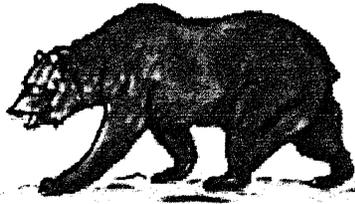


# Bear



# Facts

Volume XLII No.3

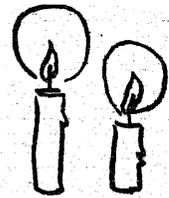
Bulletin of UCSD OCEANIDS

December 2003

*The Board of UCSD Oceanids invites  
all Newcomers, Oceanids and their guests to our*



## *Holiday Party*



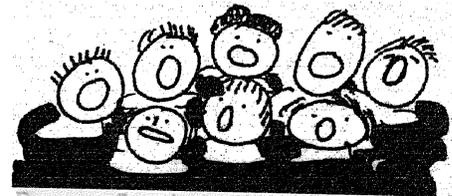
*Sunday afternoon, December 14th, 4 PM to 7 PM*

*at the UCSD International Center*

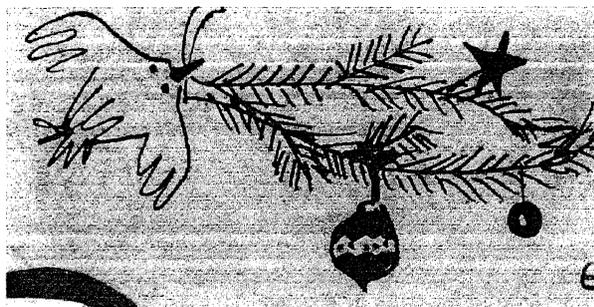
*The party is free and for adults only.*

*Reservations should be made by Wednesday, December 10th.*

*Entertainment will include carol singing with  
Evelyn and Sandy Lakoff leading the group.*



Bear facts (La Jolla (San  
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*For information and reservations contact*

*Maxine Bloor (858-459-7665; cbloor@san.rr.com),  
Mary McIlwain (858-454-4857; mm@san.rr.com),  
Judy Vacquier (858-459-7834; jvacq@san.rr.com) or  
Georgina Sham (ghshen@ucsd.edu).*



NOTE: All phone numbers are area code 858 unless otherwise noted.



### BEAR FACTS

is the newsletter of Oceanids, a UCSD campus organization. Published monthly except July, August & September. Letters to the Editor and articles of interest to UCSD are invited.

ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR CONSIDERATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE EDITOR NO LATER THAN THE 15<sup>th</sup> OF THE MONTH FOR THE NEXT ISSUE.

Please address all submissions to:

Oceanids/Bear Facts  
International Center  
9500 Gilman Drive  
La Jolla, CA 92093-0049

or better Email to:  
oceanids@ucsd.edu and  
renright@ucsd.edu

Circulation:  
Jean Kramer 453-0379  
Liz Wills 454-6858  
Isabel Wheeler 362-5732

**PLEASE NOTE**  
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and also please to  
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Friday Café	Barbara Starkey .....453-0779
Directory Updates	Ady Rosenblatt.....453-4626

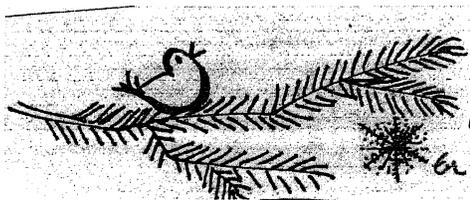
**BOARD MEETINGS first Thursday every month at the Oceanids Pavilion,  
International Center, 9:30 AM social, 10:00 AM meeting  
You are welcome to attend!**

## President's Message

Late October was a time we will never forget, the time of the ghastly Cedars fire, the greatest brush fire in the history of our state. Many UCSD families lost their homes, and if we Oceanids were not directly in harm's way, we all know someone who lost their home or nearly did. I hope that we have all contributed in some way to help our less fortunate friends and neighbors, and that we have learned some lessons before it is too late: whether it is taking an inventory of your most precious possessions (family photo albums seem to top everyone's lists), planning an escape route, or finally getting rid of your shake roof. We will never forget the horrifying sights of the destruction of our beautiful city and open spaces, the choking smoke and ash, and the relief when it was all over and we could breathe again. Hopefully our neighbors will have the strength, help and resources to rebuild, and the blackened hillsides will gradually become green and gold again.

