



LAFF

THE LAFF SOCIETY Promoting Social and Professional Contacts Among Former Staff Members of the Ford Foundation

February 2013, No. 72

The LAFFing Parade

She's been described as "going right into the lion's den" and as "a woman with fresh thoughts" who definitely is "not one of the pack." As an article in The New York Times recently observed, "Absolutely nothing about her screams obvious contributor to the Fox News Channel."

Yet, notes the article, **Sally Kohn** has been "making a name for herself in the crowded arena of political punditry, having made her way into the business at Fox News... a favorite destination for conservative viewers."

Kohn does not meet the usual expectations for a Fox News personality. She worked at the Foundation from 2002 to 2004 in Governance and Civil Society, ran a feminist organization, worked at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, was an organizer at the Center for Community Change for welfare reform, health care and immigration issues, and is the founder of the Movement Vision Lab, which was created to "amplify the voices of grassroots leaders and organizers." She "prefers baggy clothes and doesn't own a television," wrote Elizabeth Jensen in the Times article.

"I was one of those people on the left who was frustrated," Kohn said in the article, "that the institutional progressive movement had, for lack of a better word, sewn its lips to the rear end of the
Continued on page 8

A NEW GOVERNANCE PROCEDURE

The executive committee of LAFF is developing rules to provide for the "smooth functioning and transparency" of the procedure for electing officers and committee members.

An explanation of the strategy and a timeline for its implementation is the focus of the President's Message on page 3.

FRANK SUTTON (1917-2012): ONE OF A KIND



Francis X. "Frank" Sutton came to the Ford Foundation in 1954 and stayed for nearly thirty years, one of the longest tenures among staff members. During that time he helped initiate and was involved with many

programs and influenced the professional and personal lives of countless people who worked with him.

His impact was apparent in the scores of tributes to his life and work following his death in December at the age of 95.

"Frank was a pivotal figure in the Foundation's development program," wrote **Shep Forman**, president of LAFF, in a message to the members. "He was also a stalwart member of the LAFF Society where many of us had the good fortune to continue to enjoy his formidable intelligence, his knowledge and appreciation of culture and the arts, his wit and humor, and his marvelous recall of the Foundation's work in so many areas of interest to us all."

"He really was one of a kind," wrote **Richard Magat**, who had been director of the Office of Reports, "not only for his knowledge and scholarship but for his genial friendship, not just for higher-ups but for the lower orders like myself."

Charles Bailey, who worked in several Foundation offices overseas, remembered him as "always so generous, insightful, funny and kind. The news that he is no longer with us saddens me. The world needs more people like Frank."

Robert Tolles, an editor of the LAFF newsletter, said, "He occupied a special place in my thoughts. I could always call him if I had a question about the early Foundation years or

to ask him to write a tribute to a departed colleague. Of all the Foundation staff, he represented the best of its traditions and loyalties."

"He was a joy," wrote **Alice Maloney**, who had worked for Frank in the International Division,

"and I feel very fortunate to have known this truly remarkable man."

Frank joined the Foundation in 1954 from Harvard University, where he lectured on social relations and was an assistant professor of sociology and general education. He started at Ford as an executive associate in the Behavioral Sciences Program. Three years later he became program associate for the Overseas Development Program's Near East and Africa division and three years after that went to Nairobi, Kenya, as the Foundation's representative for East Africa.

His account of his years in Nairobi, including setting up the first office, appears on the LAFF website. It is part of a personal memoir he was writing, and was excerpted in the last issue of the newsletter.

In 1967, a year after the International Division was created, he returned to New York to be assistant to the vice president of the new division, then serving as Deputy Vice President into the early 1980s. During that time he also served as Officer in Charge of the European and International Program, until he retired in 1983.

Frank was born on July 7, 1917, in Oneida, P.A., and received a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Temple University in 1938. He then taught math while earning a master's degree from Princeton University in 1940,

Continued on next page

REMEMBERING TED SMITH

A memorial service for Theodore M. "Ted" Smith is planned for May 4 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It will be held at 2 p.m. at the Friends' Meeting House at 5 Longfellow Park, off Brattle Street.

Ted died September 1 when he fell while hiking with family members in the Mission Mountain Wilderness in Montana near where he lived. He had been executive director of the Henry P. Kendall Foundation in Boston for nearly twenty years before retiring two years ago and moving back to his home state.

Where are they now?

We're still looking for LAFF members we haven't heard from in some time. They may have changed their contact information so we can't reach them, or simply let us slip from their busy lives.

