

AFTER-WORDS

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE RETIREES OF THE
FOOTHILL-DE ANZA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT



FODARA
Foothill-De Anza
Retirees Association

VOLUME XLII, ISSUE 4

WWW.DEANZA.EDU/FODARA

MARCH 2021

Upcoming Zoom Events/Parties

The Holiday Zoom Party was so successful FODARA is offering two new Zoom events in April and May:



Spring Social & Earth Day Celebration Thursday April 22, 2021, 10:30-11:30 am

Reconnect and relax with your colleagues while enjoying a favorite morning beverage. Share something you enjoy about retirement, what you look forward to doing this spring, and a favorite Earth Day or recycling tip.

411 Tech Tips for Smart Phones, Tablets, & Computers May, 2021 (TBA)



Is one or more of your tech devices slow to work or difficult to use? Is it time to upgrade to a new device? Would you like help figuring out how much memory, storage, and features you need without spending too much money? If yes to any of these questions, please join us for our FODARA Tech Presentation.

Details and registration information for both events will be sent out via the FODARA listserv in March or April. For any questions, or if interested in planning, hosting, or being the "star" of a Zoom get-together, please contact Linda Conroy (lsiqcon@aol.com) or La Donna Yumori-Kaku (yumorikakuladonna@fhda.edu).



FODARA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-21

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FODARA EVENT CALENDAR 2020-21

Apr	TBD	Wine Tasting		Open to All
May 04	Tues	Board Meeting	via Zoom*	Open to All
June	TBD	Summer Picnic		Open to All

* To join a Zoom Board meeting, email FODARA Secretary Tom Roza for link/password.

FODARA COMMITTEES 2020-21

District Benefits	Tom Strand, strandtom@fhda.edu Faith Milonas, milonasfaith@fhda.edu
After-Words Email	Cindy Castillo, cindycastillo@comcast.net
After-Words Paper Mailing	Janice Carr, janicecarr@pacbell.net
Scholarships	Mike Brandy, brandymike@gmail.com
Social Events	Volunteers needed to help plan/host zoom parties!

HEALTH CARE BENEFITS UPDATE- 3 ITEMS

Following is a summary of the February 25, 2021, Joint Labor Management Benefits Committee (JLMBC) meeting.

1. 2021 Open Enrollment Results Analysis

- Currently there are 1029 employees/non-Medicare retirees. Of these, 905 are enrolled in a District sponsored medical plan, mostly Kaiser HMO (511) and PERS Choice (286). These numbers show no major shifts in plan choice from last year.
- There are 768 pre-97 retirees, including dependents, enrolled in a District sponsored supplemental medical plan: Kaiser HMO (204), PERS Choice PPO (289), PERS Select PPO (117), and UHC Medicare Advantage (54). These numbers also show no major shift from last year.
- There are 384 part-time employees eligible for a District sponsored medical plan. Of these, 102 are enrolled, with the majority in Kaiser HMO (53), PERS Choice PPO (16), and PERS Select PPO (29).
- Fourteen retirees, including dependents, (last year 19) are enrolled in the Bridge program; no medical plan selection was provided.
- Seven retirees, including dependents, (last year also 7) are in the 20-year service category; no break down in medical plan selection was provided.

2. FT Faculty/Retiree enrollment migration cost analysis

Overall the cost of the Medical plans was significantly lower than projected—a cost savings for 2020 of \$616,280—primarily from a drop in the use of dental and vision plans due to COVID 19. The projected Medical Plan costs for 2021 per employee per month (PEPM) is \$1,340.74:

- Medical=\$1,209.40
- Dental=\$118.39
- Vision=\$12.95

After including the cost PEPM for employee/retiree contributions, Post-97 Fund Contributions and Carrier Administrative Fees, the net cost for PEPM is \$1,164.57. The District negotiated funding PEPM is \$1,011.00, leaving a shortfall of \$153.57. This amount will have to be covered by a drawdown to the Rate Stabilization Fund (see item #3).

