



Dr. Sydney Wiener Dies



16-year Board Member

Sidney Wiener

Dr. Sydney P. Wiener, a member of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District Board for 16 years, died in April of heart disease. He was 76.

A native of New York City, he earned his dental degree at the University of Louisville, then practiced on Long Island, New York, for 28 years. During World War II he served as a captain in the Army Dental Corps. After retiring, he moved to El Cajon where he became active in community affairs. He became a member of the District Board on January 1, 1974 and served until December, 1990.

As a board member, Dr. Wiener was an early and enthusiastic supporter of the East County Performing Arts Center, confident that ECPAC would be an outstanding asset for both the college district and the City of El Cajon. For whatever reasons, the center never achieved the success Dr. Wiener and other supporters envisioned.

Partly because he was retired and had considerable free time, Dr. Wiener was a campus visitor more often than other board members, attending specific events or visiting departments or classes. He carried what he learned to board meetings where he was always a vigorous participant.

In the early '80s, an article he wrote about students entering college without reading competence was published in a national journal. Subsequently, students entering Grossmont and Cuyamaca Colleges were tested to determine their reading capability and whether they needed remedial courses.

An airplane pilot for many years, Dr. Wiener frequently flew in search-and-rescue operations, and was honored by law enforcement agencies for his participation.

Chancellor Jeanne Atherton noted Dr. Wiener's long association with the GCCCD, "Dr. Wiener was dedicated to the college district, and continued to be actively supportive, even after his retirement from the governing board. The district is grateful for his many years of service."

Dr. Wiener is survived by his wife, Charlotte, two daughters and five grandchildren.

Board Considers Arming District Police Officers

The question of arming GCCCD police probably will be settled sometime this fall. The governing board decided to hold off a decision until the district's Department of Public Safety has undergone training and has been certified by the California Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST).

Officers employed by POST-certified departments are allowed to carry firearms; the decision on whether to do so is then up to the governing board.

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca District has blue-uniformed and gold-uniformed police. The blue-uniformed police are rather recent to the district, having been started about three years ago. They are generally more experienced and have more training than the gold-uniformed officers. The latter generally are involved in such routine tasks as checking parking lots, and are generally students. The blue-uniformed police are charged with more serious and perhaps more complicated duties. If the governing board's decision is in favor of firearms, only blue uniformed officers will carry them.

The annual cost for POST certification will be about \$33,000.

The Lesson of Trinity Site

We heard the explosion shortly before sunrise on July 16, 1945...too early in the day for anyone to be working gas wells. More baffling, there were no drilling rigs close enough that we'd have heard the explosives drillers sometimes use. It remained a mystery for several weeks. On August 6, 1945, we heard the news that two atomic bombs had destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and that an atomic bomb had been tested earlier in New Mexico on that July morning.

My dad was in the Pacific Ocean on the aircraft carrier Shangri La so we were visiting my mother's family in northwestern New Mexico. They lived on a sagebrush and pinon pine-covered mesa seven miles south of the small town of Bloomfield. The explosion we'd heard occurred two-hundred miles southeast of there. Two hundred miles! Ground-zero (Trinity site) is now the north end of White Sands, New Mexico Missile Test Range. Forty years ago, only days after my discharge from the



Dr. Wilkening



Monument at Ground Zero

Marine Corps, I enrolled at New Mexico Tech, a small college less than an hour's drive from Trinity site. The professor who taught me my first physics at that college, Dr. Marvin Wilkening, had worked on the Manhattan Project, the program which produced those first atomic weapons. He had witnessed that first atomic explosion in the New Mexico desert. I decided to look up professor Wilkening when I returned to Socorro this summer to visit Trinity Site on its 50th anniversary.

We met the day before the anniversary at his home atop a hill overlooking New Mexico Tech. The Wilkenings are a charming and congenial couple whose pastimes include bird-watching and golf. Marvin invited me into his study (see photo) where he related a remarkable story. A young graduate student whose specialty was measuring neutron levels, his first contact with the Manhattan Project was working with the legendary Enrico Fermi at the University of Chicago. Consequently he was a member of the scientific team that produced the world's first controlled nuclear chain-reaction on December 2, 1942. (At the same time, his young wife, Ruby, a high-school math teacher, was building Geiger counters). He later worked at Oak Ridge,

Tennessee and then at the giant plutonium-producing reactor site in Hanford, Washington. From there he traveled to Los Alamos early in June, 1945, just six weeks before the plutonium bomb was to be tested in the New Mexico desert.

