"I hold that man is largely an optimist, a scraper of starlight and that this, in practical life, is what has made his life better.” (1954 interview)

Notes From the Director
Susan Shillinglaw

The bill of sale is signed. The National Steinbeck Center building at One Main Street is now owned by CSU Monterey Bay. Approximately half of the building will be occupied by CSUMB and the other 43% rented back to the National Steinbeck Center. As always, NSC doors are open daily at 10; the museum store is restocked (with best-selling books, t-shirts, mugs and new products—California bingo and Steinbeck soap); the Steinbeck biographical film greets visitors, as always, and we’re planning fall and winter events. On October 29, the NSC is hosting a book launch by Claudia Meléndez—that event is also the first in the Sweet Thursday series. From October 24-November 29, Hijos del Sol is mounting a Day of the Dead exhibit at the NSC. From December 18-20, the NSC hosts the Salinas Valley Comic Con, co-presented by the Salinas Public Library (library events on Saturday, December 19 at the John Steinbeck Library).

While sale of the building is the headline news, many other events occupy staff on a daily basis. On August 25, Steinbeck’s great, great niece, Molly Knight, visited the NSC to read from her recently published bestseller, The Best Team Money Can Buy, about the L.A. Dodgers. Appearing in Salinas a month after her book was released, Molly admitted her Steinbeck connection for the first time; she didn’t mention Steinbeck relatives to her publisher because she wanted her book to stand on its own, she told the audience.

“[A writer] is somewhat in the same position as a baseball player. In either art it is very easy to go from a hero to a bum.”
—John Steinbeck, 1953

continued on page 9

CALENDAR
Call 831.775.4721 for more information on our upcoming events.

DÍAS DE MUERTOS “El Despojo/Undermining Earth”
October 24 – November 29
Exhibition and workshops sponsored by Hijos del Sol

November 1, 3:00 – 8:00 pm
Mask Making, face painting, dancers

SWEET THURSDAYS
October 29, 5:30 pm
Reception, book launch, and book signing of Claudia Meléndez’s, A Fighting Chance

November 19, 5:30 pm
Musician Casey Frazier plays folk ballads, “mellow acoustic, a sonic landscape reminiscent of a Steinbeck story: a little country, a little dramatic, a little ethereal.”
In August, the National Steinbeck Center held two contests on social media, one for Smile Week and another for National Dog Day.

Earlier in the month, three of us convened for a late-afternoon brainstorming session in the NSC conference room, PR Consultant Marci Bracco, Director Susan Shillinglaw, and me. Also present at the table were Marci’s adorable bulldog, Hugo, and Susan’s equally adorable half-boxer half-Anatolian shepherd, Charley (think CM Coolidge’s Dogs Play Poker—a triumph of marketing—except without the alcohol, cigars, or gambling).

We began by addressing issues like the duration of each contest, how accessible we wanted to make them, and what would incentivize people to participate. Both contests followed the same template: a Steinbeck quote tied to a timely event and a call to action. I hoped that online fans would reflect on a quote, be incentivized by the prize and the timely nature of the event, and upload a picture.

Smile Week’s quote was from East of Eden: “He smiled at her as a man might smile at a memory.” Participants were to upload a picture of themselves with their favorite Steinbeck book using the hashtag #SteinbeckSmile, and to let us know why the book is a treasured memory. We offered an “I Love Steinbeck” bumper stickers as a prize.

National Dog Day’s quote was from Travels with Charley, of course: “I’ve seen a look in dogs’ eyes, a quick vanishing look of amazed contempt, and I am convinced that basically dogs think humans are nuts.” Participants were asked to upload a picture of their dog’s “look of amazed contempt” and tag the picture with the hashtag #SteinbeckDog. This prize was a basket of dog toys, a copy of Travels with Charley, and an “I Love Steinbeck” bumper sticker.

