PSU President Wim Wiewel will host his annual luncheon for retired faculty and staff at noon on April 17, in the Columbia Falls Ballroom of University Place, 310 SW Lincoln Street, Portland. He will bring us up to date on University programs and planning.

The luncheon is also a great opportunity to reconnect with colleagues and friends, meet our RAPS Scholarship recipient, and hear about a significant program within RAPS. RAPS awards to outstanding faculty and staff will be announced, as will election results for RAPS officers for the 2014-15 academic year. Parking will be available at University Place; if you have a PSU parking permit, please display it. If you don’t have a permit please tell the parking kiosk attendant our event code, #12925.

If you plan to attend the luncheon, please respond by Wednesday, April 9, to Lauren Vannini at lvannini@pdx.edu or 503725-2168.
President’s Message

As president of RAPS and a former department chair, I was especially moved by Governor Barbara Roberts’ March presentation. She spoke of the importance of history, of knowing the history of when and how women gained voice in the public sphere, and where we are in the 21st century. She addressed the importance of female role models for young women and mentoring of women preparing to enter and participate effectively in the political arena. The few biographies and autobiographies of prominent political women need to be more widely accessible to the public in general and to young women in particular. Women do contribute significantly, both privately and publicly, and yet we don’t always hear their stories. As women, are we sometimes our own worst enemies by not telling, not recording our stories, or making sure they are part of the historical legacy for our families and for future generations of women? Something to consider!

--Susan Poulsen

Shakespeare Summer Preview

By the time you read this, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival’s October 20-26 program in Ashland may be filled. If you want to join our PSU group, it is worth your while to complete the registration form and check “waiting list” in case someone has to drop out. Register online at www.siskiyoucenter.com.

There will be a break in Shakespeare promotion, but coming this summer you can look forward to:

- A glass of wine with Shakespeare and colleagues.
- An afternoon with a colleague who will educate and inform us about the plays and readings we will see and hear.

Some people are planning to drive their own cars to Ashland. A van or bus will be available for those not wishing to drive. RAPS members who want to be on the “Party Bus Planning Committee” should contact Maxine Thomas at 503-291-1279 or e-mail her at thomasm@pdx.edu. This committee will plan fun (and of course, educational) activities for the five-hour van ride to Ashland.

Don’t miss out! At press time there were five spaces available.

-- Maxine Thomas

The RAPS Scholarship

The RAPS Scholarship is awarded to students who are pursuing studies in gerontology. To contribute, please send a check payable to the PSU Foundation/RAPS Scholarship to PSU-RAPS, P. O. Box 751, Portland, OR 97201-0751. There is a link to a form for scholarship contributions on the RAPS website www.pdx.edu/raps under the “Scholarship” tab. To contribute by credit card, please contact Alle Powers, the RAPS office manager, at 503-725-3447, or raps@pdx.edu.

RAPS Scholarship Contributions

The Robert W. Vogelsang Memorial Wine Raffle
David Krug
Wanda Silverman
Vanport Extension Center:  
Portland State’s Beginnings

In 1946, Portland State began as the Vanport Extension Center (VEC), primarily to educate servicemen and women returning from World War II. The VEC was housed in Vanport, a North Portland housing project that served shipyard workers during the war and remained open for other tenants postwar. The General Extension Division of the Oregon State System of Higher Education hired Stephen Epler as a counselor for returning World War II veterans desiring to attend college. Because many of these returning veterans could not attend college in Eugene or Corvallis, Epler spearheaded the idea that the VEC be created with classes held in Vanport. The State Board approved Epler’s proposal because there were no public higher education institutions in the Portland area. He had less than three months to assemble the facilities, faculty, and staff to open a summer session. In that first summer session, 220 students (94% veterans aged 18 to 47 years; 46% married) took classes at VEC. In the fall of 1946, although a student body of 500 students was expected, 1,400 students enrolled, demonstrating the need for a Portland-based school site. The VEC was intended to be a temporary, lower division, non-degree-granting institution, a place for students to begin their college education.

