

THE GREY PANTHER

Happenings

On January 25th, 2019, Sarah Buckley, Marketing Coordinator for Schmid College, gave a group of the Retired and Emeritus Professors Organization a tour of the Keck Center for Science and Technology. The group consisted of Georgina Califf, Virginia Carson, Margaret Dehning, Claudia Horn, Joe Matthews, Karl Reitz, Heather Terjung and her husband, Thora Westervelt, and Rosemarie Williams. We got to see the new laboratories, the various science pictures decorating the three floors (including pictures of various famous women of science on the third floor), the wide staircase between the first and second floor that also doubles as a place for students to study, the visiting team stadium seats (where the picture was taken), and the locations of the faculty offices and student study rooms. At the end of the tour David Moore, Vice President Legacy Planning, gave each of us a gift bag containing a booklet about the Keck Center and a big Chapman cup with a spoon attached.



Coming Events

Thursday, April 11, 2019 – 11:00 a.m.
The Hilbert Museum of California Art:
 167 N. Atchison St., Orange, CA 92869

Join us for a guided tour of the new exhibits at the Hilbert. One of these exhibits include drawings of Norman Rockwell. A second exhibit is of the works of Mary Blair, a brilliant concept artist for Disney. The last exhibit includes watercolor and oil paintings by over sixty artists. This collection of twentieth century landscape paintings has been curated by the art expert Gordan McCelland. Many of these works are on loan from a number of collections.

Following the tour you are free to join us for lunch at Ruby's located across the street in the metro station.

Save the date for our annual luncheon on October 18. Our speaker is being arranged.



An Unbucket Travel List

by Anita Storck

Many of us make “bucket lists” of things we wish to accomplish in life. I have accomplished many of the items on my list. But now I have a new “bucket list”, it’s called “Things I never want to do again!” Here are a few of them:

*Going up in a hot air balloon : I did this one year in Albuquerque.

At first, it was wonderful, floating along over the desert, on a picture perfect day. I was with a group of women, none of whom that I knew. We were all at the same “Women’s Studies” event in town. Everything went smoothly until one of the women asked our pilot if we could touch down on the water of the river beneath us and then rise up again. I thought it sounded dangerous and hoped the pilot would refuse. But instead, she said “yes”, we could do it. As we descended to touch the water, the balloon tilted dangerously. We missed the river and scooted along across the desert floor on an angle, at a rapid pace. I thought we were going to die. The balloon tipped over on one side and two of the women fell out of the balloon. They fell into cactus and were badly scratched up, but otherwise not badly injured. The rest of us had held onto the sides of the basket for dear life. As we came to a halt, I said to myself, “I ’m never going to do this again!”

*Riding a Camel: On a trip to Tenerife in the Canary Islands, on the ride in from the airport I noticed some camel rides. I thought, “good that’s on my list of things to do”. The next day found me sitting on a very uncomfortable seat, on a camel. There were about ten camels in a row following one another and we were to go over a large area of sand dunes. There were two camel tenders who oversaw us and guided the camels. As we moved slowly across the desert area, the camel behind me started to lick my hair. I frantically tried to get the attention of the two guides, to no avail. I could feel the smelly saliva running down my back, as my hair got wetter and wetter. The camel behind me was not letting up on licking my hair. The temperature was 110 degrees, and my hair was quickly turning cement-like. The camel guides were trying to hide their laughter instead of helping me. By the end of the ride I was a mess! Everyone who saw me exclaimed, “Oh my God, what happened to you?!” Needless to say, “I’m never doing that ag ain!”

*Rafting on the Rapids in Colorado: On a family trip to Colorado, we all wanted to try white water rafting.

Book Review

Natural causes: An epidemic of wellness, the certainty of dying, and killing ourselves to live longer.
Barbara Ehrenreich (2018)

The disconcerting premise of this book is that there really isn’t much any of us can do to stave off the aging process. It’s going to happen anyway. Not only are many of our cells pre-programmed to destroy themselves, but a growing body of evidence shows that modern medicine cannot control sickness and health to the degree we had all thought it could.

Ehrenreich draws upon her training (PhD in cellular immunology) and knowledge of the field to show that aspects of the immune system *actually enable certain types of cancers and autoimmune diseases to thrive and spread*. Yes, the system that we thought was protecting us—well, it ain’t necessarily so.

And what about preventive measures, such as adopting a healthy, active lifestyle? Ehrenreich documents the societal shift in the mid-20th century which was abetted by various industries with a big stake in the changes: processed food companies, Big Pharma, agribusiness, 24-hour gyms, and so on. All were complicit in sending the message that any person, if they changed their lives and behavior in certain ways, could hold off the aging process and even delay death itself.

Ehrenreich wants the reader to understand that she/he has been conned. The fact remains that a person can do all the “right” things—and still die young. Or all the “wrong” things, and live to 100. Bodily processes that trigger disease in one person may have no such effect in another person, and little is known—as yet—about why this is so, or how it works.

That being the case, what is to be done? Ehrenreich has some ideas about that, but if I told you what they are, you’d have no reason to read this provocative book. So I’ll just stop there, and hope I’ve made you curious.

