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SJSU ERFA News, Winter 2017

San Jose State University, Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association

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SJSU
ERFA
News

Inside . . .

Dennis Wilcox has found the answer to a long and healthy life; it's simple but not easy. Page 5.

And for Nils Peterson, the change in seasons raises questions about the changes in his body. Page 8.

A Newsletter of the San Jose State University Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association



Photo by Dennis Wilcox

Barbara Conry, Ji-mei Chang, Lucy McProud and Elba Maldonado-Colon enjoying the Fall Luncheon.

Important issues at CSU-ERFA State Council

By Don Keesey (English)

The CSU-ERFA State Council held its fall meeting in Long Beach on Oct. 21st, and among the several committee reports, the Legislative Committee's was the most depressing. It highlighted the US Supreme Court case (Janus vs. AFSCMA) that threatens the viability of public employee unions by eliminating the "fair share" rule requiring non-union members to pay partial dues. In addition, it pointed to the current California Supreme Court case threatening the "California rule" which gives state constitutional protection to public employee pensions. Committee Chair Alan Wade's timely reminder: "Continued assault on public pensions and public

employment can be expected under the current national climate of opinion. California retirees' main bulwark is not public appreciation for our service, but the gritty political clout of our unions."

On another front, the Council voted unanimously to join with the CSU Academic Senate in asking the Chancellor to delay his

unilateral imposition of two major curriculum changes: (1) elimination of the remedial English and Math requirements, and (2) a new rule that General Education cannot exceed 48 units. The educational merits of these changes aside, the Council's objections centered on the long-standing and fundamental

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calendar

Friday, December 8, 2017

Holiday Celebration

ML King, Jr. Library
Rooms 225-29
(See Enclosed Flyer)

Date to be announced

Spring Luncheon

Location: The Villages

University and Academic Senate News

Can academia exist as a democratic institution?

By Peter Buzanski

(SJSU-ERFA Academic Senator)

It's an SJSU custom that when new Chairs take over in the Academic Senate, all living former chairs meet with them to reveal their secrets on how to manage this arduous task. Thus, in early October, seven former Chairs met with the Senate's new Chair, Stefan Frazier of the Department of Linguistics and Language Development. Having been one myself, I attended and while I probably taught Stef

nothing, I learned from him about a disturbing situation that concerns our President, Mary Papazian. Stef revealed that many policies, vetted and approved by the Provost, the President's own Chief of Staff and passed by the SJSU Academic Senate, languish unsigned by Papazian. In one instance it was only one word that prevented her signature. Since the President sits on the Senate's Executive Committee she is aware of their concern about these unresolved

issues. But she defends her reluctance to sign by arguing that while she may have no problem with a given policy, a future president might not interpret it the same way the Senate and Papazian now do. This is frustrating and makes many senators wish for more institutional democracy in academia.

Significant Changes on Campus

At the beginning of the current fall semester the College of International and Extended Studies (CIES) finally moved into the eastern end of the new Student Union building. The CIES provides instruction, as Continuing Education once did, for students seeking courses taught during the intercession or summer months at a much higher cost per unit. I was given a tour of the three-floor structure and was disappointed. The first floor has offices for the faculty of CIES on the periphery of a large central area containing cubicles that resemble call centers in large corporations where no real privacy exists and the noise level has to be annoying for those who prefer a quiet work environment. The second floor has more normal offices, for which students must make appointments in advance to see specific individuals and are admitted only at the time of appointment. The third floor is completely off limits to students because it serves the CIES faculty and staff as a rest and recreation area with comfortable furniture. This huge building reconfiguration was not paid for out of the general fund but with funds earned by CIES' high student fees. At a time when SJSU is striving to make the university experience more welcoming for all students, the CIES program seems counterproductive.

