non-Pittsburgh students was that grades transferred to their home institutions as only passing (if above C-). Consequently, there was little incentive for excellence. And after five days of nonstop activity in port, looking bright-eyed and bushy-tailed in class was not in the cards. Fortunately, I had sufficient “Prairie Home Companion” jokes (Where do you find a no-legged dog? Right where you left him.) to stir them at the outset of 8:00 AM classes.

There was a day of shipboard games which produced one highlight, “stupid human tricks,” a campus

phenomenon of which I was not aware. One of my students became piqued because he came in ignobly second with his proudly, stupid performance: Having an inordinately depressed sternum, he lay on his back and filled his “chest bowl” with cereal and milk. Emptying it with a spoon and straw! (Another trip highlight for me was seeing a tricycle-riding elephant in Thailand!) Well, there was another: During a session of our political discussion group, we assessed the visit to Hiroshima and the unthinkability of nuclear war. One student recalled her eighth-grade class trip to ground zero. At that point, another whispered to me, “Our class trip was to the zoo.”

Sobering was the captain’s request via the public address system that we all go to the rails to search for a seaman who had fallen overboard from a passing Indian container ship. We zigzagged back for some distance only to abandon the search. He was not found.

Our visit with Castro was memorable: For four hours he spoke, lectured, explicated on most topics, particularly international economics. Little that he said would not have been found in my international political economy course. He was especially politic before these Americans – who were almost denied permission to stop because of the Bush administration’s tightened access to Cuba. Students especially relished visiting Vietnam and Cuba – savoring their remarkable hospitality, given our egregious histories.

As an academic experience, Semester at Sea is unique. I would not allege that my students completed a standard US foreign policy course, however. But they certainly have some graphic impressions of Japan, China, Vietnam, Thailand, India, Tanzania, South Africa, Cuba and even Canada. Five days in a country does not an expert make, but we are noticeably older and wiser. (I still have not figured out how we were able to have iceberg lettuce virtually every day.) -- Richard Fredland

COMPARE AND SHARE

Kent Sharp continues to plan and organize interesting and helpful sessions in which Academy members “compare and share” their knowledge, experience and questions on a variety of important issues.

Sessions this semester have included Robyn Grant, a former Indiana State Ombudsman for nursing home care, who outlined a wide range of issues related to selecting a nursing home. Judy Silence, who developed and serves as the web master for the Academy’s new website, reported on the format and contents of the site. If you have not yet sampled it, you can do so at <http://www.iupui.edu/~sacademy>. Academy members who use the PERF website will find a link to our website there.

Academy member Ed Solinski, who serves as a volunteer for the Hamilton County, Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) led the March session on long term care insurance.

On April 13, at 10:00 a.m., Ann Holmes, Health Economist, will lead a discussion on the implications of the Medicare prescription drug legislation and Sarge Visher, Chief of Staff for Representative Julia Carson will share information on the political implications of the Medicare Legislation.

Several Academy members have reported that they are having computer problems. To receive help , you can contact Kent Sharp at ksharp@indy.rr.com or call 818-1422 to make an appointment to get help.

To receive timely notices on these topics, you can have Bob Kirk add your name to his email notification list, by emailing him your request at Rkirk1937@aol.com.

PROJECTS COMMITTEE EVENTS

On February 17, Dr Gene Helveston, Professor Emeritus of the IU Department of Ophthalmology, demonstrated how he and his fellow ophthalmologists in the U.S. are using telemedicine to consult with ophthalmologists in many developing countries. The method is a website in which the patient’s symptoms

are presented, and then diagnoses and suggested treatments are conveyed via the website. Telemedicine is much less costly than flying an airplane with an ophthalmology clinic to these countries. Gene retired from IU, but not from the practice of ophthalmology.

Carl and Mary Lou Rothe visited Iceland last summer and will present a series of images and answer questions in one of the classrooms at the IUPUI Campus in the Glendale Mall on April 20 at 10:00 a.m.

Iceland – a land of wonder. Iceland is not mostly ice. With the Atlantic Gulf Stream flowing by, this island, just south of the Arctic Circle, has a surprisingly mild climate in summer. With a population of only 280,000 in a country the size of Kentucky, it has one of the highest per capita incomes in the world, but has virtually no coal, oil or mineral deposits. Interesting!

This country, founded by the Vikings over a thousand years ago, has had a federated government since year 900. Waterfalls, geysers, geothermal flows, glaciers and active volcanoes abound. Reykjavik, with a population of about 100,000, is a dynamic modern city. Come join them to learn the details.

CAMPUS CAMPAIGN

You should have received this year's solicitation for the annual IUPUI Campus Campaign. The Academy is again requesting your support for our scholarships. The profile on LaShawna Weaver, a Senior Academy scholarship awardee, reflects the outstanding quality of the students being supported by Senior Academy scholarships.

The Scholarship Committee's goal is to have sufficient scholarship resources to not only offer awards in dollar amounts that are competitive with those offered by other units and organizations, but also to add to those contributions and pledges enough dollars to endow all our scholarships. Your contributions will support both objectives. The committee thanks you.

CAMPUS TOUR ENJOYED

After a few days of less than perfect weather, Friday, March 19, 2004 turned bright and spring-like just in time for the Senior Academy campus tour. The idea of a tour developed last year following a talk to the SA Board by Vice Chancellor Bob Martin. His presentation on the continuing rapid physical development of the campus was met with such interest and enthusiasm that he offered to organize a tour of the campus sometime in the future.

Reservations for the tour filled the seats on the bus and Bob conducted the tour himself. Stops included a visit to one of the over 700 new campus residential units and the glass sculpture, "DNA Tower" by Dale Chilhuly in the Mills Atrium of the Van Nuys Medical Building. Bob provided an informative and historical narrative as the group passed Medical Science-Phase II, Research Institute II, the new Child Care Center, Inlow Hall (the new Law School Building) and a variety of other projects under construction such, the new Communications Technology and School of Informatics Complex, and the new site for Eskenazi Hall (Herron School of Art).

Bob introduced the concept, new to most of us, of a "north campus" now developing north of 10th Street and across White River. The Biomedical Research and Training Center and Herron's state-of-the-art ceramics teaching facility and several IUPUI office operations that do not require direct contact with students or the public already exist in that area. The group marveled at the new pedestrian walkway that had been Barnhill Drive, and tried to recognize features that at one time were so familiar.

He identified the expected sites of buildings coming in the future such as parking garages, Riley Tower (the next phase of a \$200 million dollar development of Riley Hospital) and a huge new Campus Center.

The tour was a stunning experience for those in attendance and we thank Vice Chancellor Bob Martin for his arrangements and his sparkling presentation.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Social Committee's next event is a trip to the Twinrocker Paper Studio in Brookston, IN on May 5. You will soon be receiving the formal announcement.

The trip includes a tour of the paper studio and a lecture on the history and practice of this ancient craft, the chemistry of paper, artistic techniques, watermarks and examples of finished paper pulp artwork and homemade, limited edition books. For more information about Twinrocker see their website at www.twinrocker.com. The tour will be followed with lunch at a local restaurant. The cost of the tour is \$10 and reservations are due by April 15.