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AlcaláView

A newsletter for the employees of the University of San Diego / June 2002 / Vol. 18, No. 9

They Get Around

Some employees say why take the car to work, when you can walk, ride, pedal, or skateboard?
See Page 3.



Committee Plans a Patriotic Picnic

The Copley Library lawn will be festooned with lots of red, white and blue as employees celebrate America at this year's annual Staff Employee Recognition Picnic. The Great American Picnic is scheduled for noon to 3 p.m., June 21 on the Copley Library lawn.


All employees and their families are invited to the picnic, and a flier with ticket information was sent to all employees in May. Guest tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for kids.

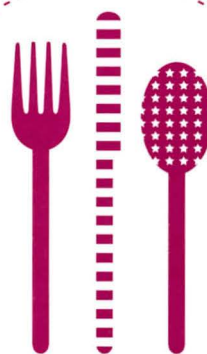
This year's event will feature a barbecue lunch catered by Picnic People, an employee talent show, a baking contest, a photo contest and traditional picnic games. The Employee

of the Year and the Administrator of the Year awards will be announced, and all employees who RSVP will be eligible for door prizes sponsored by the Staff Employees Association. Tickets for the annual 50/50 raffle are available now from any SEA member, and tickets also will be on sale the day of the event.

The picnic planning committee includes **Christina Ruffo** (Human Resources); **Janey Middleton** (Arts and Sciences); **Joan Wolf** (Finance and Administration); **Frank Chmura**

(Dining Services); **Mary Ann Timm** (Development); **Cathy Johnson** (Mission and Ministry); and **Madonna Moreno** (Human Resources).

"The patriotic theme the picnic committee has selected is very close to all our hearts," says Gwendolyn S. Lytle, associate vice president for human resources, "so get ready with your red, white and blue, and come join us." 



The Ties That Bind

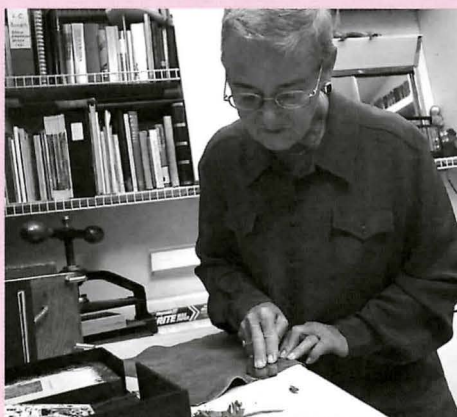
Margit Smith had just landed her first librarian job in the United States when her employers realized they overlooked one rather important detail: they had no office space for her. So they stuck Smith in the only place they could find — the library's rare book cage.

She couldn't have been happier.

Surrounded by books as a child during World War II-era Germany in her great uncle's home, Smith loved the smell, look and feel of old books. Her office in the rare book cage at the Craft Guild of the Dallas Museum of Fine Art allowed her to indulge her passion for antique books and begin to learn a rare and unique craft — the art of bookbinding.

Twenty years later, Smith, who heads cataloging and preservation for Copley Library,

is considered one of the premier book restorers on the West Coast. She spends evenings and weekends in her home studio, painstakingly disassembling volumes, some of which are hundreds of years old, gently washing



the pages to remove the dirt, treating them with wheat starch to keep them crisp, hand-sewing them together and gold tooling the

leather spines. The work entails long hours and low pay. But for Smith, it's undoubtedly a labor of love.

"When you discard the binding of an old book, you lose the history of the book and the feel of what it was like when it was new," she says. "I try to preserve as much of the tradition and history as I can, so I use complementary natural materials when possible."

That includes handmade paper made of rags to mend pages, handmade paste for gluing and pieces of hand-dyed leather for book cover repairs. Her projects can spread over weeks to an entire year — the amount of time it took for her to restore a 1730s volume about the British Navy, which included hand-colored etchings and was valued at around \$10,000.

But it's not the monetary value of a book that usually draws customers to Smith. It's the sentimental value.

"I hope I've paved my way to heaven

(Continued on page 2)

Benefits Advisory Committee Hosts First Forum

Employees discussed concerns about issues such as long-term care benefits, eyeglass and hearing aid coverage, enhancement of dental benefits, the tuition exchange program, transit reimbursement and sick leave at the first campus forum hosted by new benefits advisory committee, held May 1 in the Institute for Peace and Justice.

