

# Anthropology Department

The Anthropology Department's 2010-2011 Newsletter, Issue No.6

## Dr. Berdan Eases Towards Retirement

After 37 years of teaching at CSUSB, Dr. Frances Berdan decided last year that she would gently ease herself towards retirement from the university. For the next few years she will teach only during the winter quarters, offering her much-loved courses on Mesoamerica.

Frannie, the moniker by which she is known by the entire university community, joined CSUSB in 1973 straight out of the graduate program at the University of Texas at Austin. Indeed, she only completed her doctoral dissertation during her first year of teaching. The combination of wonderful teaching and prodigious amounts of high-quality writing has been the hallmark of Dr. Berdan's career. Mind you, she also chaired our department for no less than 17 years.

Alumni and students can attest that she may well be the most knowledgeable, energetic, and enthusiastic teacher that they have ever encountered. From the moment she begins class with a strange factoid until the last sentence of her lecture, students have found themselves in Frannie's world, plunged into Aztec history while listening to corny jokes and lapping up her vast knowledge.

Outside the classroom, Dr. Berdan established herself as one of the world's leading authority on the Aztecs. She did this through her research and writing. Frannie is the author or co-author of 13 books, including the magisterial and prize-winning four volume Codex Mendoza and several undergraduate textbooks, in addition to about 100 articles and chapters in edited volumes. In recent years many students have enjoyed doing virtual ethnographic fieldwork in the fictional village of Amopan ("Nowhere") in Mexico thanks to Ethnoquest, an interactive DVD produced under Frannie's authorship and guidance. Students, past and present, may have seen her on TV on the History Channel and the Discovery Channel, talking excitedly, as always, about the Aztecs.

Dr. Berdan's outstanding achievements in and out of the classroom have been recognized not only at CSUSB, where she was named the university's Outstanding Professor in 1982-83, but also statewide: she was the CSU professor of the year in 1983.

Retirement, partial or full, will not be the end of Dr. Berdan's career. It will simply give her more time to



*Dr. Berdan at the time of her arrival at CSUSB and before the job wore her out.*

write. In fact, books 14 and 15 will soon be heading to the presses. In her spare time (what spare time?), Frannie took up tennis, prodigiously well of course, winning several trophies, and archery, in which she has attained the grade of "forester".

Dr. Berdan's retirement is going to leave a big hole in our department, but we hope she'll return from time to time to cover it over.



*Dr. Berdan, on the right, posing for the Discovery Channel with her Aztec colleague.*

# DEPARTMENT NEWS

## Community College Reception

In May last year the department hosted a reception in our Anthropology Museum for local community college instructors and their anthropology students. This was an opportunity for students contemplating where to complete their bachelors' degrees to see what we have to offer here in Anthropology at CSUSB and to chat with our own current students. They also had the opportunity to view our exhibit of the Ellins Collection of Southwestern Native American artifacts.

## Our Numbers Are Growing

We are proud to report that at some point during the last year the number of our anthropology majors exceeded 100 for the first time ever (and no, we haven't been stopping students from graduating!).

## Hall of Famer Visit

Dr. Yolanda Moses, a member of the CSUSB College of Social and Behavioral Sciences' Hall of Fame, a past president of the American Anthropological Association,

and an alumna of the college, visited ANTH500 in February to speak about the future of anthropology to our graduating seniors and faculty.



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**Jamie Arnold**, B.A. 2010, is a graduate student in psychology at the University of Phoenix.

**Kelly (Brown) Ballew**, B.A. 1992, earned an MS in Environmental Education from Southern Oregon University and teaches biology, forest habitats and environmental science at Portland Community College and Clackamas Community College in Oregon. She reports that, "I had great profs. in the Anthropology Department from whom I learned a great deal of content but also and perhaps more importantly about how to teach, and their energy and enthusiasm and dedication to their students and their research was and is an inspiration to me that I (try to anyway) take into my own classrooms every day."

