

# THE LAF F SOCIETY

For the men and women engaged in Life After the Ford Foundation

Winter, 1999

No. 20

## The Early Days in Pasadena

Patricia Dell Dacy recalls the early days under Paul Hoffman in one of the Huntington Hotel "cottages" in Pasadena, California:

"Those of us who were fortunate enough to be part of the original group had an elated sense of the unlimited potential the Foundation could offer

the world. This was bolstered by receipt of letters from Albert Schweitzer, Eleanor Roosevelt, Ralph Bunche and countless other world figures — to say nothing of friendly and hopeful greetings from almost every university chancellor.

"Of course, we also had letters like the one from a man who claimed only the Foundation could stop aliens from outer space shooting rays which gave him stomach gas. . . And another proposal delivered in a child's casket presented in a formal funeral procession — the idea being that the applicant knew his proposal was already dead on arrival.

"At the beginning there was no clear concept of how much money the Foundation's Ford stock was worth or earning since it had previously been held only by the family. I remember department heads working with constant feverish flushes on their



## FOIBLES AT FORD:

### The Public Policy Committee

*In a note accompanying this essay, Harold (Doc) Howe II, writes: "PPC was the only activity in the FF's program that reached across the full spectrum of grant-making affairs. Otherwise the various "baronies" operated by Howe, (W. McNeil) Lowry, (David) Bell, (Mitchell) Sviridoff, and (Fred) Friendly were fairly well isolated from each other. In that sense, PPC lubricated the social aspect of the FF bureaucracy."*

by Doc HOWE

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, several universities launched new additions to their professional graduate schools. Often called public policy institutes or programs, they sought to develop more effective use of the social sciences to illuminate the country's understanding of social policy—how it is made, whether it is successful, how it can be improved.

Then FF president McGeorge Bundy was enthusiastic. As a former Dean of Faculty at Harvard, he naturally leaned toward the idea that the country's problems could be solved by professors. I strongly suspect, though I'm not sure, that Mac wanted a major Ford effort to help university-based policy studies. But the shadow of a reduced annual budget was imminent, so Mac sought a less expensive approach.

A Public Policy Committee (PPC)—mostly program officers from all divisions of the Foundation—was set up in 1972 to oversee the project. Its annual budget reached about \$3 million before it shut down in the 1980s. Only one program officer staffed the operation (first Paul Strasburg, followed by Art Cyr, Peter Bell and Dick Sharpe); thirty volunteers who served as members for

(cont. on p. 4)

faces, under great pressure to get projects under way and spending the unexpectedly large dividends coming in to avoid endangering our tax-exempt status. At the same time, Henry Ford II and the rest of the Board were frantically scrutinizing all proposed projects. Members of the Board, incidentally, complained that the birds in the surrounding gardens were keeping them awake at night.

"I remember Paul Hoffman returning from his first world survey

speaking of his worrisome conversation with India's Nehru. Mr. Hoffman proposed the Foundation set up a 'Green Revolution' group to help increase India's food supply. But the dilemma, according to the Prime Minister, would be an even more drastic population increase.

"All in all, it was a great privilege to have been associated with the Ford Foundation in its initial days when we felt we could right at least some of the wrongs in the world."

### The LAFF Society

c/o Mary Camper-Titsingh  
531 Main Street, Apt. #1110  
New York, NY 10044

*President*, Siobhan Oppenheimer Nicolau  
*Vice President*, Emmett Carson  
*Secretary-Treasurer*, Mary Camper-Titsingh

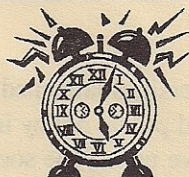
#### Coordinating Committee

Carol Arnold  
Faith Coleman  
Shepard Forman  
Willard J. Hertz  
Harold Howe II  
Jane McCarthy  
Mel Mister  
Robert Tolles  
Nancy Zimmerman

*Editor*, Richard Magat

*Graphic Designer*, Ruth Neumann

## Outwit Y2K



LAFF Society members may readily overcome at least one worry associated with midnight December 31, 1999, the so-called Y2K or millenium problem. They may pay their dues in advance and leapfrog over the problem. That is, if you're paid up as of 1999, send dues of, say, \$10, and you'll be paid up through the year 2001, \$20 through 2003, etc. Several members have already taken the leap. One member reports a rumor that "we are unable to die so long as there is time remaining on our LAFF subscription." Accordingly he enclosed a check that "barring a rate increase should take him to 2010...after that, he'll just take the years one at a time." Another was even longer range in view; he contributed \$100.