Our holiday party will be held Sunday, December 14, from 4 to 7 pm at the International Center. Please come and celebrate the season and our good friendships and our interesting newcomers. There will be a chance to make a donation to a local charity or to benefit the fire victims. Some of our Interest Groups will also be celebrating the holidays, such as Devilish Diners/Gardening Group and Café Español, so I hope you will try a new activity or two this month. Have a warm and caring holiday season!

With all good wishes, Judy Vacquier



### Editorial Apologies

Having had space to fill in November's newsletter I expressed my disappointment in the latest recall election in a short article, headlined "Bummer". I knew that not all our Oceanids would agree with my opinion, but I made the mistake of assuming that everyone would know what r.e. stands for. I apologize for not having made it perfectly clear that this was only an opinion piece by your editor. I will do better.

Roswitha Enright

## The La Jolla Moneybooks

"The Best Coupon Values"

The La Jolla Moneybooks will be on sale until the 14th of December. The last opportunity will be at the Oceanids Holiday Party. How about giving an early holiday gift to a friend or getting a book for yourself? Remember the coupons from Adelaides, The Artful Framer, Bleu Royal (fine French soaps), BoDanica, Burns Drugs, Geppetos or Kinkos can help you with your holiday shopping. Moneybooks are \$20 each and Oceanids receives \$10 on each sale. This is our only "fundraiser". Monies go to our activities that include service awards and scholarships.

Moneybooks are for sale at Oceanids Board meetings or through your interest groups. Call Maxine Bloor (858-459-7665) for information.



Be sure to attend the Sounding Board  
on  
**December 4** at the Faculty Club  
after the board meeting at 12 noon.

Speaker: Erika Torres More info page 4

### Attention Sounding Board Attendees!

In order to get the room for the lectures without cost we had to promise that the people who attend the talks will purchase their lunch (all you can eat and drink, including dessert for 10 bucks!!) at the Faculty Club. If you are a member of the F.C., you can pay at the door to the dining room. All non-members please pay Jean in the meeting room. The lunch should only be eaten in the meeting room, not in the dining room, please. It starts OFFICIALLY at noon. It's supposed to be a one-hour program.

The speaker is introduced at about 12:20 and talks for 20-25 minutes, then there is discussion. [There may be interruptions with questions or statements during the talk—it's very informal].

Sounding Board is supposed to be over by 1:00-1:15

## PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE:

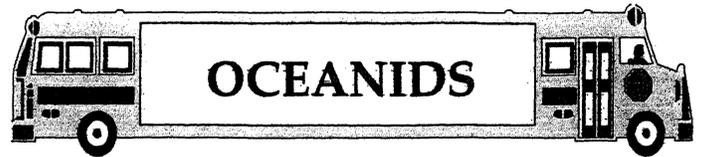
### Report and update

This month People-to-People welcomed two new members Hulya Saygin from Turkey and Helen Kinnett recently from Dallas, Texas. We also welcomed back Elizabeth Hall. Lively discussion prevailed as we had lunch at Aesop's Tables in the Costa Verde shopping center. We can definitely recommend this restaurant when you need to entertain someone or you just want an enjoyable meal out. We had such a good time at this lunch that we immediately planned another lunch for next month.

We have also planned activities for the New Year which include: Saturday, January 3 - an all day trip to El Hogar orphanage near Ensenada where we will bring gifts to help the children celebrate the Epiphany. On Monday, February 9 our new member Hulya Saygin will give us a presentation on Turkey and on Monday, March 8 Colin and Maxine Bloor will give us a presentation on their trip to Bhutan.

Last year we had Ann Van Atta give us a presentation on China and Jan Schwarz showed a film on her adventures in Antarctica while filming birds, particularly penguins. Over the years we have learned about many peoples and their countries and we are looking forward to another exciting year.

Anyone who is interested is welcome to join us. To quote our new member Helen "what a dynamic and interesting group of people".