If that's you we'd like to hear from you again, or if you know of someone perhaps you could send his or her contact information to us. **Nellie Toma**, our secretary-treasurer, is waiting to hear from you at nellieto-ma@laffsociety.org

Some of those we'd like to hear from are **Larry Cox, Joanne Derwin, Patricia Dacy, Marianne Leis Ginsburg, Yvonne LeMelle, Shana Novick, Enid Schoettle, A.D. Suehsdorf, Dorothy Thompson, Lee Sumter Travers, William Watts** and **Marian G. Weber**.

The LAFF Society

c/o Nellie Toma
PO Box 701107
East Elmhurst, NY 11370

E-Mail: treasurer@laffsociety.org
www.laffsociety.org

Shepard Forman, President
Barry D. Gaberman, Vice President
Nellie Toma, Secretary-Treasurer
Dorothy Nixon, Administrative Secretary

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Judy Barsalou	John LaHoud
Peter Geithner	Janet Maughan
Sheila Gordon	Michael Seltzer

ADVISORY BOARD

David Arnold	Theodora Lurie
Peter Bell	Ruth Mayleas
Betsy Campbell	Mary McClymont
William Carmichael	Mora McLean
Peter Cleaves	Janice Molnar
Joan Dassin	Sheila Nelson
M. Lynn Huntley	Raymond Offenheiser
Mahnaz Ispahani	S. Gowher Rizvi
Lance Lindblom	Anthony Romero
Michael Lipsky	Francis X. Sutton
	Kerwin Tesdell

John LaHoud, Editor
Nellie Toma, Assistant Editor
Esther Roditti, Contributing Editor
Susan Huyser, Graphic Designer

Frank Sutton

Continued from page 1

moving on to Harvard University for a second master's, this time in sociology.

He went into the Air Force in 1941 and served as an aerial navigator, reaching the rank of captain before leaving the service in 1945.

He went back to Harvard and earned his doctorate in sociology in 1950, being selected a Junior Fellow of the university's Society of Fellows while he earned the degree. He taught at Harvard until 1954, when he left to go to work for the Foundation.

Frank did not slow down after he retired. He was a consultant to Ford for several years, writing a history of the Foundation's international work. He also was a consultant to several other organizations, including the Rockefeller Foundation, for which he was interim director of its conference center in Bellagio, Italy, in 1992, and the World Bank. He worked closely with the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), as its acting president in 1985-86 and chairman of its board from 1985 to 1992.

He wrote prolifically, principally the books *The American Business Creed* in 1956 and *Ideology and Social Structure* in 1991. He was also editor of *A World to Make: Development in Perspective*, published in 1990.

Frank's interests and skills were varied. When in college he earned some extra money by playing first base for the Trenton, N.J., Pottery in an industrial league. And he never lost his love for the Philadelphia Athletics or his favorite player when he was growing up not far from Shibe Park, Al Simmons.

Early music lessons paid off too. He earned some more extra money in the 1930s by playing clarinet and saxophone in dance bands in and around Bucks County. And he played classical piano throughout his life, including in Nairobi where he organized a chamber music group.

"I have never in a lifetime of amateur chamber music playing had better companions," he wrote in his memoir. "There were a fine Goan and the Belgian consul on violins, a young violist from the Oxford press, and the physics professor from the university on cello, all to go with the grand piano in the house on Riverside Drive."

HISTORIAN MANQUÉ

by **Richard Magat**

Had the Ford Foundation ever had an official historian, Frank Sutton would have been

the odds-on favorite.

Although he wrote innumerable articles he published only two books: *The American Business Creed* in 1956 and *Ideology and Social Structure* in 1991, neither of which dealt with the Foundation. But for more than three decades he compiled a history of the Foundation's international and other activities, none of which has been published. The cache wound up in 321.8 cubic feet of records and 79 legal-size boxes that repose in the Rockefeller Archive Center in Tarrytown, N.Y., to which the Ford archives were consigned last year. One of the most valuable elements is an oral history of 73 interviews with staff members and trustees. Fortunately, one of them is Frank Sutton's.

Sutton's most extensive insights about philanthropy generally and Ford in particular are contained in two disparate works published in 1987. One, *The Ford Foundation: The Early Years*, is a 50-page essay by Sutton in the Winter issue of *Daedalus*. He likens the Foundation to one of many great public figures: "Their origins and youth attract curiosity that can be gratified in coherent and smooth-textured narration. Later they become like great trees with proliferating branches and foliage that blinds the sight. So it has been with the Ford Foundation. Its beginnings have been told several times, and some of the branches followed, but the canopy remains largely undescribed."