**Bill Gormbley** accompanies his check taking him through the millenium with the following: "LAFF reminds me forcefully with each issue of the breadth and strengths of those who have been instrumental, over the years, in making and keeping the Foundation

a premier institution among the world's premier institutions devoted to freedom and the advancement of humankind."

## The LAFFING Parade

**James Bausch** has retired from full-time work and lives with wife Janet at 4865 Featherbed Lane, Siesta Key, FL 34242. On his plate: "volunteering, consulting; research and writing, growing limes, perfecting grill cooking, theatre, with teaching and tutoring and learning Italian still to come." Wife Janet continues with her sculpture and painting.



**Joan Dunlop** (National Affairs), former president of the International Women's Health Coalition, is director of a new project, "A Women's Lens on Global Issues," which will explore the belief "that American women can become a new and dynamic constituency for global issues." A project of the Aspen Institute, it is based at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, where Dunlop is a Distinguished Fellow. The outfit's agenda "would put a high priority on the nonmilitary issues that will greatly impact on people's well-being, . . . such as environmental protection, equitable economic development, health promotion, and the protection of human rights." The co-director is Kate Grant. Funds have been granted by the Rockefeller Foundation, the Open Society Institute, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

**Goren Hyden** (Social science research advisor, Nairobi 1978-80;

Representative, Nairobi, 1980-85), is with the Department of Political Science, University of Florida, Gainesville.

**Charles Hirschman** (Kuala Lumpur, 1973-4) professor of sociology at the University of Washington and a visiting fellow this year at the Russell Sage Foundation.

**Richard Magat** (Reports, 1988) is the author of a new book, *Unlikely Partners: Philanthropic Foundations and the Labor Movement* (Cornell University Press). The book, the first treatment of the subject, reviews relations between the two institutions (confrontational and collaborative) over the last century. It was called "lively and informative" in a review by Peter Dobkin Hall of Yale University, a foremost historian of philanthropy. "It 'weaves a tapestry of clashing impulses combining distrust, co-optation, and sincere commitment to changing the circumstances of women, blacks, immigrants, and the economically marginalized. . . . It stands as both a significant contribution to labor history and a demonstration of the value of philanthropic historiography bold enough to wander off the beaten path." The book carries endorsements by John Sweeney of the AFL-CIO, Joanne Hayes, former head of Women & Foundations, Eric Wanner and Kirke Wilson, heads of the Russell Sage and Rosenberg Foundations, respectively, historian Robert Bremner, and foundation observer Waldemar Nielsen. A substantial portion of the research was conducted in the Ford Foundation Archive, and Magat also interviewed former staff members **Michael Sviridoff, Robert Schrank, Basil Whiting, and Terrence Keenan**. After leaving Ford, Magat served for five years as president of

the Edward W. Hazen Foundation.

The book may be obtained from Cornell University Press, P.O. 6525, Ithaca, N.Y. 14851-6525 or e-mail to: [orderbook@cupserv.org](mailto:orderbook@cupserv.org).

**Christopher Welna** has become associate director of the Kellogg Institute for International Studies at the University of Notre Dame, and **Elizabeth Station** has become assistant to the president of Saint Mary's College, also in South Bend, Indiana. E-mail addresses are, respectively, [Welna.1@nd.edu](mailto:Welna.1@nd.edu) and [station@saintmarys.edu](mailto:station@saintmarys.edu).

**Nancy Zimmerman** has become senior program officer at the Victoria Foundation in Montclair, N.J. She and Ralph have moved back to her hometown, Boonton, N.J. (204 Monroe St.) (973) 331-0882.