At the meeting, members of the committee reported that the human resources office has received projected 2003 health care premium estimates. These show an premium increase between 17 percent and 22 percent for Kaiser coverage, and a premium increase between 16 percent and 22 percent for Blue Cross.

Committee members said human resources officials will meet with health care providers in the near future to negotiate new rates and to determine what cost containment measures can be implemented to reduce the premium increases. HR representatives also outlined several steps they have taken to fix problems that developed with providers this year during a change in mail order prescription providers.

The meeting was opened by advisory committee member Laura Berend, of the law school, who said the forum was an opportunity to "open a discourse between the university and human resources."

The committee will meet monthly to discuss benefits issues, will host regular discussion forums for the campus community and will work in conjunction with the human resources advisory committee. Members said they already have met to determine and prioritize a list of employee concerns.

In the area of dental coverage, the committee has developed two surveys. The first is designed to assess other companies' and colleges' coverage, the other will determine the dental coverage needs of USD employees. In addition, the vision and hearing subcommittee currently is surveying other employers about their coverage.

Committee members reported that a tuition exchange benefit has been approved. The new program is scholarship-based, and is separate from the existing tuition remission program. USD will join The Tuition Exchange, a consortium of 400 colleges and universities,

(Continued on page 3)

Ties That Bind

(Continued from page 1)

with all the Bibles I've restored," says Smith. "I can't tell you how many 19th Century Bibles I've done, it has to be in the hundreds."

Her biggest project — and most personal — came during her sabbatical in 2000, when she learned bookbinding from the European masters in Switzerland. Smith took with her a religious book printed in 1704 that had been in her family for decades, but was so fragile that all she could do was to make a velvet-lined box for it to remain in, unopened and unread.


"She (the teacher) and I looked at it for three days and decided to take it apart," says Smith. "I was scared to death."

They took photos of the book as they disassembled it and made sketches to ensure it was put back together correctly. Once the pages were washed, dried and sized, Smith hand-sewed 96 different page signatures before rebinding it back into its spine.

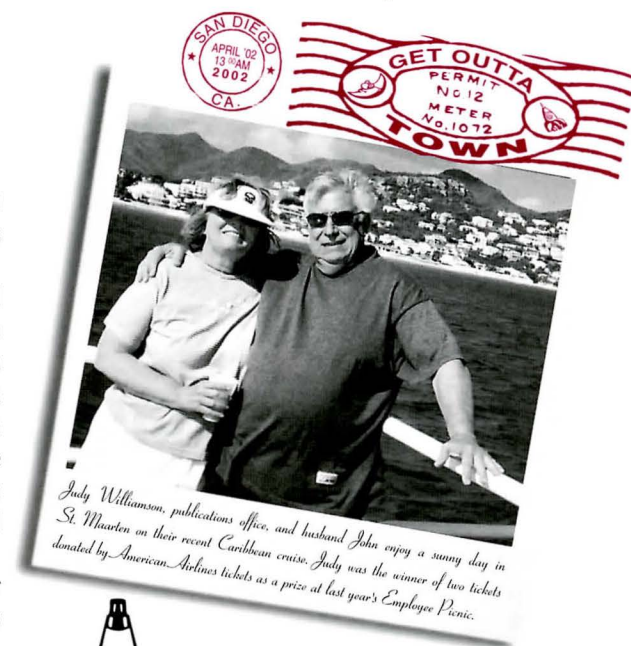
"That book, when I look at it, I'm still awed," she says.

Smith's passion has filled her house from top to bottom with books, and she literally has run out of room. But that hasn't kept her from her passion.



"I once tried to sell a book I restored," she says. "And lo and behold, someone wanted to buy it. So I figured it must be worth something, so I kept it. I haven't tried to sell a book since." 

The Alcalá View wants to hear what you do when you're off the clock. Share your "Off the Clock" stories by sending an e-mail to Michael Haskins at mhaskins@sandiego.edu or call him at ext. 4684.



Judy Williamson, publications office, and husband John enjoy a sunny day in St. Maarten on their recent Caribbean cruise. Judy was the winner of two tickets donated by American Airlines tickets as a prize at last year's Employee Picnic.



Gold Medalist

Associate Provost **Don McGraw** was honored at a May 8 banquet with the 2002 Distinguished Achievement Award from the San Diego chapter of Sigma Xi, the national scientific research

society established to reward excellence in scientific research and to encourage cooperation among scientists in all fields.