Ironically, the "canopy" had undergone a description of sorts 32 years earlier in a series of articles in *The New Yorker* by Dwight Macdonald. The articles were converted into a book whose subtitle was *The Men and the Million—An Unauthorized Biography*. Forty-one years later, a new edition was published. Enter Frank Sutton, who was commissioned to write an introduction. The resulting essay combined Sutton's erudition and a fine sense of humor reflecting Macdonald's own literary gifts.

The book did not delve as deeply as the *Daedalus* article into the origins of the industrial behemoth that gave rise to the Foundation, but it did describe the tremors that shook the Foundation when Macdonald announced his intention to dissect it. It was the height of McCarthyism, and conservative journalists, Macdonald wrote, "were tirelessly alerting their audience to the dubious actions and purposes of the Foundation.... Two Congressional investigations... were highly colored by suspicions that foundations were leading the country toward socialism or otherwise undermining its character."

Both the *Daedalus* essay and Sutton's

introduction to the Macdonald book remarked about the paucity of serious writing about the Foundation, notwithstanding that histories had been written about some of its offshoots, e.g., the Fund for the Republic and the Fund for Adult Education. "Institutional history is certainly not one of the ingratiating literary genres, but even the big banks now seem to find willing chroniclers," Sutton noted.

A DEFINING INFLUENCE

by Arthur I. Cyr

Frank Sutton remains a defining influence for me as well as a wonderful role model. About forty years ago I had the opportunity

to spend three years on the staff of the Ford Foundation. I am indebted to **Craufurd Goodwin**, the officer in charge of European and International Affairs, as well as **Andrzej Korbonski** and **Howard Swearer**, two University of California at Los Angeles mentors.

Frank Sutton, however, made the final hiring decision. The interview with him remains remarkably vivid in memory. His unusual combination of intellectual depth, executive ability and intuitive insight were striking. He also was skillful at putting a very young job candidate at ease without compromising professionalism.

Over the years we remained in regular contact. He recommended me to **John Rielly**,

president of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, for a job that was challenging and risky but ultimately more rewarding than a conventional academic path. Frank indicated as much when we discussed the opportunity.

My youngest son, Jay, and I took several trips to the East Coast. Among our many shared memories, lunch at the Century Association with Frank Sutton is a special highlight. After Jay died, the letter from Frank was particularly helpful.

'A LOVELY MAN'

by Robert Edwards

What a lovely man, the quality of whose love and kindness to those who knew him well was, if anything, even greater than his distinguished mind. What a range of understanding he had—and how fortunate the Ford Foundation was to have his humanity as well as learning and brilliance (a word I've applied to only three or four people I've known) to explain Africa to it.

He was my mentor for a decade at Ford in a way that influenced deeply my two college presidencies. Blythe and I came to love him greatly in these last years of his "retirement". We're still downcast, but he will continue to light our sky for the rest of our lives—as he will the organizations he helped to form.

WITH WISDOM AND PATIENCE

by David Featherman

He was, in so many ways, a man of extraordinary capacity and dimensions and thus his going leaves so many and such large empty places in so many hearts and minds.

Frank served on the board of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) when I was chosen to be its President, in 1989. It was not the best of times for the Council, especially in its longstanding relationship with the Ford Foundation. In his wisdom, and with respectful patience for a young professional taking on much more than he knew how to handle, Frank walked me through the repairing process that only someone of his acumen and institutional savvy would do and could know how.

He also was my staunchest supporter and ally as I sought to redefine the leadership role of SSRC vis-à-vis what then was still called foreign area studies, and to align the Council at the forefront of comparative social science.

I know I would have been considered a much lesser steward of the Council were it not for the gifts Frank shared with me, what he taught me." ■

THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Although we might all still be aching with exhaustion from the 2012 *annus politikus horribilis*, I thought I would take advantage of the fresh start of this inaugural season to update the membership on LAFF's emerging governance strategy.

As you may recall, when assuming the LAFF presidency three years ago I put a minimalist bureaucratic committee structure in place to deal with questions of governance and communications and activated an executive committee to help spread and enrich the Society's decision-making processes. In earlier Newsletter issues, I reported on the communication committee's excellent work in redesigning the Newsletter and website, both emblazoned with LAFF's new logo and ably managed by volunteer editors.

I also reported briefly on the governance committee's recommendations regarding membership and terms of office, to be limited to three years, renewable. Today's message is intended to enlist the entire membership in the planning and execution of an open and transparent process for choosing the Society's leadership.

Acting on the governance committee's recommendations, the executive committee is now proposing the following governance process and asking the LAFF membership to weigh in with ideas and recommendations both on procedure and potential candidates for President, Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer, as well as executive committee members.

The first order of business is to establish a nominating committee that has broad familiarity with the Society and can provide the broadest possible representation of the diverse LAFF membership. All comments and recommendations should be sent to **Nellie Toma**, our current (and dare I add indispensable) Secretary-Treasurer by March 31.