He described the night before that test as rainy, with episodes of thunder and lightning. There was concern that the test might be canceled. His instrument shelter, a tent and a table, was located ten thousand yards south of ground-zero. Marvin stayed up past midnight testing his instruments, then went to bed, the rain pounding hard outside. He awoke shortly after 3:00 AM, had some coffee and listened to short-wave radio while waiting to see if the weather would clear. Detonation had been set for 5:30 AM. As the countdown approached zero, he faced south. Then the sky lit up, a blinding flash (it was seen in three states). He felt the warmth on his back. He turned and watched the fireball through a face-shield of cardboard and welder's glass. The purplish cloud emanating from the fireball kept rising upward, higher and higher, eventually reaching 26,000 feet. A feeling of relief...the bomb hadn't fizzled. No recriminations, no deep philosophical musings. Marvin focused on his task of collecting data, on estimating what fraction of the bomb material had fissioned. It would be a busy morning.

He returned shortly thereafter to Illinois to complete his doctorate and then came back to New Mexico Tech at Socorro where he taught physics, did research on radon gas and later served as Dean of Graduate Studies. He retired about ten years ago, following a tenure of forty years. His was not only an enviable career; he had participated in and witnessed one of history's major events.

The morning after the interview, I ate a pre-dawn breakfast at an all-night cafe in Socorro and chatted with a Santa Fe couple who had driven down overnight to visit Trinity site. We talked mostly about whether the bomb should have been used against Japan.

There's still enormous controversy about our country's decision to use A-bombs against Japan. That decision was much simpler fifty years ago. It would eliminate the need for a bloody land invasion which would involve unacceptable American (and Japanese) casualties. It would prevent Russia from becoming too involved in the Pacific arena. At that time, using the atomic bomb was seen as a practical way to end the war quickly. It seemed no more horrible than the massive incendiary bombings that were killing thousands of Japanese daily. Veterans of the fighting in Europe wanted to return home, not be shipped to some staging area in the Pacific. In the Pacific, veterans of recent battles at Iwo Jima and Okinawa dreaded the kamikaze attacks and the fight-to-the-death response they knew they'd face from Japanese entrenched on their homelands. Our nation was weary of fighting, rationing, losing loved ones. Fifty years ago, few Americans were upset by the use of those two atomic bombs.

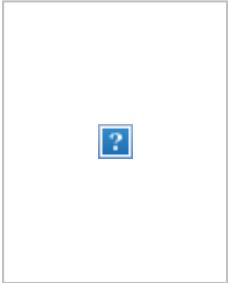
We finished our breakfast and parted, agreeing that in the context of 1945 it was almost inevitable that the bomb, once built, would be used. I thought about that as I drove south to Trinity site. Did that mean future wars would be fought with nuclear bombs?

Among the thousands attending Trinity site's anniversary, there were demonstrators and banners apologizing for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A group reminiscent of the seventies-era hippies danced in a circle around the dark, stone obelisk that marks ground-zero (see photo), singing "Give peace a chance...". They were all too young to have even been born in 1945. I sympathized with their sentiments about war but suspected they hadn't read their history. If they had, they'd know that the people who built those bombs were motivated not by vengeance but by the threat of a madman in Nazi Germany, where a smaller but very capable group of scientists was working toward a similar goal. Japanese scientists also had their own atomic bomb project. The genie had been let out of the bottle in 1939 with the discovery of nuclear fission. I'm glad our side got there first.

