

Forty Years Later-The Changing Face of Grossmont College

Editor's Comments By Bob Steinbach

Tom and I have been at odds for a while about including campus news in the Grapevine. Apparently he received flak from some retirees about becoming another PR publication for the district. In the past, I've bowed to his seniority, but since it's my turn for this column, I'm going put on my flak jacket and march to my own drum.

I was on campus for the first time in quite a while to attend the Medical Care Workshop (*see story below*) during Staff Development in August and was overwhelmed by the changes in the quad and front of the Learning and Technology Resource Center (LTRC, aka LRC, aka Campus Library). It's a thing of regal beauty! I had to stand and gawk like a tourist in New York City. Check out this photo.



Dramatic overhaul of the LTRC facade and foyer (all photos by Bob Steinbach)

Changes in the interior of the LTRC are just as dramatic. The three-story (one below ground level) addition at the north end of the LTRC provides new space for the book collection and circulation. The old stacks area has become a sea of computer stations with flat screen monitors; faculty offices and group study areas are upstairs.



Three-story LTRC addition looking west from the Social Science Quad



Acres of computers and students now occupy the old stacks area – view from faculty office area

I can't count the number of times I was involved in planning similar changes, only to have nothing happen. In the old days we were always told that the infrastructure wouldn't support any more buildings, but whatever they did to overcome the difficulties, the changes are terrific.

The "Science Quad" west of the LTRC is prepped for a new two-story science building. Completion is scheduled for August 2006 and it will house Biology on the first floor and Chemistry and Earth Sciences on the second floor. Even with the new buildings, there is sufficient open space on campus to make it feel like a college setting.





Site preparation for the new science building, looking west from the LTRC

I'm sorry for the staff and students, who are suffering through two major back-to-back construction projects on campus, but it must provide a terrific boost in spirits to see a break in the decades of stagnation. 'Tis a joy to walk around campus and feel new life.

(Note: I was 24 hours from sending this to Tom when the *Chancellor's UPDATE* arrived, scooping a bit of my Commentary – too late to come up with a new Comments column -- so, OK, we don't need campus news in the [Grapevine](#).)

Medical Benefits Workshop Informs the Retired and Near-Retired

A classroom full (approximately 45) of near-retirees and retirees attended a workshop on medical benefits at Grossmont

College on August 20th. The workshop was sponsored by the District's Risk Management/Benefits office, directed by Bob Eygenhuysen. Retiree Gay Cox played a major role in initiating and organizing the workshop, with the help of retired counselor Claudia Thompson and Director Bob Eygenhuysen. The workshop was organized in order to help educate those about to retire and those who have recently retired and needed information on their options

Joy Parker of HICAP (Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program) gave a very informative presentation on the varieties of insurers and the various Medigap programs. Bob Eygenhuysen gave a detailed presentation on District Health Plans and the pressures of rapidly rising costs and responded to questions on the plans and on COBRA. A booklet on Choosing A Medigap Policy along with various packets of information on COBRA and the district health plans were provided to attendees, along with material on the new Medicare Prescription Drug Act (discount card) and brochures on organizations available to seniors in need of counseling or services. A similar workshop is planned for the Spring Semester.



Gay Cox merits special mention for her efforts to provide health benefits and information to district employees and retirees. She has served continuously for thirty-five years on the GCCCD Benefits Committee, chaired by Bob Eygenhuysen. She is not only the resident expert but is also our retiree representative on this committee. This committee meets at least once a month and has to inform themselves about the myriad health plans available and come up with plans that meet employee and retiree needs within the confines of district budgets. We all owe her a great deal for the time and energy she has expended on our behalf and I thank her for all of us. ts



Grossmont College Honored Locally and Nationally

For the second year in a row, Grossmont College was named 'Best of San Diego' by readers of the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. This entitles the college to use the San Diego's Best logo and confirms what most of us and our students already knew.

Grossmont College was also included among the Top 100 Producers of Associate Degrees from Community Colleges in the nation in a study published by the journal, *Community College Week*, and has maintained this position for the past several years.

Retiree Turnout Low at GC President's 5th Annual All Staff BBQ





These people are pros



Can you spot the retiree?