BY APRIL 30, 2013

- ▶ The executive committee affirms preliminary criteria for officers and their terms, and appoints a nominating committee composed of no more than five individuals to develop a slate of candidates.

- ▶ The nominating committee meets to decide how to proceed with the nominations process and the election of officers.

BY JUNE 30, 2013

- ▶ Nominating committee makes an interim report to the executive committee, along with a proposed slate of officers.
- ▶ The membership is informed of the proposed slate and procedure for the possible introduction of an alternative slate.

BY SEPTEMBER 2013

- ▶ The membership votes, either online or by mail-in ballot.

BY OCTOBER 2013

- ▶ The results are announced to the membership.

BY JANUARY 2014

- ▶ The transition to new/re-elected leadership occurs.

BY MARCH 2014

- ▶ Members of the executive committee are announced and meet with the newly-elected officers.

I know I speak for all of the officers and committee members when I say how pleased we are to be able to contribute to LAFF and see it grow and flourish, but we are also aware that we should serve at the pleasure of the membership. The proposed transition plan is designed to ensure that all of our nearly 500 members have a say in the governance of the Society and a stake in its future. So weigh in, please, with your thoughts and recommendations.

As we begin this new year, I need, sadly, to reflect on the passing of members and friends, most recently Francis X. Sutton, who symbolized for many of us the awesome wit, intellect and professionalism that characterize Ford Foundation staff and the LAFF membership. The departure of these dear colleagues reminds us of why LAFF exists, to promote "social and professional contacts among former staff members" and, may I add, valued friends.

LAFFERS SPEAK OUT

Excerpts from recent articles by and interviews with LAFF members

ROSALIA SCIORTINO

Reflections on the changes in the philosophy of philanthropic giving over the last few decades, from an article that appeared on SALTOonline, a publication of the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre in Singapore.

In the more than twenty years of working with international philanthropic and development organizations of a grant-making nature in Southeast Asia, I have seen many ideologies and trends emerge and wane....New idioms of globalization and market-driven development approaches popular these days, when stripped down, are reminiscent of the modernization-cum-liberalization discourse that dominated the 1960s and thereafter....

It was that discourse with its stress on a uniform, top-down, growth-oriented and technological model of development that was under fire in the 1990s when I started my career with (Ford) in Indonesia. New voices countered that there were no magic technological bullets, societal problems were complex, and to resolve them there was a need for context-specific and systemic solutions “owned” by local organizations united in a movement for social change.

Breaking with the hierarchical systems of the past, inclusive, participatory and transparent approaches were held paramount. A “democratization” of the grantor-grantee relationship was under way, in which grant-making organizations enlisted like-minded grantee institutions and individuals in catalyzing social change.

....senior colleagues emphasized that it was the “grantee”, as recipient organization, doing the work, while the funder fulfilled an enabler role. It was believed that local organizations knew the problems and could devise the necessary solutions, given adequate means....the grantees were best positioned to act as agents of social change....Grants were to address a lack of financial resources for institutions and people that were full of ideas and ready for action, thus empowering them to operationalize and realize those ideas.

The art of grant-making was to devise overarching funding strategies to address the

root causes of specific social ills that would integrate individual grants into a synergic approach. Within the parameters set by such grant-making strategies, the role of program officers—expected to be geographic as well as thematic experts—was to identify and support those with potential solutions to the targeted societal problem....

Today, a new institutional model and related vocabulary is being heralded that takes inspiration from the corporate world. In introducing business practices into grant-making, development organizations and foundations are starting to conceive of their grantees not as “partners” but as “clients” of the financial services they provide. Interestingly, this custom is also infiltrating some NGO grantees in what are usually called program “beneficiaries”. Instead of stressing commonality of objectives, such nomenclature emphasizes the transactional, financial aspect of the relationship, with a focus on efficiency of services rather than on transformative impact.

The distance that is thus created between grantor and grantee is compounded by two other trends. First, the technologically-inspired centralization of functions in head offices and, second, the ever more dominant ideology of “the world is flat”. As locality and social settings are claimed not to matter, an assumption is emerging that development solutions are universal and technical, and answers to problems in faraway places can be found by the grantor and its selected advisors and then entrusted to suitable grantees for implementation....

Grant-making strategies...have become detailed initiative plans with set activities, inputs and quantifiable outcomes allocating fixed roles to the grantees. In the process, local aspirations, knowledge capacity and social networks are overlooked, and the grantee is reduced from being the initiator of social action to a commissioned implementer.