### BUS-EXCURSION TO THE BOWERS MUSEUM

Experience a historic exhibition of breathtaking masterpieces never before seen in the western world with Oceanids trip on Friday, January 23, 2004, to the Bowers Museum of Cultural Art in association with the Potala Palace, the Tibet Museum and the Norbulingka. The exhibit is entitled Tibet: Treasures from the Roof of the World. These treasures were used by the Dalai Lamas and their courts in the lavish ceremonies and daily rituals in Lhasa. For more than a thousand years, Lhasa has been the spiritual center of Buddhism. Almost 200 created sacred objects with great cultural significance are making their first journey to the Western World. Treasures from the Roof of the World will offer a glimpse into a culture both opulent and spiritual. There are examples of sculpture, paintings and textiles, that were the focus of the Dalai Lamas religious meditation. Oceanids bus trip will be leaving the parking lot of Macy's UTC at Nobel Drive at 10 a.m. for a cost of \$45. We will be returning by 5:30 p.m. To make reservations send a check addressed to Oceanids to Barbara Starkey, 4341 Pavlov Avenue, San Diego 92122. If you bring a guest, please give Barbara the name.

For questions call (858) 453-0779.

## SOUNDING BOARD SPEAKER FOR DECEMBER 4, 2003

Under Erika Torri's direction since 1991, the 104-year old Athenaeum music and art library in La Jolla, one of only 17 membership libraries in the US, has grown in stature and prestige to become one of the leading art venues in the area, especially for its collection of artists, books, a new art form. Music programs include many sold-out jazz series and Chamber Music series. When the popular Athenaeum School of the Arts had outgrown its space, Erika found a building for it. Her boundless energy and enthusiasm are obvious when viewing the Athenaeum's plans for further expansion. As she says, referring to the other 16 membership libraries, "We're not the biggest, but w're the liveliest!" She says, "We plan to sustain our mission to embrace arts and music in a comprehensive way, with library services, classes, performances and exhibitions while continuing the lively, innovative programming that makes the Athenaeum such a unique and well-loved place."

Erika, born in Bremen, Germany, is an artist, whose miniature weavings are in museum and private collections. She is sought after as a lecturer and consultant and often serves as juror for art exhibitions.

There's no longer any excuse for being unfamiliar with The Athenaeum Music & Art Library of La Jolla, its multimedia art classes & its superlative concerts after hearing Erika Torri, our speaker for Dec 4.





### Happy faces at the Fall Brunch.

From left: Maxine Bloor, Margaret Acampora, Judy Vacquier, Mary Dashen, Judy Skelton, Glenda Rosenblatt

## HOUSING WANTED

Beginning in January, 2004, apartment or small house is needed for a family from Switzerland, children ages two and four, ideally for 2 years, but even a month or two would help.

Preferred: Biking distance from UCSD or bus service.

Rent should not exceed \$1,500.

Call Elisabeth Marti (858) 755-1408 or e-mail: [marti@ucsd.edu](mailto:marti@ucsd.edu)

### A special wish from your editor

Dear Oceanids, would you not find some time to write a contribution to YOUR newsletter? Bear Facts can only be as interesting as its readers make it. I welcome all stories, insights, remembrances, views, news, poems, comments etc. Mail them handwritten or typed to the center or to my home address, or better, E-mail them to me ([renright@UCSD.edu](mailto:renright@UCSD.edu)) and to the Oceanids computer ([Oceanids@UCSD.edu](mailto:Oceanids@UCSD.edu))

Thank You, Roswitha

## OCEANIDS IS OPEN TO ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN UCSD

Print your name as you would like it to appear in the DIRECTORY. Check here if you do not wish to be listed

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Membership \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ FAX # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP \$20 - Check payable to OCEANIDS (not tax-deductible)**

**SUSTAINING - \$250 & LIFE MEMBERSHIP - \$500 - Check payable to UCSD FOUNDATION (tax-deductible)**

Send check(s) & completed form to

OCEANIDS, INTERNATIONAL CENTER, 9500 GILMAN DR., LA JOLLA, CA 92093-0049

# OCEANIDS' INTEREST GROUPS

Interest Groups are the backbone of our Oceanids organization. They are here to meet the many varied needs of UCSD families, especially those new to the UCSD campus, and the community. If you do not find an activity you would like to participate in, please contact Carole Ziegler, Interest Group Coordinator@ 619-297-0798. If five or more Oceanids wish to start a new group, please let Carole know so we can inform other members. All we ask is that your members be Oceanids. If one has no affiliation with UCSD, she/he is encouraged to join any of the many Friends groups on campus. If you are not yet a member of Oceanids, please consider joining us today by calling Madeleine Rast, 858-755 0478 or submitting the application form in this issue.