The construction of the Aquatic

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SJSU ERFA Officers, 2017-18

President -- Ji-Mei Chang

Vice Pres. -- Elba Maldonado-Colon

Secretary -- Dennis Wilcox

Treasurer -- Abdel El-Shaieb

Members at Large -- Carmen Sigler

Bill McCraw

Jo Bell Whitlatch

Academic Senate -- Peter Buzanski

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Newsletter Gene Bernardini (Editor) and Clyde Lawrence (Layout/Design)

Membership Wayne Savage **Consolations** Jill Cody

Activities Dolores Escobar-Hamilton **Archivist** Celia Bakke

Lonna Smith **CSU-ERFA Reps** Don Keeseey

Jackie Snell Bob Wilson

Adnan Daoud Joan Merdinger

Program Committee: Carmen Sigler, Barbara Conry,

Bill McCraw and Jo Bell Whitlatch

CSU ERFA State Council Delegate-at-Large--David Elliott

Webmaster--Carol Christensen

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Visit the SJSU ERFA Website at www.sjsu.edu/emeritusfaculty

Views and opinions expressed in this SJSU ERFA Newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the editor or of San Jose State University.

University and Academic Senate News

SJSU faculty member appointed to Board of Trustees

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Center is progressing on schedule with a 2018 or early 2019 completion date. Meanwhile, a massive ten story Science and Innovation Building (ISB) is now being designed and construction is slated to begin in June 2019. The ISB is part of the campus plan to ultimately eliminate Dudley Moorhead Hall. When the building is finished, the student services offices currently housed on the first floor of the 9th Street Garage will move to ISB, which will allow for some 400 new parking places on the first floor of the garage.

Some good news: According to the California Constitution, the CSU Board of Trustees must include one faculty trustee appointed by the Governor for a two year term. Governor Brown's appointment for this term is SJSU professor Romey Sabalius, from our World Languages and Literatures Department. It's a well-deserved honor for him and for SJSU.

Recently, the Trustees issued an Executive Order ending the remedial

Tax Deductible

SJSU-ERFA Award Donations

**By Joan Merdinger
(Social Work)**

As we approach the 2017 holiday season, we're making our annual appeal to ask that you consider a donation to our Faculty Research and Creative Activity Awards fund. We created this fund in 2014 and housed it in the SJSU Tower Foundation, a 501C (3) organization. As a result, all donations are tax deductible.

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mathematics and English courses for incoming students deficient in those subjects. For both subjects, the number of incoming students requiring remediation is in the high forty per cent range. With remedial courses now prohibited by two Chancellors' executive orders, students in need of remediation will be allowed to enter courses

carrying unit credit towards the 120 required for graduation. The English department has done so, but the mathematics department is still looking at ways to do that. Some faculty have expressed worries that a lowering of standards will be the result of the new CSU policy.

CalPERS Information

IRMAA reimbursement

**By Joan Merdinger
(Social Work)**

In late November of each year, all Medicare recipients receive a letter from Social Security informing them of the rate for the Medicare deduction from their Social Security checks to pay for Medicare Part B and Medicare Part D benefits for the upcoming year. As a retiree in CalPERS, you are reimbursed each month – in your retirement CalPERS check – for the basic Social Security Medicare Part B premium. For 2017, the standard Medicare Part B premium reimbursement was \$134 per person.

You may be eligible for additional reimbursement if you have an IRMAA (income-related monthly adjustment amount) which increases your premiums due to a higher income. If you think that you are eligible for additional reimbursement for Medicare Part B due to higher income, you may be eligible for partial or full reimbursement for your IRMAA amount. In some cases, it could be a considerable amount. If so, you must notify CalPERS in writing, and this must be done

each year. You are also able to apply for IRMAA reimbursement for prior years.

If you have an IRMAA amount itemized in your November Social Security Administration letter, how do you apply for additional reimbursement from CalPERS? You mail a written request along with a copy of your annual November letter from the Social Security Administration which describes your benefits for the upcoming year. Send it to CalPERS Member Account Management Division, Medicare Administration, P.O. Box 942714, Sacramento, CA 94229-2714. (Include a copy of the letter to your spouse too, if your spouse is included in your CalPERS benefits.) Expect a response from CalPERS within a few weeks. After the response to your request, it will take from 30-90 days before the additional reimbursement is reflected in your CalPERS retirement check. See [Medicare Enrollment Guide](#), August 2016, pp. 27-28 (CalPERS Health Benefits Program, Publication HBD-65). For additional help, you can email me at jmmerdinger@gmail.com.