....the adoption of a business approach and an aspiration of “doing good while doing well” may lead to neglect of such other core values as human rights, and of “non-economic” causes such as fighting violence against women or anti-corruption efforts. Also, if the past is any teacher, greater disconnect between grantor and grantee arising from the top-down universalist initiatives may actually compromise effective

giving, and the efficiency and accountability that is being promised.

I cannot forget the 1990s and to this day believe in engaged grant-making. The many funded programs I have seen develop and have profound impact—such as the great strides against HIV/AIDS driven by civil society groups and the stemming of zoonotic communicable diseases through pioneering multi-country collaborations—and the many grantees I have seen become an asset to their countries as well as to the global community give me the confidence that less hierarchical and more engaged grant-making in support of locally owned ideas and initiatives is essential to lasting contributions to equitable social change....

Dr. Sciortino was a program officer for the Ford Foundation in Jakarta and Manila from 1993 to 2000. She now is the regional representative for Southeast and East Asia and senior adviser to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Singapore. The full article has been posted on LAFF's website.

GARY SICK

The following is excerpted from an interview Gary Sick gave last November on the Voice of America's Persian broadcast. It appears in its entirety in a question and answer format on his blog, Gary's Choices, at www.garysick.tumblr.com

President Obama came into office originally on the idea that he wanted to have some kind of engagement or opening to Iran. That's been four years and nothing has happened. I believe that in his second term he is going to want to deal with a number of issues in the Middle East. If he has some success with an Iranian negotiation he then would be in a better position to deal with some of the issues that I think he cares about also.

I fully expect (the Iranian election this June) to be an election that resembles Mubarak's election in Egypt, for instance, where everyone from the beginning knew what the outcome was going to be. So, basically, the other thing is that the president of Iran over the years has gradually seen his authority decline as one thing after another has been taken away. And so who the president is at any moment has only a minor

effect on the actual possibility of the negotiations. From my perspective, the elections coming up in Iran are not likely to be an impediment to going ahead.

As with most long-running problems, the outlines of the solutions (to Iran's nuclear capabilities) are pretty well known. The question is really one of political will. Is Iran willing to have private negotiations with the United States, creating an agenda that would then be used for public negotiations? Would the United States officially accept the reality that Iran is enriching and will probably continue to enrich?

For Iran, the United States is the Great Satan. It is the enemy. And so by dealing with the United States you undercut that position and that has political consequences in Iran. In the United States, Iran is a very unpopular country. There is no support structure in the United States, no constituency for Iran, and so taking a step that is contrary to, say, what Israel would like to do is going to have real consequences in the United States politically. So it takes political sacrifice or political courage on each side, and over the last thirty some years it has been very unusual to

have a time when both parties were actually prepared to exercise that kind of courage.

The United States had a very close relationship with Iran during the days of the Shah. After the Iranian revolution that came to an end. But then, a few years later, in the course of the Iran-Iraq war, the United States had a covert relationship with Iran, where it attempted to sell arms to Iran right in the middle of the war when the United States was actually supporting Iraq. That was a shocking event for the Arabs.

Then the Arabs have watched the United States invade Iraq next door and install a Shia government for the first time in a long, long time. So they look at all of that and say perhaps the United States really wants to do a deal with Iran. The view from the United States is that that's absolutely absurd. But for the Arabs of the Persian Gulf it's not hard to imagine and we will have to deal with that. Our diplomats will have to make an effort to explain that this is something that is to the benefit of everybody involved and Israel falls in the same category. Both the Israelis and the Arabs will be skeptical about any kind of deal between the United States and Iran.

That, however, is no excuse for not doing it.

The United States and Iran have a number of things in common. We would both like to see an end to the drug trade coming out of Afghanistan. Both countries would like to see a stable situation both in Iraq and Afghanistan. We would like to see a calm and stable Persian Gulf. And normal oil trade going on in the gulf. The question is, how do you get there? If the United States and Iran are able to find a common ground to settle the nuclear issue then that removes a lot of problems for other areas, including Syria.

The situation in Syria will require Iran to be involved at some stage. And up until now the United States has resisted the idea of engaging Iran over Syria. If we should have at least moderately successful negotiation I think it would break the ice and permit the United States and other countries in the region to deal with Iran more directly on the issue of Syria, among many other things. ■

Gary Sick worked in the office of International Affairs at the Foundation from 1982 to 1987. He was a member of the National Security Council under Presidents Ford, Carter and Reagan.

SPEAKING OF OFF-THE-WALL GRANTS....

by Will Hertz

Early this year I came across an article in The Detroit News that triggered memories of the most off-the-wall grant I recommended in 20 years of Ford Foundation grant-making.