Barbara Tye

It looked like fun and the children who were eight and eleven at the time were excited about it. We were all given life vests to put on and given a talk about the possible dangers and what to do if we capsized. We were told that if we capsized, we were not to try to swim, just take a seated position and the rapids would pull you along. If you tried to swim, the rocks in the river would tear up your skin. There were seven rafts in our group. My family and our guide fit into one raft. We held onto the sides of the raft and rode the rapids, it was a fun and exciting ride at first, until the ride got rougher and rougher. Suddenly we started to see people floating in the river. Two of the rafts in front of us had capsized. The head guide pointed to an island in the middle of the river, and told us to stop there to regroup and take care of the injured. Those who had fallen into the water were all bruised from the rocks. The guides quickly bandaged them up and told us, "This never happens, so don't be afraid., it won't happen again." As we waited, our guide told us about his five years in prison. He was just released and was so glad to have this job. At that point I thought, "We're on a treacherous ride, with an ex-con, rafts are capsizing, what can happen next?". As we finished our ride down the river, I thought to myself, "I'm never doing this again!"



High Desert Blooms

Editorial: Libertarian Agenda?

Karl Reitz

Some months ago while browsing my local library's offerings I came upon a book "Democracy in Chains" by Duke University historian Nancy McLean. Although it is not often that I pick up non-fiction and in particular history books, I started reading and I was quickly intrigued. I was alarmed by what I read. I also started to wonder if there was a Chapman connection given some of the individuals and institutions that are discussed in her book.

McLean outlines a radical movement (conspiracy) to prevent government from instituting policies that have majority support but infringe on the economic rights of the individual. This includes policies already in place like social security, medicare, social welfare, minimum wage, public employee unions, environmental regulations and public education. In general, these are issues espoused by libertarians and neoliberal economists like Milton Friedman, Frederick Hayek and James M. Buchanan (the principle subject of McLean's book). What is different about this broad political perspective and movement founded by Buchanan is that the latter includes a long term strategy to erode democracy itself.

I tend to view conspiracy theories with a certain amount of distrust. A quick search of reviews and critiques of McLean's work yielded mixed results. Criticism came from libertarian leaning writers, but also some from across the political spectrum. However, McLean is a respected historian whose works have received scholarly acclaim. Although she may have flaws in her presentation, her main hypothesis has to be taken seriously.

So what are the goals, strategy, and consequences of this movement (conspiracy)? In the following paragraphs I will try to answer these questions as well as discuss the connections that this movement has to Chapman University.

McLean traces a school of thought that started with the states' rights advocate John C. Calhoun, but was mainly developed by Nobel Laureate economist James M. Buchanan. Buchanan received his Nobel as a result of his work on public choice economics in which he posited that politicians were motivated not for public service, but for their own self interest (an extension of neoliberal economics which discusses self interest in economics terms). He thus championed the idea that politicians vote for policies that would get

them reelected rather than what was good for the country, and that they would willingly vote for policies that trample on the economic rights of individuals. This idea resonated with opponents of the civil rights laws and garnered support from segregationist politicians.

One of Buchanan's first forays into the political process was in working with the state of Virginia's resistance to the Brown versus Board of Education decision. He argued that parents should be free to determine who their children should associate with. He argued for abolishing public education and providing parents with vouchers so they could choose how their children would be educated and with whom they would be going to school. This turned out to be a failure so Buchanan was forced to rethink the strategy for reaching his goals.

At the time Buchanan had established institutes first at the University of Virginia and later at George Mason University. He became convinced that a better long term strategy was not to confront popular policies head on, but to cripple the ability of governments to enact such policies. To strategize this process, he advocated setting up more think tanks and institutes where membership could be controlled and maintained to be sympathetic to his ideas. He also attracted major funding, most significantly from the Koch brothers. This strategy has been successful and is responsible for think tanks like The Cato Institute, The Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (founded by a political science graduate of George Mason), The Heartland Institute, and others.

Prominent in McLean's analysis is the Mont Pelerin Society. This Austrian group was founded by one of Buchanan's compatriots, Frederich Hayek. The group espouses ideals almost identical to those of Buchanan. In fact, Buchanan was one of its most prominent members. McLean points out that a number of Ronald Reagan's advisors were members of the Mont Pelerin Society. Members were advisors to dictator Pinochet of Chili and helped him establish a constitution which would hamper future legislatures from implementing progressive policies.

Buchanan's movement has a number of agenda items, but what they all have in common is resistance to policies and programs that interfere with the free market and the accumulation of capital. His goals include voter suppression, subversion of public education, crippling of environmental and consumer protection enforcement and the reduction of union power. The success of these policies has resulted in environmental degradation, increased income inequality, increased homelessness, a decrease in public health outcomes, presidential victories in the absence of a popular majority, and reductions in educational outcomes.

One of the biggest threats to the agenda of this movement is climate change. A response to climate change requires considerable governmental intrusion into the free market. To curb climate change, not even country-wide intervention is sufficient. It will require international regulation. It is therefore no wonder that many of the institutes mentioned above are foremost deniers of climate change, even in the face of overwhelming scientific evidence.

When I read about the centrality of George Mason University in Buchanan's career, it piqued my curiosity into a Chapman University connection. Chapman's previous president, Jim Doti, was a known advocate of libertarian and neoliberal economics. His choice for Provost and then for his successor as president was a dean at George Mason, Daniele Struppa. Subsequent to his ascendancy to the presidency, Struppa accepted funds from the Koch brothers to establish an institute headed by Nobel prize winner Vernon Smith. He is a former economist at George Mason University and prominent member of the Mont Pelerin Society.

As a professor emeritus of Chapman University who considers climate change as the greatest threat facing humanity, I find the above facts most alarming. As one of the original authors of Chapman's Mission statement which pledges itself to providing an "ethical" education, I am alarmed that the university might be promoting a forum which advocates for undemocratic ideals and denies the truth of climate change. I suggest that anyone who cares about democracy and truth inform themselves by reading McLean's book, the debate surrounding it and then forming their own opinions and actions.