

The Senior Sentinel

Volume No.1 Issue No. 4 July, 2004

Newsletter of the IUPUI Senior Academy

PRESIDENT ROBERTS

On July 1st Ursula Roberts succeeded to the office of President of the Academy from her position as Vice President last year. In assuming her new office, Ursula commented, "I'm delighted to see how wonderfully Senior Academy is developing. Our activities provide stimulating ways to keep in touch with IUPUI and our friends. I hope to keep our focus on the interesting programs, trips, and dinners we have scheduled, including the overnight. There are new experiences without our leaving out such fun events as the Christmas dinner. Also, I'd like to encourage people to participate in our opportunities for service, especially the portfolio review."

THE SERIES CONTINUES

In this issue, Carlyn Johnson shares her latest experience in South America. This is the third in the series sharing such experiences and adventures with Academy members. If you have had such experiences or know of other members who have and are willing to share them, please let us know by calling the Academy office, 278-2444.

FROM HERE TO PANTANAL

Next February, when you are sick and tired of the ice and snow and freezing temperatures, come with me to the Pantanal in South America. The Pana (what?) you ask? Unless you are a "birder" or a geographer or a fan of John Grisham's novels (The Testament is set largely in the Pantanal) you may never have heard of it. But, in fact, the Pantanal is the largest freshwater wetland in the world, covering some 81,000 square miles in western Brazil in the states of Matto Grosso and Matto Grosso do Sul, where Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay come together.

This part of the world has only two seasons – wet and dry. And it's always HOT! But it's a wildlife wonderland! The Pantanal is home to an estimated 656 species of birds, 102 of mammals and 264 of fishes. (And we may have seen every one of them! No, it just seems like that.)

In September 2003 my sister and my daughter and I joined three others and two guides for a spectacular adventure in the Pantanal. We flew to Sao Paulo, then to Cuiaba (pronounced KEE-A-BA, with the accent on the BA) where we boarded a little bus for a trip of 200 or so miles up and down the Pantanal Highway. Calling it a "highway" is a stretch. It's a straight, deeply rutted dirt road, connected every few miles with

collapsing wooden bridges (which would probably have been condemned in this country 25 years ago). The bridges were so bad that on more than one occasion, our bus driver would cross it, let us out to look for wildlife, then go back and manually replace all the loose wooden planks so the next vehicle to come along could manage to cross. Fortunately there is not a lot of traffic on this road.

There are no cities or towns along this “highway” and very little sign of human habitation, just here and there a road with a sign announcing it is a “fazenda” – a huge farm, maybe as large as 1,000 square miles, probably raising cattle. Some of the “fazendas” take in tourists. One night we stayed in one of them, Pousada Alegre, with big pigs and big dogs and some horses wandering around in the yard, but which rewarded us in the morning with trees full of hyacinth macaws – beautiful, long-tailed blue parrots – sounding, as one writer puts it, like a blast from an out-of-tune garage band.

The signature bird in the Pantanal is the Jabirus - a tall stork with white feathers, a black head and a red collar. Jabirus build huge nests high in the trees, so big that smaller birds scratch holes in the bottom and live there. The nests look like multifamily apartment buildings.

Each time we stopped on the highway we could see a huge variety of wildlife. In addition to numerous species of birds there might be caimans or capybaras.

Capybaras look like little furry pigs, but, in fact, they are the world’s largest rodent. Awkward on land, they have webbed feet and can swim effortlessly. (Swimming pigs - a rare sight!)

Caimans, alligator like creatures, abound in the Pantanal. Where there is water, whether a puddle or a lake, there are caimans, one, two or hundreds. There are perhaps 50,000 people inhabiting the Pantanal and 10,000,000 caimans. We stayed one night at a hotel on a river where the hotel employees fished for piranhas and fed them to the numerous caimans hanging around the dock. We did it, too. Fun!