The VEC remained at the Vanport site until it was flooded and destroyed on Memorial Day, May 30, 1948. Within two hours, the homes and possessions of many students as well as the VEC were under several feet of water. From here, the VEC, often called Vanport College by students, moved to Grant High School in northeast Portland for summer session, 1948, and to the former Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation in St. Johns from fall, 1948 to 1952. Subsequently, the school moved to the present-day Lincoln Hall site in Portland and the name was changed to the Portland State Extension Center.

Thus, today’s Portland State University was created because of:

- The World War II GI Bill that provided money to help pay for higher education for returning veterans,
- The leadership and insight of Stephen Epler, its founding director,
- Vanport, a city built to house wartime shipyard workers that provided cheap housing and services to its residents after the war,
- The raging Columbia River that flooded Vanport on Memorial Day, 1948, and
- The strong advocacy of students, faculty, legislators, and community to continue public post-secondary education in Portland.

Stay tuned for the next part of the Portland State story!

--Mary Brannan

The RAPS Book Club will meet at 1:30pm on Tuesday, April 15, hosted by Eileen Brennan at 945 SW 152nd in Beaverton. Contact her at brennane@pdx.edu or 503-646-6297 to RSVP and for directions. We will discuss *Hallucinations* by Oliver Sacks which is described on the cover as follows:

Have you ever seen something that wasn't really there? Heard someone call your name in an empty house? Sensed someone following you and turned around to find nothing?  
Hallucinations don't belong wholly to the insane. Much more commonly, they are linked to sensory deprivation, intoxication, illness, or injury. People with migraines may see shimmering arcs of light or tiny, Lilliputian figures of animals and people. People with failing eyesight, paradoxically, may become immersed in a hallucinatory visual world. Hallucinations can be brought on by a simple fever or even the act of waking or falling asleep, when people have visions ranging from luminous blobs of color to beautifully detailed faces or terrifying ogres. Those who are bereaved may receive comforting "visits" from the departed. In some conditions, hallucinations can lead to religious epiphanies or even the feeling of leaving one's own body.

Humans have always sought such life-changing visions, and for thousands of years have used hallucinogenic compounds to achieve them. As a young doctor in California in the 1960s, Oliver Sacks had both a personal and a professional interest in psychedelics. These, along with his early migraine experiences, launched a lifelong investigation into the varieties of hallucinatory experience.

Here, with his usual elegance, curiosity, and compassion, Dr. Sacks weaves together stories of his patients and of his own mind-altering experiences to illuminate what hallucinations tell us about the organization and structure of our brains, how they have influenced every culture's folklore and art, and why the potential for hallucination is present in us all, a vital part of the human condition.

Looking ahead, we will be discussing *The Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline in May.

--Mary Brannan

The RAPS Bridge Group will meet (or has already met, depending on when your RAPS Sheet arrives) on Tuesday April 1 at 1:00pm. We meet regularly on the first Tuesday of each month. Given the timing of the RAPS Sheet mailing let me inform you of a couple of upcoming bridge sessions on May 6, and June 3, 2014.

We gather in the conference room of Friendly House's Anderson Building. (This building is on the north side of NW Savier Street, around the corner from the 26th and Thurman main entrance of Friendly House). Play begins at 1:00pm and continues to about 4:30pm. If you wish to join us, please contact me at 503-646-6297. My e-mail address is the.steve.brennan@gmail.com.

--Steve Brennan

The RAPS Hiking Group hike on April 11 will be one of the classics which we have done several times. We will be walking upstream on the canyon trail at Silver Falls State Park. We will leave a car at the North Falls lot and drive the other cars to the main parking lot near the beginning of the hike. At this time of the year, there should be lots of water going over the falls. This is a leisurely hike with some elevation gain, but not nearly the 1300 foot gain of the March hike. We will have lunch at the North Falls before heading home. Lunches can be left in the car and a cooler is OK.