A Recipe for Good Health

Keep Moving . . .

**By Dennis L. Wilcox
(Journalism & Mass Comm)**

An old friend wrote the other day to say that he celebrated his 80th birthday by running in the Los Angeles Rock-and-Roll half-marathon. And he came in first in the 80-84 age group! That's nothing new for Charley; he's run in 252 marathons in all 50 states at least twice since he retired at 68.

This achievement, as today's SJSU student would say, is really "awesome" or "cool." I would agree, but Charley's efforts to "keep moving" hardly fits the commitment, passion or ability of the rest of us aging mortals. Although humbled and somewhat intimidated by his display of vitality, we should recognize that he's on to something.

That "something" is best expressed by Dr. Cheryl Phillips, a San Francisco physician and president of the American Geriatrics Society, who says, "Physical activity is more powerful than any medication that a senior can take." In other words, the only way to keep up our endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility is to get regular exercise.

Exercise, according to various research studies, is also more effective than Sudoku or crossword puzzles for maintaining our brain power. One of the proverbial horsemen of the apocalypse, at least for seniors, is now Alzheimer's. A UCLA study of almost 900 men and women age 65 and older found that those who were physically active had a 50 percent reduced risk of developing the disease.

OK, we're intellectually convinced about the need to keep moving,

but we may be overwhelmed by the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that we should spend 2.5 hours weekly, doing "moderate" exercise. That seems like a lot of time, but we should take a minute (or two) to do an inventory of our current activities and to also think about what kinds of exercise we enjoy.

Many ERFA members play golf, while others enjoy swimming, bicycling, ballroom dancing, and walking a lot. Sitting on the couch punching the remote doesn't count. One of my enjoyable activities is a weekly hike in the Santa Cruz Mountains with a group of men and women in their 70s, but all that tramping up and down has led me to formulate a new Wilcox theory of quantum physics: "As you get older, the miles get longer and the hills get steeper."

Hiking isn't for everyone, but walking around the neighborhood is an easy, low impact activity. It's an even more enjoyable commitment if you have your dog, who never says no, or a friend or neighbor who can ease the number of blocks by discussing that weird couple in the yellow house or the pros and cons of tax reform, or NAFTA. To be safe, however, a dog is a better listener. For another low-impact activity, try the ancient Chinese exercise of Tai Chi that millions of people do every morning in parks throughout China. There are a lot of DVDs for purchase on the subject, but you can get the basics on YouTube.

A gym, now called an athletic club, can also be worth the



investment. They offer a lot of hyper disco sessions for the younger generation (usually 40 women and two men in the class), but find one that also offer Pilates, low-impact equipment, and circuit training – a series of 10 machines that exercises all your muscles.

Many gyms offer discounts to seniors because we often use the facilities during the day and do not compete with all the millennials at 5 p.m. I have such a membership but am having trouble sticking to a regular schedule of visiting the place. So rule number one, which I'm still working on, is to make the gym an appointment just like the doctor's office. After four hours of trimming the trees and bushes in the backyard, however, I don't think a session in the gym is really needed--but the sauna is great.

Whatever you do, remember that the core mantra of health and medical professionals is to keep moving if you want to preserve your mental and physical abilities as long as possible. The Vulcan salute that Mr. Spock gave to Captain Kirk in Star Trek is worth noting, "Live long and prosper." The hard part is spreading our fingers to do the salute, but we need to keep moving as we explore the final frontier of space, and our lives.

CSU-ERFA State Council important issues

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principle that in a university worthy of the name, curriculum is the purview of the faculty.

The Council's other major action was to propose a change in statewide membership. The Executive Committee recommended and the Council agreed that membership in CSU-ERFA should be opened to retired CSU staff as well as faculty. This is not as big a change as it might seem. Membership in the state group has long been extended to all members of affiliated groups, and local groups on several of the largest campuses include retired staff. So staff on these campuses are already eligible to join CSU-ERFA. Note that this is only a recommendation. The issue will be submitted to a vote of the entire membership. If you belong

SJSU-ERFA Awards

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Since 2014-15, we have provided two awards a year of \$2500 each. The awards support the research and creative activities of current SJSU faculty—tenured, tenure-track and long-term lecturers—and are the result of a rigorous competitive process. It has been heartwarming to hear the gratitude expressed by our younger colleagues for the opportunity our awards provide.