3. Rate Stabilization Fund (RSF) Reconciliation and 2021 Estimated Drawdown

For 2020, the drawdown to the RSF was \$1,626,027 leaving a balance of \$9,004,183. For 2021, the projected drawdown is \$3,226,281 leaving a balance of \$5,777,901, which includes \$117,468 for stabilization of part-time faculty contributions.

Future JLMBC meetings are tentatively scheduled for late May and June after the preliminary and final numbers for the cost of 2022 medical plans are available.

—*Faith Milonas*

FODARA Benefits Representative
MilonasFaith@fhda.edu

BENEFITS UPDATE: Eligible Pre-97 retirees should have or will soon receive a letter from WEX Health, Inc. indicating it has replaced Discovery Benefits (DB) as the group the District contracts with to manage direct deposits and withdrawals, e.g., reimbursement for Medicare Part B. Because WEX has acquired DB, at this time there are no changes to the ACH forms and no action is required from retirees.

MEDICARE PART B- RETIREE SURVEY UPDATE

For eligible Pre-97 hires, below are deadlines to submit Medicare Part B proof of payment and the Change Request form (if applicable):

- **March 15** — reimbursement for Qtr 1 on April 15
- **March 16-June 30** — reimbursement for Qtrs 1 & 2 on July 15

Due to the Shelter-in-Place Order, the District changed both the form and the process for submitting documentation for Medicare Part B reimbursement and changes to contact information in order to ease the difficulties Benefits staff are experiencing working remotely. On February 15, the District sent an eblast regarding the new form and process to eligible Pre-97 retirees using email addresses on file. If you are eligible for reimbursement but did not receive this eblast, check your junk/spam folders—if it's not found there, the District apparently does not have your current or correct email address so contact mybenefits@fhda.edu. You can also email Cindy Castillo (cindycastillo@comcast.net) to find out what email address, if any, the District does have. Read more on this topic on p. 10.

The revised form, "Retiree Information Change Request," can be downloaded on the HR Retiree webpage (http://hr.fhda.edu/benefits/_retirees.html), filled-in on your computer, then emailed back to MyBenefits. It is to be submitted **ONLY** to report a Life-Qualifying Event and/or new address, phone, or email (more detail on p. 10). The deadline for submitting the form—if applicable—and Medicare Part B proof of payment is **March 15, 2021** in order to receive reimbursement by April 15. Documentation received between **March 16-June 30, 2021** will qualify for combined Q1 & Q2 (January-June) reimbursement on July 15, 2021. There shall be no retroactive reimbursement for later submissions. If you have questions, contact mybenefits@fhda.edu.

Other Items

- **Medical Plan Costs.** While reconciling bank statements, some retirees might notice their monthly CalSTRS/CalPERS pension amount is less in 2021 than in 2020. The explanation is as follows: though retirees' 2021 health plan costs did **NOT** increase, the District's cost for some plans did increase, and the total cost (retiree cost + District cost) is deducted from the monthly pension amount. However, any decrease is offset by the same amount being added to eligible retirees' monthly FHDA medical reimbursement.
- **Retiree Webpage.** The HR Retiree webpage (http://hr.fhda.edu/benefits/_retirees.html) has been updated and reorganized so that important and time-sensitive information is easier to locate. The main page now contains general information for retirees and prospective retirees, such as forms for benefit enrollment and to report personal changes, and details/links on CalPERS and Medicare. At the top are two new sections—one for Pre-'97 and one for Post-'97 hires—and each has a link to a subpage with specific health benefit information for that group.

Put a reminder on your calendar/desktop to check the HR Retiree webpage every year in mid-September for Open Enrollment information and in mid-February for the Change Request form (formerly the Retiree Survey).

Join or Renew
your membership

It's almost spring so a great time to help the FODARA scholarship fund **GROW!** Your 2020-21 voluntary \$10 FODARA dues go directly to FODARA's student scholarships, and these days students definitely appreciate financial assistance.

FODARA Treasurer Ed Burling invites you to mail your dues directly to him: send a check, made out to "FODARA," to his address: 17700 Bruce Ave., Monte Sereno, CA. 95030. Or you can donate to the FODARA scholarship fund online via the FHDA Foundation: <https://secure.donationpay.org/fhda/>; under Designate Your Gift, type in "FODARA scholarship fund."



