# **My European Vacation**

by Patrick McKenna



I spent seven weeks in November and December of 2015 traveling in France, Italy and England. My guide and companion was my brilliant and beautiful wife Lee. She had already spent two weeks in Paris before I

arrived, so she acted as my tour guide and concierge. The whole of Paris is an artwork in and of itself. In fact, the culture of France is built around the idea of the importance of aesthetics in everyday life. Food, drink, music, dance, art, these things make life worth living for the French people, especially the Parisians. I saw masterful paintings and sculptures from many ages in the Louvre, the D'Orsay and Picasso museums, the Pompidou Center, several cathedrals, and in numerous small art galleries along the Rue Seine. I saw holiday street decorations that put to shame any I've seen in this country: whole building fronts covered in lights, amazing light displays in numerous plazas, and a breathtaking installation suspended in air beneath the dome of one of the world's first department stores, the Galeries Lafayette.

We left Paris and travelled by train to the village of St Cyprien, located in the Dordogne Valley of France. The late fall is a wonderful time to be here. The many trees in the valley produce a wild array of autumn colors. The Dordogne is one of the oldest continuously populated regions in France. The earliest people settled here over 40 thousand years ago. The area is full of naturally occurring caves carved by water out of the native limestone. For thousands of years these caves served as homes for them, and also as places where they expressed themselves through many

drawings of the animals they both hunted and revered.

There are many ancient castles in this valley as well, some dating back a thousand years. It was a novel experience for me to see a castle up on a cliff every few



miles or so on our drives through the valley with limestone caves at their bases.



**Are you interested in singing,** or sing-along with other seniors. A new social, chorus group has started at the Senior Center, led by guitar-playing song leader Terry Lessardsmith. We usually sing older songs from the 50's, 60' and the 70's. Dona-

tion \$1. We meet at the multi-purpose room Mondays, 2:50 to 3:50pm, right before dinner time. Afterwards, why not just stay over and have a nutritious dinner for only \$4.



Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with us on Thursday, March 17, 4 pm. You will enjoy a traditional Corn Beef dinner, followed by songs and dances, games and prizes. \$5 donation. Sign up at Front Desk. Space limited.

# 

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# THE BOOSTER NEWS

Editors: Zion Lee & Staff email: jandzlee1607@sbcglobal.net

# NEWS FOR AND ABOUT ALBANY SENIORS

**Albany Senior Center** 

846 Masonic Ave

Albany CA 94706

524-9122

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# FOAS President's Message

Our pancake breakfast was a huge success! Approximately eighty customers and a host of volunteers turned out for this annual fundraiser sponsored by FOAS. The Albany Fire Department did a great job of preparing

their famous pancake breakfast. Thank you job! I want to thank all our volunteers for FAST!

Albany Fire Department for doing such a great helping us have a GREAT PANCAKE BREAK-

Elephant Sale to be held on April 30th! It's

Well, our next fundraiser is our Annual White spring so it's time to get on with spring clean-

spring so it's time to get on with spring cleaning. We are currently accepting usable, saleable donations. Please note that we do not take clothing, shoes, old books, electronic equipment, and large furniture.

Thank you.

Just as a reminder: On March 13<sup>th</sup> we lose an hour of sleep! So remember to turn your clocks ahead before you go to bed the Saturday night before. Well, that's all for now folks.

Bill Decker, FOAS PRESIDENT

# From the Desk of Sid Schoenfeld, ASC Supervisor

Did you know that March is known as "March Madness"? The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) created a basketball tournament where 68 men's teams and 32 women's teams compete for a National Championship. On the men's side, UCLA has won an amazing 11 National Championships while the University of Connecticut women's team has won the National Championship an impressive 10 times! Locally it's been awhile since we've had a men's basketball championship. USF leads the pack with 2 championships (1955, 1956), Stanford has 1 (1942), and the most recent, CAL has 1 (1959). For the women, Stanford has won twice (1990, 1992). Who knows, maybe this will be the year for the Bay area? At our Senior Center, we will have our own "Madness" with another busy month of great programs, events & services.

