

Toiling in the Vineyards:  
Ohlone Memories

by

Sheldon "Shelly" Nagel

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## Forward

From 1968 to 2004, Professor/Dean Sheldon "Shelly" Nagel taught history at Ohlone College (including two years as adjunct after his retirement). He also served as a Division Dean during the last third of his tenure and taught in an adjunct capacity after his retirement. In his 36 years of excellence and dedication to community college education, Shelly touched and changed for the better thousands of lives, those of both students and colleagues.

It was a privilege for me to work with Shelly during his last decade at Ohlone. Knowing him was a wonderful learning experience. He was one of the most graceful and graceful people I have ever met.

Therefore it was an honor for me when his wife Elaine asked if I could help publish some memories about Ohlone he had written as he struggled with illness during his last year of life. We agreed that some editing was needed as Shelly would have most assuredly wanted that had he known they were to be made public. I imagined going through it with him and only a few times did he say, "Better leave that out."

Shelly's memoirs stop too soon, as did his life; seemingly midstream. Those who knew Shelly will sense that he is again talking to them, they will hear his voice and smile. For those who did not know him these memories will give a glimpse into the career of a remarkable man.

Jim Wright, 2006

## Introduction

My home is littered with unfinished novels and histories (o.k. two diskettes). The history was the story of Ohlone College and the novel was based on an incident at the selfsame. I'm convinced that every educated person, particularly academics, plans to write at least one great work and that laid end to end unfinished manuscripts would run from Fremont to Newark.

However, I was hit with inspiration and decided to turn the whole project into a memoir about my time at Ohlone. I think there is more leeway as to accuracy in a memoir. You can always blame failing memory and very few people will bother to read it anyway.

One more thing. The amount of space I give or not give to individuals I write about with affection in no way reflects how I feel about them. They are all very dear to me! Above all however, is Elaine - The Magic Lady. You'll have to ask her what that means.

Sheldon Nagel, 2004

## In The Beginning

Ohlone College began in 1965 or '66 or '67 or sometime like that. The reason for the uncertainty on that point is that articles in the Fremont Argus newspaper refer to trustees in office in 1965 and planning to run for reelection in '66. That means that they could have been elected as early as '64. The district's official name is the Fremont-Newark Joint Community College District. A group of local businessmen felt Fremont-Newark should have its own college rather than watch tax dollars flow north to Chabot.

The first district offices were in a converted motel in Newark and the first bond issue to build a college was defeated by the voters. A subsequent election was successful and the search began for a permanent site.

In the meantime, a temporary location was found on Washington Blvd. The Catholic Church leased us the land. It had been put through various uses including a residence school for unmarried, pregnant girls and it converted nicely to the first home of Ohlone College.

Classes began in 1967 with some disgruntled students who preferred to go to the established campus at Chabot but were forced to stay in Fremont because of district lines. In those days you had to stay in your district. Later, someone challenged this saying that as an adult they could go wherever they wanted. This raises an intriguing question-would Ohlone have survived if early students had been given a choice?

Eons ago the earth's crust cooled, the Hayward fault came into being and the surface of the land began to rise. Some of the elevation east of Mission Boulevard became the hills of Mission San Jose. In time the Huddleson family owned a large parcel of this land with apricot trees down to Mission Blvd. and a lovely Victorian house a few hundred yards in. The elder Huddleson wanted the permanent campus to be in Fremont to the frustration of the Newark people who wanted that honor for their locale. Mr. Huddleson then offered the trustees a price per acre that could not be refused. Combine this with the attraction of a hillside site and the debate was over. Now, clearance was needed to show that the area was safe to build upon. The company first hired for the purpose pointed out that this was on the Hayward fault, one of the more unstable earthquake faults in the Western Hemisphere. This company was replaced by one more amenable to the trustees who now went ahead with plans for building a new campus.

### Aside #1

David McLaughlin is a talented artist and one of Ohlone's original faculty members. He had been bringing his students from his painting class up to Huddleson site for painting outings: landscapes, etc. The remnants of an old brick winery existed then and was an appealing subject for art students. The winery has long since been demolished and the bricks used for various walkways on campus. The elder Huddleson approached Dave and asked him how he felt about having the new campus located on the Huddleson estate. Dave's response was enthusiastic and positive and it was shortly after that that the offer was made to the trustees. Dave has always felt that he and his art students played a small part in determining our present campus location.

### Aside #2

Mr. Huddleson's son was more than upset over the sale price to the district. The land after all is of immense value and the younger Huddleson hoped to sub divide and reap millions in future sales. It was not to be.

### Aside #3

The name of the college comes from an Indian tribe that inhabited the area before the arrival of the Europeans. The Ohlones were one of the Costanoan Indian tribes. Mr. Phil Galvan, a local resident and an Ohlone, had custody of the tribal name and he offered it to our Board. They accepted and we have been the Ohlone Renegades ever since. A Native-American student once objected to the negative connotation of "renegade" but the Board ignored this appeal to political correctness.

## Aside #4

I show up in 1968

### Toiling in the Vineyards Part I

My arrival as a permanent resident in California was a result of a series of small incidents culminating in the big decision. First, let me say up front, and I want you to disregard any ministrations to the contrary from the lovely Elaine, that every good thing that has happened to me is the result of her efforts and support.

I earned my B.E. from Chicago Teachers College (now Northeastern Illinois State University). I was an evening student working full time when I married in 1957. My bride observed that this process would take forever and offered to continue working full time while I became a student full time. By 1960 I was employed as an elementary school teacher in the Chicago Public School system. During my 6 1/2 years there I made good friends and generally enjoyed my time. I was later accepted to the graduate school at Northwestern pursuing an MA in history. Teaching full time and going to grad school nights and summers also requires a wife with unique qualities. I know there are some such around but I was lucky to have one of my own. I had my MA in 1964.

My ambitions were minimal. I wanted to be a high school history teacher, a sort of modern day Mr. Chips. If a miracle happened, I might get a spot on the faculty of Wright Junior College. Then a small disappointment popped up. I failed to get a summer school assignment I applied for. As a result, we decided to spend the summer in California with my in-laws.

I worked a couple of days a week at an Oakland scrap yard belonging to Elaine's cousin and we traveled around the bay area and down to southern California visiting old friends. One day looking out from the Sausalito shoreline across to San Francisco and the East Bay I decided that I was ready to move west. Remember, Elaine's family lived here: mother, father, brother, sister-in-law, niece, nephews, aunt and cousins. Yet, she never said a word urging my decision. It was all up to me and I preferred the beauty of the bay over Los Angeles.

But I needed a job. I sat down with the telephone directory and went around the bay area calling boards of education. Oakland Unified offered an interview. Then San Leandro called, a plumb district at the time. Someone left had them in the lurch and they would have taken a chimp at this late date. However, I was available and I signed a contract.

Back in Chicago we began packing up. Then the call. Chabot College had an opening in history. Had I signed a contract? I had-too bad, dream gone. This time Elaine spoke up-yelling more like it: "Ask them about night school!" They were thinking of adding another section and I could interview when I got back. That job I did get.

So, for three years I taught sixth grade in San Leandro during the day and night classes in U.S. History at Chabot. I didn't know it but Ohlone was just over the hill.

### Toiling in the Vineyards Part II

Ohlone College called me for an interview. Carl Karasek was the Dean of Instruction and he informed me that there were two positions available: one was a permanent tenure track type and the other was a one year temporary. He asked if I was interested in the one year job. My son Philip had recently arrived and I had rent to pay. I asked what the chances were that the one year might develop into a permanent one? "We, we do like to hire from within," was the response. I went for advice to Dr. Arthur Larsen, at that time the evening dean at Chabot. He had been the Principal of Bancroft Junior High in San Leandro and was an outstanding administrator.

"Where do you want to be in ten years?" he asked. "I want to be teaching in the community college," I said.