## Caretaker of Forests

**Lloyd Garrison** (Director of Reports) has relocated to Norfolk in northwestern Connecticut, where he manages some 50 acres of his own woodland. In an article titled "The Education of 35,000 Landholders," in the Connecticut section of *The New York Times*, he reported on a course he took on preserving Connecticut's woodlands, given by the a group affiliated with the University of Connecticut's Cooperative Extension Service. The course reflects concern about the future of forests in the area, Garrison writes. "Unlike the Far West, where most timber is on public land, close to 90 per cent of all timber in New England, including Connecticut, is in private hands.

The forests are almost as abun-

## Women and International Scholarships

Among the innumerable areas where the gender gap remains is participation in international scholarship programs. **Rona Kluger** (National Affairs) helped address this problem in a survey for the Institute of International Education. The survey covered nine case studies, ranging from AMIDEAST (America-Mideast Educational and Training services) to the Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships. It emphasized women from developing countries studying in developed countries, mostly at the graduate and post-graduate levels. Copies were sent to several hundred educational advising offices throughout the world and provided to the network of International Center for Research on Women.

Kluger concluded, "'There are not enough qualified women' is no longer a credible excuse when, year after year, programs in certain countries select virtually no women candidates and other programs in the same countries achieve 50% or higher percentages of women awardees. . . . If there is one key finding from this project, supported by example after example, it is that when there is the will to recruit women, qualified candidates are identified in short order, even in the most unlikely places."

In a follow up, IIE, with support from the Ford Foundation, published a brochure, based on a conference, "Study Abroad: You Can Get There From Here: A Guide for Women\* (\*and men), which is based on in-depth interviews with a group of program alumnae. They came from countries as widely separate as Argentina and the Sudan, Hungary and Indonesia, Costa Rica and South Africa. It provides recommendations to promote women's increased participation in international scholarship programs. The brochure concludes with the exhortation, "Remember that you are not alone! Tens of thousands of women worldwide have successfully followed the same path you are now setting out on—and have returned home to make important contributions. If you have the talent and desire and dedication to pursue your dreams of overseas study, you can succeed."



dant today as they were in the early 1700s and natural tree growth still exceeds tree removals by some 350 Connecticut firms that convert timber to a wide range of products. However, Garrison quotes an authority on ecological history as noting that what is abundant today can turn barren in a

few decades. By 1750s two-third of Connecticut had been cut over, mainly for farming and firewood, and by the mid-1800s demand for charcoal to power industry meant that only the steepest hillsides and ravines were left untouched. Only with the eventual migration of farmers westward and the

import of Midwestern coal for industry did the trees begin to return. From 1880 to 1960, two-thirds of the forest grew back. But a new downward trend is under way, according to Stephen Broderick, an authority on ecological history. Some 3,000 forested acres are disappearing annually for development purposes "This time there will be no second chance," Garrison quotes Broderick." Today, almost every tree-covered acre that is taken out for development is paved over. It is irrevocable."

Before joining the Foundation, Garrison was a former Times, Time Magazine and UN Development Program writer and editor.

### *Foibles at Ford*

(cont. from p. 1)

a year or more had full-time responsibilities in other corners of the FF.

Though keenly interested in the project, and often attended meetings, Mac Bundy wanted to avoid being the visible operator of this small "foundation with the Ford Foundation," so he asked me to chair it. My title changed from Vice President for Education and Research to Vice President for Education and Public Policy

Half of PPC's grants helped universities; the other half, less focussed, was suspect among Foundation staff not involved in the operation. It arose in part from the endless queries the FF gets to create or try out ideas thought to be unique by their originators. These "over the transom" requests were generally declined on the grounds that they didn't fit the Foundation's plans. But might such outsiders occasionally have interesting ideas about what the Foundation might do with its money? The PPC thought so, responding with a kind of contrarian grant-giving separate from the life of the Foundation's pre-

planned activities. To allow for these ventures, the PPC was renamed "Public Policy and Social Organization Program."