The turnout of retirees attending the President's Barbeque at Grossmont College on Monday, August 16 seemed noticeably smaller than previous years. The grilled chicken and all of the accompanying food was, as always, delicious. The weather was perfect, if you stayed in the shade. The location, between the Communication Arts building and the Administration building, and the loudness of the band, made it easy enough to find. But the number of retirees there amounted to less than a score.



Talented, but wired for a stadium



Sheltered from sun, but not the sound

As the years go by, the faculty and classified staff slowly change until the day comes when the returning retiree finds few that he recognizes. Maybe that's why some retirees no longer attend. There may be some critical mass of strangers which make it difficult for our aging population to enjoy such an event. There is that last good year when the last of the folks you knew in your department has retired and now there's no close connection with the job you retired from. Maybe the loudness of the band drove some of us away. The high decibels and close proximity to the dining area made it difficult to converse whenever the band played. Or maybe this year's low retiree attendance was just a fluke. Sadly, the low attendance this year might keep those retirees who did show up from coming back next year. That would be unfortunate because this annual event has meant a lot to some of us over the years, keeping us connected to the campus as well as each other. Maybe next year will be different. ts

Driftwood

Snippets of gossip that have been burnished by friends and washed up on the Grapevine desk



by Bob Steinbach

(click on any picture with blue border to enlarge)

I picked up an interesting book for my last trip to Tucson: [Blood Work](#) by Michael Connelly. It's a basic murder mystery about a retired FBI agent with a newly transplanted heart. The foundation is unusual and allows a number of interpretations of the unfolding facts. The author delivers several "I should have thought of that!" moments and there are enough options to make the twists surprising. I finished it before I got home from Tucson. It's available (used) for one cent plus shipping at Amazon.com.



Judy Barkley joined



Don and Joan Scouller on an Arizona Historical Society Docent trip

through NE Arizona at the end of April. Joan is a docent and when the tour doesn't fill up with docents, it is available to others.

Highlights were an Anasazi archeological site; the Walpi pueblo, most pristine of the Hopi villages, on First Mesa; and a Harvey Girls tour of Winslow's famous La Posada Hotel, the masterpiece and favorite building of Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, the greatest of all Southwestern architects.



Sherry Chase's (Sherry Frey) husband, Bob, passed away July 28, 2004, a result of heart failure. Bob and Sherry traveled extensively during their eight years of marriage. They were planning their next two trips when he went into the hospital.



Ivan Jones married Sally Sayan on August 7, 2004, in an intimate backyard ceremony near his estate on the shores of Hammersley Inlet, one of the waterways of Southern Puget Sound. A barbecue reception followed on the grounds

shores of Hammersey Inlet, one of the water ways of Southern Inlet Sound. A barbecue reception followed on the grounds. Congratulations, Ivan and Sally!



Dick Mellien's wife, Arleen, lost her battle with cancer on September 24, 2004. Dick and Arleen were married in 1983 and have been very generous in opening their lovely home on Mount Helix to various retirement parties and Dean's meetings.



Ernie Neveu continues producing winning wine! His 2003 Pinot Gris won a Silver Medal at the L.A. County Fair International wine Competition this year. His wife finished the last of this year's harvest - fermentation and it looks pretty good.



Muriel Owen and Norman pulled up stakes in San Diego August 10 and are building a home in Colorado Springs. They are scheduled to move in around the first of the year - their new address will be 694 Orchestra Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80906. Their new accommodations will allow travel flexibility that they haven't had before, so they are perusing cruise and riverboat catalogs as well as considering exploration of New Zealand and Australia. In the mean time, they have domestic travel plans including Branson, MO.



Tom Scanlan and Rosemarie have a lovely new granddaughter, Charlotte Karen Thorne, born on October 14. She weighed in at 7lbs, 15oz and was 20 inches long. Hi Blaine for this wonderful gift.

