Thoughts for our Friday Nov. 6 Board Meeting

I am writing this because, during my last year web project, I spent a lot of time thinking about our association goals and how to reach them. So, I figured that an overview of the “possibilities” (that I and others have expressed) could be interesting to the board as a springboard for new suggestions. To be clear, I’m not suggesting we do all of this, but that if an item “resonates”, perhaps it would inspire someone to act on it.

Implementations (Most of these are already implemented)

Service:
1. Publicize emeriti activities they engage in for public service
   a. Scholarly publications
   b. Mentoring
   c. Promise Scholar support (and mentoring)
   d. Publications (posts, books, talks) that inform the general populace
   e. Leadership or consultation with community groups that benefit society
   f. Spotlights: focused articles on emeriti who have or are currently making noteworthy contributions to the general welfare
   g. Projects, such as the oral history project that has been discussed in the past
2. Community
   a. Promote engagement among all emeriti
   b. Sponsor events that bring emeriti together
   c. Encourage emeriti to suggest events that would interest them and provide feedback on past events.

Some thoughts about how effective our events are in supporting community:
1. Passive events: Examples
   a. Zoom presentations (minimal interaction with others)
   b. In-person lectures (informal socializing)
   c. Pub talks (informal socializing)
   d. Extra time for socializing and munchies support more interaction. Interaction is weakest for Zoom presentations.
2. Events with potentially more active engagement
   a. Short intro talk with munchies and group discussion after.
      i. An example might be a short talk on issues emeriti face when adjusting to retirement, with a group sharing after.
      ii. Adjusting to the loss of a partner, short talk with sharing
      iii. Another example: Making the transition from full UCSB employment benefits to retiree status. Questions and sharing afterward.
      iv. RASC and other benefits transitions issues, questions, sharing as needed.
   b. Events where participants are part of the event. These events might be recurring at some time interval, or one-offs.
      i. Reading or game groups
      ii. Bike to Breakfast
      iii. Cooking classes (there is a local “A to Z Cooking School” that would be perfect)

Challenges:
1. Encouraging retirees to engage with us.
   a. Ellen P’s emails are great. They are engaging, artistic and good reminders of events. The shortcoming of these emails is that, except for a recipient sending a message to Ellen, there is no (or minimal) broader communication among emeriti. Communication is one way.
   b. Accountability: how do we evaluate the success of an event?
i. Attendance count
ii. Attendee feedback that is viewable by the board or community and can help to guide the priorities of the program committee. Ideas for new events are minimally shared. Even the Board of Directors may only get a brief report every (infrequent) board meeting.
iii. A transparent and available way to engage the community in ideas, feedback, and help would strongly support our goal of “Community”.

c. Streamlining the event planning process, especially for ongoing events.
   i. Planning events takes time. Repeating events like reading groups, bike rides, games, etc, can take even more.
   ii. Attracting volunteers for managing the repeating events could help.

2. Finances: Since we are no longer collecting money for dues, we need a strategy for getting donations for ongoing expenses in addition to our “Promise Scholar” program. An engaged community will be needed.