You can help them by sending a check made out to "Tower Foundation" (on the Memo line write "ERFA Faculty Award"). Please send your check to our Treasurer, Abdel El-Shaieb, 5032 Wilma Way, San Jose, CA 95124. We thank you for your consideration of this request.

to CSU-ERFA, expect to receive a ballot. Note, too, that each local group will continue to decide its own membership rules.

Fuller accounts of the Council's

actions and the committee reports will appear in the November issue of the *Reporter*. Go to CSU-ERFA.com and follow the links.

SJSU-ERFA and CSU-ERFA

Do you know the difference?

By Don Keesey (English)

Retiring faculty are often confused about the relationship between SJSU-ERFA and CSU-ERFA. Can you belong to one and not the other? What's the point of belonging to both? Here's the short answer.

Our campus group, SJSU-ERFA, is primarily a social organization whose main mission is to help retirees stay connected with each other and with the university. To that end, it arranges luncheon meetings for the entire membership each fall and spring, and a springtime excursion to some Bay Area institution or event. It also hosts a December holiday party. Its quarterly newsletters report members' activities and campus developments. Over the years it has supported the university with donations to the colleges and the library, and research grants for current faculty.

CSU-ERFA has a very different purpose. It is primarily an advocacy and watchdog group. Though it maintains liaison with the state-wide Academic Senate and frequently advises the Chancellor's office and trustees on academic matters, its main mission is to protect and enhance retiree benefits. To that end it tracks actions in the legislature and CalPERS that affect our pensions and health care benefits, keeps members

informed through its newsletter, the *Reporter*, and joins with other retiree groups like the Retired Public Employees Association to lobby for our interests. It will also intervene directly to help individual members fight their battles with CalPERS. These days, as we find our pensions and health care benefits under constant threat, the group's mission is more crucial than ever.

So, two quite different yet complementary organizations, each offering important benefits. You can belong to either, but there are good reasons to belong to both. There are connections. For one, CSU-ERFA sends a portion of each member's dues back to the local campus groups. Second, local members who also belong to the state group can pay their SJSU-ERFA dues simply by having their two dollars per month collected by payroll deduction. This convenience saves SJSU-ERFA the trouble of multiple collection reminders, another reason to belong to both groups. If you are already a member of CSU-ERFA and want to pay your local dues by adding two dollars to your payroll deduction, contact Treasurer Abdel El Shaieb (abdel39@verizon.net). If you are thinking of joining CSU-ERFA, you will find full information about the organization and a membership form at www.csuerfa.org.

Chat Room . . .

Special news from and about our members. Edited by Gene Bernardini

This edition contains news about travels and activities taken from the membership renewal forms. Members are invited to send additional news about themselves to Gene Bernardini at geebernard@comcast.net or by snail mail at 775 Seawood Way, San Jose, CA 95120

• **Betty Auchard** (Associate Member) has written three books since retiring, all of them available on *amazon.com*. They are memoirs of her earlier years—funny, entertaining and poignant. She is available for lively talks to private groups and clubs who need a speaker and she can be contacted by email at *btauchard@aol.com* or by phone: (408) 356-8224.)

• **William Barrett** (Computer Engineering, '12) is currently the Treasurer of the Santa Clara County Democratic Club, which sponsors monthly events with speakers like Ro Khanna, Zoe Lofgren, Anna Eshoo and our own ERFA Board member Jill Cody, who recently spoke about her successful book, *America Abandoned*. Bill volunteered to serve as Treasurer without realizing the enormous tasks it requires, everything from managing financial resources, to updating membership lists, making badges, mailing renewal notices, emailing members about local activities and serving on two committees. Still, he says, "Life is good. I don't lack for interesting and satisfactory things to do."