The article reported a three-day tour by five Michigan transit advocates using public systems to promote the development of regional public transportation systems. The tour, called the Michigan Transportation Odyssey, is a project by Transportation for Michigan, which was funded by the Ford, Kresge and Charles Stewart Mott foundations, the first and third of which are former employers of mine.

The first day of the tour involved travel by public bus from the Detroit Airport to the Ford River Rouge plant, then by the Rosa Parks Transit Center, then on the Detroit People Mover around downtown Detroit. The Detroit People Mover was my baby at the Foundation, with **Lou Winnick's** help in drafting the grant recommendation.



First, a little FF history: In 1968 the Foundation established the Fund for the City of New York to support innovative projects by New York City and its supporting services. An annual appropriation was set by the imputed value of the Foundation's exemption from city real estate taxes.

In 1973, Henry Ford II, a member of the Foundation's board, complained that there was no such funding for the Ford family's

home state—Michigan. To keep peace in the family, the Foundation approved an annual fund for Michigan in the same dollar amount as was appropriated for New York City. These Michigan charities were to receive annual funding determined by the evaluation of the FF building in New York City.

The logic of this escapes me, but **Mac Bundy**—a son of Grand Rapids, Michigan, his Harvard associations notwithstanding—went along with this formula. When I left in 1981, **Frank Thomas**—a native of Brooklyn—abolished the Michigan fund, but the NYC fund still exists, at a more modest level, as an independent FF grantee (2011:

\$300,000 for a project to protect immigrant and migrant rights).

The appropriation for the Fund for Michigan was assigned to the Foundation's Secretary's office for managing and reporting. As the assistant secretary—and the only person in the Secretary's office who had ever written a grant recommendation—I was named responsible program officer.

Continued on next page

Off-the-Wall Grant

Continued from page 5

To do the leg work and help with my decision making, I recruited regular program officers as partners.

One of my first acts was a planning grant of \$400,000 to the Detroit People Mover (DPM). With Henry Ford's involvement and that of his Dearborn staff, it couldn't have been otherwise. With no staff experience in urban transportation, I turned, as I often did in such instances, to Lou Winnick to wing the grant recommendation.

DPM is a 2.9-mile automated, elevated light-rail system, which operates one-way on a single set of tracks, and encircles downtown Detroit. It was promoted to the Foundation as an important asset for business travelers, tourists, residents and downtown workers.

How did FF get involved? Back in 1975, the federal government sponsored a nationwide competition for the planning and construction of innovative urban transportation systems. There were three winners: Detroit, Miami and Baltimore. However, the projects had to be carried out with existing grants, and Baltimore and Miami withdrew from the program. You've guessed it: Detroit proceeded with a grant from the Fund for Michigan.

As might be expected, construction funding was hard to come by. After numerous starts and stops, DPM officially opened in 1987 as a component unit of the city of Detroit. DPM uses the same driver-less technology as Vancouver's SkyTrain and Toronto's Scarborough RT Line.

Has it been successful? The figures to date are not encouraging. At the time of the planning it had a projected ridership of 67,700 a day. In its first year of operation, the figure was only 11,000 and it dropped within a few years to 7,000. The cost-effectiveness figures are even less exciting: \$4.26 in cost per passenger mile in 2009, compared with Detroit bus routes of \$0.82.

Transportation for Michigan now hopes to turn these trends around with the economic recovery under way in metropolitan Detroit and by extending DPM within Detroit and linking it to several public transportation developments planned in the Detroit region, including public rapid transit to and from the airport and the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. ■

Will Hertz is an editor of the LAFF Society newsletter.

CHANGES IN LIFE

by Will Hertz

At 88, Will Hertz, an editor of the newsletter, moved into a new life style that he documents movingly here. It's an insightful and encouraging story that surely is relevant to other LAFF members who would like to share their new starts, whenever they may have occurred since leaving the Foundation. We'd like this to be a regular feature of the newsletter, so we encourage members to contribute to it.

I want to report a major change in my residence and life style. Remember the days when old folks moved in with the family? There now is a better way for those who are ready and willing: independent living in a retirement community.

After losing Annette three years ago, I attempted to carry on as a solo act. I stayed in the house overlooking the water in Yarmouth, Maine, and continued my busy life of writing concert program notes, sitting on boards and editing the newsletter of LAFF. But, despite the continuing affection of friends, family and neighbors, it was a lonely existence, particularly at meal time when Annette and I talked—and talked—and talked. I craved a human voice to go with my pasta.

