

THE GREY PANTHER

Newsletter of the Retired and Emeriti Faculty Association of Chapman University



Retired and Emeriti Faculty Association Fall Luncheon



Collette Creppell and
Richard Turner

Collette Creppell, Vice President of Campus Planning and Design, shared concepts of campus-making and Chapman campus building projects of recent years with the Retired and Emeriti Faculty Association at the association's fall Lunch Talk.

She began with a gallery of photo images and an overview of the fifteen major projects completed during Danielle Struppa's presidency which concluded at the start of this academic year. Under the umbrella title of "Campus: Origin Stories, Resilience, Infill, and

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Accomplishments of the Executive Board

The Executive Committee has been hard at work protecting and advancing the rights and privileges of retired and emeritus professors. These include getting parking permission and library privileges for emeritus professors. We are also in discussion for getting library permission for non-emeritus retirees

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Holiday Social

After several years of celebrating the holidays at the beautiful home of Nancy and John Kosak, we have been invited to the home of Carol and Jeff Cogan this year. The date is Sunday, December 7, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Their address is 7337 Saddlehorn Way, Orange CA. If you haven't done so already, please rsvp to Claudia Horn at:

horn@chapman.edu

From the Editor:

Comments and submissions are welcomed. Send to Karl Reitz at kpreitz@gmail.com

Preservation,” Collette then posed the question of “What is a Campus” and talked about the origin of the word at Princeton University in the 18th century with the recognition of the “shared ground plan” and the pre-development origins of our Chapman campuses in Orange and Irvine.

With her experience at Tulane during and after Hurricane Katrina, Collette made the point that even developed campuses cannot take their existence for granted and that a resiliency mindset is valuable. She highlighted the sweep of devastation, recovery, rebuilding, and reimagining in which, sometimes, a smaller effort such as a campus pedestrian way can have an outsized impact.

Ms. Creppell then turned attention to recent projects at Chapman, including the Sandi Simon Center for Dance at the national register historic landmark Packing House at Chapman University, the Campus Center at the Rinker Health Sciences Campus, the Hilbert Museum of California Art at Chapman University across from the Orange train station, and the national register historic landmark Killefer School Building renovation and Experimental Lab Building at the Daniele C. Struppa Research Park.

Among the topics about which Collette spoke were: the emphasis on healthy design as two of the projects attained FitWel certification; the magical—and health—impacts of bringing daylight and generous space into formerly dark and cramped interiors; the fit and place of the projects into the larger planning framework for our two campuses; the value of campus walks to connect people and campus zones; the transformation of the project sites and landscapes along with the interiors in order to create outdoor rooms and civic spaces for the gathering, use, and benefit of the campus community; the sustainability as well as preservation outcomes of reimagining existing buildings such as the former graffiti-strewn and beat-up Killefer School building; “invisible accessibility” as a principle of universal design; and—above all—the joy of watching researchers of the Institute of Quantum Studies instantaneously taking their chalk and equa-

tions to the salvaged and reinstalled chalkboards as architectural walls and the undergraduate students’ joy upon entering the new dance studios of the Dance Center for the first time.

Ms. Creppell concluded with “Looking Ahead” in which she talked about supporting the vision and priorities of the new president Matt Parlow.

The retired and emeriti faculty asked questions and shared valuable information and stories during the Q&A session. They know the history of the last many decades at Chapman, which made the sharing a two-way conversation.

Faculty Senate Report

The Executive Committee of our organization recently reestablished our observer status on the Chapman Faculty Senate. This means that a member of the Executive Committee will attend the monthly Senate meetings. Dawn Hunter agreed to fill that role.

At the October meeting the Senate discussed a number of revisions to the Faculty Manual which were proposed by the administration. According to lawyers hired by the administration, the Faculty Manual was not in compliance with current law. The revisions in the proposal consisted primarily the elimination of any mention of “affirmative action” and “diversity, equity and inclusion.” For example, the statement “The University is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in all its practices, including hiring and retention” is to be eliminated.