The day before the start of Smile week, I worried that no one would participate. Ironically, I didn’t spend much time smiling that week. I tried to refrain from checking Facebook, Instagram and Twitter incessantly, but ended up doing so against my better judgment. Luckily we received a few entries on the first day, assuaging my fear about the contest’s success. In total, we received 15 entries via Instagram, 5 through Twitter, and 3 on Facebook. The contest was far from a slam-dunk; most of those entries were submitted at the start of the week and, by day four, the submissions flat-lined. Still, I was satisfied.

I wasn’t as anxious about our National Dog Day contest as I had been about our Smile Week outreach. Second time around was a success. We received 35 entries on Instagram, 32 on Twitter, and 86 on Facebook (as well as an entry of a cat that self-identifies as a dog). Although we advertised one winner, I selected three honorable mentions because there were so many handsome dogs.

Our online pawprint is growing! Watch for the next installment.
Lovely books

Visit the NSC restocked bookstore!
New titles, new editions, new products!

Bookstore manager Yessenia Guzman and I are working to expand stock at the bookstore. This summer I ordered more Penguin titles and also asked Elda Rotor, associate publisher and editorial director of Penguin Classics, to tell me something about two series I love. —ss

Penguin Drop Caps

Elda Rotor

Our Penguin art director Paul Buckley first introduced me to Jessica Hische’s wonderful typography on her site Daily Drop Cap. Paul and I were thinking of a new series to create, and we both thought it would be ambitious and exciting to commission her to illustrate the covers for a series, from A to Z, creating letterforms unique to each book and author. I created a hardcover classics collection for gift-giving, and built a series that features both perennial classics by Bronte, Austen, Cather, and Dickens with modern classics by Ishiguro, Rushdie, Lee and Tan. Jessica’s cover art draws in fans of typography, and Paul’s vision for a rainbow spectrum of book spines continues to find new audiences among the design crowd. I suggested an octopus for Steinbeck’s Cannery Row, specifically to honor the friendship between Steinbeck and Ed Ricketts, whose Pacific Biological Laboratories has a fantastic logo. I also thought an octopus was fitting because for each Penguin Drop Cap we feature a special quote from each work on the back cover. For Steinbeck, it reads “Perhaps that might be the way to write this book—to open the page and to let the stories crawl in by themselves.” People have loved collecting the Drop Caps, many enjoy not just finding their favorite author or discovering a new one, but collecting their initials, or spelling out names. They make perfect gifts for birthdays, graduations, weddings, and births.

The NSC bookstore has a complete set of both these editions, as well as several copies of Drop Cap “S,” Steinbeck’s Cannery Row.

PENGUIN THREADS

Etsy was such a phenomena and movement, and the embrace of the handmade inspired me to think about what we could do with Classics for this type of reader. At the same time, Paul Buckley came to my office with a small embroidered piece he bought (from Etsy!) to start a conversation we both had buzzing in our heads at the same time. I selected books that are classics both cherished by adults but very special for children as well. I was excited especially to do something with Black Beauty, which we never had in Penguin Classics before. Paul commissioned the great Jillian Tamaki for the first three titles, and the very talented Rachel Sumpter for the next three. The brilliant packaging he directed includes shooting original embroidered canvases, debossing the covers to replicate the feel of the needlework, and, this is my absolute favorite part, reproducing the back of the original canvases. This usually elicits a gasp from readers when they look at the inside covers, and to me it’s a completely perfect note, a celebration of the handmade, the artistic process, and a perfect introduction to reading these wonderful works of literature.

“I think [Al] Capp may very possibly be the best writer in the world today.” —John Steinbeck, 1953

DECEMBER 18-20, National Steinbeck Center and the John Steinbeck Library, December 19

Presented by

For details and tickets visit: www.steinbeck.org
Graphic Novels Hit NSC Book Store

Jesse Banda, Events and Comic Con Director

There is one new addition to our bookstore that is catching the eyes of comic fans. That is our new graphic novels section. I thought I would take this opportunity to discuss a couple of them, along with the impact they have had in the literature world.

**Watchmen** – Written by Alan Moore in 1986, it touched on the subject of what would happen if superheroes existed in the real world. What kind of an impact would they have had on critical moments in history? Would they save us from evil or be the cause of greater destruction? After its publication *Watchmen* became the first graphic novel to win a Hugo Award, and was listed by *Time* magazine in their 100 Greatest Novels list in 2005.