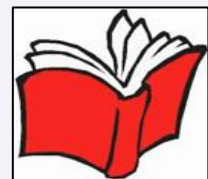
thank
you!

Ed Burling, spreadsheet specialist and numbers guru, has just announced he would like to "retire" after serving 15 years as Treasurer—he started in 2006! The FODARA Board can't *possibly* thank him enough for all of his time and effort in keeping us in the black. Being treasurer entails collecting membership dues, paying a few bills, and preparing a budget report prior to the five yearly Board meetings. He has enjoyed the job but now has other things he'd like to do. If you'd like to join the Board as Treasurer, he will be happy to hand over the books and pass on his expertise and extensive wisdom. To sign up, email him (EdBurling@gmail.com) or Cindy Castillo (CindyCastillo@comcast.net).

BE FEATURED IN AFTER-WORDS!



Submit an update on your life these days and/or a book recommendation to *After-Words* editor Linda Lane (LaneLinda@fhda.edu). Artwork, photos, and projects, are also welcome!



FODARA WANTS TO KNOW!



To keep retirees connected, the FODARA board is asking members to share the "little" things in life they enjoy.

First on the list is your **favorite places to visit** and **best restaurants (take-out food, too!)** wherever you live—any area, any state. Email your recommendations to Linda Conroy (lsiqcon@aol.com) to be featured in future issues of *After-Words*.



Linda Conroy, FODARA At-Large Board Member and retired De Anza Child Development faculty, is the first to share her favorite restaurants.



Are you looking for a good Mexican Restaurant to dine in or get food to go? As a long time South Bay resident who *loves* authentic Mexican food, I highly recommend the four places below. Buen Provecho!



El Caminito: Great ambiance, great catering, and delicious combination plates; great Mexican fare and Menudo on the weekend. I have had them cater many events. Ask for Julian and he will take good care of you.
 • 510 E El Camino Real, Sunnyvale, CA; (408) 739-1191



La Superior Taqueria: Fresh homemade tamales daily, burritos, tacos, etc. Menudo on the weekend and a delicious Mexican bakery.
 • 1098 Leigh Ave, San Jose, CA; (408) 320-1999



Lucy's Mexican Grill: Burritos, tacos, flautas, etc., and Menudo on the weekend.
 • 615 Blossom Hill Rd, San Jose, CA; (408) 227-1430



Tacos Al Pastor: Burritos, tacos, flautas, etc., and Menudo on the weekend; three locations in San Jose.
 • 6469 Almaden Expy, San Jose, CA; (408) 997-3548
 • 400 S Bascom Ave, San Jose, CA; (408) 275-1619
 • 1629 Meridian Ave, San Jose, CA; (408) 265-1198

RETIREE NEWS

How Cheryl Hylton Met the Bidens



After retirement from the FHDA Foundation, Cheryl and her husband, Jeff, endowed a scholarship (see below). At the time, Dick Henning still had the Celebrity Forum going, and Jill Biden was a speaker during the 2017-18 year. From time to time, Foundation donors were invited to come backstage to meet a speaker. Cheryl and Jeff were invited to meet Jill Biden. As it turned out, Joe Biden was also there. There had been rumblings that he was considering running for president. Cheryl expressed her opinion on that decision and they had a very short conversation about it. Robin Latta, from the Foundation, was quick with the camera and snapped the picture. Cheryl remembers both of them as very kind, patient, and friendly with the guests in Flint Center that night. They stayed until the last guest had an opportunity to meet with them.



My Applications
* Opportunities
Donors
* castrodndy@fhda.edu



Cheryl and Jeff Hylton

Cheryl and Jeff have a passion for helping our community. A dedicated fundraiser, Cheryl worked at the Foothill-De Anza Foundation for seven years and helped students achieve their dreams by providing the community's support. Cheryl and Jeff chose to give to De Anza so they can help students who show grit and determination in finishing their education.