“Well if you take the job and they don’t rehire you, you’ll be an out of work community college teacher. If you don’t take it, they’ll start looking at you as ‘just an elementary school teacher.’ God I hate that!”

Clearly, he had faced the same frustration trying to escape the junior high school. Elaine was of course supportive and I informed Karasek I would accept if offered. It was offered and I accepted.

I shared an office with David Nephew. Dave was fresh out of San Jose State. He taught political science and California History and I taught the U.S. survey. I couldn’t figure out why he had been given the permanent position and I the one year job. That spring I ran into Dr. Epler in the quad and he called me over. “I think we’ll have enough growth next year to keep both you and Mr. Nephew,” he said.

After profuse thanks I ran in to tell Dave. It was then I found out that he had been told the same story by Karasek. Clever, huh? They kept all the options. They could keep both, one or none at the end of the school year as it suited their plans. I hung around for 32 years.

### Hail to the Chief Part I

Dr. Epler looked like an Old Testament prophet emerging from the wilderness. He was tall, angular and with a shock of white hair. He acted like a patriarch. He was Ohlone’s President and Ohlone was his college. He came from College of Marin after the faculty there voted no confidence in his leadership. His reputation was for building schools combined with his contacts in Sacramento which could smooth over roadblocks to progress. He valued education and good teaching and he knew who his good teachers were. He was something of a transition figure in education having been a student at Columbia University when John Dewey was there. Our faculty was small during his tenure at Ohlone and at Christmas he sent a letter of season’s greetings to everyone. However, he penned a personal note in the margin and I received one of the finest compliments of my life from him. He wrote: “I count you among our best.” The year I served as Faculty Senate President I used this technique to add a personal comment to greetings I sent to the faculty.

In some things he could be very cautious. Dave McLaughlin wanted to introduce a life drawing class which meant nude models. This is a standard class in an art department but Dr. Epler was concerned over the community reaction. Finally, he allowed it to be placed in the curriculum. One day Dave decided to take the class outside, up the slope of a hill behind the campus. Some of our land is adjacent to land belonging to the water district and a jeep came up the dirt road with the driver suddenly distracted by the sight of a nude woman posing for students. He ran the jeep into a ditch.

He had invented six man football played throughout the country by small schools with low enrollments. He offered classes on Saturday and Sunday for the convenience of all who worked during the week. “If people can go to a ball game on Sunday,” he said, “they ought to be able to go to college.” After his retirement he volunteered as an aide in his daughter’s elementary school classroom. Of course he served his country during World War II, in the navy. The gymnasium is named for him and many years after his retirement, his family threw him a birthday party and Stacy Cole and I were invited.

### Colleagues

I have met many fine teachers at Ohlone and several have become my closest friends. Para inter pares-first among equals has been Stacy Cole. Our backgrounds have almost nothing in common and yet we have developed a special bond. I regard him as an intimate and trust him without reservation. From my perspective, two brothers couldn’t be closer and I love him like one. He comes from Texas, Corpus Christi I believe. His father had been a Baptist minister and a stern parent. Stacy’s various teaching experiences brought him to Washington High School in Fremont and then to Ohlone one year after I arrived.

I can’t remember when our friendship began to blossom but we started going off campus for Friday lunches, leisurely affairs since neither of us had an afternoon class on that day. For three decades we solved the problems of the world and made suggestions for the improvement of the Giants, A’s 49ers and Warriors.

He is one of the finest lecturers I've ever observed. His personal library is more extensive than some public branches. His breadth and depth on just about any topic amazes. He is perceptive and thoughtful. He is also one of the least ambitious men I have ever met, content to teach his classes. However, he served as Faculty Senate President more than once as well as being of various key committees.

No one has had a greater influence on my intellectual growth. Books, pundits, ideas all flowed from him and I was able to absorb some of it. The old cavalier means a lot to me. I'm a Jewish kid from Chicago who enjoyed sharing anecdotal material with his students. No two people who came from such different backgrounds could probably have gravitated to each other. Yet, it happened. Stacy played basketball for Baylor. I'd be lucky not to trip on the curb crossing a street.

### Toiling in the Vineyards Part III

Dean Frazer and Howard DeWitt were the two original hires in history. Howard was leaving to pursue his doctorate at Arizona and a replacement was needed. Someone had been offered the position and turned it down. It was then offered to me and that's how I came to Ohlone. I informed San Leandro that I would not be returning. By the way, I was on track to be the President of the San Leandro Teachers Association and this always led to an administrator's job. Security being important to me I asked the lump of flesh that served as San Leandro Unified's personnel director if I could have a one year leave of absence (just in case Ohlone didn't work out).

"We don't grant leaves for teachers to try out other districts," he said.

So, that was that. You can understand then, that I was a little shook when my principal came up to me on the playground and wanted to know if I was indeed going to Ohlone.

"They're still calling to check on you," he said.

I know now that these were the final loose ends being tied up.

I was now looking at a summer without income and so I called my creditors to ask for leeway. They had no trouble granting me some wiggle room until September. I believe it was that August that a friend called me. I no longer remember who it was. He asked me if I was going to Ohlone. When I said yes, he said it just burned down. Stunned does not describe my reaction. My mother used to tell me that if you wanted to make God laugh, tell him your plans. Turns out that one of the old wooden buildings had caught fire. A sort of bucket brigade got various records out before the building went down. The classroom units were untouched. I still had a job.

The temporary campus was a series of residence buildings. Small rooms in each became faculty offices, medium sized rooms (which had been dorms) became general classrooms and each building had a large lounge area which held larger enrollment classes. There was a stone fireplace in the center of each lounge and student desks were lined up on each side so that when you taught you could only see half your class at a time. Lecture, step left; lecture, step right. Finally, someone had the bright idea of putting the desks at a right angle and teaching from the apex of the angle you could see everyone at once and they could see you.

In those days everyone did everything. Faculty were expected to be on at least two key committees or sponsor two student activities or some combination of both. Class registration was fun. Faculty members would sit behind long tables and there would be loose leaf binders near us. Each binder was a different department: chemistry, math, history, etc. A student would walk up with a class card that showed subject and section number. A peel off label was on the card and the student wrote his or her name on it. We would peel off the label and stick it on the loose leaf sheet inside the binder that corresponded to the subject and section number. you could see if your sections made its minimum enrollment by the accumulation of labels and you had the name of each student. These would be later typed up as your permanent rosters.

We always maintained large numbers of part time instructors and they were our cushion. They received no benefits and were paid \$10 and hour (which I thought was pretty good at the time). If a full timer's class didn't make we could always bump a part timer. Plus, we all taught overloads for the extra money. My first year at Ohlone I continued to teach a night class at Chabot. We were still living in Hayward and Chabot was close. By my second year I cut my ties with the Chabot District.

#### Colleagues

Dean Frazer was an original hire with Howard DeWitt. Between the two they could teach it all: U.S., Cal, Political Science, even Marriage and Family. Dean was as dynamic a lecturer as Stacy and when we had them both on the faculty no department could come near us. Both Dean and Howard interviewed me and I know Howard felt my degree from Northwestern was worth something. Dean asked me what areas and eras I liked to teach and when I told him he said: "So you like to go from the Congress of Vienna to the present." The Congress of Vienna, for the uninitiated ended the Napoleonic era and established more or less the modern map of Europe. However, I drew a complete memory lapse and couldn't think of what it was. So I said yes and nodded and that seemed to satisfy him. My first week there Dean and I shared an office. One morning I was puttering around and for some inexplicable reason I pushed in the lock on the file cabinet which contained my lecture notes. I had to walk into Dean's class and whisper to him my dilemma. He handed me the keys with a look that had wonder in it. Wonder that they had made a dreadful mistake in hiring me. Dean was from Petaluma or Santa Rosa and he wanted to get back. When a spot opened up at Santa Rosa J.C. he left us and went there.