## AVI SET BIRDERS

*Contacts: Sidney Bagley (858)455-1477, Lou Bowles (858)755-7102, or Joany Mosher (858)454-0017*

Our birding group meets promptly at 8 a.m. the second Monday of each month during the academic year. The La Jolla group will now meet at the corner of Dunaway Drive and Glenwick Dr. in La Jolla, and the north county birders will meet at the home of Lou Bowles, 13040 Caminito Mar Villa, Del Mar. We carpool from these locations and visit sites around the county. Members will be called. **Next outing is December 8.**

## BOOK GROUP

*Contact Odette Filloux, (858) 453-0749*

**Dec. 9,** Daughter of fortune by Isabel Allende, reviewed by Marianne Burkenroad. Meeting Place: Barbara Penn, 8223 El Paseo Grande, La Jolla.

Future reading list:

Jan.13, Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom  
Feb.10, The Heinemann Book of Contemporary African Short Stories  
Mar. 9, The Snake Charmer by Sanjay Nigam  
Ap. 13, The Book of Illusions by Paul Auster  
May 11, Out of Egypt by Andre Aciman  
Jun. 8, Portrait of a Lady by Henry James  
Jul. 13, Caramelo by Sandra Cisneros

## CAFÉ ESPAÑOL

*Contact: Judy Vacquier, (858) 459-7834*

La próxima reunión de Café Español será el lunes, **15 de diciembre**, 1:30-3:30, en la casa de Judy Vacquier, 7050 Via Valverde, La Jolla. Favor de contestar a Judy (858-459-7834) si puede venir o si tiene preguntas. Trae una bebida o galletas o algo así para una fiesta de la navidad. **From November on, Cafe Espanol will be on the THIRD Monday.**

## CAFÉ FRANÇAIS

*Contact: Lucie Walther, (858)755-8060 and Martha Morera (858)481-7723*

La rencontre du prochain cafe francais aura lieu le **10 decembre**. chez Heli Hofmann, 5870 Cactus Way, La Jolla.

## CINEMA SOIRÉE

*Contact: Laurette Verbinski, (858) 453-4699 or Roswitha Enright (858) 459-7375.* We meet on the second Sunday of each month at 7:00 p.m. for socializing, and movie discussion will start at 7:30 sharp. For information call Laurette or Roswitha. Next meeting **December 14.**

## DAY BRIDGE

*Contact: Barbara Bank (858)484-4597 (barbara@sndal.ucsd.edu)*

We meet the first and third Tuesdays of the month at various members' homes. We start at 10 a.m. and usually end at about 3 p.m. Everyone brings their own lunch. The hostess only provides drinks. Call for information.

Next meetings: **December 2 and 16.**

## DEVILISH DINERS

*Contact: Mary Dashen (858) 457-4631, fax 457-4371, or mdashen@san.rr.com.*

**December 2:** We are going to Herlihy Farms in Fallbrook once again for our annual Holiday outing. We had a delightful morning last year and look forward to another fun visit on Tuesday December 2. We will enjoy lively cooking demonstrations featuring delicious holiday recipes (colorful crisp salad, sweet potato casserole and steamed persimmon pudding). Afterwards we will stroll through the gardens, visit the vintage shed full of signature gift items, purchase cut flowers from the ranch and vintage roses selected by Marilyn herself. Meet at TGIF Parking lot at 9:15 to carpool and distribute maps; we will depart promptly at 9:30. Reservations and advance payment were due by Nov 18. Call Mary Lynn Hyde in case there is last minute cancellation that you can fill in. **January 29:** Anything's likely! The first Thursday of the month is New year's Day, thus meetings and activities are likely to be pushed back a week. Our outing is likely to be Thursday Jan 29 and likely to be in San Diego rather than a road trip as previously planned. If you have a favorite or new restaurant to suggest for January, please tell Mary Dashen or Mary Lynn Hyde no later than December 7 so we can make plans and make BearFacts deadline.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION BOOK GROUP

*Contact: Judy Vacquier (858) 459- 7834.*

This group meets the fourth Thursday of each month to discuss a book on environmental conservation and related topics. We will take a break for the Dec. holidays. The next meeting will be Thursday, **January 22, 11:30-1:00**, in the conference room at the Birch Aquarium

at Scripps. The book for January will be Darwin's Dream Pond; Drama in Lake Victoria by Tijs Goldschmidt, MIT Press. Book discussion will begin at 11:45. You must pay \$3 per vehicle (for the parking machine) or have an A or B parking sticker or display your member's parking coupon. Bring your lunch. For more information contact Judy Vacquier, 858-459-7834 or jvacq@san.rr.com.