And from our Grapevine Guest Book on the web -

Hi there! Great newsletter as usual. It's good to be able to access it online. Save a tree and all that. Please add me to your



e-mail list. Thanks, and keep up the good work. **Julie Kuhl** District Retiree jkuhl7@cox.net

Hi Grossmont College Colleagues - Ran across your Grapevine on the web and it's great. I am now the President/CEO at IMPAC University in Florida, a for-profit university offering Master's level degrees only. The university offers both residential and on-line courses. **Sharon Yaap Caballero** E-mail at caballero_s@impacu.edu

Tom, just love reading about what our college friends are doing. I have had quite a traveling year myself so far. Beginning in Feb, 2004 with a cruise on the QM2. Boarded in Rio de Janeiro, cruising up through Barbados, Martinique and St. Maartens, disembarking in Ft. Lauderdale. Home a few weeks then drove to Idaho to visit my daughter. Got back in time to repack and head out to St. Maartens again, this time to be a beach bum for a week. Have had company off and on since then. Next trip is in Sept. when I'll be off to England for a visit with cousins for a week, then going to Italy for a week. After that may stay home for a while, but who knows..... oh the joys of retirement. Thanks for all the work you and the team do, greatly appreciated.



Brenda Elliott

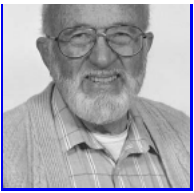


Homer Lusk to retire in December

Homer Lusk began teaching at Grossmont College in 1969 and has chaired the English Department for many of those years. In addition to regular English courses, his teaching specialties included the literature of mythology and science fiction. After retiring he plans to continue teaching some English courses and Mythology part-time in the evening.

Helping Retirees with Limitations





Ray Resler has helped another retiree with limited mobility to achieve some of the benefits of our computer age. A few years ago he helped retiree Charleen Lamons, now deceased, work with a computer/TV system so that she could use the internet and e-mail (see [Grapevine](#), December, 1999) even though she was bedridden. In the past few months he has helped provide a computer and accessories for retiree Don Shannon, who is confined by Parkinson's Disease and leg injuries to wheelchair or bed in a local convalescent home.

A number of District employees helped make this possible. Computer technician Fat Lee donated the CPU, keyboard and mouse and Ray picked up a flat screen monitor that Don Shannon purchased in order to keep the system compact enough for the confines of his two-patient room. Alba Orr, Kats Gustafson and Hsiu Chih Jennings were all instrumental in helping Don receive the type of system he could work with and an e-mail account at the college. Ray and I installed the system and helped Don relearn the excitement of Solitaire and Chess. This will be an ongoing project because Don is unable to use a keyboard. We are looking into a speech-to-type system that Don can use, along with a few other options that will help him benefit from a personal computer in spite of his physical disabilities.



Don Shannon is staying at the Country Villa convalescent facility (formerly Beverly Manor) on 5696 Lake Murray Blvd., just a few miles south of Grossmont College. He would very much appreciate visits and phone calls (personal phone 464-0759) from his colleagues and friends. His e-mail address is don.shannon@gcccd.net



OK, so you caught me playing Solitaire



Hats off to another computer geek



by Mary Ann Beverly

Impressions of Oaxaca: My First Visit

The beauty of this country was enhanced by the artistic abilities of the indigenous groups as well as the general population. They truly are natural artists. Artwork produced during the pre-conquistador period seemed to be sculptures of deities and utility uses of clay and geometrical designs on building structures. Today, black pottery appears to be the most popular for tourist. Paintings in oils, pastel and watercolor flourished throughout the whole country. Subject matter was of every thing from real life to the imaginative, primitive to futuristic style. The place was a haven for art galleries, which exhibited mixed media in many forms of art including crafted fabrics to brightly painted wooden sculptures of whimsical types of common and mystical animals.

Coming in for a landing was like falling to earth in a dream. When I realized the plane was dropping down, I looked out the

window and saw a blanket of soft, fluffy patterns of different colored greens. Whoa! What a sight! Are we coming into a hidden paradise? Shangri-la' it may well be, for after landing and on our way into the city of Oaxaca, we were greeted with all the colors one would find in a box of crayons. Forgive me for being so excited, for I have never been to this land of wonderment before. First off, I noticed the surrounding hills, which were more like mountainous peaks, giving me a secure sense of protection. One could see the richness of the earth; there was an abundance of plants and a variety of trees. It looked and felt tropical. The quick introduction to flowers, as we neared our destination, was bright and cheerful when we went to the big Friday mercado; we were dazzled by the reality of nature's paintbrush. Every kind of flower and vegetable grown on this planet was represented in cinematic color. Fruits and vegetables in all shapes and sizes looking juicy, healthful and ready to eat.