# **Services**

One of the most important topics facing our seniors will be discussed at our "Topics that Matter"

series. On Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup>the topic presented will be "Senior Housing Today". The presentation starts at 10am and will provide valuable information and guidance.

# Programs – Nutrition

Why cook dinner when you can come to our dining room every Monday-Friday at 4pm. Our dinners are a great way to eat a nutritious meal while socializing with friends. You won't want to miss these upcoming special event dinners too... Sundae Tuesday

(March 8), St. Patrick's Day / Birthday Dinner (March 17) and Baseball by the Bay Dinner (March 31).

#### Events

"March Madness"! Come by the Senior Center to watch all the action on our large screen television, March 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>. Games will be on all day!

We really appreciate your participation in all of our Senior Center's programs, events, and services. We hope to see you all during the March "Madness"!

## The Albany Travel Troupe

By Karen Holzmeister

SAN FRANCISCO - Greg Hulse was a winner before the Super Bowl even started. Hulse won a Macy's gift card Feb. 3 when he visited Super Bowl City on Mar-

ket Street and The Embarcadero with other Albany senior travel troupers. And, during a long, late-afternoon stop at Moscone Center, the 19 Albany visitors saw the silver-and-gold Tiffany trophy won Feb. 7 by the Denver Broncos, ornate-and-gaudy diamond rings given

phy won Feb. 7 by the Denver Broncos, ornate-and-gaudy diamond rings given to winning teams of the prior 49 Super Bowls, and many professional football players.

"I am really surprised, but happy," Hulse

said after he beat other football fans in an exercise competition at the Macy's booth on Market Street.
"This event is just great."

In fact, the senior travelers reacted positively to both San Francisco venues, which attracted thousands of

visitors daily in the week preceding the Super Bowl in Santa Clara.

"It was a good experience all the way around," said Bill Decker, who joked that the best part of the day was seeing the 49ers prospector mascot.

Black-and-gold dominated the color scheme at Super Bowl City, where Joan Aiken found herself pictured on a 15-foot-tall video wall as she waved to cameras outside the National Football League (NFL) booth.

Other seniors also oohed and aahed at the glass-enclosed CBS booth, where broadcasters were taping interviews.

NFL vendors hawked souvenir tee-shirts and sweat-shirts. Multi-story buildings were adorned with advertising signs. Utility, automobile, retail and food booths promoted their merchandise and food. A cup of beer ranged from \$8 to \$12; lobster rolls cost \$20 each, and per-glass wines from Sonoma County wineries cost upwards of \$15.

Between the two locations, free-of-charge, visitors could have their pictures taken with the mascot, ride a zip line, obtain autographs from National Football League players, play Super Bowl-themed games, immerse themselves in interactive games, and see the trophy and rings, The only catch: waiting in lines

ranging from 100-to- 400 people.

"The nice thing about all of this is that it is so friendly, family-friendly, someone said," noted Janet

Weitz. 'It's tiring, but wonderful."
Also, extremely secure. Super Bowl
City was fenced in along Market Street
from the Embarcadero to Fremont
Street. Visitors, limited to 18,000 at
any one time, entered through monitors
similar to those at airports. Police and
security officers were prominent and
plentiful, many with K-9 dogs, and
SWAT team members held machine
guns.

'Thank you for all you do," Patricia Clark said to many officers she passed. 'I feel very secure." When the Albany group arrived at Moscone Center, where entry rules were as rigid as Super Bowl City, they were greeted with a field of near-ground level foot-

ball helmet replicas. Pamela Milin was petite and agile enough to slide into a helmet long enough for her picture to be snapped.

"This is the only time this ever will happen," she laughed.

The day was long, with the two sites being visited during six hours. But Milin and her friend Elizabeth Lim planned to leave the Albany tour after visiting Moscone Center, and attend a San Francisco Symphony performance that linked music with football films.