## EVENING BRIDGE

*Contact: Barbara Bank at (858)484-4597, or e-mail (barbara@snda1.ucsd.edu)*

The couples Evening Bridge Interest group meets at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Saturday of the month all year long at one of our members' homes. If you wish to play on a regular basis, or just occasionally, please contact Barbara Bank. **Special Holiday Bridge on 2nd Saturday, Dec. 13**  
Next regular meeting **January 24.**

## GARDENING GROUP

*Contact Mary Lynn Hyde 858-488-9283 mlhyde@san.rr.com or Irene Allison 858-453-0206 iallison@ucsd.edu*

On Tuesday **December 2**, we will return to Herlihy Farms for to Celebrate Autumn. We had a delightful morning last year and look forward to a return visit to Fallbrook. We will see lively cooking demonstrations featuring delicious seasonal recipes. \$25 per person includes hearty tastes of all recipes (colorful crisp salad, sweet potato casserole and steamed persimmon pudding). Afterwards we will have the opportunity to stroll through the gardens, visit the vintage shed full of signature gift items, cut flowers from the ranch and vintage roses. Meet at TGIF Parking lot at 9:15 to carpool; we will depart promptly at 9:30. Gardeners may want to explore a nursery on the return trip, otherwise we will be back around 2pm. Reservations and advance payment of \$25 were due by Nov 18.

## GRACIOUS AGING

*Contact: Elibet Marshall (858)459-5246*

This group has an age limit; you must have lived 80 years to participate. We meet at Ellen Revelle's home on the first Monday of the month from 11 a.m. to about 2 p.m. to discuss various associated subjects. Pure spring water is provided. You bring your own apple (lunch). Call Elibet for details.

Next meeting **December 1.**

## HIKING IN AND AROUND SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Contact: Roswitha Enright (858)459-7375

We meet at 8:30 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month (October to May or June) at the La Jolla Village Shopping Center parking lot and carpool to the starting point of the hike. Bring a lunch, plenty of fluids, sturdy shoes and sun protection! Friends and family are invited. Call the week before the hike if you would like to come. Next hike **December 13**

## LA JOLLA RENAISSANCE SINGERS

Contact: Bill Propp at (858-459-2019) or [wpropp@ucsd.edu](mailto:wpropp@ucsd.edu).

The group meets every Wednesday at the La Jolla home of Connie Mullin, a member of the UCSD Oceanids.

The La Jolla Renaissance Singers (formerly the UCSD Madrigal Singers) has existed for 40 years as an Oceanids activity group. Directed by History and Judaic Studies professor William Propp, the choir of about 25 performs throughout the San Diego area in period costume. This winter season, the group is preparing holiday music from the Old and New Worlds in Spanish, Catalan, Latin, Basque and Ladino. Experienced choral singers (especially men!) are encouraged to contact Dr. Propp at [wpropp@ucsd.edu](mailto:wpropp@ucsd.edu) to arrange a visit and/or audition.

## PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE

Contact: Carole Ziegler, (619) 297-0798.

On Monday, **December 8** at 12:45pm we will gather at Todai Japanese Restaurant located at 2828 El Camino Rio South in Mission Valley. It is an all you can eat Japanese restaurant with several rooms of buffet which includes sushi, sashimi, tempura, other hot entrees, salad bar and desert bar. If you wish to join us please call Carole at 619-297-0798(H), 619-594-6443(W) or email [cziegler@sandeigo.edu](mailto:cziegler@sandeigo.edu). Please see People-to-People report and update on page

## MOVEABLE FEAST

Contact: Liz Fong Wills (858) 454-6858.

This dining out group is currently at capacity but we are taking a wait list. For questions, please call Liz.