#### To Protect and Serve

To really be a teacher you have to go beyond the classroom and find activities that are ego fulfilling and make you feel you're returning something to the profession. Legitimate schools, public and private, are accredited by one of this country's accrediting agencies. For the western states and out into the Pacific it's WASC, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Dr. Epler circulated a memo that WASC was looking for volunteers. I filled out an application but heard nothing for over a year. I called WASC headquarters in Burlingame to find out how I could get my application out of the file drawer. That must have done it. By the end of the year I was assigned to a visiting committee for Los Gatos High School. The odd thing about all this is that I wanted to go to community colleges but wound up doing high schools. I forgot exactly how many I did over the years but they included Mountain View, San Ramon, Burlingame, Escalon and Notre Dame. Each was interesting in its own right and every one could legitimately use more money. The average student from an urban school like Burlingame High would seem to be an outstanding one at a more rural school like Escalon.

Schools to be accredited need to complete a detailed self study following guidelines created by the State of California. The completed document is sent to committee members about a month prior to the site visit with various sections assigned to each member. The committee actually writes its report prior to the visit and the visit is to either confirm or deny what was anticipated. Commendations and recommendations are made on site to the entire school staff and interested parents on the last day of a week long visitation. WASC then receives the committee's report and issues full accreditation (5 years) or partial accreditation of 3,2 or 1 year. A partial requires a revisit to see that recommendations have been implemented. In an extreme case, accreditation can be denied and no other institution will accept the units from an unaccredited school.

My criticism of the whole process is that many of the topics to be addressed are educationese and can be written up with little or no connection to what is happening at the school. The training sessions for the committee members take teachers out of the classroom and are of little use for someone who has been on several committees. A video tape and an 800 number would be more efficient. Real questions which should be of concern to education are not touched upon at all: what about changing technology, shifts in educational philosophy, the value of the liberal arts, the growing diversified population of California, etc.? Clichés substitute for substance. There really is no secret to good schools. You need creative teachers, supportive administrators and involved parents. Good luck!

## Colleagues

Jim Klent is an original hire at Ohlone and I believe the only one to still be teaching there as of this writing (Spring semester 2004). He teaches chemistry (which he loves to do) and combines that with an impish sense of humor. He has served as faculty senate President, department chairperson and member of the Fremont School Board. He has been twice nominated for a prestigious educator in chemistry award and ran summer workshops at U.C. Berkeley for high school chemistry teachers from around the country.

He is a generous friend who will lavish time on you if you have any problems operating (or purchasing) a computer. He is also one of a group of intimates who escape with me to mountain cabins several times a year for a statistical analysis weekend seminar (poker). Like myself, he is from the Chicago area and we have many stories in common as a result.

When the college was ready to move to its permanent site in the foothills he sent out a bogus memo purporting to be official. It set forth a convoluted formula for classroom space that was so bizarre it should have been immediately seen as a hoax. To his delight it took several days before it was found out.

Jim has also been one of the more respected faculty members in the eyes of our several Presidents. I may not have always agreed with his sage advice and observations but they are always well reasoned and worthy of consideration. He's also a good source of opinion of issues of politics and local candidates and I always seek his input prior to elections. The college is giving him a well deserved recognition. The Ohlone Foundation is setting up a scholarship in his name for deserving chemistry students and a chemistry lab is being named in his honor.

Of my many years at Ohlone, one of my fondest periods were the years when my office was next to his.

## Hail to the Chief Part II

Dr. William Richter was Ohlone's second Superintendent-President. He was the principal of San Leandro High School when I was teaching at Halcyon Elementary. I did not know him then. Dr. Epler's wife taught English at San Leandro and she must have brought him to her husband's attention. Bill Richter had to make a career choice. He told me later that he was aiming at becoming a school superintendent of a unified district but now there was an opportunity, no guarantees, in the community college. He came to Ohlone the same time I did. He was first the Evening Dean, then the Dean of Instruction and everyone knew he was being groomed to succeed Dr. Epler.

The Board was not about to rubber stamp anything and this surprised me. They ran a legitimate search and actually offered the job to someone from the Pacific Northwest. That individual turned the job down with the excuse that he had a daughter in high school and didn't want to relocate during such a sensitive period in her growth. The more likely reason as told to me by Neil McCallum was that the candidate and the district couldn't reach agreement on salary. Dr. Richter was then offered the job which of course he took. He was very popular with the faculty and supportive and creative as dean. He was also a game player working one department over another. He was excellent at stroking individual faculty members, myself included. He did pass on one piece of wisdom to me. He said that there were two things that were sure to get the attention of a faculty: parking and offices.

One of the things he concentrated on was collective bargaining. It probably would have come eventually, but I believe the attention he gave it hastened the process. As a result, the faculty had to share its energies and efforts between the newly formed union and the existing faculty senate. Proposition 13 passed while Dr. Richter was President limiting property tax growth on existing, occupied homes. He was Ohlone's shortest serving President and retired to Palm Desert. His wife has recently passed away and Dr. Richter has moved up to the Pacific Northwest where his daughter resides.

## First Crusade

When I first began teaching at the community college a wise legislature in Sacramento had installed a government and institutions requirement for graduation. This meant students had to take classes that exposed them to our nation's history, local government and political institutions, a not unreasonable requirement for future participation in our republic. At Ohlone we required a year of U.S. history or a semester of political science (American government) and a semester of California history for transfer students. Initially, we offered a one semester course in American civilization for two year, terminal students. Other schools had variations on this to meet their G & I requirement. One of the more bizarre is the one U.C. Berkeley has instituted. They will accept high school history as fulfilling their standard. (It is stunning to me how many major colleges and universities in this country have no requirement for U.S. history or equivalent for graduation.)

The argument that students have had this material in high school does not survive the most cursory examination. First, this argument can be made for most general education classes in college. Second, it is not disputed by any experienced college teacher how woefully ignorant most incoming students are with regard to our basic history and institutions.

Then, John Vasconcelles, a leading Democrat in the state legislature changed the requirement to simply a social science one. This opened up the opportunity to stick in any psychology, sociology, geography, etc. class to be used for graduation purposes. Each school could determine for itself what classes qualify thus watering down the original intent of a G & I requirement. For nearly two decades Stacy Cole and I have convinced the majority of our colleagues to support Ohlone's existing standard. It was toward this end that it became a major motivating factor in my becoming an administrator.

#### Colleagues

Tom McMahon was the youngest member of our little group of intimates at the college. He came to Ohlone as student activities advisor, moved on to be a full time counselor and is currently a member of the teaching faculty in the psychology department. Whenever I had a student who needed sage and knowledgeable advice I recommended he or she make an appointment with Mr. McMahon. Tom is one of the most enthusiastic people I have ever met and he energetically tackles whatever task he is about. He is the spark plug of our group. He was one of the three that had a cabin or house removed from the Bay Area and it served as one of our poker retreats for many years. It was usually Tom who would say that it was time for one of our weekends and get everyone together.

Tom has published several books but his two most successful are collections of child rearing tips. He solicited the experiences of parents who would tell him (in person or via internet) some successful technique they used in raising their children. My favorite was the one about putting Cheerios in the toilet bowl to train boys to go to the bathroom on their own. (The little o's are targets to aim for.) He would run the suggestions by a pediatrician to make sure they were safe to use. The first book dealt with young children, the second with teenagers. My only input for the second book would be to advise parents to get a whip and a chair.

Coupled with Tom's enthusiasm is sincerity and one is indeed fortunate to count him as a friend. He is as excellent a teacher as he was a counselor and his classes quickly fill to their capacity. He cares about people and if he offers you support personally or professionally you can take it to the bank.

There was a move to add an ethnic diversity component to our curriculum. Tom headed the committee to accomplish this and achieved the goal without burdening the list of requirements, making sure the courses so designated were academically legitimate and gaining acceptance of the whole idea by the entire faculty. A prodigious achievement.