At Moscone Center, in a replica locker room, Clark, Weitz, Jaccqueline Armstrong and Rita Schucker were lucky enough to see New England Patriots' tight end Rob Gronkowski. Fortunately, since about 100 fans were clamoring for selfies, Gronkowski is 6 feet 6 inches tall and stood above the crowd.

Traffic in San Francisco literally was at a standstill in many locations, due to drivers who hadn't taken public transit, along with street closures due to building construction and roadwork. Albany driver Elodia Simentel masterfully wound her way past any and all obstacles to and from the super events.



Super Bowl revelers: Sid, Pamela, Elizabeth & Patricia.

Move over, Kaepernick, for 49's new quarterback Milan

Can We Have More?

By Zion Lee, Photos by Don Davis

In spite of being the shortest in the year, the month of February 2016 can boast having the most occasions for festive and colorful events at the Albany Senior Center. Within this short month, leap year notwithstanding, we have celebrated Valentine's Day, Chinese New Year, the monthly birthday party, the Pancake Breakfast.... and, add to it the Evening at the Oscar Extravaganza at the end of the month. You might think that the Senior Center's staffers have been huffing and puffing —yes, you're right, we are; but we are not wearied, and we will not stop there! Stay tuned, the year has just begun, and there are more new and exciting activities in the pipeline, all to bring you the best service and programs that you come to expect and deserve.

The Valentine's Day party started innocently on a sweet note, with a delightful musical presentation by students from the Crowden Suzuki String School (Isabelle's two daughters among them), as the audience dined on a Jerk Chicken dinner. Then, the party turned "naughty", as it delved into the "secret" lives of ordinary "older" couples, in a contest called the "Not-So-Newly Wed" game. Under intense grilling by game host Sid Schoenfeld, fantasies were revealed, and misconceptions dispelled, all for some good-natured fun. The winning prize went to Team Rich and Anna Mae Morrish, who scored 80/100. And the audience also scored highly, judging from their hearty laughs.



The Crowden Suzuki String group performs



The Game: Floyd Garrett in the hot seat.



A *hearty* Valentine Dinner for the audience

The Year of the Monkey was not one to be treated lightly, and the overflow crowd who came to this Chinese New Year celebration was not disappointed. Although students from the Chinese School could not come to entertain us because of Spring Break, we had the Center's professional staff plus a few volunteers running the Golden Dragon. They handled the Dragon masterfully (after an impromptu 30 seconds' training), gaining the approval of the audience and a nod of the Dragon Head. Thanks to the North Berkeley Senior Center's dancers who performed several Chinese-New-Year-themed dances in exquisitely beautiful costumes. After a catered BBQ chicken dinner, the audience was invited to experience some hands-on fun in playing a specially-designed "Flying Monkey" game. However, the Flying Monkeys proved to be quite elusive and so were the prizes, although some seniors managed to win monkey food, namely, bananas and carrots. Raffle prizes were awarded to a dozen of lucky participants.







The Flying Monkey Game: from left, Hope Solomon, Patricia Wong & Wai-wu Chin (with Zion assisting)



The North Berkeley Dancers: Happy New Year!



Beautiful costumes coupled with elegant moves.



Running of the Dragon: Zion, Bill, Sid, Lorraine, Mary & Nobuko



# **March Birthdays**



Jacqueline Arm-Manaf Shela Pearl Rumi Famerato France March Walter Price strong Kent Ginny Howard Goldberg Martin Julian Fitz Randolph Phyliss Basari Joyce Bellamy Nan Green John Massler Thomas Read Lucy Nancy Rubin Mary McKenna Corrine Brennan Dorothy Green Harold Chung Jane Harada Eileen McKenzie Jacquelyn Rydman Barbara Conheim Lynn Hofmann Michael Miller Mimi Sasaki Claire Davidson Florence Jeone Jay Miyazaki Cheng-Hsin Su Frank T. Dietderich Roslyn Kartychak Miyizaki Marian Sylvester Shirley Domer Kathryne Ann Kinsey Ying Wai Mui Davetta Thibeaux Thelma Dutton Ruth Landshoff Norton Minori Iwasaki Joan Susan Edmistor Diane Love Muriel Ong Nancy Wong Kiyoko Yamada William Eichen Hilda Luty Camille Parker Renee Evitts Madigan Linda Yu Karen Carol Parsons