## MUSEUM GROUP

Contact: Carol Schultz (858) 453 0458 or Sally Kroll (858) 459 1322..

We will occasionally have museum outings where all Oceanids are invited to join. Check the newsletter for information.

In January we will have a bus tour to the Bowers Museum to view an exhibition of Tibetan treasures. See page 4 for more information.

## SOUNDING BOARD

Contact: Barbara Baehr (858) 272-4370

Next Sounding Board after the Board Meeting at about 12 noon on the first Thursday of the month, The talk starts about 12:20.

On December 4: Erika Torri, Exec. Director of The Atheneum will speak about "The Jewel in the Jewel"

## STAMP GROUP

Contact: Betty Shor (858) 453-0334

We do not meet on a regular basis, but welcome other collectors to join our informal exchange. For information call Betty.

## WALKING GROUP (NEW!)

This is a new interest group to encourage fitness by walking with friends in your neighborhood. We have 3 groups formed so far: Del Mar, North La Jolla (UCSD), and South La Jolla (Mt. Soledad/Bird Rock). Please contact Judy Vacquier (858) 459-7834

if you would like to join a group or start one in your neighborhood, or if you would be willing to be a team captain for your neighborhood.

## WEDNESDAY COFFEE

Contact: Emily Stowell, 481-7938 or Mary Bailey, 755-6813.

Please come and join our social group of Oceanids, newcomers, postdocs, students and their children every Wednesday all through the year from 10 a.m. to 12 noon for coffee, juice and cookies at the International Center. This is a time for children and adults to make friends, and find out about strange and wonderful American customs. There is also the opportunity to visit the kitchen exchange, where newcomers can rent kitchen and household equipment, also baby things for a small fee.

For more information, please call Emily Stowell, or Mary Bailey.

## WINE TASTING GROUP

Contact: Pat Kampmann (858) 454-1856

Exploring the taste sensations of a new wine or an old vintage, this group meets the third Friday monthly. Members rotate as hosts, however, this group is currently at capacity. For questions, contact Pat.

## WINE TASTING II

Contact: Barbara Scholz 858-350-6014 or [bscholz@hotmail.com](mailto:bscholz@hotmail.com).

We meet monthly. Members rotate as hosts. The cost for wine and food is shared between the people attending. Contact Barbara for information on the next meeting. 858-350-6014 (home) or 800-358-0700 x475 (work)

## WITS I

Contact: Pat Kampmann, (858)454-1856.

This long-time investment group allows one to learn and earn on one's own. Procedures are followed which analyze all stocks before they are bought. A regular monthly investment is required along with a "buy-in". At present there are a few places open. We meet at the Oceanids Pavilion on the 4th Tuesday of the month all year long from 1:30 to 3:30. Next meeting, Dec 23

## WITS II

Contact: Ruth Reid (619) 226-2538

WITS II meets the 4th Wednesday of the month, all year long, at various members' homes. We study companies, using the stock investment guides of NAIC, educating ourselves to have a better financial understanding and competence. Come visit us for a couple of meetings. No meeting in December.

## Half WITS

[Contact: (Liz Fong Wills (858)454-6858)]

Contact: Eleanor tum Suden (858)587-8865

Due to scheduling conflicts, our financial discussion group will NOT meet during December. If you are interested in joining our informal group to learn about stocks and mutual funds without having to buy into an investment group, please check this space in the January 2004 BF issue for further information.





## A personal and diminutive approach to French diminutives

Some time ago, Oceanids friends Marianne Burkenroad and her husband Charles Fuchsman got me interested in the usage that various languages make of the diminutive. Since French is my native tongue, they prompted me to think of how French specifically approached the problem. As a response I wrote the following, somewhat playfully.

Not too many months after we first came to the USA, we left New York for the state of Maryland; we arrived by train in the small town of Havre de Grace at the mouth of the Susquehanna River on Thanksgiving Day. We were met at the station by a very kind gentleman who proceeded to take us to a motel on the outskirts of town. There, he left us to our own devices, wishing us the best. There was a television in the room, which, not knowing what else to do, we flicked on. We saw reflected for us on its screen, the many dinners that Americans were being sat at on that feast day, with turkeys galore and the jelly of red cranberries. With barely a cent in our hands, we nevertheless managed to acquire some Nescafe and condensed milk which we drank, lukewarm thanks to the water from the bathroom sink, as we watched on the T.V. screen, our future compatriots gorge themselves on extravagant food. It was at once amusing and strangely sad.