The entrance to our "habitacion" or hotel, was a charming, cobbled stoned courtyard with tropical plants and a coffee tree bursting with beans. We were very pleased and comfortable with our accommodations, as the service was pleasant and hospitable. This was true of the whole atmosphere. The natives and people in general made us feel welcome. The weather was mostly quite predictable. We awoke to bright sunny mornings. By early afternoon soft rains and gentle breezes caressed us. But there was the occasional heavy rain followed by resonant drums from the heaven thunder.

Oaxaca is the capital city of the state of the same name, located in the southernmost part of our neighbor Mexico. The trip was recommended and organized by Lee & Barbara Roper, "aficionados" of this part of the world. They suggested traveling at this time of the year because of a happening called "Guelaguetza". There are many, many fiesta days throughout Mexico; this particular one happens every July. Guelaguetza is also called the "Fiestas del Lunes del Cerro" which means (not literally) gathering, on Mondays, of the different native indigenous groups who live in the surrounding hillsides.

Each of these different groups has their own dialect, which originated from the Mayan language. They are regarded as the backbone of the working and creative population. This was their time to shine, and shine they did. About seven different indigenous groups participated in this extravaganza each with beautiful bright colored costumes. Many costumes were of multi-colored, textured fabrics and threads. Some decorated with bright colored beads and some with dramatic feathers. This spectacle alone heightened the visual senses. The auditory senses were stimulated by each groups dance music. (Sometimes they were accompanied by National State Band of Oaxaca). There was no such thing as a Salsa or a Cha-Cha dance tempo. Theirs leaned more toward the primitive sound, similar among all the different tribes which was of simple types of rhythm, but, amazingly, some harmony could be heard. I understand that the children of these villagers are given a musical instrument as early as three years of age. Most of them are self-taught. When the family come into town to sell their wares, the children are placed at some corner, plunking their guitars (with two strings). One would walk a few steps and be serenaded by a "squeaky" violin or a two "finger" type chord accordion. All played with little tip jars at his or her side. I guess one could guess where my extra "pesos" went. A totally enchanting experience!

We took a two hour trip high into the mountain to a village where rugs and wall hangings were created. What an education! Before "oo-ing and ah-ing" at the array of beautiful rugs and wall hangings, we were given a demonstration of how the wool material was dyed. Color pigments were extracted and processed from the bark of trees, leaves, plant roots and insects from cactus and other plants. They showed the old way of preparing the yarn to today's method using modern equipment. I never saw so many shades of earth tones, reds, greens and indigos. These talented weavers skillfully produced designs from the primitive and common to contemporary.

These people know what the "turistas" want. They truly seem to be connected to the outside world. Most of all, Rolando, our knowledgeable guide told us, they are connected to Mother Earth. With that strong connection, they survive peacefully by hanging on to their inner tranquility. They respect and honor the Earth--which provides the tools and inspiration for their creations.



By Lee Roper

Oaxaca Revisited

Even after having visited Oaxaca, Mexico many times, we always find that we get homesick for the magic of the place. In checking on flights we found out that we would save about \$70 per ticket if we had a group of eight people. We ended up with a wonderful diverse group of ten. We were Mary Ann Beverly, Marie James, Dorothy Ledbetter and her daughter Holly from Texas, Wayne and Peggy Harmon, the Ropers and two of our neighbors.

We flew Aero Mexico out of Tijuana, which always seems to leave on time. Our hotel was just a few blocks from the Zocalo right in the center of activity. There was no planned agenda but we made sure that we went to the villages on the market days, saw the live animal market where we could have purchased an oxen, visited the folk art communities to see where they make the wool rugs, the black or green pottery, paint the wooden figures etc. We enjoyed the churches, museums, restaurants as well as the famous Guelaguetza. That is the biggest fiesta of the year. All of the areas of the state of Oaxaca send music and dancing groups to entertain and share their products. There were parades, outdoor stages and lots of singing groups in the city streets. The Harmon's spent a day birding in the nearby mountains where they did the "life bird dance" for the 12 new species that they found.