Here we saw rare giant river otters. On a boat trip up the river, we rounded a bend, and there they were, as if on cue, two meter long otters, jumping out of the water, swimming by our boat. What fun!

After several days up and down the Pantanal Highway we drove up to the “highlands” where it would (theoretically) be cooler. It wasn’t. We stayed at a lovely isolated hotel with a stone swimming pool fed by a mountain stream, the result of which was that the swimmers shared the pool with hundreds of tiny fish. A unique experience! Several big, colorful macaws had taken up residence at this hotel amusing, themselves by pecking apart the outside glass light fixtures. One of them stole a pen right out of Sarah’s hand as she sat writing by the pool. It was irretrievable. Scolding macaws is useless.

From the highlands we flew back to Sao Paulo and boarded another little bus for a several hour drive to the Itatiaia -- how do you pronounce an 8 letter word with 6 vowels? I still can’t do it. -- National Park, high in the coastal range of mountains with very different flora and fauna and delightfully cooler. Our accommodations here were in a charming chalet, high on a hill with a lovely view over the valley. But at the end of the dry season here, fire becomes a problem. In the highlands we had hiked through acres and acres of burned scrub and here in Itatiaia we could see what looked like a significant forest fire coming toward us – big enough to cause us some concern. We romantics would like to believe the fires had been caused by some natural event like a lightning strike, but our local, more realistic guides said, with some disgust, it’s an annual problem and blamed careless or malicious humans.

All in all it was an interesting and delightful experience. While I’m not a “birder” -- standing in 100 degree heat, peering through binoculars into a dark woods looking for a Little Brown Bird is not my idea of fun -- I respect those who are. Would I go again? In a heartbeat!

POST SCRIPT: Carlyn will share pictures of her trip on October 21st at 10:00 a.m. in the IUPUI Center at the Glendale Mall.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Sixty members and guests attended the Academy's annual membership meeting this June. The event was hosted by Chancellor Bantz and his wife at their residence. In welcoming members, the Chancellor expressed his appreciation for the Academy and the efforts the organization makes to support the campus.

A special feature of the Annual Meeting is the recognition of the retiring members of the Board of Directors. Those recognized this year with expressions of thanks and small gifts, acknowledging their contributions to the Academy, were Carlyn Johnson, Beverly Ross and Henry Wellman. We are all indebted to them for their service and we thank them again.

COMPARE AND SHARE

September 14, 2004, *Retirement Tragedies and How to Avoid Them.*

David Snyder, Trust officer for Monroe Bank in Bloomington, will present an overview on estate planning with an emphasis on its pitfalls. This includes estate planning, death tax planning, beneficiary designations, income tax deferral and investments. This provides you an opportunity to make sure your estate planning is up to date. David puts on seminars on estate planning and works with the IU faculty on TIAA-CREF and 18-20.

October 19, 2004, *Protecting Your Computer.*

Hackers are becoming more sophisticated into at damaging our computers with viruses, spyware, Trojan horses, and spam and stealing the data on your computer. It is important that we take steps to protect ourselves. This session will review steps that we can take as well as answer computer issues the audience may have.

November 9, 2004, *A Discussion of Different Travel Formats.*

We are fortunate to be able to travel in our retirement and there are many formats from which to choose. This includes, but is not limited to educational tours, cruises, excursions, walking formats, and other specialty formats. We want the best plan to meet our needs for the cost. Senior Academy members have traveled using these formats and are aware of the advantages and disadvantages. This program seeks to identify the best format for you. A panel of Senior Academy members will share their experiences using these formats and then the audience is expected to share their experience.

All Compare and Share sessions are held in the IUPUI Center in the Glendale Mall at 10:00 a.m. Mark your calendars now.