**Maus Vols. I and II** – Created by Art Spiegelman, this is the illustrated story of his father’s survival in Nazi concentration camps. Spiegelman uses different animals to represent Nazis and Jews, touching on how propaganda films used to depict them. *Maus* was created by Spiegelman recording conversations with his father and talking with other family members and friends who also survived. From there an amazing tale of survival was created.

Upon the release of *Maus Vol. I* in 1986, the book garnered not only great reviews but also went on to win a Pulitzer Prize in 1992. The novel proved to be so popular that Spiegelman convinced the *New York Times* to change the books’ listing from “Fiction” to “Non-Fiction.”

In the NSC bookstore, we also set up a display of comic history. This display includes original Disney comic book prints from the 1950’s and 60’s and original art work from the French graphic novel adaptation of *Of Mice and Men*.

ARCHIVES

Sweet Thursday Archive

Lisa Josephs, Archivist

When Susan Shillinglaw hired me as Archivist in June, her first assignment for me was to go through the Ernest and Twyla Martin Collection (donated to the NSC in December, 2014) to produce a contents list. My first surprise in this assignment was seeing that the whole collection is housed in a black rolling suitcase. The second surprise was how heavy that suitcase is. Suddenly, the wheels made sense; lifting it onto and off of a table was bad enough without having to carry it from the shelf in the Archives out to my work table.

As I started to sift through the contents, it was dizzying, fascinating, a little confusing, and ultimately satisfying. The collection contains nearly 500 pages of hand and typewritten material, including letters, “Bear Flag” and “Sweet Thursday” manuscript pieces, and random notes and lists. Inventorying the contents was daunting, at first, but I grew more and more comfortable with the items as I went on. The letters, notes, and ideas in this collection are captivating. In some of the letters, Steinbeck writes of his sadness in finishing “Bear Flag,” because he felt...
Taking on Steinbeck’s canon during the summer evolved into a much more intensive project than I originally imagined. By the time I reached Travels with Charley and the posthumously published The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights, I traced an incredible number of similarities in Steinbeck’s works, all the way back to his first novel, Cup of Gold.

Cup of Gold, the adventurous and “swashbuckling” tale of Captain Henry Morgan, kept luring me back. Critics who have written about Cup of Gold focus primarily on Morgan’s quest to capture Panama and the mysterious La Santa Roja, who captures the hearts of every man who sees her. Other critics trace Arthurian threads in the story. But after reading all this criticism, I realized that there is one character who receives no critical attention—Morgan’s childhood “friend,” Elizabeth, daughter of a poor tenant farmer.

When Henry leaves home, bound for the Indies, Elizabeth cries out for Henry not to go; by his old age, Henry has transformed Elizabeth into an unobtainable princess. The story of their “farewell” becomes more and more detailed and traditionally romantic, but also further and further from the truthful memory of young Henry’s feelings for Elizabeth. He steeped his “memory” in emotion, and draws in his listener with his elaborate tale of heartbreak and forgotten love.

At the end of the novel, Elizabeth returns to Henry in his dying hallucinations. She returns (in spirit) to Henry, Morgan as the childlike figure he once knew. She is once again “little Elizabeth” and not the fabricated forbidden princess whom he wished to wed.

In examining Morgan’s inspiration I found a pattern in Steinbeck’s writing. As a little boy, Steinbeck was enchanted by Le Morte D’Arthur, and he used this love of Arthurian Legend as a foundational theme for many of his works from beginning (Cup of Gold), to the end (Act of King Arthur). Arthur was to Steinbeck what Elizabeth was to Morgan, both holding significant childhood value that could never seem to dissipate with adulthood. Like Arthur, Steinbeck’s characters are always on a quest for something. Whether it be security, freedom, friendship, or a deeper understanding into the mysteries of humanity, each character holds in their hearts some version of the Holy Grail.

Bookending Steinbeck’s career with Cup of Gold and Act of King Arthur is, for me, richly suggestive.