One famous example of this new open-door to the Foundation's treasure

“  
*You have created within Ford a new foundation that ranks 50th in the list of large foundations.*  
”

chest was a grant of \$10,000 for a study of the virtues of the "nine-day week." An 80-page study "On the Possibility of Changing the Present Seven Day Week" resulted, and was presented with a request for \$1 million to try out the nine-day week in a small village on the edge of Hudson Bay. The proposal was denied and the study rests in the FF archive. The author, who died in 1983, was Dr. Carlos W. Versavsky, an Argentinean astrophysicist with a Ph.D. from Harvard. He said the nine-day week would produce a major economic gain since businesses could operate every day of the year and a significant gain in leisure time for workers, who would be divided into three cadres, each working six days a week followed by a three-day weekend. Dr. Versavsky was a practical man; when he came to the Foundation to make his pitch he brought along a Nobel Prize-winning economist.

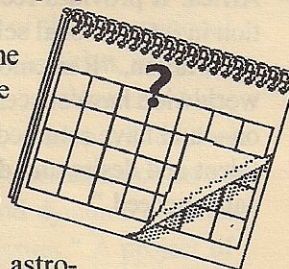
Dr. Versavsky's study fell within PPC's "miscellaneous" category. We also worked in the

military and society; corporate social responsibility; domestic agriculture, nutrition, and food policy; the family; non-profit organizations; and aging.

In contrast to the long shots was a system of grants to writers who were humanists (philosophers, historians, poets, playwrights, novelists, even religious types). We thought that more voices from that quarter would be useful in the FF's commitment to social justice. This effort, overseen by Dick Sharpe, is described in a 1980 document; since it was prepared for the Board of Trustees, it's not easily available, but call me if you want more information.

When he was chairman of the FF Board, Alexander Heard, president of Vanderbilt University, remarked to Mac Bundy, "You have created within Ford a new foundation that ranks 50th in the list of large foundations. Furthermore, this outfit is doing things the Trustees had not discussed." Right! Even so, I think some Trustees liked it, but as I suggested at the memorial service for Mac, he had kept the Trustees slightly nervous. The PPC was clearly one way.

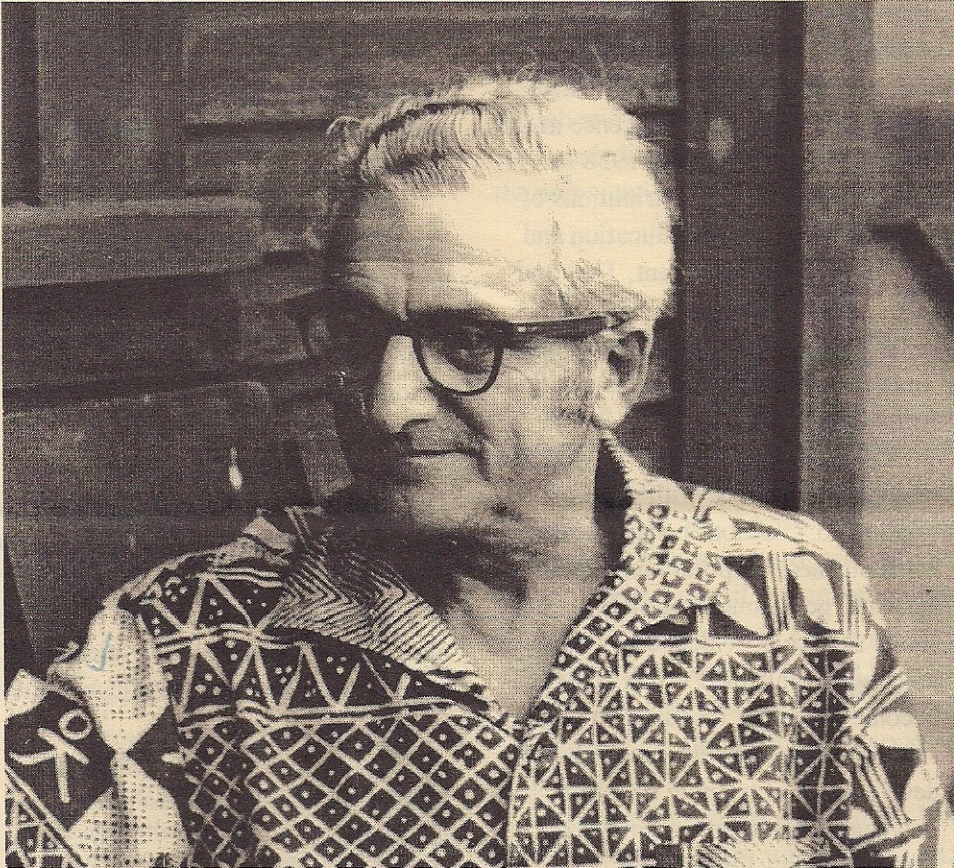
P.S. Several members of the PPC went on to become foundation heads: Dick Sharpe, John A. Hartford; Terry Saario Northwest Area; Peter Bell, Edna McConnell Clark; Marshall Robinson, Russell Sage; Ned Ames, Mary Flagler Cary, and, not least, Susan Berresford, the FF itself. Serving with them were James Kelly, Paul Strasburg, Francis Sutton, Haskell Ward, Louis Winnick, Arthur Cyr, Peter de Janosi, R. Harcourt Dodds, Antony Herrey, Sol Chafkin, Robert Edwards, Adreienne Germain, Larry Ruff, Esther Schacter, Richard Sheldon, Reuben Frodin, Felice Gaer, Robert Myers, Basil Whiting, Peter Hakim, Sheila McLean, William Pendleton, Robert Goldmann, Warren Ilchman, Jay Light.