Still, no nuclear bombs have been used in fifty years. Nations understand their terrible power. Maybe, just

maybe, that understanding will deter another world war. Perhaps the legacy of Trinity and Hiroshima and Nagasaki and those dedicated Manhattan Project scientists like Marvin Wilkening was to demonstrate that world wars are no longer a reasonable option. Driving north away from Trinity site later that morning, I found myself thinking...hoping...that the weapon first tested there fifty years ago would provide a lesson too powerful to ignore. - *Tom Scanlan*

Editor's Comments



by Pat Higgins

Obsolescence is a peril inherent in publishing or broadcasting news, even in the world of gigantic daily newspapers or television networks, where technological miracles are performed every day.

Sometimes events outstrip the printed page or the television script, and the pages or scripts have to be revised. If it's not possible to make the changes before printing or broadcast time, the readers or viewers may miss new and important developments in a major story—though chances are they won't know they're missing anything.

One of the most publicized cases of events outstripping deadlines occurred in the 1948 Presidential election. The Chicago Tribune, banking on its experts' analysis of early returns, printed and distributed throughout the Chicago area an edition whose front-page banner headline said, "Dewey Defeats Truman."

Subsequent returns showed the gigantic error, and since wishing wouldn't make it so, the newspaper printed a corrected edition, then sent its trucks to pick up all copies still available of the papers with the mistaken headline, and to substitute the revised edition.

I don't know how much money the episode cost the Tribune, but there was much needling of the paper, which modestly called itself *The World's Greatest Newspaper*—and perhaps still does.

That's all to introduce the fact that there may be obsolescence in the Grapevine from time to time. The subject isn't likely to be as important as Presidential returns, but because of the somewhat leisurely way we publish the Grapevine, events may produce new developments between our preparation and our distribution. If that happens, and the developments are important, we'll try to fill you in next time.

The Chicago Tribune election fiasco is now ancient history, of course, but I have a personal recollection which remains with me.

I was attending Northwestern University then, and on election night I was assigned to a couple of polling places in Evanston to get local results and phone them to the campus radio station.

I went to the polling places, waited for results and phoned them to the station. Then, some time after 11 o'clock, I caught a bus back and got off about two blocks from home. Beside the bus stop was a newspaper rack. I glanced at the Tribune's front page with the headline, "Dewey Defeats Truman." Knowing nothing

different, I sorrowed a moment for Truman, but decided I didn't want to read the paper then, and went home to bed.

As I said, the Tribune picked up all the papers with the cursed headline, and by the time I sought a paper next morning, the precious ones were gone.

I've wondered sometimes whether such clear-headed decisions as mine on that election night may be why I've never owned a newspaper or a television station.

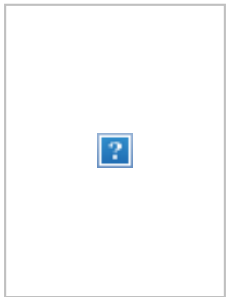
Title to ECPAC May Go to El Cajon

The GCCCD hopes to get rid of a longtime headache by turning over the East County Performing Arts Center (ECPAC) to the City of El Cajon.

The center was built under a joint powers agreement with the city, and the board now wants to transfer all its responsibilities under the agreement to the city. The center was opened in 1977, and in the years since then, the District has spent as much as \$500,000 annually from its general fund for center operations and capital improvements.

Chancellor Jeanne Atherton has been directed by the board to negotiate with El Cajon City Manager Robert Acker the transfer of responsibility for ECPAC, because the district no longer can afford to run it.

Biblio-Files



by Tom Scanlan

One of my favorite modern literary writers is John Gardner. He authored twenty-one books before he died in a motorcycle accident in 1982. These included nine novels, several children's books, nonfiction, poetry and short story collections. My favorite and some critics say his best novel is [Mickelsson's Ghosts](#), his last work, pub. 1982. It's the story of a philosophy professor at a small college recovering from a failed marriage, not coping well, and drinking too much. He tries to escape his problems by moving into a run-down farmhouse he's just purchased in the nearby mountains of western Pennsylvania. He continues to teach, but his life is now further complicated by the unusual acquaintances he makes in this rural community and by growing evidence that his new home is haunted. There's murder, mystery, suspense, romance and dark humor in this complex tale of professor Mickelsson's struggle to pull his life back together. If you enjoy it, try his novels [Nickel Mountain](#), [October Light](#), and [The Sunset Dialogues](#).