By reading Steinbeck’s works in chronological order, I feel like I have a much deeper sense of the man than I would have had I read them in order of personal preference, length, or universal popularity.

In another letter, he calls himself a “restless organism” and speculates on his next project, suggesting a political essay as a possibility. Later, buried among pieces of manuscripts and typescripts, I found exactly that. The essay juxtaposes the 17th and 20th centuries. Steinbeck writes about Englishman Titus Oates, who gained notoriety through his “Popish Plot,” a conspiracy to kill King Charles II.

In the course of Steinbeck’s account, Oates accuses hundreds of Catholics of being in on the conspiracy, which led to the execution of at least 15 innocent men. Steinbeck juxtaposes this craze of accusing Catholics and the irrational fear of Jesuits with America in 1953 and the fear of Communism. Steinbeck offers no direct critique of McCarthyism, but the parallel between America’s Red Scare and the story of a perjurer, whose dishonesty was later discovered and his reputation shattered, does suggest his disgust with McCarthy.

These three pages, more than any other piece, helped me understand a little of Steinbeck’s personality. This essay is a wink and a nod, letting the reader draw their own conclusions, but still quietly revealing Steinbeck’s own views on the subject. Once I read it, I found it easier to see that wink, nod, or wry smile in other parts of the manuscripts and letters.
Ellwood Graham Portrait
donated to the NSC by Karen Kadushin

Graham met John Steinbeck and his friend Edward F. Ricketts in Santa Barbara in the mid 1930s. Soon after, Graham moved to Monterey, buying lots on Huckleberry Hill, most for about $75.00 each. He knew Steinbeck when he was “a voraciously hungry writer,” in Graham’s words. John and Ed called Graham “The Painter Laureate of Cannery Row” and when he was writing Sea of Cortez in 1940, John commissioned Graham to do his portrait: “John didn’t want a conventional study,” said Graham. “‘Paint out loud’ he often said—so I had him come to my Huckleberry Hill studio. For at least a month, I guess, he sat at a table on a model stand” and wrote Sea of Cortez.

At the time of this drawing—a study for the portrait—Steinbeck was separated from his wife of 10 years, Carol Henning Steinbeck, and he was, as Graham notes, “in turmoil, and this is what I showed in my sketches and, of course, in the painting.”

Steinbeck also paid Graham’s way to Mexico so that Graham could paint Mexican subjects.

Notes from the Archives
Mary Gamble, Salinas Public Library Archivist

As I look through the extensive Steinbeck Archives now at the National Steinbeck Center, I am reminded of the many people who have visited, and those who have contributed their time, their stories, and their memorabilia to this fine collection. I recently reviewed the typescript of “The Snake,” which first appeared in that “short-lived publishing venture,” The Monterey Beacon, June 22, 1935.

The Salinas Public Library was given the typescript, along with a copy of The Monterey Beacon, by De Vere G. Arnold, Ph.D. Evidently Dr. Arnold visited the Salinas Public Library where he spoke with Gordon Joblon who often greeted the many visitors to the Library’s Steinbeck Room.

It seems that De Vere G. Arnold, Ph.D., was a “fledgling printer” at the Beacon in 1935 when the story was published. He asked the author if he could keep the typescript and Steinbeck obliged. Many years later after visiting the library and talking to Mr. Joblon, Mr. Arnold sent it to the Salinas Public Library. In his cover letter, Mr. Arnold reminisces about the magazine, his acquaintance with John and Carol Steinbeck, and “The Snake” typescript.

He comments that the publishers of this magazine, nationally recognized by a few as “among the best of the little magazines...had a wide circle of acquaintances around the Monterey Peninsula, and the printshop (sometimes restaurant and sometimes riding stable) became something of a gathering place for struggling writers, actors and horse plays, local gossip and how to train horses.”

Mr. Arnold remembers that: “Several times a week John used to stop by and visit. He enjoyed the printshop with its smell of pine lumber, ink, paper and the molten lead from the Linotype.”