Summer is the rainy season in Oaxaca. The hills are lush green with fields of corn and flowering vegetation. In the early evening we weary travelers would come together at the big tables in the patio to share experiences over a few drinks and lots of laughs.

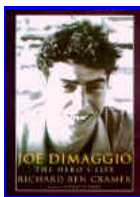
BIBLIOMES:



by Tom Scanlan

*There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away
Emily Dickinson*

(click on bookcovers to enlarge; click on title for Amazon.com reviews or purchase)



[Joe DiMaggio-The Hero's Life](#), Richard Cramer (Simon and Schuster, 2000)



Reviewed by Pat Higgins

The Hall of Fame, pantheon of baseball, includes such immortals as Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth, Willie Mays, Mickey Mantle and Ted Williams, but arguably the best of the best was Joe DiMaggio. This biography carries so many instances of DiMaggio's great play that you'd need to keep a list as you read, to remember them all. It's hard to refrain from calling him outright the best baseball player who ever lived. From the time he was a gawky teenager when---I didn't know---he played shortstop. Then an alert San Francisco Seals manager put him in the outfield, and he was so outstanding that he went to the New York Yankees and became a star only three years after he started a professional career. In New York he played right field, then settled into center field for his fielding exploits.

The DiMaggio achievement which drew most attention---a record that still stands---was his 1941 streak of hitting in 56 straight games. It kept baseball fans everywhere on edge until it ended on July 17, before a capacity crowd in Cleveland, where Joe went hitless in four times at bat. (I was lucky to see DiMaggio heroics one night in Chicago. The Yankees were playing the White Sox in Comiskey Park. My parents were visiting from Spokane, and I took my dad to the game. DiMaggio had been on the injured list for a couple of weeks, for what I don't remember. But he resumed activity that night, and for our life-long remembrance hit two home runs. Of course, the Yankees won.

Most of the baseball life was good for Joe, but he had one bitter experience which lasted for several months. For 1938, Joe wanted \$40,000 from the Yankees. But Col. Jacob Ruppert, the Yankees' owner proved a supreme and immovable tightwad. He told DiMaggio and the press that Joe would get \$25,000, no more. As Joe struggled to get his figure, Ruppert kept putting the word out that DiMaggio was fighting in vain. Eventually, DiMaggio surrendered, and joined the team for the Ruppert figure. And then fate became really fickle. On Joe's first day back he chased a pop fly from his center field position, while second baseman Joe Gordon chased it from second base. They collided hard enough to send both to a hospital overnight and Gordon was out of the lineup with shoulder pains. Then Joe's friendly fans turned on him howling at him as a greedy prima donna, and a menace on the diamond. The abuse wasn't confined to Yankee Stadium; it followed DiMaggio around the league. Joe blamed writers---whom he mostly disliked anyway---for turning the public against him. There were no more holdouts. Fans came round in time, and DiMaggio was a hero.

Being a hero has a lot of advantages. For example, if you were Joe, you'd rarely have to pick up the check in restaurants, nightclubs or wherever else your fancy might take you. Owners and hosts were so honored to have DiMaggio in their establishments that the bill was on the house. Or guests in your party, or others would gladly treat DiMaggio to hospitality. There was adulation wherever DiMaggio went, and it generally was welcome. But the converse was that privacy was hard to obtain. The constant contact with autograph seekers, and others, who felt no reticence about accosting their hero, was a sort of cross to bear.

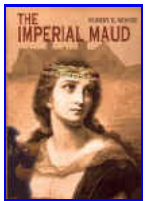
Joe was fond of women, and he knew many. But it seems he really loved only two, Dorothy Arnold and Marilyn Monroe. Dorothy was a Minnesota girl named Olson, who took Arnold as her professional name. She had an ambition to be a Hollywood actress. And after stints in vaudeville in Duluth and Chicago, and acting school in New York, she signed a film contract with Universal as its "Miss Oomph." She met DiMaggio by chance, when both were on the set in New York for the film "Manhattan Merry-Go-Round. It was close to love at first sight, and then began a courtship hampered primarily by the fact that Dorothy's career was centered on Hollywood, while Joe's life was in New York. Still, love conquered hurdles, and in November, 1939 they were married in San Francisco.