Scholarships

- [De Anza Hylton Family Endowment Scholarship](#)

How Mike Brandy, former Vice Chancellor of FHDA Business Services and FODARA's Scholarship Committee volunteer, spends his time

When I retired from FHDA in 2007, I was interested in exploring new ways to give back to the community. I volunteered at Henry Cowell State Park in Santa Cruz for seven years. Since moving to Walnut Creek seven years ago to be close to two of our grandchildren, I have enjoyed many new opportunities. While I did join the bond oversight committee of our local school district, I was really interested in other avenues of service.

I volunteered with the American Cancer Society to drive patients to chemo and radiation appointments for the last six years. Although that activity was put on hold due to Covid, I hope it returns soon. I also volunteer at Mount Diablo State Park. I am a docent at the visitor center and help with other repair projects throughout the park. I am a member



of the Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA.org). We used to hold monthly nature talks at a library. When the pandemic restrictions came into play, we could no longer meet in person, so I volunteered to moderate bi-monthly natural history talks on Zoom. I have met many interesting people. We have presented topics on spiders, tarantulas, geology, astronomy, birds, amphibians, hiking apps, peregrine falcons, wildflowers, and ranching. I work with the presenters on their content and then moderate the presentation, usually one hour long. It has been great fun for me. If any of these topics are of interest to you, the recordings are on our website at MDIA.org under the "Events" tab. I suggested to FODARA that perhaps they could use a similar webinar format to have retirees present topics where they have expertise. I would certainly meet with anyone interested in

moderating such a series to share what we have learned and the model we use for these presentations.

If you have never been to Mount Diablo, you should come sometime. There are 162 miles of trails for all abilities of hikers. Many hardy people come to hike or ride their bike to the summit, while others just drive to the summit to enjoy the amazing views from 3,849 feet!



In Memoriam



*Jessie Brackett Goodmonson
Robert Raymond Hubbs
Marilyn McDonald
Glenn Moffat*



Sadly, FODARA learned that **Robert "Bob" Hubbs**, 85, died January 30, 2021. After he retired from De Anza in 2001, he joined the FODARA Board, and over the years took on several roles: Treasurer 2002-04, Vice President 2004-05, President 2005-06, At-Large 2006-19. During those years, he contributed a wealth of great ideas on how to best engage and inform retirees; he enjoyed attending all of the annual social events, making the rounds to talk and laugh with everyone, always with a big, welcoming smile.

Bob started teaching chemistry at Foothill in 1963, and, after De Anza opened in 1967, transferred to its chemistry department. In the 1980's, he also served as Dean of the Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering Division.

In addition to his educational involvement, Bob was a student of the American Civil War. In 1997, he became a member of an organization called the South Bay Civil War Roundtable, based in San Jose, and remained a member until his death. In later years, he joined the San Francisco and Peninsula Civil War Roundtables. As a member of these three Roundtables, Bob contributed his knowledge of the Civil War acquired through numerous visits to Civil War battlefields and museums. Bob was a docent on Alcatraz Island, which during the American Civil War became the largest American fort west of the Mississippi River; he wore a Union uniform and gave lectures to visitors. In February 2015 and 2016, Bob gave a two-part presentation at the FODARA Valentine Luncheon, titled "The Mysteries of What Lies Under Alcatraz Prison." He was an authority on Ulysses S Grant and Abraham Lincoln regarding their involvements during the Civil War and often gave talks on a wide variety of Civil War topics that included not only the military conflicts and armaments, but also the human interest aspects that affected millions of Americans who were impacted by the Civil War.

Bob was voted President of the South Bay Civil War Roundtable, for which he led the effort to increase membership, revised the By-Laws to bring them up-to-date with the objectives of the organization, and assisted in the redesign of the monthly newsletter. His contributions to these organizations, FODARA, and FHDA will be remembered and always valued. Bob will be greatly missed.



Glenn Penrose Moffat, 92, died January 9, 2021. Early in his childhood, in the Port Angeles area of Washington State, he developed a fascination with plants, birds, and insects of which he had many collections.