The young printer thought Steinbeck “a common enough sort, dressed in blue jeans and rough shirt with the bluest eyes I ever saw. He was about 33 at the time, quiet but solid.” He also adds that “John was quite proud of his wife Carol’s poetry,” which appeared in the Beacon. De Vere remembers Carol as a “lively, friendly girl,” and said that all of them “showed a flair for words and a keen sense of humor.”

When Steinbeck offered his rejected story, “The Snake,” to help fill out the June 22nd issue, The Monterey Beacon accepted. But De Vere said he managed to keep his own advice on improving the piece to himself. In his letter he reflects that he is glad he did. “Who knew that this story would be republished again and again as his (Steinbeck’s) fame and stature grew.”

Two pages from this first typescript of that much reprinted tale are on display at the National Steinbeck Center. A copy of Mr. De Vere G. Arnold’s letter dated 15 July 1983 and the source of all the above quotes, as well as the entire typescript and a copy of The Monterey Beacon, is in the Steinbeck Archives at the National Steinbeck Center.
Volunteers

Love of Steinbeck Spans the World

Diane Arellano, Volunteer Coordinator

One of the reasons our volunteers enjoy spending time at the National Steinbeck Center is the opportunity to meet people from across the nation and around the world. John’s books have been translated into more than 42 languages. Recently, an American literature professor from Hungary mentioned Steinbeck as being a prominent part of his curriculum, and donated a book to the Center’s archives collection.

Our docents and greeters ask guests to sign a guest book, so we have a record of from where our guests are visiting. So far, in 2015, we have had guests from 41 U.S., states including Kentucky, Alaska, and Maine, and 40 foreign countries including the Netherlands, Pakistan, Estonia and Hungary. Many of our volunteers have traveled oversees, so when someone arrives from a place they have visited, a common bond is quickly made, and conversations commence about the guest’s homeland and why they read Steinbeck.

For some visitors, Steinbeck is a voice for the underdog; he writes of social injustice, but for one couple from Italy, a Steinbeck book is what brought them together. “I was sitting at an outdoor café; I saw a gentleman reading a Steinbeck book. I also like Steinbeck, so I started a conversation and now we have been married for 20 years.” L.D. from South Africa, found a different perspective on a favorite novel, “Very interesting; see East of Eden in a new light.”

Our volunteers invite guests to have a seat with them at the Docent Desk, as they answer questions on John, or to discuss a guest’s favorite book or part of the museum. H.M. from Massachusetts commented on her walk through the Steinbeck exhibit, “What an excellent collection—the museum is far more fascinating that I expected! The way it brings his literature to life is unlike anything I’ve ever experienced.”

Become part of our volunteer team! I can be reached at 831.796.3833 or diane@steinbeck.org. We would love to have more Museum Greeters and Tour Guides sharing the knowledge of Steinbeck with our guests. We also need help with the website, with updating membership lists, and with Steinbeck Young Authors!

Visitor Comments:

Brett was in the middle of his own cross country trip, inspired by Travels with Charley.

Loved this museum! I would only suggest to make the “Travels with Charley” map quotes more optimistic. Most all quotes on there felt overly negative, which is not the tone of the book as a whole. He felt only love for Montana, so why not include that? Besides that, the rest of the museum is really wonderful. —Brett, Highland Park, IL

A Literary Garden

Susan Shillinglaw

Jennifer McQuillan teaches English at West Bloomfield High School in Michigan, where she cultivates a “literary garden” with her students. This summer she collected clippings from authors’ gardens across the east coast—a daylily from Emily Dickinson’s yard, wisteria from Mark Twain’s Hartford, Connecticut house. From me she requested a Steinbeck clipping. Poppy, I thought, or lupin (East of Eden). Or perhaps geraniums (The Red Pony) or chrysanthemums (“The Chrysanthemums”) or fuchsias (“The White Quail”) or maybe even an orange tree, as Ma Joad envisioned in California? I suggested them all when I wrote back to her, noting how much Steinbeck loved his Pacific Grove garden: “My garden is so lovely that I shall hate ever to leave it,” he wrote a friend in 1930. “I have turtles in the pond now and water grasses... We have a vine house in back with ferns and tuberous begonias. We have a large cineraria bed in bloom and the whole yard is alive with nasturtiums.”