**Brandon Fryman**, B.A. 2008, received two awards last year for volunteering within the community and abroad, one from The White House and one from CSU Long Beach. The President's Volunteer Service Award, from The White House, came with a thank you letter from President Obama and a gold pin with the USA Freedom Corps insignia for completing over 500 volunteer hours. Brandon is currently working towards his MA in Applied Anthropology at CSU Long Beach. His thesis, Orphan Families in Rukungiri: The Child Survival Program in Rural Uganda, is part ethnography and part needs assessment on a program helping orphan families in southwestern Uganda.

**Natalie Kahn**, B.A. 2009, has moved from Frazier Park to Valencia. She is an aide to children with autism at an elementary school but she's still looking for a library job and has applied for the Master's in Library Science program at San Jose State.

**Evan Mills**, B.A. 2008, has been working in cultural resources management (CRM) since his graduation. He is currently on the field staff of six different CRM firms and has been able to keep busy for the length of his short career.

**Corey Ragsdale**, B.A. 2009, is a graduate student in anthropology at the University of New Mexico. He spent several months this year doing research in Afro-Mestizo communities along the Gulf Coast of Mexico, investigating the affects of population mixture throughout the complex history of occupation in Mexico. While working there he found an archaeological site in danger

of being lost to environmental factors and so he is now coordinating an international project to recover the site and help the local community preserve their heritage. Corey is also reconstructing some Egyptian mummy heads and will be presenting the results at the 7th World Mummy Conference in June, in San Diego.

**Linda Stockham**, B.A. 1975, M.A. special major 1987, and former department secretary, has had her short one-act play on Alzheimer's "Forgotten Souls" accepted for publication in the 2010 edition of The Bluestone Review, Bluefield College, Bluefield, West Virginia.

**Mike Wahl**, B.A. 2008, is a student in USC's GIScience and Technology Master's program and enjoying it, but reports that he has not diverted totally from anthropology since he focuses his projects on archaeology and rock art specifically.

## News from the Laboratory for Ancient Materials Analysis

The Laboratory for Ancient Materials Analysis continues to specialize in the analysis of ancient materials of Mexican origin, this year collaborating with scholars from Mexico, France and the USA. We recently completed a comparative analysis of gooey materials from two resin statues of water deities. Analyzing these samples is always fascinating, since they are only about the size of 2-3 grains of salt. The samples from the two artifacts turned out to be virtually identical, so similar they could have been produced in the same workshop. We are currently finishing analyses of adhesive samples from artifacts excavated at Mexico City's Templo Mayor. We are also collaborating with researchers from the University of Arizona and the University of Alabama to propose an analysis of ancient Mexican turquoise mosaics in the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. This project will tell us much about the origins and use of turquoise in ancient Mesoamerica.

Happily, some projects came to fruition this year. An article, "El adhesivo y el material de reparación de la mascara," co-authored by Frances Berdan and David Maynard (Chemistry), has been published in the landmark book, Misterios de un rostro maya (Mexico: INAH). Our research on adhesives has also been included in another major Mexican book on ancient Mayan funerary masks, Rostros de la divinidad.

Since the last Newsletter, The Anthropology Museum has opened a new exhibit, planned and completed most of the preparation for an upcoming exhibit, and received a new collection.

In spring of 2010, Enduring Change: The Stuart Ellins Collection of Contemporary Southwestern Native American Art opened. This exhibit, co-curated by Perry Kroh and Russell Barber, featured nearly eighty art pieces from the first major collection donated to the museum, including ceramics, kachina dolls, and sand paintings. The exhibit will continue in place until it is replaced in spring of 2011 with a new exhibit curated by Wesley Niewoehner: "Steps Through Time: The Emerging Human".

The Webb Collection was donated to the museum in May of 2010 by the Alf Museum in Claremont. Although the Alf's mission is focused on paleontology, they had acquired some archaeological materials, particularly the Webb Collection of ancient and early twentieth-century ceramics from the Four Corners region of the American Southwest. This collection is strongest in Navajo ceramics from about a century ago, but it also includes some recent Pueblo pottery (roughly contemporary with the Navajo materials) and some ancient Anasazi pots and ladles. As a thank-you to the Webb family, Perry Kroh and Russell Barber have prepared an interpretive catalogue that outlines the significance of the collection to The Anthropology Museum.