After graduating from high school, Glenn spent four years in the Navy during the Korean War, then returned to the Seattle area, where he married Carol Lee Macklin, the love of his life; they were happily married almost sixty-eight years. Glenn had four children, thirteen grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

With the GI Bill, Glenn earned bachelor's degrees in Biology and Education from Western Washington State and later master's degrees in Entomology from University of Utah and in Ornithology from San Jose State University. Glenn had a special love of ecology, birds, and marine biology. He organized many whale watching trips on the Monterey Bay and in Baja. He wrote books about the ecology of the San Francisco and Monterey Bays and field manuals on birds and was involved in the inception of the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Glenn taught biology at Foothill College for twenty-nine years, retiring in 1993. A gifted teacher, he loved to entertain his students and went out of his way to mentor them. In 1975, he founded a successful eco travel company and lead field trips around the world to many places, including Macha Pichu, the Seychelle Islands, Scammon's Lagoon in Baja, and the Olduvai Gorge in Kenya. After retirement, he and Carol traveled extensively for many years worldwide. He was friendly and gregarious and enjoyed seeing new places and meeting new people. He is greatly missed by family and friends.



*If you know of an FHDA retiree who passed away but is not listed on FODARA's In Memoriam webpage (<http://www.deanza.edu/fodara/memoriam.html>), please email Cindy Castillo (cindycastillo@comcast.net). Tributes submitted to Cindy by family, friends, or former colleagues will be published in *After-Words*, and, if available online, short tributes for others who passed will also be included.*



According to the online FHDA District Board minutes, one person retired at the end of Fall Quarter 2020:

➤ *Emanuel DaSilva, DA College Operations*

Apologies if anyone was inadvertently excluded.

We wish all retirees a happy, healthy post-employment life! New and “old” retirees are invited to join and support FODARA by signing up for the listserv (email cindycastillo@comcast.net) and by volunteering to serve on the Board or committee—meetings currently held via Zoom (email pacciorettimike@sbcglobal.net). Keep in touch by sending your \$10 voluntary dues to Treasurer Ed Burling (see above) and by submitting an article or book review for *After-words* (email newsletter editor lanelinda@fhda.edu). Please plan on attending upcoming Zoom events/parties—look for details in the May *After-words*! For more information about FODARA and the many great services it provides to retirees, visit <http://www.deanza.edu/fodara/index.html>.

RESOURCE FOR RETIREES

Senior Planet—Aging with Attitude!

Several FODARA members, including At-Large Board Member LaDonna Yumori-Kaku, have joined and highly recommend this online and brick-n-mortar organization.

Senior Planet is a program created and sponsored by national nonprofit Older Adults Technology Services (OATS), which formally joined the AARP family in 2021. OATS mission is to help seniors harness the power of technology no matter their socioeconomic circumstances, geography, educational background, or age. But it is about much more than just the latest gadgets and apps and websites. Those gadgets and apps and websites are only a means to an end: enabling older adults and people of all ages to come together and find ways to learn, work, create, and thrive in today's digital age.

Senior Planet online (<https://seniorplanet.org/>) provides a variety of resources: online video classes, e.g., Morning Stretch; events and lectures; news articles of interest to seniors; and a newsletter (via subscription).

Senior Planet "on-the ground" are centers located in these five states (more coming soon): New York, Maryland, Colorado, Texas, and California—in Palo Alto! The centers offer weekly technology courses, most free, that help seniors learn computer basics and develop life-enhancing computer skills: digital photography, social media, online job searches, and website creation. Also scheduled are senior-relevant tech lectures, workshops, and social events.

While anyone over 60 is welcome to take classes, attend lectures, and use the centers for free, joining the membership program is highly encouraged. Membership offers access to special programs, quarterly impact reports and annual technology reviews, and the opportunity to support the work of Senior Planet to teach older adults how to use technology in order to improve their lives and help lead a growing social movement to transform how the world views aging.



Have a technology question?
Call the National Senior Planet Hotline: 920-666-1959
 Open from 9am – 5pm EDT, Monday – Friday

If you have a resource to recommend to FODARA members, please email details to *After-Words* Editor, Linda Lane (lanelinda@fhda.edu).