Jennifer reminded me gently that in her “literary garden” contained only ancient vines, so to speak; she wanted a plant cultivated by Steinbeck’s own “planters’ hands.” That was a tougher assignment. I called Virginia St. Jean, part owner of the 11th Street cottage, and asked if any plant was very old: “The mattress vine that John planted! And I’m glad to give that. I want to get rid of it,” the vine that once covered the side of the house facing 11th Street.

Might we plant a less ambitious “literary garden” in the NSC patio, cultivating in containers all the flowers and weeds mentioned in Steinbeck’s books? Volunteers take note!
Why I love email
Susan Shillinglaw

I miss letters. I miss slicing open envelopes hand addressed to me; admiring monogrammed cards (Elaine Steinbeck’s, thick cream stock with blue engraving); or filing the rambling, heavily corrected and delightful letters of Steinbeck scholar Warren French. Steinbeck sometimes signed his letters with a little drawing of a duck (writing to his wife Gwen or to his two boys) or stamped them with his Pigasus stamp, “To the stars on the wings of a pig.” Who wouldn’t save that?

But emails are delightful in their own way, simply because I sometimes open random questions from distant voices. This from a summer visitor to the NSC:

…near the railway car (to the left as you are walking through the museum) I heard the narrator speaking about John Steinbeck’s views on teaching shop in schools so that young people may not become carpenters but they will know how to build a chicken coop and who knows what other advantages this will bring to society.

Do you have a web link where I could get the exact quote? Or do you have the correct words and the date and time they were spoken?

I think what he said was really important and educators still need to hear this message. (Norm Hann, Toronto, Canada)

Steinbeck was a lifelong woodcarver and fixer of doors.

This email came from England:

I am an Event Manager by day in the UK and international antiquarian book trade, and a designer bookbinder by night with a first class BA Honours degree in the subject. I have long been looking for a binding copy of East of Eden worthy of a full leather binding decorated with a modern unique design using traditionally gold tooling techniques. I have been sitting on a design idea for this book for many years and must bind it soon or I will burst! (Marianne Harwood)

You can’t easily illustrate an email, unless it’s a sexy winky, a favorite of my students.

I hung fire on answering this email, since I couldn’t place the quote; my intrepid archivist Lisa, on the job for only two months, found it for me in ½ hour. The source is the 1919 El Gabilan yearbook, where young Steinbeck writes about the Salinas High School shop:

For a progressive, useful and practical shop, ours is equal to any in the state. While very few of the woodworking students may become carpenters, many of them in the future will build their own chicken houses and fix that kitchen door because of their high school training. Neatness, efficiency and accuracy are among the lessons which will be the most useful in later life and these are only a few among the assets of the woodworking course...People are coming to realize that neither the work of the head alone or the hands alone is successful, but that a careful blending of them is the true way to the top of the hill and so forge is the addition.
What is more certain is that fifteen leather-bound copies of *Grapes* were auctioned by the “John Steinbeck Committee,” dedicated to migrant relief and organized by Helen Gahagan Douglas.

In 2014, for the 75th anniversary of *Grapes*, Viking Press again bound *Grapes* in leather, an embossed tractor on the cover, a coffee pot on the spine, a sunset on the back cover—appropriate emblems for Steinbeck’s novel about the land, about nourishment, about endurance.

Email has its own expansive pleasures. 😊

**From the Director, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

As it does—it’s a lively, readable text (signed copies available in the NSC bookstore). A few Giants fans were present on August 25—no heckling—and a few Dodgers fans (one drove from the Central Valley), and many Steinbeck aficionados—a capacity audience of over 80 in the Vista Room. Molly fielded questions as gracefully as a shortstop. *East of Eden*, she admitted, was her favorite Steinbeck book. After her reading she signed 45 copies!