#### Toiling in the Vineyards Part IV

In a few short years at the college I had served as Faculty Senate President, Chairman of the Salary Negotiating CCommittee, and Department Chair. When Dr. Richter eliminated the Department Chairs I went back to full time teaching. He instituted a reorganization and there was an assistant dean position available.

I applied but the job went to Dr. Hector Cordova who came from San Jose State. It turned out to be a fortunate rejection since I would have had to give up my classroom teaching which was why I went into this business in the first place.

When Dr. Peter Blomerley became Superintendent/President he instituted another organizational change. The faculty was divided into divisions with division chairs (later to be relabeled division deans) responsible for nuts and bolts administrative responsibilities and answerable to assistant deans above them. The most appealing aspect of this was that you still did teaching on a half time basis. Thus, the reasoning ran, you didn't lose touch with the needs or feelings of the faculty and could serve as a more effective bridge between faculty and administration. Once again I applied and this time I was selected. My competition had been Colleen Carr and Jerry Pressler. Colleen headed the Fashion Merchandising program and kept it afloat through hard work and recruiting. She had paid her dues by serving on various committees and heading up projects for the college. Jerry was our resident geographer, geologist and anthropologist. He and his wife Bea were the first people we met socially when we moved to California. He had been Faculty Senate President and created a museum on campus of prehistoric artifacts. Both, I believe, would have done a creditable job as division dean. They both were supportive and loyal members of the division.

Each division had a certain logic as to the disciplines included, except the one for which I was responsible. Whatever didn't seem to fit elsewhere was put into the Division of Social and Natural Sciences. I had history, political science, psychology, geography, geology, anthropology, math, biology and chemistry. There was also fashion merchandizing, nutrition and early childhood studies. I shared a large office with Mildred White who had the language arts and foreign language disciplines. All the division offices used the second level corner rooms that were originally intended to serve as library satellites and were never used for that purpose. Mildred and I were responsible for about 40% of the faculty, full and part time. We also shared one secretary. This was an amazing situation. Yet, we never had a cross word between us and we got along very well. We were both fortunate to first have Joyce Soutar and then Beverley Williams as division secretary. How they kept their sanity is remarkable. In addition to carrying out the needed work for two supervisors they both nurtured me along as I learned how to be an administrator.

Elaine and I were up in Seattle attending a wedding when I received a phone message from our daughter that I had been chosen. My instantaneous reaction was that I had made a big mistake and I was actually depressed about it. It wouldn't become official until the Board approved the President's recommendation and the next Board meeting was about a week and a half away. In the meantime I and three other appointees attended a day long retreat to discuss various topics. There were guest speakers from Diablo Valley College and Butte College espousing the merits of the flex calendar. I spoke out vigorously against this proposal and this caught the attention of Dr. Blomerly. The day of the Board meeting he called me up to assess my attitudes towards loyalty. He stated that the administration had to speak with one voice on issues (he was pushing for the flex calendar). I told him that my definition of loyalty was that while an issue was being discussed and expression of honest opinion was not only necessary but required. However, once a decision had been reached, a team member was obligated to support it. I also stated that I understood that all administrators served at the pleasure of the President and could be replaced at his will. He responded by saying that he hoped it wouldn't come to that.

Whatever his misgivings, I and four colleagues were approved by the board that night. Bill Collins, assistant to the President, told me shortly afterwards that there was some concern upstairs that I would be too supportive of the faculty over the administration. I sincerely believe that I was a loyal member of the administrative team while also representing the interests of the division faculty. As time went on, the deans complained that the administrative work load was becoming burdensome and asked to be relieved of their teaching responsibilities. One thing of which I am most proud is that at the time of my retirement I was the last division dean who still taught.

#### Colleagues

During the three years I taught as an evening instructor at Chabot I attended an orientation meeting at the start of each term. Tom Fryer was the evening dean at the time and went on to be the head man at the

prestigious and well funded Foothill-DeAnza District which served Silicon Valley. At one of the orientation meetings he introduced a gentleman who was to intern that semester at Chabot, assisting with various administrative tasks. The only time I actually saw him was when he was sitting in his office, reading a newspaper and listening to a Giants game on a transistor radio. Later, at Ohlone, I realized that he was Dr. Neil McCallum.

Neil came to Ohlone out of the Cal-Berkeley leadership program. He began as a member of the counseling staff, then became assistant dean and when Dr. Richter became President, Neil became dean of instruction. He had a quick sense of humor which seldom allowed anyone to top him. (I did it only once.) Nothing escaped his notice and he knew the reasons behind everything as well as the reasons behind the reasons. (One of my favorite quotes is attributed to the financier J.P. Morgan who supposedly said: "A man has two reasons for doing anything, a good one and the real one." It's arguable that Morgan's personality actually produced such a witty and perceptive bon mot.) Our friendship began one day on the old campus when we were going off to lunch. The name of an Ohlone instructor came up and I commented that I thought this person was a cliché spouting pain in the ass. He broke into a broad smile, reached over and shook my hand.

Neil was also a member of our poker group and we used his cabin at Lake Tahoe from time to time. When I assumed administrative responsibilities he became my mentor. He told me that I would make mistakes as I went along and that when I had to make a decision try to come down on the side of the faculty.

One thing that surprised me was how active a Rotarian he was. Back slapping and calling total strangers by their first name didn't seem to fit him. Yet, he seemed to thoroughly enjoy the experience and as far as I know, he had perfect attendance at meetings. All top level administrators were expected to join one of the service clubs in the community. I don't know if any relished the experience as much as Neil.

#### Aside#5

The one time I remember besting Neil was when he was hesitant to tell me something. "You can't keep a secret," he said. "Sure I can," I said, "there are plenty of things I don't tell you."

#### Hail to the Chief Part III

Dr. Peter Blomerley became Ohlone's third President/Superintendent serving in that post for 15 years, longer than any of his predecessors or immediate successor. The average for community college Presidents in California is less than 5 years. He came to Ohlone from Broome College in New York although he was familiar with the Bay Area having once attended Stanford. His academic field was math. His parents were English and I don't honestly know if he was born in England or elsewhere. His parents were Methodist missionaries and I do know that he spent time as a boy in Australia going to school via short wave radio. By the time he came to Ohlone his parents were retired and living in American Samoa. He had a sister who was married to a Samoan school administrator. Whenever a school out there was up for accreditation, Peter tried to be on the visiting committee so he could fly out and see the family at WASC's expense.

He represented the college in the community with dignity and was well respected. He had an almost austere personality and seem to distance himself from those around him. During most of his tenure here, the state went through some difficult economic times. He weathered all that, keeping the college going without laying off a single employee. He was a strong President and could be very sharp with you on occasion. He converted the Ohlone Foundation into a real fund raising office where before it had been largely a social group. He had talked about a merit system for administrators but that never took off.

Peter and I became friendly as a result of playing golf together. I got to see a different side of him. Socially, he was warm and friendly. Elaine and I even spent several weekends at his home in Murphys after his retirement and found him to be a warm and gracious host. He and his wife Barbara have since moved to Florida to be closer to his two children who live back east.

#### Second Crusade

Part of the origins of the California community college system was the offering of college classes at night usually held in the local high schools. The system has since grown to over 100 colleges offering lower division and career classes in first class physical facilities on an inexpensive rate schedule. I once interviewed a prospective adjunct instructor in anthropology who had recently returned from Guatemala. He looked over our campus and commented that if it were transported to Guatemala it would be the national university and pointed to with pride.

Because of its origins, the community college calendar was tied to the high school calendar with an equal number of days. Thus, the students were in the classroom longer than their counterparts in the CSU or UC systems. The flex calendar idea was to bring us more into line with the universities by eliminating as much as two weeks of instruction per year, the option remaining with each individual district.