This proposal resulted in a heated discussion in the Senate including a request that the Senate meet with the University’s lawyers. That request was rejected with the statement that lawyers represent the administration and not the faculty.

The idea that mention of DEI by the University is illegal is not entirely clear since other organizations like COSTCO continue to include such statements in their missions. .

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who have had long time service to the university. We are also working to get these privileges enshrined in the faculty manual.

Another problem that has arisen is regarding the continuation of having a Chapman email account. The current faculty manual indicates that emeritus status is only conferred after one has retired. Since having a Chapman email account is only allowed for those retired faculty having emeritus status, many faculty had their email accounts removed and only restored after they achieved emeritus status. This is also a problem as it relates to advising students and writing letters of recommendation. The only solution to this problem seems to be changing the faculty manual to allow the conferring of emeritus status before or at retirement.

The Committee is also working with the provost office to develop a checklist for those going into retirement. This would include notifying faculty members what they need to do and what rights and privileges they have upon retirement.

It should be noted that a lot of effort on the part of the committee went into holding the annual fall luncheon which involved finding a speaker, securing the venue, arranging for the proper AV, and providing for the luncheon.

The Committee is now in the process of trying to determine events that would provide entertainment and cultural or intellectual enrichment to our members. We will be sending out a survey in January to our members in an attempt to solicit your input to our work.

Member Accomplishments

Jim Blaylock has a new book coming out next year. It consists of essays and a memoir, that he has written and published over the past 40 years.

Beginning Anywhere, Moments in a Life

by James P. Blaylock

a collection of essays and recollections

Published by Evoke Press

Winter, 2026

In June 2025, Atanas Radenski independently published a literary book titled Dessa's Crossing: A Novel and Other Stories. It follows a young woman, a search-and-rescue volunteer, who must decide whether to keep—or break—an important promise that has turned against her life and future. The story was inspired by Atanas's daughter, a veteran helicopter rescue technician in Washington State's mountains. His book is on sale on Amazon.

Karl Reitz, along with a few other members of Citizens Climate Lobby, met with Amanda Shafer, Senior Legislative Assistant to Congressman Mike Levin.

The agenda for the meeting was to discuss ways in which climate legislation could be advanced.



Clockwise from upper left:
Amanda Shafer, Karl Reitz, CCL
members.

Editorial: Academic Freedom

Karl Reitz

An assault on academic freedom is happening around the country. For example, a Texas A&M professor was fired because she discussed gender identity in her class. An Indiana professor was suspended because she showed her class a graphic (which she did not create) that included (among many) the acronym MAGA as an example of implicit racism. Professors at Clemson, Austin Peay and Florida Atlantic were suspended over negative remarks on social media about Charlie Kirk. A number of professors were fired or suspended for their remarks critical of the Israeli government.

There is also the larger issue of the Trump administration pressuring universities into conforming to its vision about higher education, which is to rid it of leftist and WOKE ideologies. Just the threat of cutting off funding has caused many universities, including Chapman, to purge any mention of affirmative action or DEI practices. In teaching my course in Anthropology I always discussed the differences between biological sex and gender. As examples I taught my students about the hijras of India and the two-spirit people of some native American cultures. As a result, in this era I would have been sanctioned for not conforming to the ideology of the Trump administration that there are only two genders. Regardless of our position on any particular issue, we should all be alarmed by this assault on our first amendment rights and our academic freedom.

How's retirement?

by Michael Hass

The answer
is hazy
A little of this.
A bit of that.
Days pass
Quickly or slowly
No matter
I have no idea what I did.

The answer.
is a poor attempt
at reassurance
this is the imagined
freedom they hope for

The truth.
We follow
in Inanna's footsteps
forced to leave pieces of
royal garments jewels
of our exulted status
at each of the seven gates

The truth
We arrive, yes
Naked except for our
Memories
and imagined selves
Dreams
of walking back

Through the gates, better
for having left
It all behind