Their son, Joe, Jr., was born two years later, and though his parents rejoiced, the child couldn't save the marriage. The tension about careers, Joe's view that baseball was the most important aspect of their lives, and his mild jealousy about his wife's attraction for men took toll. In May, 1944, a Los Angeles court granted Dorothy a divorce after she testified to Joe's "cruel indifference." She later remarried, and then divorced her second husband.

Marilyn Monroe, Joe's second love of his life---chronological, not necessarily preferential---was two hours late for dinner with Joe, their first date. In fact, it was only telephone urging by her business agent that persuaded her to keep the date. She said she wasn't looking forward to dining with a sports star, but she did come. Joe stood up as she came to the table; that and his conservative dress convinced her that he wasn't all bad, and a love was begun that was smooth and stormy over the years, more stormy than serene. In a calm time they married and stayed married for 286 days. Surprisingly that separation was not the finish of their love affair. Each seemed still fond of the other and in the years after they showed their love many times. Despite

... of their love affair. Each seemed still fond of the other, and in the years after they showed their love many times. Despite her some times erratic behavior, in spite of the fact that she'd had a short marriage to playwright Arthur Miller, and the fact that she spread her favors around, Joe wanted her enough to propose that they try marriage again. Marilyn agreed, and they shortly set a wedding date. But only weeks before that day, Marilyn apparently overdosed on sleeping pills to end her life and dash Joe's hopes.

From then on, it was down hill for DiMaggio. His health faded with the years, though he managed to get into a couple of schemes involving autographed baseballs and bats. Those operations brought in a lot of money, though it wasn't always the product of great ethics. In fact, a lawyer who worked his way into DiMaggio's confidence managed to portray himself as Joe's best friend and set himself up for life. That lawyer, in Joe's hospital room the night he died, spotted a ring on Joe's finger, and instructed a nurse to take the ring off. It was hard to get the ring loose, but the nurse was successful and the attorney took the ring. The inscription read, "Thirty six World Series, rookie year." The attorney left the room carrying the ring. When he was asked later about the ring he was wearing, he said, " Joe gave it to me."



[The Imperial Maud](#), Robert E. Moore (iUniverse, Inc. NY, 2004)



Bob Moore

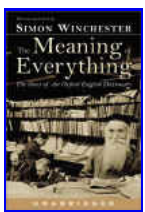
Now I find myself regretting that I never enrolled in Bob's creative writing class before he retired from Grossmont College (I did purchase and read his excellent textbook, [So You Want to be a Writer](#)). This is Bob's first published novel and it really makes the case that we are never too old to be creative (those of you who know Bob are well aware that he's no young chicken anymore, but editorial restraint prevents me from divulging the extent of his antiquity).

As a genre, his novel is a period romance and adventure story set in 19th Century England. It concerns an artist, Stuart Tremaine, who makes his living painting landscapes and portraits of the gentry. While traveling in the countryside, Stuart stops at a remote inn and is smitten by the countenance of the innkeeper's wife, Polly Butler. In order that he might use her as his model, he agrees, for mere room and board, to feature her on a new sign which will replace the worn and faded one hanging at the inn's entrance.

Things get a bit sticky when Stuart finds himself falling in love with Polly. Her husband treats her rather harshly and he doesn't wish to compromise her situation further. To make things worse, a rather unsavory local, Jack Waggoner, also has his eye on Polly and poses a serious and menacing threat to Tremaine and his romance with Polly. Adding more spice to the stew, a deranged countess whose husband has run off with Stuart's wife is also visiting this remote village and now wants Stuart to avenge their common misfortune. Simple escapades soon escalate into deception, violence and even a murder mystery.

The language, setting and characters seem authentically early English (I didn't realize Bob was *that* old!) so you'll find after just a few chapters that you are quite at home in the environs of an earlier, rural England, enjoying the colorful company of hearty gents and spirited damsels as you quaff your stout ale and feast on steaming kidney pie at the inn's great common table--whilst turning the pages of this delightful little novel. I heartily recommend it, especially if you're just a bit out-of-sorts with modern times.