Congratulations to the above individuals on their March Birthdays. They will be honored at a Dinner Party on Thursday, March 17, 4 pm, when we will also celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a traditional dinner of Corned Beef,, Steamed Red Potatoes, Green Cabbage & Carrots, Fruited Lime Jello and Birthday Cake. St. Patrick and his sidekicks will be on hand to entertain you with songs and dances. Come see the Giant Leprechaun on steroids; play the Lasso for Gold game and win prizes. \$5 Donation. Sign up now at the Front Desk, or call 524-9122.

## FOAS Pancake Breakfast, 2016.

The Annual FOAS fundraiser on February 20th was an epitome of the spirit of cooperation and community involvement. Albany firefighters, doing what they always do best (after fighting fire, that is), took command of the kitchen early and cooked up the best pancake one can imagine this side of the San Francisco Bay. Albany staffers and volunteers, led by the bullish and efficient Sid Schoenfeld, laid out the tables strategically per the game plan. Before all this, there were Judy Cohen ad Maya Mizuhara, who frequented the food source that is Costco, and methodically rolled out the ingredient timely as in a production line. Our table service was greatly reinforced by the presence of "cross-over" personnel Brad Griffin and Rosemarie Chu from the Albany Community Center. Finally, our customers, the most important ingredients, turned out in large numbers, enjoyed the breakfast and had a great time. And that made it all worthwhile!



Volunteers, from left, Jackie, Margie, Bill, Maya, Harry



Albany Firefighters, a.k.a. Pancake Masters



Lorraine Davis (right) and daughter



Volunteers, from left, Brad, Rosemarie, Judith and Matt



The customers and supporters



Quality time with the Danziger family

Walk, Talk and Be Healthy by Pat Tousant, Photos by Aileen Williamson & Pat Tousant

# Ragle Ranch: February 9.

"They say we are never too old to learn something new and this proved true for our 22 hikers who journeyed up to Ragle Ranch Regional Park a few miles west of Sebastopol on the Elodia-bus last Tuesday. Ragle Ranch is a 157 acre park that has a number of sports facilities, a dog park, a veteran's me-

morial, a peace garden as well as hiking trails around its perimeter. We came to hike. The 3.5 mile hiking trail was accomplished by all in summer-like weather with majestic skies and myriads of high wispy clouds blowing up there in the wind. The trail took us over dirt paths, through woodlands, open fields, large dormant blackberry bushes and WETLANDS. The wetlands were fed by a creek that skirted much of the trail. The fun started when we gingerly walked through, in, and around these wetlands helping each other trek on the high spots so we would not be slipping and sliding on the clay

soil nor getting wet feet in the process. When we thought we were out of them there they were again. We all had a good feeling as we walked to the higher land with our wet and muddy shoes, socks and feet. It challenged us, we took the challenge and proudly won and laughed in good spirits at the end. We hosed our feet off and went down to Sebastopol for our lunch. Oh, yes, what 22 hikers learned--none of us can walk on water. Welcome, Jo, what a great initiation!!!