Since this is a drive south on I-5 we will meet at 9:00am on the top of Parking Structure #1 across Broadway from Neuberger Hall. Extra cars with PSU permits can be parked. Cars without permits will be carpool cars. An Oregon State Park day use permit costs $5 and may be purchased at the park and at the North Falls parking lot. Please confirm your participation by Thursday April 10 by calling Larry Sawyer at 503-771-1616, or e-mail him at larry_sawyer@comcast.net. (There is an underscore between larry and sawyer in that address.)

--Larry Sawyer
Would You Like to Receive Your RAPS Sheet a Week Earlier Each Month?

If you have access to e-mail, you can receive the RAPS Sheet on the day it is sent to the printer. As a bonus, you will be able to see many of the photos (including those below) in color. If you would like to change your subscription from mail to e-mail, call Alle in the RAPS Office at 503-725-3447, or e-mail her at raps@pdx.edu.

Photo Gallery

These photos were taken by Larry Sawyer on the Hiking Group’s trip to the Lyle Cherry Orchard in the Columbia River Gorge last month.
Emeritus Professor Richard J. “Dick” Sonnen, of the Graduate School of Education, born March 27, 1936, died February 26, 2014. Professor Sonnen, a native Oregonian, earned a B.S. emphasizing secondary education at Western Oregon College in 1958, and an M.Ed. at the University of Oregon with an emphasis on teaching students with disabilities (1965). He interrupted his education to serve in the United States Navy from 1959 to 1961 as a medical technician. His highly productive career began with special education teaching appointments in the Portland and Lake Oswego public schools. He served five years as a consultant for the Oregon Board of Education.

Dick pursued further graduate training at the University of Oregon, and in 1971 completed an Ed.D. in special and general education administration. He continued to broaden his experience base through service as Director of Student Services for the North Clackamas School District and Director of Special Education and Student Services for Portland Public Schools.

Professor Keith Larson, founder of PSU’s Special Education Program, recruited Professor Sonnen to join the School of Education in 1978 with an appointment as chairperson of the newly formed Department of Special and Counselor Education, a position that he fulfilled until 1988 when he took a well-deserved year-long sabbatical leave. Subsequently he carried out full-time teaching assignments prior to retiring as Emeritus Professor in 1992.

The School of Education’s Annual Report for 1991-1992 highlighted contributions stemming from Professor Sonnen’s departmental service and leadership as a teacher trainer, resulting in improvements to quality of instruction, research and community service. Through committee service Dick was well known and highly respected by colleagues throughout the University. Moreover, he gained recognition as an ongoing advocate for the integration and mainstreaming of persons with disabilities into the community’s public schools and vocational settings.

In consonance with PSU’s mission to fulfill educational needs of the Portland metropolitan region and the state of Oregon, Dick contributed extensive noteworthy support for public and community service organizations. These activities included chairing the United Cerebral Palsy professional advisory committee, presiding over the Providence Child Center advisory board, and providing leadership and guidance for the PSU Chapter and Divisions, Oregon Council for Exceptional Children. He also supported the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators, the ARC (for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities), and Oregon’s Higher Education Council and Department of Education.

The University owes Professor Sonnen a debt of gratitude for long years of productive institutional service. Under his guidance and leadership, the Graduate School of Education trained a generation of public school teachers who are especially equipped to help persons with disabilities function more fully in our society.

In 1963 Dick married Joann, who along with daughter Alice and sons David and Steven survives him; to them we extend our heartfelt condolences for their loss. Funeral services will be held at 11:00am Friday, April 11, 2014 at St. John the Evangelist Church, 8701 NE 119th Street, Vancouver, WA 98662, followed by burial at 3:00pm at Willamette National Cemetery, 11800 SE Mt. Scott Boulevard, Portland OR 97086. A celebration of Dick’s life will be held 2:00pm Saturday, April 12, at Bill’s Chicken and Steak House, 2200 St. Johns Boulevard, Vancouver WA 98661. Memorial gifts may be made to the Richard J. Sonnen Memorial Scholarship through checks written to the PSU Foundation, Attn: Development, P. O. Box 751, Portland OR 97207.

--Emeritus Professor of History Victor C. Dahl, with assistance from Emeritus Professor of Education Steve Brannan