You can browse (read the prologue and first chapter) or purchase this book at http://www.iuniverse.com/bookstore/book_detail.asp?&isbn=0-595-32972-1 and it's also available for purchase in paperback or digitally at <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0595329721/>



[The Meaning of Everything](#), Simon Winchester (Oxford University Press, 2003)

If you love words, history, travel, people, or have ever wondered how a dictionary is made, this book is a wonderful read. Simon Winchester is well known for his best seller, [The Professor and the Madman](#), a fascinating tale of madness and genius, and the incredible obsessions of two unusual men who contributed so much to the making of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED). The [Meaning of Everything](#) is a much broader and complete story of the 71 years it took to complete the OED, though equally fascinating.

The book begins with a brief history of the English language, a chapter that alone justifies reading the book. The origin of words and how meanings and spellings have changed is a lesson in history and geography and social anthropology, all in one. The contributions of the various settlers and sometimes conquerors of the British Isles is mind-boggling, not to mention the impact of travel and technology. English has no single origin, no pure form, and it changes incessantly, more than any other language on the planet. No wonder that immigrants have always found it difficult, despite the familiarity of a certain few words from their own language. Learn Latin and you'll find that Italian and Spanish are not so far removed. But what do you study as a prelude to English? Don't even try.

And how does one assemble a dictionary? Who actually does it? Who pays for it and who will publish it? Who will buy it? The answers vary, depending on whose dictionary you mean. There were dozens of dictionaries produced in England alone before the OED and Winchester discusses their pros and cons. But mostly this book is about the unusual and fascinating people who persevered in producing what is today considered the greatest dictionary of the English language, *The Oxford English Dictionary*.

The sources of words for any dictionary, of course, are primarily other dictionaries, letters, conversations and literature, including newspapers, novels and even scientific journals. But who would undertake the Herculean task of gathering and reading ALL of this material in order to produce a truly COMPLETE dictionary of English? Inspired members of the Philological Society (philology; the love of learning or words) in 1857 England, who else! With the help of thousands of volunteers from around the world, but mostly from the English speaking countries of the British Isles, Australia, Canada and the United States.

A standard method of submitting words was adopted and a small staff, mostly volunteers and the rest poorly paid, working in what was described as a glorified shed, began the grueling task of sorting and cross-checking and organizing the submissions, one word per card. These were filed in a system of pigeonholes, which continued to grow and evolve as the project stretched from the original estimate of ten years to over seventy years. Many of the volunteers and staff did not live to see the fruition of their efforts. Along the way, efforts to find a publisher willing to fund the printing and fights with editors who wanted to trim back the project continued, complicated by the expected professional jealousies and political infighting to be found among University board members and their advisors.

Even before its completion, the dictionary began to be published serially, over a period of years, until its completion in 1928. Can you imagine people dashing to the nearest newsstand when it was announced that the next volume, a slim 64-page paperback, perhaps containing the words from *whiskey* to *willfulness* was now available? They did--and this was one way the publishers of the past were able to fund more than a few works, including fiction. The completed dictionary contained over 400,000 words and nearly two million illustrative quotations. The first bound edition was twelve volumes; any fewer would have made the volumes too bulky.

Would you like a copy? You can purchase the twenty volume, 20,000 page dictionary of 2.5 million quotations illustrating over half a million words for just \$895, a special 75th anniversary price (list price \$3000). You might actually be tempted--after reading Winchester's book.



Grossmont's *Acorn Review* Requesting Submissions

Grossmont College's literary magazine, *Acorn Review*, is encouraging submissions for their Fall semester, 2005 edition. They accept poetry (50 lines or less), prose or short plays (less than 3000 words), and art or photography (black and white recommended as only the covers will include color art or photos). An individual may submit up to 10 poems, art works or photos, and up to three short stories or plays. All manuscripts must be typed double-spaced, one side only, pages numbered. Also include a word count and title, and attach a 3x5 card to each work with your name, title of the piece, name of instructor (if applicable), your phone number, address and e-mail address. Do NOT put your name on your work. Submit your work to Juliana Cardenas in office 511B at Grossmont College no later than March 22, 2005. All submissions will be judged anonymously by a panel of student editorial staff members. If you have questions, you can call Julie at 644-7486.