A few days later, as we had settled in a rented apartment, the friends who had helped us find it brought us the town newspaper in which our arrival had been dutifully recorded. We could not believe that we deserved such recognition, and yet there we were written about, in print, black on white.

It was at that very moment, as I read on, that I first encountered on American soil the word "diminutive". The article stated that a "diminutive" Frenchman and his "attractive" wife had arrived in the town of Havre de Grace, which, as the bearer of such a distinguished French name was honored to welcome them as their first French citizens. It had never occurred to me that I was "attractive" but I knew that my husband was small. In France he had appeared less so than he had since our arrival in the States where men (and women) towered over us. And even if he was small, I had never thought of him as "diminutive"; I immediately tried to translate for myself the word into French, but in vain, as in my mind a "diminutive" was only referring to a linguistic device added onto a word, in order to apply to it a nuance of smallness, attenuation or familiarity. The American word "kitchenette" immediately leapt to my mind; it had adopted the most common French diminutive suffix, namely -ette, in order to make, even in America, a kitchen smaller. Thinking further, I recalled how, in the old days, when a man courted a woman, it was said in French that he would "conte fleurette" to her (that is, literally, he would "tell her tales of small flowers", or if you prefer, in correct English, whisper sweet nothings to her.) Some etymologists claim that the English in turn anglicized the saying and made of it the verb: to flirt (in which you hear "fleurette"); the French to respond in kind, quickly readopted the verb, "to flirt", which became in French "flirter" (pronounced "fleurter", as it should be written according to French phonetics), and today in France men and women "flirtent", and no longer, alas, "content fleurette", though the expression was so charming.

Time passed and from Maryland we came to California. La Jolla was a lovely place when we first arrived, and there was no grandiloquence to it. Houses were tasteful and often small, next to the vast Pacific Ocean. I felt at ease and not overwhelmed. Only the cars remained huge, until the dawn of the Carter era, when "small" was suddenly "beautiful". Unfortunately it did not last long. Soon, everything developed into something bigger, grander, and higher. La Jolla became arrogant and showy. Now, when I take my walks, I pass by what I cannot but think of as "les palais romains", the Roman palaces with "front audacieux", of which the poet Joachim du Bellay in 16th century France wrote.

On re-reading of du Bellay's poem I was brought back to 16th century France, and I could not but remember one of the last poems written by Pierre de Ronsard, le Prince des Poètes, before his death, as he addressed his soul, in a flurry of diminutives.

## A Son Ame

Amelette Ronsardelette  
Mignonnette, doucelette,  
Très chère hôtesse de mon corps,  
Tu descends là bas faiblette,  
Pâle, maigrelette, seulette,  
Dans le froid royaume des mors ;  
Toutefois simple, sans remors  
De meutre, poison, et rancune,  
Méprisant faveurs et trésors  
Tant enviés par la commune.  
Passant, j'ai dit ; suis ta fortune,  
Ne trouble pas mon repos : je dors !

Here is a quick attempt at a literal translation: it is almost impossible to do a good job of it because of the many diminutives attributed to words usually never used with them.

Tiny little soul of small insignificant Ronsard  
Very cute, very sweet,  
Very dear host of my body,  
You are going down over there, most weak,  
Pale, very skinny, and most alone  
Into the cold kingdom of the dead;  
Yet, simple, without remorse  
Of murder, poison and rancor,  
Despising favors and treasures  
So envied by the common man.  
Passer-by, I say (to you); follow your fortune,  
Do not trouble my rest: I am sleeping.

The poem's extensive use of the diminutive *-elette-* is evident. To French ears it sounds absolutely childlike and extremely tender, as well as surprisingly unselfconscious from the part of such a renowned and serious poet as Ronsard. Even though the subject is somber, since Ronsard is speaking to his soul anticipating his death, the tone, thanks to the diminutives, remains light and almost playful. It emphasizes the role of diminutives in the French language as tools for obtaining nuances which could not be obtained otherwise.