Another shorter novel set in the academic world is [Faithful are the Wounds](#) (pub. 1955) by May Sarton, a poet, essayist and novelist whose books I'd rank with Stegner's and Gardner's. This story concerns a small group of liberal professors at Harvard trying to deal with the suicide of one of their dear friends, an English professor who was the embattled liberal activist on campus during the turbulent years of McCarthyism in the

1950's. His suicide provokes questions about their own level of commitment and how they might have acted differently to prevent this tragedy. A later (1970) and longer Sarton novel, [Kinds of Love](#), deals with an elderly Bostonian couple who, after a lifetime of just "summering" in a small New England town, decide to stay on through the winter. During that long winter they cultivate surprising new friendships with the rural locals, ultimately enriching their own lives and their marriage. The setting and characters make this a wonderful read. And if you're a cat lover, you owe it to yourself (and your kitty) to read Sarton's delightful little book, [The Fur Person](#).

Doris Alexander (retired GC English professor) sent in a list of books she'd highly recommend, some of which I've read or managed to read before writing this column. I'll include her comments and/or my own in parentheses. Her list includes: Margaret Yourcenar's [Memoirs of Hadrian](#); three novels by Wallace Stegner; [Angle of Repose](#) (Pulitzer 1972, a generational saga set in the early West, wonderfully told by a fictitious descendant), [Big Rock Candy Mountain](#) (fascinating family saga based on Stegner's childhood and adolescence), and [Crossing to Safety](#) (his best, in my opinion. See *Grapevine* "Biblio-Files" November, 1994); Jung Chang's [Wild Swans](#) (author's account of her grandmother's, her mother's and her own life growing up in a China in turbulent transition from feudal lords to modern communism—the best I've read of this genre); Kuki Gallman's [I Dreamed of Africa](#) (Doris invites responses to this book. I read most of it, would describe it as the autobiography of a remarkable woman who persevered on her African ranch-refuge despite many personal catastrophes, written somewhat amateurishly); Willa Cather's [My Antonia](#) (based on her memories of growing up and her childhood friends on the post-frontier prairie—her best novel, in my opinion, even though [Death Comes for the Archbishop](#) is more widely read); three novels by Anthony Trollope [The Warden](#), [Barchester Towers](#), and [Framley Parsonage](#); Nobel laureate Ivo Andric's [The Bridge on the Drina](#) (Doris describes this as a novelization of nearly five centuries of Serbo-Croatian history and vital to understanding the horror there today. I agree, a very difficult history writ small from the perspective of a bridge-side village); and Cormac McCarthy's [All the Pretty Horses](#) (which Doris describes aptly as 'sad and wonderful'. Yes!—a modern cowboy story set in south Texas and northern Mexico).

Finally, I can think of no reading more appropriate during this 50th Anniversary year of the end of World War II than Doris Goodwin's [No Ordinary Time](#), a Pulitzer prize-winning biography of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt during those war years. Her detailed, narrative account of those historic and formative times will literally transport you back to the late 30's and early 40's. Even the most orthodox Republican will come away from this book with new understanding and appreciation of that remarkable couple.

Remembering the Starts; Small Faculty, Small School

Thanks to Bob Danielson, retired Grossmont College English instructor, we have a bit of historical trivia to offer. Bob came across some documents from the first year of Grossmont's activity, and he has passed us copies.

What was the district designation then? You may be surprised to know—or remember—that it was the Grossmont Junior College District, not Community College District.

Governing board members were Rexford Hall, president; Portia (Peg) Goode, clerk; Robert Brown, Robert Dryden and Palmer Svalstad. College administrators were Lewis Smith, superintendent; Harold Hughes, assistant superintendent; John Hansen, president; John Burdick, dean of student affairs; Charles Collins, dean of instruction and Laurance Coons, dean of admission and guidance.

How many were members of the first faculty? Not many, but enough to outnumber the Grossmont College graduates at the first commencement, June 15, 1962. Associate degrees went to 18 graduates, including the late Frank Vittor, who subsequently became a Grossmont College English instructor.