So in September I sold the house and moved into the Thornton Oaks retirement community in nearby Brunswick. What a change! It's run like a club. Each of us has a two- or three-bedroom suite, beautifully furnished, with dinners together in the dining room. It's a lively bunch. Because of its proximity to Bowdoin College it has a high quotient of retired academics, not just from Bowdoin but from campuses around the country. There is a rewarding series of side activities, including lectures by residents and guests and a bus to musical and theatrical performances in Brunswick and nearby Portland. And I lit the Hanukkah candles as I did every December at the Ford Foundation.

I am giving pre-concert lectures before we leave for the Portland Symphony and Midcoast Symphony concerts and expect to do that in the summer months for the Bowdoin International Music Festival. And I'm thinking about a lecture on Beethoven's deafness—its causes and effects and the way he handled such a crippling disability.

I took a two-bedroom suite in order to

use the larger bedroom as my office. Here I have my shelves of CDs, musical scores and reference books as well as my computer stand and filing cabinets. I need all this for my continuing program-note writing for ten concert organizations in Maine, Massachusetts and Westchester County in New York—a workload of about fifty concerts a year.

Finally, I have a girl friend! Yes, at the ripe old age of 88. She is a retired professor of French and international relations from Berkeley, from an old French-landed family and with a sometimes challenging French accent. And she lives down the hall.

The hardest adjustment for me was living exclusively with old folks. I had lived all my life with younger people—from children through young 30s and middle-age to gray-haired maturity. But some of these seniors are fascinating. My companion, for example, was in the French resistance as a teen-ager and was given a medal by the French government for her contributions to French-American relations.

This was the right move at the right time. I recommend this style of life to those in their senior years who feel the need for a change, dinner companionship and someone else to mow the lawn and shovel the snow.

I suggest, though, that you recruit family help for the difficult and emotionally wrenching task of selecting which of your lifetime possessions to take to your new home. You won't have much room and wall space. I gave most of my furniture to grandchildren setting up new homes within rental-truck distance, and contributed the bulk of my books to a community library for resale. And I made daily runs to the local Good Will collecting station. But I took with me the music-related possessions and the art and handicrafts to make my apartment a personal retreat.

And I would urge you to select a retirement haven in a college community. And one convenient to an airport for visits to family and friends. I'm going to spend nine days in February in London with son, Alan, and his family, enjoying London's lively theater and music. And to refresh my memories, I will return, as I always do, to Churchill's preserved underground war headquarters a block from Downing Street. ■

FORD'S ROLE IN GRAPPLING WITH POVERTY

by Alan Divack

L AFF Society members gathered at a rather unusual venue last fall for a review of the Ford Foundation's attempts to grapple with poverty in the United States over the decades.

The place was the fourth floor of the Emigrant Savings Bank Building at the corner of East Broadway and Grand Street on New York City's Lower East Side, home to the Educational Alliance's Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) facility. The day was November 19.

Being on the lower east side gave several LAFFers the opportunity to take an informal walking tour of the neighborhood for two hours before the meeting, observing how ethnic succession was a constant in the area and getting a personal introduction to the subject they would hear discussed.

The Educational Alliance is a pioneering settlement house founded in 1889 to serve the needs of new immigrants, largely from eastern Europe, and which continues to serve immigrant populations today. Members had suggested that LAFF look for meeting places closer to the locus of foundation programs and we were able to use the EA facility through the efforts of **Jennifer Powell**, formerly of Ford's Economic Development program and now EA's vice president for development. Although Ford has partnered with other grantees in its programs in the neighborhood, it was refreshing to meet where work of the kind the Foundation has long supported was taking place.

The excellent acoustics facilitated the lively discussion at the meeting, where two former and one current Foundation staff members gave presentations: **Henry Saltzman**, who served in the late 1950s and early 1960s in the Public Affairs program; **Robert Curvin**, who was director of the Urban Poverty program in the late 1980s and early 1990s and then was Vice President for Communications, and **George (Mac) McCarthy**, current director of Ford's Metropolitan Opportunity program. In part because of the strengths and experience of the speakers, the meeting focused on community development broadly defined, and dealt just briefly with such areas as workforce development, work supports and financial services for the poor.



The speakers, from the left, Robert Curvin, Henry Saltzman and George McCarthy.

After welcomes by **Michael Seltzer**, chair of the LAFF Society program committee, and myself, chair and organizer of the event, Saltzman discussed the origins of the Foundation's Gray Area programs of the late 1950s and early 1960s, which dealt with the problem of new migrants to urban areas, largely African-Americans from the rural south and, to a lesser extent, Puerto Ricans, and which grew out of the early Great Cities programs, which had worked on problems of large urban school districts. The program's focus on in-migration, Saltzman said, was in part a way to address the needs of disadvantaged racial and ethnic minorities without tackling the issue of race head on.