## Steps Through Time: The Emerging Human

2010 was an interesting year in the study of human evolution. For example, a new species of early hominin from South Africa, *Australopithecus sediba*, was announced in April. Additionally, though formally announced in late 2009, during 2010 the ongoing analysis of the *Ardipithecus ramidus* skeleton, "Ardi", has caused many to rethink the role of knuckle-walking in the last common ancestor of humans and chimps.

Many people (but not me) have argued that the last common ancestor must have knuckle-walked, but the Ardi skeleton seems to indicate non-knuckle-walking among our common ancestors. This conclusion has resulted in a reassessment of long-held hypotheses about the evolution of bipedal walking. More genetic analyses have been performed on Neandertal remains, and sensational and often misleading headlines concerning their role in human evolution abound.

In May, a draft sequence of the Neandertal nuclear genome was published in the journal *Science*. This will prove to be the beginning of the eventual unraveling of the mystery of the genetic and evolutionary relationship between Neandertals and modern humans, but it will take years to fully understand the genetic data.

In the meantime, I caution the reader to not get too excited about the headlines. One prime example is the

pronouncement that a new species of Late Pleistocene human has been discovered. This premature conclusion is based on the mtDNA sequence of a 40,000 year old finger bone from Denisova cave, Siberia (this is the same time period during which both Neandertals and modern humans are known to have inhabited Europe).

Given all of this new information, I concluded that it is time for our department to mount an exhibit on human evolution in the Anthropology Museum. I am heading-up the exhibit, but I will be receiving help and advice from the other faculty members. In addition, this gives us a chance to involve our undergraduate anthropology students in a high-visibility project.

The display is scheduled to open in May 2011. I hope to report that it was successful in our next newsletter.

- Wes Niewoehner



*A Young Neandertal*

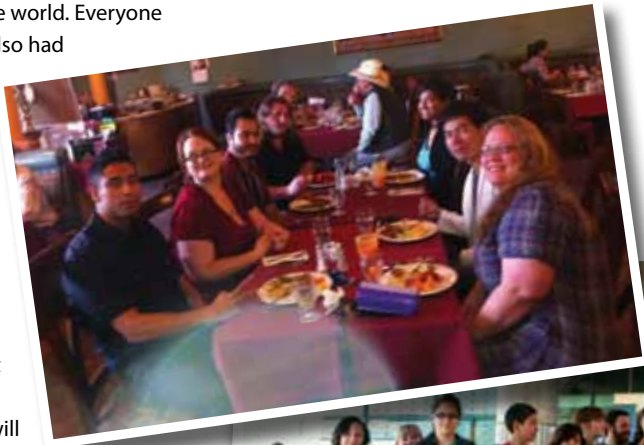
The first event of the year was a trip to the California ScienCenter to see the Mummies of the World exhibit. About thirty people, including family and friends of ALPACA members, toured the many natural and man-made mummies from around the world. Everyone enjoyed themselves and also had the opportunity to explore the rest of the ScienCenter. Our next trip was to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to visit the Olmec exhibit. We went on a guided tour of the exhibit, which included some of the Olmec colossal heads. The exhibit was very informative for everyone. Future events will include a trip to the Museum of Man in San Diego for the Strange Bones exhibit of skeletal abnormalities.

Ethnic dines are an ALPACA favorite for the opportunity to sample foods from other cultures and spend time socializing with fellow anthropology majors. We have gone to a Japanese restaurant to sample sushi, sashimi, and teriyaki for the less adventurous. We also enjoyed an Indian buffet in San Bernardino and Hispanic foods in Redlands. Future ethnic dines will include French food, among others.

Any member of ALPACA may suggest future events so let us know what you would like to do.

More information can be found at the ALPACA Facebook page—[www.facebook.com/alpaca.csusb](http://www.facebook.com/alpaca.csusb) or by emailing us at [alpaca.csusb@gmail.com](mailto:alpaca.csusb@gmail.com).

This year's officers are: Chelsea Parham- President, Scott Fisher- V. President, Trevor McFann- Secretary, Vanessa Maez- Treasurer, Kacey Donner- Historian, and Ervhins Hurtado- Honorary Shaman.