## Mitchell Canyon: February 16

The wheels on the bus did not go round and round on our first February hike because the raindrops were falling as they had been for over a week. Of course, that would make for some water in the creeks and some green hills and pastures



To save a tree, many hands make light work

for our future hikes. We were not disappointed as we headed over Hwy. 4 with its green velvety hills toward Clayton and Mt. Diablo State Park. We entered on its northwest side via Mitchell Canyon Road. After taking care of business we headed toward the

Mitchell Canyon Trail which is primarily a dirt fire road following along Mitchell Creek. Staying on the level near the creek we could see the green hills and mountains in the clearings. Because of the prior rains we had competition from the rapidly flowing creek and sometimes our conversations had to be elevated. We did get our talking in however. Evidence

was seen on the dirt trail that this was a popular equestrian route. We saw one beautiful horse and rider as she ascended a hill perpendicular to our trail into the green verdant hillside. While we were walking in the Canyon we encountered a few other hikers and they were equally as happy as we were to have their senses being filled by the smells and sights and sounds of this

> beautiful canyon. We finished this wonderful experience with our annual Chinese New Year Lunch. (We welcomed to our group of hikers Gerry and the Equinozios, who seemed to enjoy their first hike with us--thanks for your transgression and your assistance respectively.) Gung Hay Fat Choy!!!! Roberts Redwood Park: February 23. A century before Silicon Valley be-

came the tech capital of the universe

there were two tall redwood trees pro-

truding on the skyline looking east across San Francisco Bay. The ships entering the Bay in the 1850's lined up these two trees(16 miles away) and the water area between Alcatraz and Yerba Buena Islands as they approached the Bay so they would miss the submerged

rock formations between them which they called Blossom Rock. Not wanting to damage or destroy their ship they created their own GPS tracking system. Today where the redwood trees were is known as the Roberts Regional Recreation Area--82 acres in Oakland off Skyline Blvd. The two original growth redwood trees have

In times of mud, on a

wing and a praver



Sunshine on our shoulder: Ruth (left) and Ying-Ying

been cut down and there are now 3 separate monuments in the vicinity where they once stood. The area now is second growth redwoods with hiking trails, oak trees, some eucalyptus, canyons, far away views to the west to include the Dumbarton Bridge, near views of the coastal hills, and lots of unleashed dogs (permitted) all along our 3.5 mile hiking trail. Added to this was lots of sunshine, a big blue sky, a little breeze, scenic paths, good conversations, lots of picnic tables, and wonderful relaxing spaces with views equaling another great hike. Life is good!!! Sometimes the current GPS's are not--it had to be simpler with the redwood trees.