• **Bob Bornstein** (Meteorology, '05) has worked at the Institute for Urban Climate in Beijing several months a year for the last five years. His research on urban-induced thunderstorm flooding and haze episodes has garnered him the Great Wall of Friendship Award from the Mayor of Beijing (one of about four given each year). In honor of Bob's 75th birthday, there were two Named Sessions in January at the Urban Climate Conference, part of the annual meeting of the American Meteorological Society.

C. Kenneth Bradshaw (Math/Computer Science, '96) writes that he's "currently involved in writing poetry—not good poetry, but it keeps the wheels in my mind turning."

• **Shannon Bros** (Biological Sciences, '16) is currently working on modifying the Federal Agricultural Act of 2018 (the Farm Bill). The bill's purpose is to modify present crop insurance subsidies to align with the best conservation practices in farming.

• **Peter Buzanski** (History, '96) and his wife, Colleen, spent an exciting week in Manhattan at the beginning of summer. They stayed at a hotel across from Lincoln Center where they could view the Metropolitan Opera House. They visited the Museum of Modern Art, the Frick Museum and saw two serious Broadway plays: *Oslo*, which dealt with the drama leading up to the Rabin-Arafat Oslo accord, and *Sweat*, which explored the plight of laid-off steelworkers in Pennsylvania. For sheer amusement, they took in the Broadway revival of *Cats*.

• **Phyllis Connolly** (Nursing, '11) is enjoying her retirement in Nipomo, CA, playing golf, and with two hole-in-ones, her game is obviously getting better. She continues her work with the Trilogy Art Group to raise funds for the Nipomo Library and her art is hanging in the Burton House restaurant there—"but no sales yet." And she's still actively involved in watercolor painting classes, the local book club and playing Mah Jongg. She says she's grateful to the ERFA Board for keeping her up to date with the newsletter and Directory, and regrets living too far away to participate in events.

• **Marjorie Fitting Gifford** (Mathematics, '92), living in Hawaii, just finished a year as Rotary Club Treasurer, while still doing tax preparation on her own. Her newest project is directing a program for the Kilauea Community Ag Park, which is deforesting 75 acres of invasive trees and preparing the soil for farmers' plots. The program includes a vegetable garden that feeds over 90 people a week, a covered farmers market, restrooms, gazebos, walking paths and fruit trees endemic to Hawaiian plant cultivation.

• **Don Kassing** (SJSU Past President, '11) recently visited Quebec City with his wife, Amy, for a week. His great grandfather was from there. "Our lives now revolve around eight wonderful grandkids," he says.

• **Wanda Waldera** (Assoc. Member), the widow of Steve French (Art), is announcing a current exhibition of his works at the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art. Steve strove to incorporate his wide-ranging interests in poetry, literature, myth and music into the visual imagery of his painting. His influence on generations of students who are acclaimed both regionally and nationally, can be seen at the exhibition. It consists of two exhibits, one of Steve's work, *Overture—The Art of Steve French*, and one of his students, *Encore—The Legacy of Steve French*. The gallery is located at 560 South First St., San Jose, and the exhibition will run from November 12, 2017—February 4, 2018.



In Memoriam

• **Donald Ryan** (Financial Aid, '96?) passed away on June 3, 2017, at the age of 82 from complications following surgery. As a boy, Don was active in scouting, and rose to the rank of Eagle Scout. He graduated from Bellarmine College Prep, where he was elected Student Body President before going on to earn BA and MA degrees from SJSU, also serving as ASB President there. Upon graduation, he was employed by SJSU, where he became the founding Director of the Student Financial Aid Program. He was active in the state, regional and national associations of Financial Aid Administrators and was elected president of all three organizations. After retiring, Don spent his time gardening, playing golf and volunteering for Chaplain Services at O'Connor Hospital. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Missy, two daughters and several grandchildren.