Letters:



Stan Claussen writes:

Retirees often find themselves stuck in a routine, often a pleasant one, where they do almost the same thing every day. Jan and I travel by motorhome cruise ship or airliner, or just take the Matrix; and after ten years or so, like the rest of you, we have done a lot. But some of us miss the old tangle of minds and ideas when we confronted students and colleagues. Jan and I found a way to get some of this back in our life. It is called Project Vote Smart. It is a non-partisan, non-profit operation tucked away on an old dude ranch in a beautiful valley not too far from Missoula, Montana.

Project Vote Smart has a serious and worthwhile purpose: to get politicians to talk about the things they would like to avoid; ie. the issues in their political campaigns. It was founded in 1988 by Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford and about 40 other private citizens and national leaders. The Project itself is a national library of factual information on 40,000 candidates for public office: the presidential candidates, the state governors, all members of the House of Representatives and Senate, and all state legislators. Each candidate is covered in five areas: biographical background, positions on campaign issues, voting records, campaign finances, and performance evaluations made by special interests. PVS makes sure that it can provide unbiased and accurate information, by hone or on line, that every citizen can trust to be free of slant or hidden agendas. All funds come from members of PVS and charitable institutions, not corporations.

The setting draws people of all ages who like the great outdoors to offset important but sometimes tedious work and low pay. A permanent staff of about 30 runs the everyday operation all year, while young interns and older project member/volunteers come to participate in what the banner across the workroom proclaims: "Quiet Please. Democracy is being reborn." This crew creates the database mentioned above by putting together, sending out and tabulating a National Political Awareness Test (or NPAT) for each candidate; this test examines the willingness of each person running for office to let voters know how they will handle the tough issues if elected. If you would like to check the place out before you join or volunteer a week or two of work, you can visit Project Vote Smart any time by taking a 30 mile detour from the small city of Philipsburg, Montana, and pick the brains of staff and volunteers who always welcome visitors. You can also contact Stan Claussen (stand@nas.com).



Last Play of the Season

Grossmont College is presenting *Educating Rita*, directed by Henry Jordan, at their Lab Theater (directly behind the Stage House) on November 15-20 and November 22-23 at 8pm and on November 20 at 2pm. Tickets may be purchased at the senior rate of \$9 from the Theater Arts Box Office in room 200 or by phone and credit card at 644-7234.

The following synopsis is from EcucETH – The English Page (internet): ***Educating Rita*** is the story of Rita, a Liverpudlian hairdresser from the 'wrong side of the tracks,' who decides to go to university part time to discover her true self. She arrives at her Open University course to discover that her tutor is an alcoholic, failed poet named Frank who is only teaching to subsidize his drinking problem. Undeterred, she insists that he teach her all that there is to know about English literature, against his protestations that by teaching her the accepted truths she will lose all that is wonderful and unique about herself. The clash of 'cultures' results in a very funny play, which celebrates the joy of individual expression. Playwright Willy Russell considers himself a 'working class bloke' who fell into theatre in order to give the working class a voice.

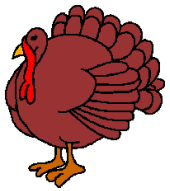
GCCCD Obituaries



Wanda Wagner passed away on July 26, 2004. She worked as a clerk typist for Security Services at the District from 1973-1984. She had also worked in the Business Office and the Physical Education Department.

Wanda was born on July 12, 1933 in Hawaii and raised in Coronado, remaining in the San Diego area for the rest of her life. She and her husband, Conrad, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on October 28 last year. She earned a limited teaching credential in Physical Education and was a very active swimmer who won the La Jolla Rough Water Swin in her age division in 1978. Her experience as a high school cheerleader for the football and basketball teams fostered a love of sports that kept her active as a supporter of Little League and Back Yard Swim programs and a season ticket holder of 27 years for the San Diego Padres. Trips to Mammoth, Padres' spring training and her birthplace in Hawaii helped to round out a very full and active life.

Wanda is survived by her husband, three sons and a daughter and four grandchildren.



Happy Holidays!



To Contact us or to read other issues, go to [Grapevine Home](#)