The award is given annually to a San Diego Sigma Xi member who makes major advances in an area of science or engineering or who contributes greatly to the quality and prestige of the San Diego chapter. McGraw qualifies in both categories. In his prior role as Sigma Xi chapter president, he began many nationally recognized programs for the organization. And, in addition to his body of scholarly research, McGraw last year published his first book, *Andrew Ellicott*



Don McGraw

Douglas and the Role of the Giant Sequoia in the Development of Dendrochronology. The book discusses the science of tree-ring dating, which also was the subject of the keynote speech McGraw delivered to the society at the award banquet.


If you or someone you know deserves to be put "In the Spotlight," send an e-mail to Michael Haskins at mhaskins@sandiego.edu or call him at ext. 4684.

Benefits Forum

(Continued from page 2)

and the provost's office will dedicate scholarship money to fund 14 exchange students.

The details of the program are yet to be settled, but advisory committee members said it will be an undergraduate program only. Students must first be accepted into a participating institution, then may apply to the fund. The scholarship funds are not taxed. A list of Tuition Exchange member institutions can be found at www.tuitionexchange.org.

A survey distributed to all attendees focused on wellness issues. The survey is also available on the HR Web site under benefits. 

SEA Snippets

The following issues were discussed at the April meeting of the Staff Employees Association:

- Gwendolyn Lytle, associate vice president for human resources, addressed the meeting to discuss the new Performance Management Process. She said the previous system — a check-off review conducted on the anniversary date of hire — often was seen as too dependent on interpersonal relationships and too limited for employee response.

Lytle then asked for comments about the new system. Those present said the structure of the process is good because of the self-motivating aspects of personal goal setting and the chance for staff employees to discuss their vision for their jobs. Scheduling the reviews for one date campus-wide rather than various anniversary dates also is seen as a way to ensure everyone is evaluated.

Several employees had negative comments about the process. The most common complaint is that it removes incentives for improvement, because everyone in the same pay grade receives the same pay raise. The bonus award system is seen as very political, with some managers refusing to nominate employees who had expressed disagreement about previous winners and other managers passing the nomination around the department indiscriminately.

In addition, staffers said the system is not mandatory across campus, therefore some

Parking Problems: What Are The Alternatives?

In preparation for the temporary loss of some on-campus parking spaces during construction of the 783-space parking structure on the West Hill Parking Lot — which begins in July and is expected to be finished by April or May 2003 — university officials are stepping up efforts to encourage the use of alternative transportation.

Several recommendations regarding possible financial incentives for people who use alternative transportation have been presented to the human resources department, says Public Safety director **Larry Barnett**, and decisions are pending. Other programs already are under way.

"USD parking services recently began a program where it subsidizes a portion of the monthly San Diego bus passes for students," Barnett says. "The funding comes from fines and parking permit fees."

The bus passes cost \$100 per semester, and parking services pays \$15 toward that amount. Barnett says his department is looking into offering a similar subsidy for employees. If approved, it could be available as early as Fall 2003.

departments don't evaluate at all, some do modified review, some require extensive written goals and review sheets, and some still use the old system. Some employees said they didn't know there was a review process in place at all and had not been notified about the pay raise they would receive.

Lytle said she has heard similar comments in meetings with the President's Advisory Council, and that she currently is reviewing the entire process to determine what works well and what needs to be modified.

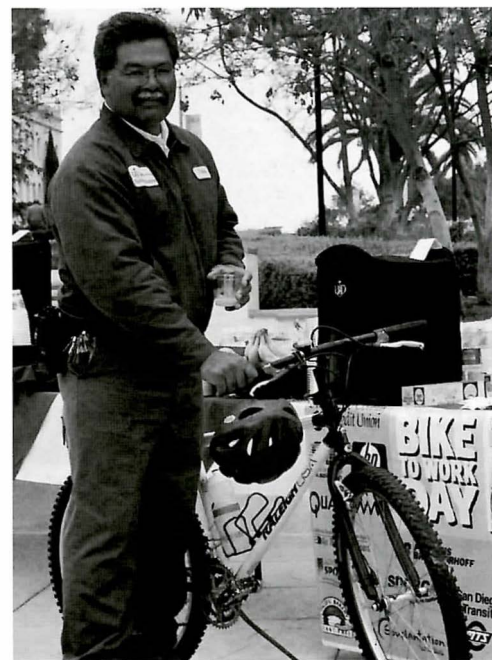
- In other business, members were given tickets to sell for the 50/50 raffle to be held at the Employee Appreciation Picnic, and board members voted on Administrator of the Year, to be announced at the picnic.