With the diminutives in mind, one word arrested my attention more than any other: the word: *Mignonnette*. It is worth looking at it in more details:

The radical to which *-elette-* is added is the noun: *mignonne*. *Mignonne* is the feminine of *mignon*; the first degree of diminution would have been *mignonnette*, adding the suffix *-ette-*. *Mignonnette* further diminishes the word *mignonnette*. If you think that *mignon* itself is the diminutive of *minet* and that *minet* is in turn the diminutive of *mine*, which is the popular name of the cat in various Gallo-Roman idioms, you realize that an approximate and correct translation in English of *mignonnette* would have to come down to a quintessential "kitten" or "kitty".

From all that has been said above, one common factor comes to mind. It is, maybe, the inclination for the "less", for the "small", for the "familiar", the "homey", the "sweet", the "young", the "child", that the use of the diminutives implies the most. It is this aspect which attracted me, (mixing all categories and not necessarily in that order), to Ronsard, du Bellay, and also in a certain way to La Jolla when it was a village, to my husband, to the Carter era, all children etc.

It would appear that when we dare to let down our defenses, and come to use the charming diminutives of love, affection, and care, our language is often enriched with an infinity of nuances, otherwise lost in plain straight talk.

Odette Filloux

(Please see next page)

*[Unfortunately we could not publish all of Odette's charming and scholarly essay due to space restraints. Please contact her (453-0749) if you want to read the unabridged version. The editor]*

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### **MORE FALL BRUNCH PHOTOS:**

On the right: (from left) Bea Zweifach, Ilse Warschawski and Rose Bailey



Below: (from left) Eleanor tum Suden, Marge Bradner and Edith Nierenberg



## **UPCOMING TALKS AT SOUNDING BOARD**

December 4: Erika Torri, Exec. Director, The Atheneum, "The Jewel in the Jewel"

February 5: Richard Atkinson, UC President (Ret.) "Prospects for UC"

March 4: Donna Frye, SD City Council, 6th District "City Council Maverick"

April 1: Steve Erie, Political/Urban Scientist "Water and Growth"

May 6: Jim Goldsborough, SD Union-Tribune "Today's Hot Topics"



Also at the Fall Brunch were (from left):  
Glenda Rosenblatt, Carol Schultz, Estelle Shabetai and Margaret Acampora

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## NEWS FROM MEMBERSHIP

### PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBER!!!!

Helen Kinnett grew up in a small town in Texas where several generations of her family have lived. When she finished high school, she moved to Richmond, Virginia where she attended Westhampton College and met her future husband.

When Bill finished medical training they settled in Tidewater Virginia with their two children. Through the years, Helen was involved in all facets of community work, but the ones she enjoyed most through the years were the "Tidewater Juried Art Show" and the city festivals for both Newport News and Williamsburg.

Most of her life she has been involved in the arts; and for some time, dreamed of owning an Art Gallery. Her contacts in Williamsburg gave her that opportunity and she was in business. The next nine years were involved in every facet of art and owning a small business. She sold the gallery in 1993 and moved to Dallas to be with her Mother who was very ill.

Helen and Bill's daughter, Cheryl Peach is with the

Birch Aquarium and the son works with IBM in Atlanta. In 2001 the children decided that she should move either to the east or the west coast. She chose California, and finds the west coast very different from the east coast. She loves the climate, the diversity of the landscape and the people, and she is close to the ocean again!

#### **Please note:**

#### **New e-mail addresses:**

Katherine Wong  
kathywong2003@yahoo.com

#### **New phone number:**

Madeleine Rast  
858-453-8223

#### **New address:**

Madeleine Rast  
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San Diego, CA 92122



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## December 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Gracious Aging <b>1</b>	Day Bridge Devilish Diners Garden Group <b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	↑ <b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	Avi set People to people <b>8</b>	Book Group <b>9</b>	KitX, Wed. Coffee LJRS Café Franc. <b>10</b>	BOARD MEETING Sounding Board <b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	Hiking Evening Bridge <b>13</b>
Cinema Soireé <b>14</b>	Café Espanol <b>15</b>	Day Bridge <b>16</b>	KitX, Wed. Coffee LJRS <b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	Wine Tasting I <b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	WITS I <b>23</b>	KitX, Wed. Coffee LJRS <b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	WITS II <b>31</b>	<b>HAPPY NEW YEAR</b>	<b>2004 !!!</b>	

**Bear Facts**

**Month: December**

**Year: 2003**



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