As with so many such ideas, they are discussed in Sacramento at meetings of Presidents. Once accepted, these Presidents return to their schools with the intent of selling them to their faculties and boards. No President wants to be seen as unable to lead and so they push these ideas no matter how absurd. For example, there was a drive to get more ethnic diversity on the faculty. (My prediction at the time was that this issue would resolve itself as the population changed and thus the student and prospective teacher pool would change with it. This has proved to be the case.) Dr. Blomerley suggested we let go of our current adjuncts and replace them with a more ethnically diverse group of instructors. This ran into opposition particularly from Gary Smith, the respected division dean of Fine and Performing Arts. He felt it was disloyal to our part time staff, many of whom had served the college and its students for many years. This one never got off the ground. Just try and replace several hundred part timers all at once with instructors who are competent in their discipline while meeting a diversity criteria at the same time every other college is trying to do the same thing. It would be a logistical nightmare.

The State Education Code still required a calendar of equal length with the secondary schools so the reduced classroom time had to be replaced with professional activities beneficial to the faculty and its growth. The Butte Community College handbook had such stellar offerings as several workshops dealing with stress as well as a walking tour of Butte County. I contacted a colleague at Grossmont College near San Diego. Grossmont had gone flex and he told me the classes and seminars were nonsense and recognized by most of his fellow faculty members as such. (I know of faculty members who don't show up to these required sessions and have their sick leave reduced rather than sit through these make work meetings). I knew at once that when the initial enthusiasm for the idea waned, we would be hard pressed to come up with valuable experiences worth the time. In any case, however laudable an idea might be, it was not equal to the lost classroom time.

Teachers teach, I argued and teachers with minimally a masters degree surely know more about their discipline than even the current calendar allowed for. Community college students generally needed more not less time in class. Many come to us with significant academic deficiencies which needed to be addressed. Additionally, Ohlone has a large and successful program for deaf students. These students needed more, not less classroom time, not because of any lack of intelligence but because general instruction in regular classrooms has to be interpreted to them in American Sign Language. More time is needed to flesh out and absorb the material. Finally, I argued that every industrial country with whom we compete has a longer school year than we. History showed that the rise of every industrial nation was tied to their public education system producing literate workers.

I, with the aid of like minded colleagues, fended off the implementation of the flex calendar for eleven years. Dr. Blomerley even told me how elated he was when the faculty first turned it down. He would not however, make any public statement to that point and actually continued to work for its passage.

I eventually lost the struggle, not over any philosophical argument but because of Christmas. The Christmas break during fall semester ended with two weeks left in the term. Faculty who once argued our original quarter system was too brief now embraced the shortening of the semester. My points that we could start earlier and end before Christmas (which we now do) or that individual faculty members were free to end

their instruction before Christmas and use the remaining two weeks for review or enrichment fell on deaf ears. Flex carried the day and now is likely to be a permanent fixture of our calendar.

### Colleagues

Dr. Alan Kirshner was the first Ph.D. on the Ohlone faculty. More impressive to me is the fact that he was also an Eagle Scout. He was born and raised in New York but came to us from the University of South Florida. He is a motivating teacher creating classes in a History of Masculinity, self paced classes in Western Civilization and courses via the internet. When collective bargaining loomed he was instrumental in organizing the faculty union. (Jim Klent named it the United Faculty of Ohlone or UFO, and the newsletter is called The Missile.)

I have always admired how Alan operates from principle and will take a stand on these over self interest. He came to Ohlone as a single parent, raising his son and even volunteering as a “room mother” at his boy’s elementary school. He has since remarried and has raised two additional sons. He follows the Greek ideal of a sound mind in a sound body, organizing and participating in drug free, body building competitions as well as running a chess school.

He can be argumentative, stubborn and even antagonistic. In other words all that is needed to be an interesting human being.

### My Brush With Scholarship

Jerry Baydo was a history instructor at Grossmont College. We had never met but the department received a form letter from him stating that he was attempting to create a professional organization with a quarterly journal aimed at community college social science instructors. The editorial board of the journal would also be the ruling body of the organization. The letter was asking if anyone would be interested in volunteering for this activity. I was and thus the Community College Social Science Association was born with Sheldon Nagel as a member of the editorial board. I never reviewed anything for the journal but I did submit several articles which were printed. One was co-authored with Ms. Dorthea French who was my student teacher at the time and it dealt with the value of the student teaching experience. Another had to do with the use of folk music in the history curriculum. There might have been a couple of more but I honestly can’t remember them. The organization lasted less than a decade but some interesting experiences are related to it. During our first year it was decided to hold a convention and to have it in the Bay Area. I was asked to chair the host committee which meant getting projectors and screens, etc. for the various presentations. I was able to borrow a few of the items from Ohlone and then I called Dr. James Duke, President of Canada College and former vice-President at Ohlone. (When he left, the office of vice-President was eliminated.) He graciously provided additional equipment. Stacy had a close, personal relationship with Eric Hoffer, “the longshoreman philosopher”. His books included The True Believer and Working and Thinking on the Waterfront. Stacy invited him to be our banquet speaker and he accepted.

I met Baydo when I delivered the equipment and it has been the only time in my life that I nearly burst out laughing at someone’s appearance. He was about 5’8” tall, wearing a slightly baggy tweed suit and round, steel rimmed glasses. The topper was a droopy mustache resembling the one Snoopy’s brother had in the Peanuts comic strip. The whole ensemble caught me and I had to bite my lip to keep my composure. Appearance notwithstanding, Jerry was a down to earth hard working individual and we got along well. Being the Association’s first conference, not all loose ends were neatly tied up. No provision had been made to designate the seating at the head. Hoffer thought this was all intentional and remarked on the democratic nature of the event because there was no V.I.P. treatment of anyone. Stacy introduced him (outstanding in its own right) and then Hoffer enthralled everyone with his comments. Unfortunately, I don’t think anyone thought to record the event. All in all the whole conference went well and the responses were enthusiastic and positive. Over the years meetings were held in Beverly Hills, Louisville, and Chicago. The conference budget at Ohlone was generous in those days. I got myself on the program as a featured luncheon speaker for the Chicago get-together with a presentation on old radio. My air fare was paid for by Ohlone and I stayed with relatives for the long weekend. After a few years the organization faded away as original board

members drifted off and energetic replacements could not be found. There were some interesting offshoot experiences however.

Baydo put together a collection of essays under the title of Mass Culture in America: 1877 to the Present. I was asked to do the one on the rise of the film industry. The dozen or so contributors were expected to adopt the reader for their classes insuring enough sales to cover costs. My first royalty check was for \$60 and I used the money to buy a new golf bag. The next I received \$32 and the last year of publication, \$16. Incidentally, the last question on my book quiz for this reader was:

Without question, the best article in this reader was written by: a) Sheldon Nagel; b) S. Nagel; c) Mr. S. Nagel; d) Professor Nagel

No one got this wrong.

Baydo's father-in-law at the time was the cartoonist for the Flintstones newspaper strip. I asked Jerry at one of the conventions if he could get me any leftover artwork and I was sent two strips approximately 6x12. One day I was spending an afternoon in San Francisco and spotted an art gallery off Union Square. They were promoting Hanna-Barbera cells from animated cartoons. I went in to see what they had. Off in a corner there were a series of pen and ink strips similar to the ones I had. The price was \$1200 each. The following week I took the two I owned and had them framed. Philip received one and Toby the other. A couple of years later the same gallery still had some drawings left and the price had dropped to \$600. Jerry's father-in-law also put together a panel for one of the conventions that included the political cartoonist for the L.A. Examiner, a producer of animated t.v. commercials including the Quick bunny ("Quick is for kids.") and June Foray, the voice of Rocky Squirrel and innumerable other cartoon characters.