On September 5, the all-female Mariachi band, Mariachi Femenil Tecalitlan U.S.A. was a showstopper at the Mariachi Festival. Lead singers circled the room and enticed the audience. At the end of the evening—close to midnight—the other two Mariachi bands—the excellent Mariachi Tradicion and Mariachi Mexicanisimo—joined the women in a phalanx of voices and trumpets and guitars, surround sound, to be sure.

Another female showstopper was Jacqui Warda, ace pilot, on September 23, an inspirational speaker sponsored by *The Salinas Californian*. Jacqui spoke to an audience of 90—most were young women, some were aspiring pilots themselves. She told her life story, noting how determination and a passion for flight took her from waitress to pilot. Jacqui is among a handful of female stunt pilots in the U.S.

It was, in short, a month of inspirational women at the Center.

Watch for further announcements about the forthcoming Sweet Thursday series, which begins October 29. Why the name? As Steinbeck was completing his novella *Sweet Thursday* in 1954, he mused: “this has been a lot of fun—fun in the direction of invention.” On one or two Thursdays each month, at 5:30 pm, the National Steinbeck Center will present inventive programs on various topics, each distinctive, each interactive, all inspired by the range of Steinbeck’s creativity and social engagement: “I am really a restless organism, casting about for the next thing,” he wrote after penning the last scene of *Sweet Thursday*. Inspired by energy of this mid-career novella, a madcap sequel to *Cannery Row*, topics in this series will honor Steinbeck’s inventiveness and his relevance to the contemporary world.

Finally, the NSC Board appointed me Director at the September 21 meeting. I’m deeply grateful for the chance to lead the Center during this time of transition and exciting new directions. I look forward to NSC and CSUMB collaborations.
**This fall New York State reads Travels with Charley**

Stand aside, Route 66. The eastern seaboard’s Route 1, a highway that winds from Fort Kent, Maine, to Key West, Florida, is launching a common read to celebrate the highway, Read1Book.

For 2015, the Empire State Center for the Book’s Read1Book is John Steinbeck’s Travels with Charley, In Search of America. Steinbeck drove some of Route 1 in 1960, when he left Sag Harbor, New York for his trip around America. For more, see www.empirestatebook.org

There you’ll find this treasure: Baron’s Cove Restaurant in Sag Harbor has a Travels with Charley cocktail on the menu.

**Travels with Charley—famous again!**

On October 5 a film crew for the European public broadcast arts and culture channel ARTE (often compared to PBS) visited the NSC to shoot part of a documentary film inspired by Travels with Charley. During September they took their own cross country road trip, starting in New York City and driving the southern route to San Francisco. One of the producers wrote to me:

“The protagonist of our film will be an Austrian-American actor who grew up in the US but has lost touch with his home country since moving to Germany at the age of 17. He is now Steinbeck’s age at the time of his trip and ready to rediscover America! He will be going on the trip with a dog of course, though we don’t have a pure-bred poodle but instead a lovable mutt named Betsy.”

www.travelswithbetsy.com

**Lights and phones**

David Butler

The Center is replacing the 250 flood lamps in the John Steinbeck Museum with low wattage, long life LED floods. The reduced wattage will significantly reduce our electric bill. Coupling this with the PG&E incentive rebate program this conversion has a payback of only a few months. In addition the LED floods will last 7 times longer resulting in less replacement.

The Center will be upgrading its phone system to an Internet Cloud Voice service with a significant savings. Our current analog system is old technology with limited cost saving features.

**Travels with Charley: Cocktail Origin Whisky Sour**

- 2 oz Virgin Kaine high rye bourbon
- 1 oz lemon juice
- .75 oz peach agave (see below)
- Splash club soda

Glass: Rocks
Garnish: Mint sprig

Add all ingredients to cocktail shaker except club soda. Fill with ice. Hard shake for 8 to 10 seconds until snowball cold to touch. Add splash club soda. Double strain over ice in large rocks glass. Garnish with mint sprig

**Peach Agave** makes about 750 ml

- 2 T loose leaf peach tea or about 8 bags
- 13 oz light organic agave syrup
- 13 oz water