## Remembering Mel Fox

*Melvin J. Fox, who served the Ford Foundation over a remarkable 32-year-period, died in August at the age of 84. At the time of his death, he was living in Jamesville, New York, a suburb of Syracuse.*

by WILLARD HERTZ



Mel was one of the Foundation's most versatile staff members, serving in a range of capacities in both the United States and overseas. He also was a great story-teller. As a result, his oral history, at 250 pages, is one of the longest and most readable in the Foundation's archives.

As Mel tells the story, he first approached the Foundation in 1951 as a grant supplicant in his capacity as the director of a small organization called the United States Citizen's Committee for UN Day. "I made a pilgrimage to the Drake Hotel," then a branch of the fledgling Foundation, Mel recalled, "and found Bun [Bernard L.] Gladioux in a suite of rooms. Papers literally were almost flying through the room like some sort of Alice in Wonderland fantasy. It turned out to be a fairly negative experience partly because they were so beset at the time. I just washed it out of my mind.

However, John Howard, who became the director of the Foundation's International Training and Research (ITR) program, was assigned to check out Mel's application, and Mel was given both a grant and a job offer. He started as

a consultant and became a permanent staff member in October, by which time the staff had grown to five professionals.

"When I got my own office at 60th and Madison," Mel continued, "I had an enormous office full of plush furniture. And I really didn't know how to walk across the room even to greet somebody at the door; my knees would knock together and so forth. Unfortunately, man is infinitely corruptible and that only lasted about three days. I then felt I was made for this very lush setting."

As the Foundation's programming grew, Mel became a jack-of-all trades. He was instrumental, for example, in the Foundation's support for international exchange programs, including the development of the Institute of International Education as the apex agency in the field. He also worked closely with Howard in the Foundation's support for foreign area studies centers at major universities.

In the mid 1950s, Mel was a member of the staff teams that visited tropical Africa and paved the way for the extension to that continent of the Foundation's Overseas Development Program. But in his oral history, Mel tells how he almost didn't make the 1956 trip.

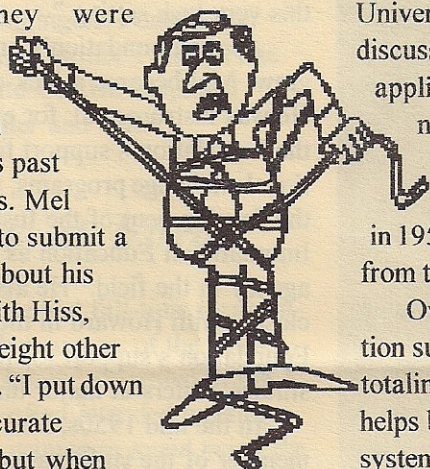
"I was responsible for preparing for this very ambitious trip. It took a year to prepare; we knew nothing about Africa in the Foundation. And about four weeks before this trip was to leave, I got a note from Mrs. [Frances] Knight in the State Department saying they couldn't extend a passport to me. Now, at this point we had sent to leaders of state letters from our president, Rowan Gaither, and to other people in Africa about our trip. So it was all laid on."