#### Colleagues

Dr. Howard DeWitt was plain old Howard DeWitt when first we met. As I previously wrote, Howard was the reason I got to Ohlone. He was off to Arizona for his doctorate and this opened the position I eventually filled. His original ambition was to find a tenure track position at a four year college or university. The job market for history teachers is always tight and when Howard began his quest it got even tighter. He left the academic world to take a job with the Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms trying to collect a \$250 license fee from a Chinatown bar that had only taken in \$50 for the week. When our department expanded, Stacy, Alan and I enthusiastically welcomed him back. He has been teaching California History, American Government and a History of Rock and Roll ever since. (That last class has been a small annoyance to me which has nothing to do with Howard. U.C. accepts his class for transfer but not my History of Radio class. The reason has nothing to do with quality or scholarship. It's because they have a similar class to Howard's in their curriculum but not one like mine. The final upshot to this is that Cal and several other local universities have sent faculty over to get their hands on Howard's materials to update their own courses.)

The college has a 100 watt FM station and a successful program for students who seek a career in front of or behind the mike. It also used to offer classes for credit over the radio. One of the classes offered was Howard's History of Rock and Roll. One day as I was walking across campus I bumped into Professor DeWitt. He was on his way to record the next installment of his class for KOHL (our call letters). He invited me to go along and we sat together in front of the microphone. He was lecturing on the music and life of Richie Valens, a popular performer and one of whom I had never heard. Howard began asking me questions about Valens and would point to his script for the answers which I dutifully read. To this day students approach me with awe as an expert on Richie Valens.

Howard is a bottomless reservoir of anecdotal information and a fascinating lecturer as a result. He also has boundless energy. Perhaps because he is left handed, he can erase the chalkboard with his right hand and write with his left at the same time. He is also a prolific writer and has published text books, monographs and professional articles. He has traveled to Europe and the Philippines to deliver lectures and the topics have included rock and roll as well as Filipino freedom fighters. He has excellent rapport with his students and seems to know everyone in town. He also has some secret pipeline to every piece of news on campus.

He keeps talking about retiring but for Ohlone's sake I hope he puts it off for several more years.

## KOHL

KOHL 89.3 FM or Radio Ohlone began as an idea with the late Roy Hurst, an original hire who taught physics. Roy was an interesting man, politically conservative and with strong moral values. He did not believe in unions for teachers and when the Ohlone union was formed he chose not to belong. However, he did not feel it was not right to get a free ride as the union negotiated salary and benefits for all so he contributed the equivalent of the union dues to the union's scholarship committee. Roy saw the station as an extension of the physics curriculum and was not all that interested in programming. He was concerned however, with the graphic nature of some rock lyrics and worried that students might want to play songs such as the then popular "Muscle of Love".

I had suggested the call letters be KOC, using the initials for Ohlone College. I was dissuaded when it was pointed out that it could be pronounced "cock radio" and quickly went along with KOHL. (For the uninitiated, stations west of the Mississippi begin with K for kilocycle and stations east begin with W for wavelength. One exception is KDKA, Pittsburgh, PA which is the first radio station licensed by the Department of Commerce and began by broadcasting the results of the 1920 presidential election.)

We applied for and received a license and began with a 10 watt station located above the campus in what had been a small guest house which the Huddleson family had built next to the main house. The latter now housed the President's office and support staff. The station eventually increased its power to 100 watts and was relocated in the corner of the second floor of building 2. With the completion of the Smith Center, KOHL moved into a state of the art broadcasting center. Chet Gould was the original station manager and in charge of our broadcasting program. Bob Dochterman currently holds that position. Although the operation of the station is primarily as a vocational program with first class equipment, it also aired classes for credit. This combination, I thought, fulfilled the mission of a college radio station and allowed us to make use of the newest buzz phrase "distance learning". FM is line of sight transmission, so we receive responses from people on the peninsula but do not reach very well to our north, in Hayward.

At one time we offered classes on air in U.S. History, California History, Introduction to Sociology, Marriage and Family, History of Rock and Roll and History of Radio Broadcasting in America. This last one was mine. I had long harbored a strong, nostalgic feeling for old radio. It's what I grew up with. I began collecting old broadcasts on tape and enrolled in a Cal Extension course in the Golden Age of Radio. As a class project for the course I put together a half hour tape-slide presentation of old radio and have been showing it to various service clubs ever since. Then, I decided to put together a full course in a History of Radio Broadcasting in America. It became a requirement for students in our broadcasting program. Other students could sign up in order to meet a humanities elective for graduation. I initially taught the class in the evening. I needed the three hour time span because it took awhile to set up the tape recorder and slide projector I needed and doing it three times a week instead of once made no sense to me. I put the whole class together in my bedroom using a portable reel to reel tape recorder record turntable and cassette recorder to put together the broadcast tapes out of my own collection. I then used my old Yashica SLR camera to shoot slides out of books to illustrate my recorded narration. The last of the old G.I. Bill was still in effect and vets also signed up for the class. They were always looking for classes so they could continue collecting their benefits. Finally, Don Tenney, a faculty colleague who was somehow involved with programming for the station, convinced me to convert the class to a self paced one which could be offered over KOHL. I did just as the G.I. benefits started to dry up and with it my evening enrollment. Of course, some of the more interesting items I had on tape were the old commercials. I wrote to and received permission from the FCC to air these as educational material and I put in a disclaimer at the start of each broadcast that Ohlone doesn't endorse any of these products, especially the cigarettes.

## Colleagues

There are a number of faculty and friends that all taught in one department, math, and I have chosen to include all in one group. Though they share many things in common, including my affection, being

outstanding teachers is at or near the top of the list. One reason I can attest to this is that as Division Dean I was able to observe them in the classroom and read their student evaluations.

Tony DiJulio is now retired. The math faculty is among the largest at the college and Tony used to handle the schedule each semester organizing assignments and rooms. This took a great burden off me when I was Dean. He taught by the Socratic method which takes a great deal of energy. By a series of questions he would lead each student to discover answers and solutions by themselves. It is much easier for a teacher to simply tell the students but self discovery is much more effective. In his many years at Ohlone, Tony was never absent due to illness or the desire to take a personal leave day.

Illene "Sam" Katz is a real sweetheart. Her story was her father had hoped for a boy so she was nicknamed "Sam" and we all call her that. She is warm and friendly to all and everyone reciprocates. She and her husband, Steve, went to China one year and returned with a daughter, Jessie. The little girl is beautiful and bright and one day may realize that she is one of the most fortunate human beings on the planet.

Ron Staszko and I grew closer as a result of golf. He is one of the regulars in our Thursday group and organizes the various weekly competitions as the troop marches off to the first tee. He headed the SOFA at Ohlone for a number of years. This committee handled various social activities for the staff and granted recognition in various ways to deserving employees. Ron is a natural administrator and should be a Division Dean. He also loves teaching and his unwillingness to leave the classroom has kept him from the administrative ranks. We had a good natured discussion once when I said that algebra didn't teach you to do anything except algebra and he felt it helped you to think logically. If that's so, how do you explain all the logical thinkers who never had or were never good in algebra? A grateful student donated money to name a classroom for him and Ron is the first faculty member so honored.

John O'Conner came to Ohlone the same year as I and is now also retired. He took up golf after he left the college and is now a regular in the Thursday afternoon group. As with the others I have mentioned, he is a sterling classroom performer. He is also a good friend and I enjoyed our ongoing conversations between golf shots. Sadly, my game continues in mediocrity while his continues to improve.

Bob Bradshaw continues at the college and maintains the standards exemplified by the old timers. My conversations with Bob centered less on education than on woodworking. He is an excellent craftsman (so is Ron). Collectively and individually this group is an outstanding example of fine teaching, professionalism and friendship and I am fortunate to know them.

#### The Smith Center

Gary Smith and Craig Jackson were original hires. Gary taught music and also played clarinet with the Oakland Symphony. Craig taught drama, had studied and performed at the Pasadena Playhouse and had also studied with Raymond Edward Johnson. For real old timers, Raymond Edward Johnson was the eerie voice of Raymond on the radio program Inner Sanctum.