Mix all ingredients in pot and stir to blend agave and water. Bring to light boil. Remove from heat. Cover for 30 min to hour. Strain out tea into bottle. Keep refrigerated. Lasts 4 to 6 weeks

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2016 THE 2016 STEINBECK FESTIVAL will be held the first weekend in May, 6-8:
From Salinas to Sea of Cortez; Steinbeck on Land and Sea

This year, we’re planning tours around the Salinas Valley (more to come) as well as on Monterey Bay (squid dissections included pre-launch). Presenters include Steinbeck scholar Robert DeMott on Saturday as well as a team from Modesto on Sunday, participating in a teachers’ workshop and discussing their NEH curriculum grant, “The Search for Common Ground: Culture in the Central Valley.” Details in January NEWS.
The NSC Board: As I move into position of Director of the National Steinbeck Center, I want to thank the NSC board and Nolan Kennedy for their collective commitment to the Center. Without their steadfast loyalty the sale of the building to CSUMB would not have been finalized.

Colleen Bailey, former Executive Director of the NSC, for hours and hours of work during the 18 months leading up to the sale of the building.

Chris Steinbruner, Chair, for his unflagging patience as he helped to negotiate the sale.

Lino Belli, also on the executive team that attended meetings, nudging the sale along.

Nolan Kennedy, the lawyer who made sure all the details meshed… so many details.

Jimmy Panetta, whose energy kept the board on track during those 18 months.

Ricky Cabrera, who single handedly plans and executes the Mariachi Festival. What an evening. Ricky also brings to the NSC his superb collection of charro saddles and costumes, some worn by his father.

Dennis Donohue, former mayor of Salinas, whose vision for Salinas is writ large, an inspiration for our future.

Ana Toledo, Nan Lesnick and Natalie Rava have each offered suggestions for the future of the NSC. Each grounds me.

John Turner, Steinbeck collector and friend of many years, who is always ready to listen… and to offer brilliant suggestions: another Books and Bites in Monterey.

Thanks also to former co-Directors Lori Wood and Elizabeth Welden-Smith, who also worked very hard at guiding the Center forward during that challenging year.

Thanks to volunteers:
On October 8 a volunteers meeting will be held at the NSC to discuss the May Steinbeck Festival. Thanks to Carol Robles for organizing the team!

Thanks to Marci Bracco and Julie Minnis who are coordinating the Steinbeck Young Authors program for 2015-16. My former student, Anita Leonard is helping marshal support in South County. Teachers, please sign up for this wonderful program that immerses middle school students in John Steinbeck’s The Red Pony. In 2016, the NSC will sponsor a Day of Writing in King City as well as Salinas.

Call 831.775.4729 or visit www.steinbeck.org
STEINBECK YOUNG AUTHORS, GRADES 6, 7, 8

Day of Writing

Monday, March 7, 2016 (King City) • 8:00 am – 3:00 pm
Tuesday, March 8, 2016 (Salinas) • 8:00 am – 3:00 pm
National Steinbeck Center • One Main Street, Salinas

Middle school students explore the excitement of writing and enhance their writing skills by reading and discussing John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*.

**STAGE 1: Classroom Component.** Engaging class activities and progressive writing activities that focus on *The Red Pony* as well as a rubric for assessing the students’ writing skills.

**STAGE 2: Day of Writing: March 7 in King City or March 8 in Salinas**

Day of Writing event for teacher-nominated students in different categories: Proficient Advanced Writer, Emerging Writer, English Language Learners. Students’ essays from the Day of Writing are reviewed by a panel of expert judges.

**STAGE 3: Awards Ceremony – April 16, 2016.** Awards given in all categories, plus special Judges’ Awards recognizing students with unusual achievements. All students who participate in the Day of Writing receive a certificate of participation, the *Gabilan Journal*, which includes all recognized essays, and an edition of *The Red Pony*.

Commitment to participate must be received by October 16, 2015

For additional information contact Eric Mora, Eric@Steinbeck.org or Susan Shillinglaw, Susan@Steinbeck.org. 831.775.4729.