The first faculty had 30 members. Now the number is nearly 200, according to a quick check of the campus directory. Of course the number of students and graduates has risen a bit over the years. Three members of the first faculty still are active. Trudy Bratten and Tom Hepp are at Grossmont, Bob Holden is at Cuyamaca.

Other first faculty members were Shirley Acheson, Don Anderson, Dorothy Arnold, James Bell, William Carden, Ruth Coover, Bob Danielson, Merle Donohue, Lee Engenhorn and James Erkenbeck.

Also Arthur Fitzner, Martin Gerrish, Alvin Hanson, Marjorie Hyde. Charline Lamons, Daniel Lewis, Chester Palmer, Ray Resler, Ray Reynolds, Donald Roper, Thomas Ruth and Evelyn Schmidt. Others were Morgan Shelley, George Washington, Walter Whitmann, John Wilton and Walter Yuhl.

If anybody has a roster of classified personnel who took care of Grossmont College in its first year, we'd like to see it, and to list those pioneers.

More About Retirees' Life After California

In April we published reports by GCCCD retirees who have moved away from California. This issue's reports come from the Pacific Northwest, Oklahoma and Arizona.

DORIS ALEXANDER, Seattle, Washington: "With all three sets of our children here, we were making our own tracks up I-5. So with a little urging from our children we decided to go with it. The transition has been aided, of course, by the perfectly beautiful city and its ambience and environs. We feel fortunate to be able to spend our waning years here in Seattle. We do not miss San Diego, but I do miss some colleagues."

"Alex swims, plays bridge, reads—even good stuff now. We both have been on a weight-lifting program sponsored by the University of Washington Medical Center."

"As usual, I am up to my neck in books. You remember in Hersey's 'Hiroshima' one woman was killed when bookshelves fell upon her, well, that's ME. I belong to four book groups—well three, except that I do book reviews for a fourth."

"I belong to the Trollope Society here; we read one of Trollope's long novels per month, and along the way learn a lot about Victorian ethics, religion, parliament and of course the gentry. So as you can see I am a walking fount of books. How better to spend one's retirement?"

COURTNEY LINDQUIST, Lake Havasu City, Arizona: "Many, many good memories of Grossmont and I sure enjoy reading about all the retirees in the Grapevine. I'll write you a thumbnail sketch of Lake Havasu City sometime in the future."

WILMA REDDING, Antlers, Oklahoma: "My husband, Dale, and I live in the Kiamichi country area of Pushmataha County. I describe it as 'behind the pine curtain' in Oklahoma. We live three miles near the small town of Antlers on a two and half-acre plot of land. We think we have found a wonderful retirement area for our needs and income."

"When we first moved here in January, 1981, we were actively outdoor people—great fishing and hunting close by. Now our age and Dale's health keep us closer to home. Small town life is so friendly and sweet. Last fall I won 12 ribbons in the county fair—six of them firsts."

"I'm active in our local Daughters of the American Revolution chapter, recording and corresponding secretary for the past two years, and in May will be installed as chaplain. Altar guild duties in St. James Episcopal

Church and attendance involves a very caring group of friends."

"Want you to know that I will be eternally grateful to the wonderful opportunities that living in California affords a person who is willing to pursue a good work ethic."

SUE WARREN, Bellingham, Washington: "We lived in El Cajon for 25 years, raising four children in the Grossmont area. Our daughter was living in Seattle, and on one of our visits we discovered Bellingham. We instinctively knew we could live here."

"Bellingham is a town of approximately 54,000 with 74,000 living in the county. It is located 90 miles north of Seattle and 55 miles south of Vancouver, B.C. It is located on Puget Sound; we can see Bellingham Bay and the Islands from our living room. Some of the amenities I wanted in our new town were a good hospital, good library, shopping mall and an airport in case we were needed by family. Bellingham has all of these, plus Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College, museum, art galleries, a remodeled 1929 theatre, used for activities similar to ECPAC, the Alaskan ferry, and Mt. Baker overlooking the most beautiful scenery in the country."

"Since we moved here in April, '92, we have become interested in learning local history—logging, salmon fishing and canning and dairy farming. We are active in the Friends of the Fairhaven Library, a 90-year-old Carnegie branch. We are still working on our genealogies, a lifetime pursuit. We brought our sailboard up from San Diego and find it a perfect place to sail. Besides working in the garden, we spend a lot of time walking the dog."