While at Ohlone Gary completed his doctorate at Stanford in music education. I liked Gary a lot. He was forthright and feisty and he loved opera. He and his wife, Faye, had seasons tickets to the San Francisco Opera and when the production was an old war horse he had seen before he sold us his tickets. Sometimes we'd get to see four or five productions in one season. He became Dean of the Fine and Performing Arts Division and he was able to provide leadership to the art, music, broadcasting and drama faculty. While still a full time faculty member he wanted to include a fine arts requirement for graduation. I worked with him to accomplish this while at the same time not have the new requirement burden students by extending the time needed for graduation. One way we accomplished this was by exempting nursing students whose class requirements were already very heavy.

Gary spearheaded the effort to get the State to fund the construction of a new performing arts center. The effort was successful and the new building with outside amphitheater sits on campus. Although impressive, it is not perfect. The main theater seats about 450 and should have had a capacity of at least 1000. There are

no classrooms which should have absorbed the music and art departments, freeing up needed classroom space on the main campus. Finally, it should have been, in my opinion, located closer to Mission Boulevard on flatter land more easily accessible to the patrons. Despite all this it is a fine facility and totally owned by the college. This contrasts with the theater at Chabot College which is a community facility and thus must be shared since the taxpayers directly support it. Ours is also used by the community (the Fremont Symphony, for example) but we control its use and the drama and music department have first call on its schedule. Gary and Faye have no children and they set up a \$1,000,000 plus trust. Living on the interest the funds will go to the college with their passing to be used to bring quality performers and performances to the center. As a result of the bequest the facility has been named the Gary Soren Smith Center for the Performing Arts and a portrait of Gary and Faye is in the lobby.

Faye was a counselor and later high school principal in Oakland. (That's where the two met.) One of her counselees was Tom Hanks and the two have kept in touch over the years. She asked him if he would attend the dedication of the new theater and he graciously did addressing the audience twice on that evening. Gary and Faye have retired to Healdsburg, Gary's boyhood home. Sadly, his health is poor causing him to be homebound. Faye is active in her church and community.

Craig Jackson was fun to be around and we would often exchange greetings and salutations in whatever accent struck us at the moment, usually Irish. He once told me he was descended from both Andrew and Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson and that in his family "damn Yankee" was one word. His students loved him and he was equally popular with his colleagues. It was a standing joke in the early years that Craig would stand during orientation week and ask for used clothes and furniture for the drama department. He was a smoker and lung cancer caught up to him. The main theater in the Smith Center has been named for him.

#### Hail to the Chief Part IV

With the announced retirement of Dr. Blomerley a new search began for a replacement. Dr. Floyd Hogue was given the brass ring. He was President of Mission College. Let me say at the outset that my relationship with him was always cordial and friendly. My speculations here on his motivations for decisions are just that. They may have credence but they are still unprovable.

The district had decided to expand to a permanent site in Newark. Until then the college operated a Newark campus in space rented from Newark Unified. A large piece of land was available near the Dumbarton Bridge. Despite the many shortcomings of the property including a very limited amount of acreage that could actually be built upon, Dr. Hogue clung tenaciously to the decision to go ahead with the purchase. It seemed that some Newark business interests also wanted the site to be used for a college since its existence there would raise surrounding property values. Finally, a series of articles in the Argus brought enough pressure on the administration that the purchase idea was dropped. The college then purchased land owned by Sun Microsystems and near Newark Memorial High School. The money came from the passage of a bond issue.

One of the more difficult challenges for a President is to raise enrollments without the additional cost of adding new sections and Dr. Hogue had promised the Board he have a budget without the need to tap reserves. The only alternative is to increase class size. Faculty are touchy about this especially if it's done arbitrarily. Instructors whose style is discussion in the classroom feel that forcing in additional students alters the relationship they have with the class. Also, raising class size makes for more work: more papers to grade, tests to grade, etc. On the other hand it's the only way to generate more funds from the state since enrollment is the method by which the state determines how much money you get. Most of our faculty accept students who petition for entry after a class has been closed. On this voluntary basis the enrollment goals are being met. Dr. Hogue wanted a more predictable method in place and so the word went out that enrollment would be based on room capacity. It worked although there were a lot of disgruntled teachers.

#### Colleagues

Larry Weiner taught computer studies at Ohlone. He was one of the sweetest human beings around. I never

heard anyone say anything negative about him nor did I ever hear him say anything negative about anyone else. He was struck down by liver cancer and after his passing a classroom was named in his honor. He should not be forgotten.

### Gotcha I

A Chevron gas station once stood across from Ohlone on land now occupied by the Bank of America. Chevron at that time sponsored the Giants baseball games on the radio and Lon Simmons would do commercials detailing the extraordinary lengths Chevron dealers went to to serve their customers. Then I was driving my 1960 Volkswagen which did not come with a gas gauge. Instead there was a lever near the floor and when you started to chug chug as a sign you were running out of gas, you flipped the lever with your foot and you had another gallon to use. This happened to me one day on the way to class and so I pulled into the Chevron station. All I wanted was a dollar's worth so I could get back to my regular station at the end of the day. Gas was 30 something cents a gallon then. When the young man finished putting in the gas he came to collect. I asked him to please clean my windshield and he said, "Not for a buck." I was taken aback particularly when Lon Simmons' stories of station owners trudging through the snow were fresh in my mind. It was getting late and I had to go to class, so I didn't put up any argument. This was all during the first week of this particular semester and the following day I met my 11:00 o'clock class for the first time. There in the front row was the young station attendant. Our eyes met and there was that moment of instant recognition. God lives, I thought: Gotcha! (He didn't drop the class and as I recall, he passed although I'm not sure it was as high a grade as he deserved.)

### Gotcha II

In addition to the permanent buildings on the old campus there were some portables we put up to round out our facilities. One of these was the fondly remembered room 115, the lecture hall with seats for over 100. I taught a night class in those days in that room. About 100 yards out from the building was the main road into and out of the campus. We had no food service to speak of and so the evening dean arranged for one of those "roach coaches" to drive in around 8:15 so students could get a snack at break time. The only problem was that the driver hit his air horn to announce his arrival. This interrupted my lecture and unnerved me. I asked our evening dean, Frank Nakasako, to tell the guy to drive up quietly and lay off the horn. The next week I saw the truck through the open front door drive up silently. I continued my lesson and about 15 minutes later the driver sticks his head into the lecture hall from the rear door and yells, "Last chance for food!": Gotcha!

### Gotcha III

Some years ago I received a hand written letter postmarked Atlanta. The gist of it stated that if everything the writer had read about me in Newsweek was accurate I must be one fine teacher. I didn't recall ever being interviewed by Newsweek and the whole thing was a puzzlement. About a week later I received another letter, this time postmarked Detroit. This writer also complimented me on the Newsweek article but said I shouldn't have made the comment about Nixon. After all he was the President.

By this time I was in the library going through back issues of Newsweek trying to find some article on education that might have mentioned me although any kind of logical appraisal of the situation would show that no such article existed. Once again I received a letter with an out of state postmark. It was brief and said that commies like me should not be allowed to teach in our schools.

A short time later I was grading set of midterms and a sentence in one student's essay had a very familiar ring. It was the same as one that appeared in the first letter. It turns out that this student had attended a body building competition in Atlanta and he arranged for several of his friends to write and mail the letters after they returned home. It was one of the better practical jokes I experienced: Gotcha!

One day during my tenure as Dean, an adjunct math instructor came to see me. She said that she had just encountered something that had never happened to her before. A student was attending her class pretending to be another student. Apparently, he was better in algebra than his friend and was taking his spot. She found out when he absentmindedly put his own name on a quiz paper. I told her I would take care of it.