## Seeking Support

The Anthropology Department is very grateful to those who have donated to the department during the last year. As a result of your generosity, we have given some student scholarships and used money to buy materials for exhibits in our Anthropology Museum. Most of our own faculty are also continuing to contribute via payroll deduction to a scholarship fund for our anthropology majors. We hope that some of you will consider adding your donations to the department or designating a larger gift in your name or in someone else's honor. We have many needs, including scholarships, our Museum, student fieldwork and travel, and lab equipment.

If you would like to make a gift to Anthropology Department, you may make your check payable to the **Foundation for CSUSB**, and in the memo section write **Anthropology Department**. You may send your check to **Enrique Gonzalez-Salgado**, Director of Development, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, California State University, San Bernardino, 5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407. For more information on how to make a gift to the department please contact Gonzalez-Salgado at **(909) 537-7363**, or via e-mail at [egonsal@csusb.edu](mailto:egonsal@csusb.edu).



## FACULTY NEWS

### Russell Barber

During the last year, I split my efforts between The Anthropology Museum and writing projects. At the museum, I co-curated (with Perry Kroh, B.A. 2010) *Enduring Change*, an exhibit presenting contemporary Southwestern art from the Stuart Ellins Collection; I also brought the Webb Collection of Southwestern pottery into the museum. Much of my writing has been focused on the second edition of *Doing Historical Archaeology*, for which I have written an additional two exercises, revised three more exercises, reworked the organization of the book, and re-written the instructor's guide. I have also just begun a project that aims to create a new regression-based formula-dating method for historic white clay pipe bowls.



this project is to investigate why children of Arabic-speaking heritage have chosen to study Arabic as young adults. I have been interviewing students and conducting participant-observation fieldwork in Arabic language classrooms at CSUSB. One concern of this research is the legacy of 9/11 among college-aged Arabic Heritage Learners and, correspondingly, the dynamics of race and racialization as experienced by young Arab-Americans in the past decade in the Inland Empire.

### Frannie Berdan

I spent a month last summer in Europe, some of it traveling, some of it participating in a symposium ("Negotiating Conflict") in Warsaw, Poland. There, I gave two invited presentations: a professional paper on Aztec hieroglyphic writing and a general lecture on Aztec featherworking in pre-Columbian and colonial times. I was also invited to write a piece on the Aztec mosaic two-headed serpent in the British Museum for the popular BBC/BM website, *A History of the World in 100 Objects*. Some articles that have been long in the works have now appeared in print: an article on Aztec competition in the book *Competition in the Ancient World* and an article (co-authored with David Maynard in Chemistry) on the adhesives on Pakal's funerary mask (Mayan) in a publication



of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología in Mexico. And now there is light at the end of the tunnel on my endless book for Cambridge University Press, *Aztec Archaeology and Ethnohistory*.

### Jennifer Miller-Thayer

My biggest news is that I finally graduated with my Ph.D. in cultural/medical anthropology from the University of California, Riverside in December 2010! My dissertation is entitled: "Medical Migration: Strategies for Affordable Care in an Unaffordable System." I am working on getting it published as a book. This past May I was accepted to attend and present at the First Annual Training Workshop for the Center of Expertise on Migration and Health at the University of California, (COEMH). My presentation, "Health Migration: Crossing Borders for Affordable Health Care," was later published in *Field Actions Science Reports (FACTS)*, a free online peer-reviewed journal.



### Kathleen Nadeau

The three volume *Encyclopedia of Asian American Folklore and Folklife*, which I co-edited with



Jonathan H. X. Lee, was published in February 2011. Dr. Lee and I are now co-editing *Asian Pacific American Folklore: Pluralisms, Practices,*

### Anne Bennett

My current research focuses on Arab-American college students who are heritage learners of Arabic. This research draws upon anthropology, linguistics, and foreign language pedagogy. I presented a paper on the first phase of this research in summer 2010 at the University of Wyoming's "Language, Culture, and History" conference. One focus of





and Passages. I have also co-authored two articles with William Holden: "Philippine Liberation Theology and Social Development in Anthropological Perspective" will appear in the next issue of Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society, while "Exemplifying Accumulation by Dispossession: Mining and Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines" has been accepted for publication in a Scandinavian journal. In March I presented a paper on the "Early Modern to Postmodern Filipino Family" at the San Francisco State University Re-SEAing Southeast Asian American Studies conference. This summer I will continue work on my book project, Roles of Asian Women.