Paul Ylvisaker, director of the Public Affairs program at the time and the key figure in the beginning efforts to address issues of poverty and race, conceived of the Gray Areas programs as a way of dealing with the needs of the poor in a more holistic way. Although schools remained central to the effort, the Foundation worked with partners, generally a public benefit corporation tied to the local government, to provide a wide range of services and involve the population in decision making.

After the Gray Areas programs, the Foundation began to address the needs of poor communities largely through community development corporations. The first CDCs were founded in the late 1960s with Ford involvement, led by the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation. Although Curvin did not join the Foundation until the late 1980s, at which point he had oversight for CDC programs, he had been involved with

CDCs as a community activist in Newark, N.J., in the late 1960s.

CDCs were non-profits that brought together community leaders with representatives of foundations, government and the private sector to mobilize resources for the communities. Curvin discussed one of the more powerful critiques of the CDCs, which is that essentially they became housing development organizations and did not deal adequately with other needs of the poor. This

position was advanced most forcefully by Nicholas Lemann in an article in *The New York Times Magazine* in 1994, where he argued that the needs of poor people would have been met better by enabling them to move to communities where they had access to jobs, education and services rather than by attempting to develop better housing that would keep them in the communities where they lived.

Curvin said that after several decades of reflection he had come to see the value in Lemann's critique and spoke with passion of programs designed to increase the incomes of the poor, in particular the Earned Income Tax Credit.

George McCarthy explained how, when the Foundation reorganized its programs in 2009, it attempted to take a system approach to urban problems, to see what had and had not worked and where, given the limited philanthropic resources, it could intervene with the most impact. The focus of the program now is on how to support efforts that reach beyond individual neighborhoods and cities to connect residents with opportunities in their broader metropolitan economies. Ford supports organizations that pursue integrated approaches to housing; land use and environmental planning; public transportation and community infrastructure, and aligned workforce opportunities.

One issue raised in the lively discussion that followed was the role of education in antipoverty programs. Questions also were raised whether Ford and other foundation programs have adequately addressed the problem of growing economic inequality in recent decades and whether the use of the proxy power of endowments to limit executive compensation would be a useful strategy to address this. ■

The LAFF Society
c/o Nellie Toma
PO Box 701107
East Elmhurst, NY 11370

The Laffing Parade

Continued from page 1

White House....I was about movement politics, about ideas, about vision, about how to get regular people engaged in the process of making the world a better place.”

She got into television by accident, when a cable executive approached her at a conference. She was, said the executive, Geraldine Laybourne, “incredibly articulate about complex issues. She had a point of view and could put it forward in a way that made people listen to her.”

And read her. During the presidential campaign last year she wrote in a commentary on Foxnews.com that Rep. Paul Ryan’s vice presidential acceptance speech was characterized by three words: “dazzling”, “deceiving” and “distracting”. It was, she wrote, “an apparent attempt to set the world record for the greatest number of blatant lies and misrepresentations slipped into a single political speech.”

The posting collected 2.1 million hits, making it one of the site’s top five original posts for the year.

David Smock, who worked in the Africa

and Middle East offices from 1964 to 1980, has co-edited a new book published by the United States Institute of Peace Press titled *Facilitating Dialogue: USIP’s Work in Conflict Zones*.

He is senior vice president of the institute’s Centers of Innovation and director of its Religion and Peacemaking Center.

Radhika Balakrishnan was featured in an article in *The Nation* magazine in which the author, Laura Flanders, discussed human rights as a national political issue. “We could do with some good human rights lawyers in the budget debate in Washington,” she wrote.

She quoted Balakrishnan that, “Looking at the election we have just been through, if we had been looking at this from a human rights lens, every candidate would have to have spoken about poverty” because governments have obligations to the most vulnerable in the society.

Flanders paraphrased Balakrishnan that under international human rights accords, only some of which have been ratified by the United States, humans have rights and governments have duties, among them the duty to use the “maximum available resources” to

realize the basic human rights of their people. “All of these discussions that are taking place as ‘you’re for the rich or you’re for the poor’ can be addressed in a very different way,” Balakrishnan said.

She worked in the Asia and Pacific Office of the Foundation from 1992 to 1995 and now is director of the Center for Women’s Global Leadership, at Rutgers University.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2012

BALANCE ON 12/31/11 \$8,236.84

INCOME

Dues, donations, interest \$4,050.36

EXPENSES

Newsletters \$1,944.07

Secretarial services (Dorothy Nixon) 290.00

PO Box, supplies and postage 301.09

Meeting expenses 28.00

Google Checkout fees 35.97

Wire transfer fees 30.00

TOTAL EXPENSES \$2,629.13

Income/Expenses \$1,421.23

BALANCE ON 12/31/12 \$9,658.07