FODARA EMAIL UPDATE

In February, Cindy Castillo, FODARA Webmaster/Listserv Administrator, spent hours pouring over FODARA's and the District's email lists to help ensure retirees are able to receive important and time-sensitive emails from the District. Below is her report.

The good news is that we have over 800 FODARA members with an email in the FODARA database. Yay! Every year we try to contact newly retiring employees to invite them to join us, but we miss many of them as they leave employment and venture out into "retirementland." Whether retirees are PRE-97 (hired before July 1, 1997) or POST-97 (hired after July 1, 1997), all are welcome to join FODARA.

With the monumental changes that affected employees of Foothill-De Anza since the pandemic, they have had to adjust their work, their families, and, in some cases, their way of doing business, working from their kitchens and living rooms. The campuses are almost ghost towns and will remain closed at least through June 30, 2021. So, for eligible PRE-97 retirees, the process of collecting the 2021 Annual Retiree Survey and documentation related to Medicare Part B had to change.

On February 15, 2021, the District Benefits Office sent an eblast to 700 eligible PRE-97 retirees explaining the new process. The former Retiree Survey, now called the Change Request, is to be submitted **only** for a Life-Qualifying Event or new contact information. The deadline for submitting this form, if applicable, and Medicare Part B documentation, is **March 15, 2021**. But because the campus is closed, MyBenefits staff are requesting retirees submit documents via **email**—nothing can be dropped off in person, USPS is not always able to deliver "snail" mail, and FAX machines are checked only twice a week.

The District reported to me that a number of the February 15 emails were returned as undeliverable due to incorrect addresses or because the retiree's email provider rejected the MyBenefits email as unsafe/unapproved. To resolve this matter, the District graciously provided FODARA their entire list of retiree emails so I could help members determine if the District had an email address on file, and, if so, if it was correct. What did I find? After sending out a FODARA eblast alerting retirees to the February 15 District email, I heard back from about seventy-five retirees that they did not receive it. About twenty had an old email on file with the District and three others had no email on file—an easy fix by simply submitting the Change Request form with updates. About thirty retirees had a current email on file with the District, but the February 15 eblast was rejected or diverted to their **spam or junk** file—not so easy to fix (see Tech Help: Email on page 11).

I also heard several compliments to FODARA and to the benefits staff who responded in a timely manner to inquiries. FODARA does not have access to retirees' private HR information, but we are always happy and willing to try to help make a process easier for both retirees and the Benefits Office.

The event above demonstrates why eligible Pre-97 retirees must remember to update the District if their email address changes. Even after the campuses and District offices reopen, important and time sensitive District emails—such as those regarding fall Open Enrollment and the winter Change Request for Medicare Part B documentation (formerly the Retiree Survey)—will continue to be sent to eligible retirees as an eblast. To update your contact/status information, simply email MyBenefits@fhda.edu the new information and request a confirmation of receipt for your files.

TECH HELP: EMAIL

How to Prevent Important Emails from Going to Spam/Junk Folder

Disclaimer: This article is intended only as a general guide; details in the steps below may or may not match the visual cues (icons) or wording used in all versions of the email programs noted below.

Preventing important emails from being delivered to your junk/spam folder can typically be done in two ways. The easiest method is to add the email address to "contacts" or "address book" (whichever term is used by your email program). An incoming email, if the address is in your contacts/address book, *should* automatically be directed to your inbox. The other method of setting a filter, including labeling an email as "not spam," is more complicated and might require assistance. A few examples are provided below.

Add Email Address to Contacts/Address Book

- **GMAIL** and **MACMAIL**: open email from sender and place cursor over person's name or email address; when pop-up window appears, click "Add to Contacts"
- **COMCAST**: click on the My Address Books drop-down arrow from the left-hand menu; click on the Address Book option and select New Contact; fill in information
- **OUTLOOK**: open Outlook and at the very bottom of the left side menu bar, click on the people icon; when the new window opens, at top left, click on "New Contact" and enter information