There were no specifics in Mrs. Knight's letter, but Mel had a pretty good idea of the cause of the problem. Mel's father, one of the architects of

the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Program in FDR's administration, had worked with Alger Hiss in the State Department, and Mel had worked for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace when Hiss was its president. Further, at the Treasury Department, Mel had worked with Harry Dexter White in the Treasury Department, who was also accused of Communist ties.

Sure enough, when the Foundation's lawyers visited Mrs. Knight's office, they were shown "a full file drawer" on Mel and his past associations. Mel was asked to submit a statement about his relations with Hiss, White and eight other individuals. "I put down a brief, accurate statement, but when they took it back to Washington, they were handed a list of ten more names. By this time we'd eaten up about, I don't know, two weeks or more and it was getting real tight....At the last minute, I got my passport."

Five years later the problem of past associations cropped up again when Mel was invited by Sargent Shriver to join a small group of advisors in setting up the Peace Corps. Mel negotiated a leave of absence for a year, on the assumption that Washington would have done the necessary checking in order to make him a firm offer. "I cleaned up my desk, cleaned up my work, and said goodbye to everybody," Mel recalled. "When I got down there, I discovered that they had just been told by the FBI that they had to do a three-months check on me.



Needless to say, I couldn't sit and wait three months without a job, and so I got back on the track here."

Perhaps the high point of Mel's first decade with the Foundation was the creation of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in Washington. The Foundation had taken an early interest in the teaching of non-Western foreign languages in the U.S. and the teaching of English as a second language in the U.S. and overseas. Mel was instrumental in planning a conference at the University of Michigan in 1958 to discuss the potential contributions of applied linguistics to education and national development. That and Mel's continuing staff work, led directly to CAL's founding in 1959, with help with initial funding from the Foundation.

Over the next decade, the Foundation supported CAL with grants totaling \$6.7 million. Today, CAL helps business corporations, school systems, government agencies, and social service providers deal with their language problems. Further, CAL has become a leading resource on communication issues through research, the development of training materials and language-teaching programs, and language policy formulation.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Mel continued his interest in innovative language education—including a survey of language use and language teaching in East Africa; development of language study centers in the Philippines and Tunisia; and support for individual scholars.

In 1967 Mel moved from the Foundation's ITR program to its Middle East and Africa program, serving first as Deputy Representative for West Africa, stationed in Lagos, Nigeria, and then as a program advisor

in New York. In 1975 he returned to Lagos as the Representative.

Mel retired from the Foundation in 1977, but his long Foundation career still had one chapter to go. In 1983, at the age of 70, he was asked by the Foundation to return to Lagos as Acting Representative until a new Representative could take up his assignment. Mel had made many friends in his two previous postings in Lagos, and he responded eagerly to this unique opportunity for a six-month curtain call.

In retirement, Mel continued his interest in languages and linguistics through involvement in CAL's international refugee work and membership on the CAL's Board of Trustees. In its October newsletter, CAL paid double tribute to Mel and to Charles A. Ferguson, its founding director, who died a month after Mel. "They both remained involved and interested in our work until their deaths," wrote CAL's president, Donna Christian. "We will miss their counsel and their friendship greatly, as we treasure the legacy they have left to us."