- SEA meetings are open to all employees, especially staff. The next SEA meeting is scheduled for 2-3 p.m., June 12, in the Hahn University Center's faculty/staff dining room.

- For information about the SEA, or to find out who your representative is, log on to www.sandiego.edu/sea.


Barnett and parking officials also encourage employees and students to use the campus shuttle service, which currently runs to and from the Old Town Trolley Station and to and from Mission Beach. Barnett says public safety may conduct ridership studies and suggest areas where additional shuttles could be offered.

In addition, the campus' Fresh Air Commuter Club has information on alternative transportation, and lobbies to make commuting easier for students and employees. As an incentive for joining the group, members get a permit allowing them to park for free on campus 12 times each semester.



Ernie Salazar, Grounds Supervisor in Facilities Management, shows off his wheels at the Fresh Air Challenge.

The group also sponsors the annual Fresh Air Challenge, an alternative commute-to-work day, which this year was held on May 17. More than 50 students, faculty, administrators and staff left their cars at home that day and instead walked, biked, carpooled or took public transportation to work. Participants gathered at Colachis Fountain from 7 to 9 a.m. and were treated to refreshments and gift certificates to Aromas.

For information on the Fresh Air Commuter Club and alternative commuting, call **Greg Zackowski** at ext. 4796 or log on to www.sandiego.edu/freshair. 



Dear H.R.,

I need to know at what age, if there is one, my dependents can no longer be covered under my medical plan. Is it age and/or student status?

— **Proud Parent**

Dear Parent,

H.R. is a single guy, but he empathizes with those parents who are trying to make ends meet, keep the kids in college and make sure they're covered if they suffer eye strain from those all-night study sessions. Fortunately, dependent children between the ages of 19 and 24 are eligible for health coverage as long as they are full-time students. Participating dependents become eligible for 36 months of continued coverage under COBRA on their 25th birthday. In addition, if dependents between 19 and 24

lose their full-time student status, they become eligible for 36 months of COBRA as well.

Dear H.R.,

Do staff employees with Aetna dental coverage receive orthodontist coverage?

— **Smilin Sam**

Dear Smilin',

Hey, check out my pearly whites. I'd love to say I was born with 'em, but I got a little help from my friendly neighborhood dentist. Yes, the Aetna plan has orthodontic coverage for employees and their dependents. Orthodontics benefits are explained on page 16 of the Benuflex Handbook and in Aetna's "Evidence of Coverage" booklet, or you may contact Human Resources for clarification of the benefit.

H.R. is here to answer your human resources questions, and will respond to as many queries as possible in each issue. He cannot, however, analyze individual cases. Send your questions to askhr@sandiego.edu

Milestones

Publications Associate **Krystn Shrieve** and her husband, Rob Monroe, welcomed their first baby, Caroline Grace Monroe, on April 26.

John Alquiros, son of **Julie Ellenburg**, executive assistant in the School of Business Administration, passed away on April 20 in Canada.

Thomas Elliot, father of **Thomas "T.J." Elliot**, cook in Main Dining, passed away on May 5.

James Evans Sr., father of **Jim Evans**, associate professor in the School of Business Administration, passed away on May 8.

CLASSIFIEDS

FREE: Children's wooden swing set, including two swings, ladder and monkey bars. Take it away and it's yours. Call **Miriam Rothman** at ext. 4856.

FOR SALE: Five tickets to the Padres vs. New York Yankees, 2 p.m., Sunday, June 23. Plaza 48, Row 26. \$60 for all five (face value). Call **Mike** at ext. 4913.

FOR SALE: '98 Honda CRV-EX. Only 42,000 miles, excellent condition. \$15,000 or best offer. Call **Alicia** at ext. 8761 or email alicia@sandiego.edu.

USD Tops Recyclers List

The City of San Diego recently named USD the 2002 Recycler of the Year among local colleges and universities. In 2001, under the direction of **Lou Magaña**, general services manager in facilities management, the univer-

sity recycled approximately 121.5 tons of paper, nearly 11.9 tons of aluminum, glass, metal and plastics, more than 79 tons of cardboard and about 97 tons of green waste. ♻️

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