You may recall the original t.v. episodes of “Law and Order” with Michael Moriarity as the assistant district attorney. He addressed every heinous felon with the utmost courtesy and I took my cue from that. I went into the algebra classroom and introduced myself to the culprit and told him to follow me out. We went back to my office where he admitted his actions. I had already contacted the teacher where the other student was to tell her I’d come in and remove the student. He was unaware at this point that his friend had tripped up and so when we walked into the office and he saw his buddy sitting there his jaw dropped. I was having a great time. “Mr. So and So,” I said, “You know Mr. So and So?” I got affirmative nods. I handed each one a copy of the student conduct code and pointed out the section on cheating. I then expelled them for the remaining of the semester. It wasn’t much of a punishment since there was only about a week and a half left and I allowed them to return to take their finals but not in algebra.

### Colleagues

Frank Nakasako was an original hire. He was a counselor at one of the local high schools and he came to Ohlone as one of the original members of the counseling staff. Frank was well liked. The year I ran for Faculty Senate President I asked him to run with me as Vice President but he had applied for the position of Assistant Dean for Counseling and was about to become an administrator.

I once asked Frank if he knew anyone who had been interred in camps during the Second World War. He said, “Yeah, me.” I believe he met his wife to be, Amy, there as well. Sadly, Amy has passed away and I occasionally see Frank when I’m out and about. He took an early retirement when the district offered a one time golden handshake bonus for early retirement of administrators. It was intended for one of the deans the President was hoping to get rid of. That worthy did indeed take the offer, but so did Frank.

### Ars Gratia Artis

Krafttile was a Niles company owned and operated by a Mr. Kraft. The company made ceramic tile and sold all over the country. I recall ads in Sunset and other magazines that showed how to put down a tile patio without using cement—a homeowner’s project and it was run by Krafttile. One day Bill Collins, assistant to the President, called me and said he was contacted by Kraft. This was the story. Kraft Foods of Chicago (no relation to Kraft of Niles) had commissioned an artist to do a bar-relief sculpture on a history of dairying theme which would hang in the lobby of their corporate headquarters in Chicago. The sculptor chose a scene from ancient Sumeria showing priests ceremonially milking and churning in the name of one of the gods associated with milk. Before delivering a finished work, a test piece was run at Krafttile complete with a bronze plaque explaining the scene. It was identical in all respects to the finished item which was shipped east. The test piece had long since been gathering dust in a corner of the Krafttile factory and Mr. Kraft was wondering if it was something we might want to keep and display at Ohlone.

Stacy, Alan and I were to go down and see if the sculpture was indeed something we would want. As I think about it now, I wonder why no one from the art department had been contacted. Alan wondered if Mr. Kraft would be insulted if we felt the thing was a piece of junk and we turned it down. It turned out to be a very fine work of art. It was in three sections totaling about six feet long and two feet high. It was held together by a banded steel frame. We sent a truck over to remove it and it was stored in our maintenance building while discussions were held over its permanent location.

I was opposed to putting it in the cafeteria simply because it had a food theme. I wanted either the library or under the overhang of building 1 facing the quad. Hans didn’t think he had a wall in the library of sufficient strength to support the weight. Finally, it was decided to place it on the east wall of room 7202, a large lecture hall where students entering and leaving would pass it and have the opportunity to view. A typo on the work order resulted in its installation on the east wall of 7102, the lower lecture hall and where there is no

exit, so students entering or exiting will not pass by. Later, in order to meet the artificial numbers established by the state for student capacity the lecture halls were subdivided into smaller classrooms and the sculpture was removed back to the maintenance building.

Shirley Peck succeeded Hans Larsen as dean of learning resources and she welcomed the installation of the piece in the library. Simon Barros, head of an overworked maintenance staff has not been able to free the time for the project, Shirley retired and I am no longer there to push for installation. Krafttile is no longer in business. They had put in a bid to manufacture the tile to be used in all the BART stations but the contract went to a firm in Poland. With that the business collapsed.

### The Open Door

No, this isn't about John Hay and the territorial integrity of China. It's about the entrance requirements for the California community colleges. These institutions are open to any adult, any high school graduate or anyone that "can profit from the instruction." No entrance exams are given nor is there any psychological screening. The result is that every once in awhile, a strange duck roams in.

Once, on the old campus while Stacy was teaching in our one and only lecture hall, a young man sitting about half way down and toward the side started vigorously giving Stacy the finger. Ol' Stace couldn't figure this one out. He hadn't disparaged the Catholics, the Republicans or the Golden State Warriors. What he had done was jingle the keys in his pocket as he paced the front of the hall. The young scholar took this as a secret sign that Stacy was insulting him and decided to respond in kind. This really sounds amusing in the retelling but at the time no one knew if we were dealing with a real or paper tiger. A disciplinary meeting was held officiated by Bill Collins. Under the provisions of a nonexistent student conduct code the student was expelled. We found out later that he tried to enroll at Chabot but called attention to himself in the registration line. At that time district boundaries were in effect; he didn't reside in the Chabot district so they booted him also. He disappeared after that although there were reoccurring rumors that he was serving in Congress.

### Colleagues

Bennett Oppenheim is as tough as a Marine. That's because he was one and served in Viet Nam. A man of action and a man of words, he earned his doctorate in sociology after he left the service. In addition to teaching classes in sociology he also taught in the computer studies area. I will always remember him for three things. For many years he undertook the often thankless and draining task of being head negotiator for the UFO. He would go head to head with the district lawyer Joe Zampi over salaries and conditions. Remember, Bennett was doing this part time while Zampi and Associates was at it full time. Contract upon contract Bennett gave as good as he got and produced the best possible terms available for the faculty.

When I retired, I asked Bennett and his office mate Dr. Charles Reed (who was instrumental in my selection as Dean) if I could share their office space since I would be there when they were in class. They graciously welcomed me and allowed me a home base from which to operate, something not all adjunct had.

Bennett, dressed in Elaine's clothes, performed at my retirement party. As he made his entrance from the back of the hall there was a moment I thought it was really Elaine. It was the highlight of the evening.

### Free Speech

When we were still on the old campus there resided in Fremont a chiropractor, Dr. Kaiser. I forgot his first name. He lived in a Victorian home on Fremont Boulevard that had become so dilapidated that it could have been a model of inspiration for an Erskine Caldwell novel. Anyway, Dr. Kaiser's local notoriety lay in the fact that he was an active member of the John Birch Society seeking commies under every bed. I'm sure his own home was safe since I doubt if any self-respecting red would want to enter the hovel.

It was during the Viet Nam war when there were protests and demonstrations on so many campuses that a

teach in was scheduled for Ohlone at the request of the students. Ohlone was an island of calm without sit ins or demonstrations throughout this period. Dr. Epler decided that all views needed representation and so Dr. Kaiser was invited to speak so that reactionary opinion could also be expressed. He presented the predictable tirade of conspiracy to an audience under the palms that gave him a polite hearing. He was followed by Dean Frazer whose opening comment was that Dr. Kaiser's remarks reminded him of the excrement of male bovines; in other words, bullshit. Dean always had a way with words.

Incidentally, the house on Fremont Boulevard was scheduled for demolition after the good doctor moved. Four homes were to be erected on the property but city space regulations prevented that from happening. The house was purchased by a Hayward police officer and he set about restoring it to its original charm.

### Colleagues

Barbara Hendrickson and Margaret "Maggie" Morrison are both old friends. Barbara (I first new her as Barbara Hofacker) taught English and Maggie taught speech. Of greater interest to me however, was the fact that both women grew up in homes that were part of the American labor movement. Barbara grew up in Ohio and her father was an organizer for the United Mine Workers. She said John L. Lewis, head of the UMW and later a founder of the CIO was a visitor to their home. Barbara later went off to Miami of Ohio and was a secretary for Ara Parsegian. She helped him send off applications for the coaching position at Northwestern which he got and later he had a very successful career at Notre Dame.

Maggie grew up in West Virginia and her father was also an organizer for the UMW. At one point he was to address a rally of miners but was told if he showed up he'd be shot. He figured no one would take a shot at a little girl so Maggie was dressed in her Sunday best and memorized a poem he wrote called "A Little Lump of Coal". She went to the rally in her father's place and recited the poem which had stayed with her through all the years.