# **March 2016 Calendar of Activities**

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1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Monday, March 14, 10am. Topics
	9am Needlecraft \$1 9am Birds of Bay Area 1/11-4/4 \$85/\$90 (No Class March 7) 9:45am World Affairs/Politics \$4/\$5 10:30am Gentle Tai Chi \$3/\$4 ACC 11:15am Fine Art Photography 1/25-3/21 \$185/\$190 11:30am Short Stories 1/4-3/21 \$75/\$80 1:45pm Beg. Line Dancing \$1 2pm Memoirs 1/4-4/18 \$96/\$101 3pm Sing Along \$1	10am World Lit. 3/8-6/7 (\$103/\$108)  10am Bridge for Intermediate Players  1/5-4/26 \$7/\$8  10:30am Hip/Hop Dance (3/1-4/26)  \$8/\$9  12pm Bridge for Beginners \$32/\$37  (3/1-4/19)  12pm Drawing with Pen, Ink, &  Brush \$129/\$134 (2/2-3/22)  1:30pm Movie  4pm Dinner  6:30pm Beginning/Cont. Painting	9	9am Gentle Yoga \$7/\$8 9am Art Social \$1 10:00am Pet Lovers Only 10:15am Zumba for the Mature \$7/\$8 11:30am Mandarin Class \$1 12:00pm Lunchtime with Technology \$1 1:00-3:00pm Mahjong/Games \$1 1:30pm Smart Phone & Tablet Photography 3/3-4/7 \$34/\$39 1:45pm Line Dancing Beginners \$1 4pm Dinner	9am Gentle Yoga \$7/\$8 ACC 10:15am Free to Move \$9/\$10 10:30am Gentle Tai Chi \$3/\$4 ACC 11:00am French Social \$1 12pm Bridge Social \$1 12pm iPad Partners for Beginners \$1 2pm Women's Lives 3/25-5/27 \$75/\$80 4pm Dinner	That Matter. Get expert info and guidance on senior housing. Thursday, March 17, 4:00pm. March Birthday Party and St. Patrick's Day Celebration. Come join us for a traditional Corned Beef dinner with Steamed Red Potatoes, Green Cabbage & Carrots, Fruited Lime Jello and Birthday Cake. St. Patrick and his sidekicks will entertain you with songs and dances, along with a Giant Leprechaun on steroid; play fun games for a pot of gold. \$5 Donation. Sign up now. Wednesday, March 30, 12 pm. Hikers Pot-luck Luncheon. Tuesday hikers and potential hikers are invited to bring a dish to share. Pictures, games and talent show. Brown Bag: Distributes grocery bags of food. \$10/year. Nutritious Dinner: Daily at 4pm. Suggested donatio \$4.  Shopping: The Senior Center Community Shuttle provides door-to-door shopping trips to Albany residents age 60+. Monday trips are open to non-residents (p-u at the Senior Center). Registration and minimal fee required. HICAP: 3rd Friday of the month. Free objective infand counseling about Medicare. Call 839-0393 for free appointment Taxi Ride Subsidy: For Albany residents 80+ & residents w/disabilities 18+. Registration required. Free Rides for qualified seniors. Call 1-510-928-743. (Sponsored by Senior Helpers) Meals on Wheels: Delivered 4 days/wk to homebound seniors. Registration required. Info, Resource Referrals & Form Completion Assistance: Up-to-date info on services and form completion assistance provided by staff. By appoint ment.
	7 11:30am FOAS Board Meeting 12:00pm Podiatry	Drawing Deadline 8:30am Walk: Camp Sawyer Trail, San Mateo 1:30pm Movie: Trumbo	9	9:00am Shopping: El Cerrito Plaza/ Ranch 99 1:00pm AARP Taxes  10 9:00am Shopping: El Cerrito Plaza/Ranch 99 1:00pm AARP Taxes	9:00am Shopping: Safeway/Target 9:30am Brown Bag  11 9:00am Shopping: Safeway/Target	
	Beach Blanket Babylon Info and Guidance	8:30am Walk: Sweeny Ridge, Pacifica 1:30pm Movie: Brooklyn  22 8:30am Walk: Sunset Trail, SF	10am-2pm NO Parking BART-side  23	9:00am Shopping: El Cerrito Plaza 9:00am 5 Creeks Walk: Easy Rocks 1:00pm AARP Taxes 4:00pm St. Patrick's/Birthday Dinner  24 9:00am Shopping: El Cerrito Plaza/Ranch 99 1:00pm AARP Taxes		
	28 9:00am Shopping: Dollar Tree	1:30pm Movie: Concussion	30 10:00am Lunch Troupe: Tulip Garden/Chalet Restaurant 12:00pm Hikers Pot Luck Luncheon	9:00am Shopping: El Cerrito Plaza/Ranch 99 1:00pm AARP Taxes 4:00pm Giants vs. A's Dinner		Just-for-the-fun-of-it-socials!-Needlecraft, movie, art, French, Pet Lover's, Mandarin & Bridge: Fee \$ Drop-in.  Thursday Games (Ping Pong, Mahjong, Wii, etc.) Fee \$1. Drop in.  Tuesday Movies: Showtime at 1:30pm, unless note otherwise. Fee \$1. Drop in.



Registration or appointments are required for most activities and services provided. Unless otherwise noted, call or visit the Senior Center for more information.

Albany Senior Center, 846 Masonic Ave., Albany, CA 94706 Phone: (510) 524-9122 Fax: (510) 524-8940

www.albanyca.org / email: seniorinfo@albanyca.org www.facebook.com/albanyseniorcenter

**Sing-along:** Mondays, 2:50-3:50pm \$1. Drop-in. **Day Trips & Walking Trips**: Registration required.

Bridge: Fridays, 12 noon.