"We are still happy with our choice of moving to Bellingham. We welcome any of the Grossmont College family to come visit. Our guest room is always ready."

Finally, we pass along the greetings of an old friend and colleague, **ROBERT (BUD) EMILE** whose presence added luster to the Grossmont College Music Department two decades ago. The University of Nebraska took him from the Grossmont College faculty 20 years ago—Impossible!—but he saw the April issue of the Grapevine through the courtesy of Emilie Duggan-Zouhar and wrote us:

"I have tried to make a yearly trek to Southern California, with a visit to Grossmont, so I have periodically seen many old friends. Nonetheless, if the opportunity arises, please pass along my warmest greetings to all. I have just finished 20 years . . ."

"Two years ago I left the Symphony, so I am now down to one job at the university. Got married in '93—July."

"We have a large comfortable home on Highway 80. The welcome mat is always out for all East-West, West-East travelers. Just call from the edge of town. Regards to all. Bud."

Write It, Draw It, Send It to Cowles Mountain

It's time again for GCCCD authors and artists to share their talent with others of the GCCCD community in the Cowles Mountain Journal.

Again, the publication will be published in the fall, and its staff wants retirees to be among the groups represented. Guidelines for submission are: Maximum of three non-fiction selections; maximum of three fiction stories; maximum of 6 poems and a maximum of six visuals. If anybody submits all the entries above, be sure to let us know, so we can contact the publishers of the Guinness record book.

Written manuscripts should be typed on standard double-space paper, with name, phone numbers and the title of the work on each page. Attach a separate sheet with a brief biographical sketch of up to 50 words. Include, also, a self-addressed envelope.

Those outside the GCCCD area can mail their entries to Judy Barkley, Cowles Mountain Journal, Grossmont College, 8800 Grossmont College Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020.

Deadline for getting entries in is September 13, 1995.

Football Season Starting

At Grossmont, it's football time, and Coach Dave Jordan hopes his 1995 team can equal or exceed last year's 8-2 record, the best in recent years. It's unlikely, however, because he lost most of his experienced players, and the team that starts 1995 against Fresno City College in Fresno will be largely inexperienced.

Jordan looks back with pride on the 1994 season, but not just because of the won-lost record. Fourteen of his players received scholarships at four-year schools across the nation, including the University of Texas, Kansas State, Miami of Ohio, Brigham Young and Southern Illinois.

Whatever the record this year, it's unlikely to rank in Jordan's memory with his 1974 team which went undefeated and won the state title. Grossmont's quarterback that year was Joe Roth, who went on to quarterback UC-Berkeley, then died of cancer at 21.



The imposing entrance to Cuyamaca College's new multi-purpose gymnasium will see plenty of foot traffic after its grand opening August 19. The gym is part of a \$5.5 million indoor-outdoor physical education complex on which construction was halted for about a year because the site was the home of the California gnatcatcher bird. Eventually the district was allowed to designate 47 nearby acres as gnatcatcher habitat, and to continue the P.E. complex construction. The little bird was taken off the endangered species list about the same time.

Retiree Directory Additions/Changes

Leo Bridgeford

Rte. 4 Box 32
Joplin, MO 64805
417-624-1622
Spouse: Ramona

Adele Chandler

17368 Campillo Dr.
San Diego, CA 92128
675-3746

Carolyn Constantine

7014 Gain Dr.
San Diego, CA 92119
697-3861
Spouse: Bob

Margaret Kuhn

2665 Pine Knoll, #5
Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Pete Nares

New # 431-1377

Ernie Ortega

275 Worthington St., #123
Spring Valley, CA 91977

Robert Randels

300 SE La Creole, #279
Dallas, OR 97338
503-623-7961

Marilyn Rummerfield

2857 NW Scenic Dr.
Albany, OR 97321

William Tester

409 S. Grand Ave.
Bozeman, MT 59715
406-587-4166
Spouse: Sandy

Clint Whitfield

1009 N. Arrowhead Dr.
Payson, AZ 85541-3801
602-474-4841
Spouse: Judy