Set Filter / Label as Not Spam

- **GMAIL method #1**: go to spam folder and open email you want delivered to your inbox; click on "Report not Spam" at top. *Note: these steps might have to be repeated for this new preference to be applied to all emails from the sender.*
GMAIL method #2: go to spam folder and open email you want delivered to your inbox; click on three dots in top right corner of email; select "Filter messages like these" and fill out the form as needed to, e.g., in the "From" box, type mybenefits@fhda.edu. click on "create filter" and check both NEVER SEND TO SPAM and ALSO APPLY TO FILTER TO MATCHING MESSAGES. Click "create filter" again
- **MAC MAIL method #1**: under MAIL, click "Preferences," then, in the pop-up window, click Junk Mail; check boxes to reflect your choices
MACMAIL method #2: go to the Junk folder and open an email you want delivered to your inbox; at the top right corner, click on "Not Junk"
- **COMCAST**: setting a filter in this email program is challenging; ask a relative or friend for help or search online for a video tutorial or a website forum Q&A; or try calling the Senior Planet Tech Hotline (see p. 9).
- **OUTLOOK**: click on "settings" icon in upper right menu bar; at bottom of pop-up window, click on "View all Outlook settings"; in Settings window, click on "mail" then "junk email"; under "Safe Senders and domains" use the "+" sign to add email addresses you don't want in Junk email folder, e.g., mybenefits@fhda.edu



Got Books?

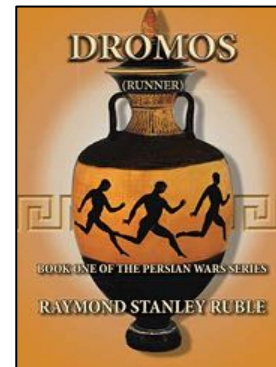
Since most of us have plenty of extra time these days and reading is a pleasant and thoughtful pastime, please share your favorite books. Email title/author and a brief description of the book to Cindy Castillo (cindycastillo@comcast.net) or Linda Lane (lanelinda@fhda.edu). The details will be posted on the FODARA website under the "Good Books" link and the books will be featured in an issue of *After-Words*.



Foothill retiree **Denos Marvin** recommends *Dromos*, the first book in a series about Persians and the Persian Wars written by Raymond Stanley Ruble:

I am halfway through Dromos, which is set in Ancient Greece and its surrounding seas and citystates. It's an exciting "you are there" read for me. If you like reading the books by historical novelist Robert Graves, you'll love Ray Ruble!

Ruble, a retired professor of philosophy from Appalachian State University, describes *The Persian Wars Series*: they are not war books per se; they are about six families caught up in a time period later understood to be bracketed by the opening and apparent closing of the Greeks' wars against the Persian Empire in the same way the Twentieth Century is understood to be bracketed by WWI, WWII, the cold war, Vietnam, the Gulf war, etc. Book one *Dromos (Runner)* is available now on Amazon.com. It presents the story of the first Persian invasion of Greece in 490 BCE, which culminated in the famous Battle of Marathon. Book Two *Pais (Youth)*, to be published this spring, takes the families from 490 BCE through the Battle of Thermopylae and the destruction of Athens in 480 BCE. The remaining four books, set to be published in 2022-23, are Book Three *O Salamis, Divine*—the creation of the Athenian navy to the famous sea battle in the Straits of Salamis in 480 BCE; Book Four *Oikos*—the Athenian families' attempts to rebuild their city to the Battle of Plataea in 479 BCE; Book Five *The Daimonion of Samos*—the gods and demons interest in the survivors of the wars; and Book Six *Kimionion*—the apparent end of the Persian wars around 460 BCE. For more information about *The Persian Wars Series*, email Raymond Ruble at rublers@appstate.edu.



Linda Lane, *AW* Editor, recommends Brit Bennett's new novel *The Vanishing Half* (2020). A multi-generational saga, it begins in the 1940's and ends in the 1990's, with chapters moving randomly through the decades. Issues addressed are racial identity and bigotry through the eyes of identical twins, who, after leaving their small hometown in Louisiana, chose to lead very different adult lives. They, along with other characters—mothers, daughters, husbands, partners—eventually come to realize what's lost and what's gained with each decision made.