• **Patricia Rowe Burns**, widow of Hobert W. Burns, passed away on August 7, 2017, at her home in The Terraces of Los Gatos. Pat loved nature, birds, walking, quiet, solitude and reading. She was also an active gardener, water colorist, drawer, art teacher, library scientist, golfer and traveler. With Bert, she was proud of their close association with the MLK Library, especially the California History Collection. She was also a spirited fighter, not a quitter, and she showed a fierce life force even as Alzheimer's tried to rob her of it. Her family is grateful to her amazing care team, her long-time Kaiser physician, Dr Ann Ferris, Pathways and Suncrest Hospice. She is survived by her children Janifer Burns and Charles Burns, step-daughter Carol Burns Crane and her 3 children, her god-daughter Cecily Villemain Wilson, and oh, yes, OJ the cat, one of

many grand dogs and cats!

• **Weldon Parker** (Elementary Ed '82) passed away on September 14, 2017, at the age of 87. Weldon's life story is one from the playbook of the American Dream. Born in Texas in 1930, Weldon and his family (totaling five children) was soon driven by the dust storms to California, where they worked as migrant farm workers. Weldon attended 11 elementary schools as his family followed the crops up and down the state. Still, he graduated on schedule from high school and was granted a scholarship to attend SJSU in 1948. Mentored by education Professor William Rogers, he graduated in 1952 with great distinction and honors. During his senior year, he taught a course in Natural Science 10C, whetting his appetite for a future career in college teaching.

Weldon taught elementary school in Santa Clara for three years, then became a science advisor for San Joaquin County schools. In 1958, he received his Master's in Education from SJSU and taught courses there while attending Stanford University, where he received his Doctorate in Education in 1964.

Weldon published various articles on science and education in *Teachers Ideas and Materials*, *Classroom Learning Centers* and *Teaching the Disadvantaged Child*.

Retiring after 30 years, Weldon and his wife, Dee, moved to Lake County, where he helped establish the Anderson Marsh State Park, becoming a founding member of its Interpretive Association and the Lake County Land Trust. He loved gardening, earning ribbons for his vegetables at the county fair, gave bird-watching boat tours on Clear Lake and taught locals how to square dance.

Weldon and Dee bought a cabin

cruiser and spent 6 years traveling throughout the U.S. In 1983, they bought a mobile home and a boat to enjoy fishing the warm waters of Florida. Inveterate travelers, they took trips all over the world with family and friends.

Weldon is survived by his wife of 67 years, a daughter and son, a grand-daughter and great grandson. His son John proudly followed in his father's footsteps, obtaining a PhD in Archaeology from UCLA.

• **John Banister** (English, '87) died on September 30, 2017, at the age of 90. Born in Oakland, CA, John moved with his family to Los Gatos when he was eleven. He attended Bellarmine College Prep, then Santa Clara Univ., where he took his BA in English and finally, Stanford, where he earned his PhD. He had a long career as a teacher and administrator, beginning with Cal Poly, SLO, in 1954, followed by SJSU in 1959, where he taught English while serving as AVP in the administration. In '67 he moved to the Chancellor's Office in Los Angeles, where he was appointed Assoc. Dean in the Academic Planning Division. There he was involved in a wide variety of activities from supervising MFA degrees in performing arts to establishing programs in Industrial Arts/Technology, and working with WASC accreditation committees statewide. He returned to SJSU in 1981 as Professor of English, specializing in Victorian Literature. His many community services involved being elected President of the Board of the Franklin McKinley School District three times. In 1987 he retired to live in Carmel, CA. He is survived by one brother, and countless numbers of nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews, and one great-great niece.

Newsletter of the Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association
SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY
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San Jose, CA 95192-0210

Return Service Requested

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WINTER • 2017
SJSU ERFA
News

a poem

By Nils Peterson
English/Humanities

and so it ends, so it begins
last day of summer
first day I've worn a jacket walking the dog
when I come back in, the heater's humming
its pleasant monotone not heard since march
the light pouring in my window
has hints of pale lemon
as they might say
on the back of a wine bottle
well yes it is the best of wines
so I sit in my chair drinking it in
now i find
i have some questions
for my body
i thought we were in this together
jogging side by side through the years,
but here you are about to turn 84
leaving me behind somewhere
in my 50's maybe 40's even
why are you hurrying?
pause for a few years
and let me catch up
then we'll get a couple of walkers
and push on together
to wherever we're going