PROJECTS COMMITTEE EVENTS

On February 17, Dr Gene Helveston, Professor Emeritus of the IU Department of Ophthalmology, demonstrated how he and his fellow ophthalmologists in the U.S. are using telemedicine to consult with ophthalmologists in many developing countries. The method is a website in which the patient's symptoms are presented, and then diagnoses and suggested treatments are conveyed via the website. Telemedicine is much less costly than flying an airplane with an ophthalmology clinic to these countries. Gene retired from IU, but not from the practice of ophthalmology.

Carl and Mary Lou Rothe visited Iceland last summer and will present a series of images and answer questions in one of the classrooms at the IUPUI Campus in the Glendale Mall on April 20 at 10:00 a.m.

Iceland – a land of wonder. Iceland is not mostly ice. With the Atlantic Gulf Stream flowing by, this island, just south of the Arctic Circle, has a surprisingly mild climate in summer. With a population of only 280,000 in a country the size of Kentucky, it has one of the highest per capita incomes in the world, but has virtually no

coal, oil or mineral deposits. Interesting!

This country, founded by the Vikings over a thousand years ago, has had a federated government since year 900. Waterfalls, geysers, geothermal flows, glaciers and active volcanoes abound. Reykjavik, with a population of about 100,000, is a dynamic modern city. Come join them to learn the details.

CAMPUS CAMPAIGN

You should have received this year's solicitation for the annual IUPUI Campus Campaign. The Academy is again requesting your support for our scholarships. The profile on LaShawna Weaver, a Senior Academy scholarship awardee, reflects the outstanding quality of the students being supported by Senior Academy scholarships.

The Scholarship Committee's goal is to have sufficient scholarship resources to not only offer awards in dollar amounts that are competitive with those offered by other units and organizations, but also to add to those contributions and pledges enough dollars to endow all our scholarships. Your contributions will support both objectives. The committee thanks you.

CAMPUS TOUR ENJOYED

After a few days of less than perfect weather, Friday, March 19, 2004 turned bright and spring-like just in time for the Senior Academy campus tour. The idea of a tour developed last year following a talk to the SA Board by Vice Chancellor Bob Martin. His presentation on the continuing rapid physical development of the campus was met with such interest and enthusiasm that he offered to organize a tour of the campus sometime in the future.

Reservations for the tour filled the seats on the bus and Bob conducted the tour himself. Stops included a visit to one of the over 700 new campus residential units and the glass sculpture, "DNA Tower" by Dale Chilhuly in the Mills Atrium of the Van Nuys Medical Building. Bob provided an informative and historical narrative as the group passed Medical Science-Phase II, Research Institute II, the new Child Care Center, Inlow Hall (the new Law School Building) and a variety of other projects under construction such, the new Communications Technology and School of Informatics Complex, and the new site for Eskenazi Hall (Herron School of Art).

Bob introduced the concept, new to most of us, of a "north campus" now developing north of 10th Street and across White River. The Biomedical Research and Training Center and Herron's state-of-the-art ceramics teaching facility and several IUPUI office operations that do not require direct contact with students or the public already exist in that area. The group marveled at the new pedestrian walkway that had been Barnhill Drive, and tried to recognize features that at one time were so familiar.

He identified the expected sites of buildings coming in the future such as parking garages, Riley Tower (the next phase of a \$200 million dollar development of Riley Hospital) and a huge new Campus Center.

The tour was a stunning experience for those in attendance and we thank Vice Chancellor Bob Martin for his arrangements and his sparkling presentation.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Social Committee's next event is a trip to the Twinrocker Paper Studio in Brookston, IN on May 5. You will soon be receiving the formal announcement.

The trip includes a tour of the paper studio and a lecture on the history and practice of this ancient craft, the chemistry of paper, artistic techniques, watermarks and examples of finished paper pulp artwork and

homemade, limited edition books. For more information about Twinrocker see their website at www.twinrocker.com. The tour will be followed with lunch at a local restaurant. The cost of the tour is \$10 and reservations are due by April 15.

Document last modified on: [undefined](#)

Comments: [IUPUI - Senior Academy](#)

Copyright ©
2003