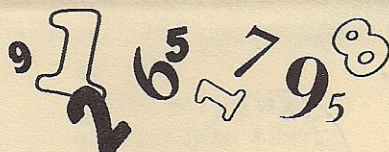
The Newsletter also published Mel's final word on the subject—a letter he had written in 1995 to G. Richard Tucker, then president of CAL:

"Over time, the Ford Foundation's work contributed to a recognition and understanding of the prevalence of language problems in many countries in all parts of the world and at every stage of development. The Foundation came to realize the potentially productive link between its international and its domestic language activities. The role of language came to assume decisive importance in relation to the Foundation's core concern for improving the human condition, for extending

the benefits of modern science and technology, and for responding to the contributions and needs of the excluded and the disadvantaged. I was pleased to have been able to participate — at least vicariously — over the years in this contribution.”

## E-mail Alert

A new edition of The LAFF Society directory will be published later this year. If you wish your E-mail address and/or telephone or Fax numbers included, please so notify Dorothy Nixon, Academy for Educational Development, 100 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011 or (212) 367-4563. The Directory may be ordered for \$3.50.



## Funny Numbers

You are reading Issue 20, Winter 1999, but it doesn't follow a No. 19 LAFF Society newsletter. It's a bit complicated, so be patient. Following Issue 15 (Summer 1997) came the Winter 1997 issue. Alas, it was numbered 17, not 16. So that there would be a 16th issue, we numbered the Spring 1998 issue 17A. The Summer 1998 issue was numbered 18 back on track! But not for long. Somehow we (no names) neglected either to number or date the following issue, which should have been inscribed "Fall 1998, No. 19." So for the current issue, we had a choice: number it 19, or forget we had forgotten 19, and call this No. 20. That's what we've done. Litigious society this may be, but we dare anyone to bring suit.

## We Do Care

The LAFF Society is not as logistically lush as the Ford Foundation. Except for one very part-timer, everything is done by volunteers. So we're unable to acknowledge contribution beyond normal \$5 per year dues, of which there have been several recently. But we are truly grateful and we thank you. We are closer to solvency, though still in debt to a few members who made loans last year to prevent the organization from folding.

## Whereabouts?



Addresses are needed for the following LAFFers:  
**Josephine G. Lydecker** and  
**Angelita Ramirez.**

## In Memoriam

**Abraham "Abe" Weisblat** (International) died in October at the age of 79 in Lawley, Mass., where he had been a summer resident for 40 years.

Abe Weisblat in 1953 was one of the first recipients of a Ford Foundation Fellowship and spent a year studying in India. The following four years he directed the fellowship program. In 1958 he went to work for the Agricultural Development Council, a foundation established by John D. Rockefeller III. For 25 years he helped train a new generation of Asian leaders. He served as the council's representative to both the Philippines and India and spent a number of years running its Research and Training Network. In the 1970s and 1980s he was among the first to focus international attention on the role of women in development.

Born in Poland, he came to the United States with his parents, grew up in New York City and graduated in 1940 from New York University. He attended the University of Wisconsin where he received master's and doctoral degree. Upon his retirement from the ADC in 1984 he became a visiting professor at Rutgers University, where he researched and co-authored a study evaluating the international fellowship programs of the ADC, the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

In 1996, he received the first "outstanding contribution" award from the Rutgers Department of Agriculture Food and Resource Economics.

Survivors include his wife of 53 years, the former Janice Hallet, a son, daughter, and sister, and several nieces and nephews. Memorial contributions may be made to the Abraham Weisblat Scholarship Fund, Department of Agricultural Food and Resources Economics, Rutgers University, 55 Dudley Road, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.



## Readers Need Writers

Readers of The LAFF Society newsletter are generally an appreciative bunch. But would that they would write more. The newsletter needs



more contributions—personal reminiscences, reflections on events, manners and morals, etc.

The need is especially great since we have expanded to (almost) three issues a year.

We have yet to turn

down an essay... because they have been uniformly interesting. Please send personal and impersonal material—up to, say, 750 words. Without your help this could suffer the fate of any publication—dullness. Send to Mary-Camper Titsingh, 531 Main Street, #1110, N.Y. 10044.

**THE LAFF SOCIETY**  
c/o Mary Camper-Titsingh  
531 Main Street, Apt. #1110  
New York, NY 10044

Mary Camper-Titsingh (p-98)  
531 Main St #1110  
Roosevelt Island NY 10044