### **Wes Niewoehner**

Last spring, I attended the annual meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists in part because it was sponsored by my alma mater, the University of New Mexico, and because a recent graduate of our department, Corey Ragsdale, is attending graduate school there. I

presented research expanding my previous work on a methodology for distinguishing the finger bones of Neandertals from those of early



modern humans. While discussing aspects of Neandertal hand anatomy with other researchers, I realized that some of the hand bones that I had been studying from a collection of Northwest Coast Native Americans housed at Simon Fraser University

possess some features of the thumb bones that are usually only found on Neandertal hand bones. I am currently working on expanding this line of inquiry to bolster my argument that some unique Neandertal hand skeletal features reflect habitual behavior patterns and are not useful for phylogenetic (ie.ancestor/descendant) reconstructions.

### **Peter Robertshaw**

During the past year I have continued to publish my research on the chemistry of glass beads found on African sites. I published two journal articles on this work in 2010 and more are in the pipeline. Another paper,



"Beyond the segmentary state: creative and instrumental power in western Uganda," published in the Journal of World Prehistory, drew on my Ugandan fieldwork and its relevance to debates in political anthropology.

In October last year I was invited to give the keynote address at the annual African Archaeology Research Day, which was held at my alma mater, Cambridge University. I spoke about, "The Big Picture: Archaeology and Multi-Disciplinary Reconstructions of the African Past." I met people there whom I hadn't seen since I was an undergraduate. This March I spoke at a weekend symposium at Rice University in Houston on "Thinking Across the African Past: Archaeological, Linguistic and Genetic Research on Precolonial African History."

## **Lubos PASO and Dr. Nadeau**

Lubos PASO is the Filipino Student Association for which Kathy Nadeau serves as the faculty advisor. Last fall the association organized and performed an on-campus cultural dance program in honor of International Week. Later in the year the student president, William Macale, and Dr. Nadeau presented papers on a panel entitled "Glimpses of Filipino Culture" at CSUSB's Asian Studies Symposium. May 2011 marks the 10th anniversary Annual Celebration of Filipino Culture event at the Sturges Theater in downtown San Bernardino. More information on this and other events is available from Dr. Nadeau.

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## Gustatory Corner shirr, v.t.

A shirred egg is simply a baked egg: break an egg into a buttered dish, put a little butter or cream atop it, maybe season it, and bake it for fifteen or twenty minutes in a moderate oven. This sounds like so simple a dish that it must be ancient, but in fact it's a pretty recent American development. (The ancient Chinese had an elite egg dish that was baked in moist clay, essentially fired into an earthenware slab that kept the shell from bursting and was ceremoniously broken open at the table, but this never was a common way to cook eggs and certainly didn't inspire the Anglo-American dish.) What is believed to be the first written reference to shirred eggs comes from an American cookbook in 1891, and there is no evidence that anybody in America (or the rest of the Western world) baked eggs much before that date. Why so late?

Technology. You can't bake an egg easily in an open fire. If it's in its shell, it will explode; if it's out of its shell, it will

get ashy and smoky, not the best qualities in an egg. You can use a Dutch oven – a lidded pot placed on a fire without any liquid in it – but this is a tricky proposition and can easily lead to burnt eggs or a broken dish. To properly shirr an egg, you need an oven. Fairly practical ovens didn't become common until the 1850s, and the introduction of the gas stove in 1879 truly made them effective. Only at this point did shirring eggs become easy, hence popular.

But where did the word shirr come from? Its first usage is in 1847 in one of Webster's American dictionaries, describing fabric with elastic threads woven into it as shirred fabric; to shirr is a backformation. By 1860 in America and 1887 in England, the word also was being used to describe fabric that was puckered by sewing threads through it and gathering them tight, especially for hats. The connection between a garter, a fancy hat, and a baked egg isn't immediately obvious, but there are some commonalities. All are somewhat stretchy and puckery, and all have vis-

ible filaments running through them; perhaps even more important, both take advantage of a new word that was perceived as trendy and modern. How appropriate that a dish that was made possible by the technology devised in the Industrial Revolution should be named through a metaphor based on one of its products!

