Jim and Joan Peck explore Camino de Santiago at February 15 member meeting

FOR SOME, IT'S A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY. For others, a test of physical endurance. For still others, a unique way to experience the culture of a country. Regardless of their reasons, hundreds of thousands of “pilgrims” a year head to Spain to walk part or all of the Camino de Santiago – a network of routes across Europe leading to the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain where the apostle St. James the Great is said to be buried.

Among those pilgrims in 2016 were Jim and Joan Peck, who will speak to RAPS in February on their experiences in an illustrated talk titled “An Extraordinary Pilgrimage: Camino Francés to Santiago de Compostela.”

Many RAPS members will recall Jim’s November 2016 presentation, “Hope in Hell: Operating in a Civil War Zone,” about his work as a volunteer physician with Doctors without Borders. A specialist in general and vascular surgery, he is adjunct professor of surgery for the Division of Vascular Surgery at OHSU and has been in private practice in Portland since 1981. Joan Peck is the CEO of Markstein Enterprises, a family business in the Bay Area. The Pecks have been married 48 years and are the parents of four children.

The meeting begins in 333 SMSU at noon Thursday, February 15, with a light lunch. The Pecks will speak at 12:45 pm.
Co-President’s Message

IN 2006, RAPS MEMBER Diane Sawyer traveled to Italy on a trip organized by Collette Tours. She had such a wonderful experience that she’s going back to Italy this November—on the very same program, “Italian Vistas,” organized by Collette. How’s that for a testimonial?

The trip Diane and husband Larry are already signed up for is the one sponsored by RAPS. The 12-day program begins in Rome November 6 and moves to Pompeii and the Sorrento Coast, Capri, Florence and other Tuscan cities, Venice and the island of Murano, Verona, and Stresa. The program ends November 18 in Locarno, Switzerland, with an optional two-day extension to Milan. An insert in this month’s edition of the RAPS Sheet tells you all about it.

Diane and Larry have traveled abroad extensively. I asked Diane why she decided to go back to Italy on a Collette Tour. “I can think of two reasons,” she replied. “First, the trip we will take with RAPS, like my trip in 2006, visits a good part of the country. I can’t imagine going all the way to Italy and seeing just two or three cities. There’s so much more.”

“Second, the success of a trip such as this depends in large part on the skills of the tour manager. The Collette tour manager on this trip was the best of all I’ve traveled with. My expectations are high that we will have the same manager lead our RAPS trip. If not, I anticipate the same high level of service.”

Diane especially appreciated the central location of the hotels. “A good example is our hotel in Rome. You step outside the hotel, look right, and there you see the Roman Forum, an easy few blocks away. Look across the street and you see a small church. Inside that church is Michelangelo’s statue of Moses.” Diane has already confirmed that this year’s group will use the same hotels she stayed in on her 2006 sojourn.

RAPS is sponsoring another upcoming trip in 2018, this one closer to home. Sometime in May, RAPS member Scott Burns will lead a one-day tour to three wineries in the Willamette Valley, teaching RAPSters about the environmental conditions in which grapes are grown and introducing them to Oregon winemakers and the fruits of their labors. Scott led wine tours for RAPS in 2016 and 2017; perhaps this is becoming an annual event! Look for information coming soon about the exact date in May.

These two trips have one thing in common: they help raise funds for the RAPS scholarship account. Whether you sign up for the one-day excursion to Oregon wine country or the 12-day visit to Bella Italia, isn’t it nice to know that worthy PSU students are going to benefit?

— Dawn White

Spring member events

MARCH (Thursday, March 15) Annual Spring Potluck, followed by “Behind the Scenes of Benjamin Britten’s Comic Opera, Albert Herring.” Presentation by Christine Meadows and PSU opera students; 333 SMSU.

APRIL (Monday, April 16) – note departure from Thursday pattern – President’s Luncheon, hosted by President Rahmat Shoureshi; SMSU Ballroom.

MAY (Thursday, May 10; please note the changed date and room) “The Importance of Norms: Trump vs the Press.” Presentation by Christopher Shortell, professor of political science and department chair, followed by Annual Ice Cream Social; 296 SMSU.
**RAPS group reports**

**Book Group**

**THE BOOK GROUP** met on January 16 at the home of Nancy Chapman and discussed *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. It is a novel set in Russia in 1922, telling the story of a former member of the aristocracy sentenced by a Bolshevik tribunal to spend the rest of his life under house arrest in a Moscow hotel. We were as enthusiastic about the book as the reviewers had been, admiring the writing, the character development, the structure of the novel, and (we must admit) struggling to remember the details of the historical background.

In February we will read Jodi Picoult’s *Plain Truth*, and will meet at the home of Gwen Pierce, 512 SW Maplecrest Drive, in Portland. This is an older novel by an author many of us have liked, set in Amish culture. It is, according to the back cover, “a riveting story of a murder that shatters the picturesque calm of Amish country and tests the heart and soul of the lawyer defending the woman at the heart of the storm.” Call Gwen at 503-246-9632 or email her at gwen-pierce@comcast.net to let her know whether you will be there.

In March we plan to read *Exit West* by Mosshid Hamid, the story of two young people who leave the conflict of their homeland and settle in the West. We will meet at the home of Steve and Eileen Brennan.

The Book Group meets the third Tuesday of every month at 1:30 pm. New members are always welcome. And we welcome suggestions of books that are interesting to read and full of issues for discussion.  

—Joan Shireman

**Bridge Group**

**THE RAPS BRIDGE GROUP** meets in the afternoon on the first Tuesday of each month. We begin play at 12:15 pm. We try to finish up by 4 pm. We meet in Smith Center, usually on the second floor, but sometimes on the third floor.

Please mark your calendars for the following upcoming dates, rooms, and times:

- Monday (not Tuesday!), February 5, 2018; in SMSU 294
- Tuesday, March 6, 2018; in SMSU 294
- Tuesday, April 3, 2018; in SMSU 294
- Tuesday, May 1, 2018; in SMSU 294
- Tuesday, June 5, 2018; in SMSU 294

I will send out the reminder email notice about one week prior to each date we play.

The RAPS Bridge Group members are very friendly and are always looking for new players. If you wish to join us, please contact Steve Brennan, 503-646-6297. My email address is the.steve.brennan@gmail.com.

—Steve Brennan

**Hiking Group**

**THE FEBRUARY HIKE** will be along the Old River Road in Lake Oswego. A description of this hike is available at https://www.oregonmetro.gov/tools-living/getting-around/walk-there

The Tuesday, February 27, hike begins at George Rogers Park, which is located at 611 State Street in Lake Oswego. Turn east on Green Street at State Street to access the parking lot, and park east of Furnace Street in the park’s lot. Hikers will meet in the George Rogers parking lot at 9:30 am. The Old River Road trail is on a paved path that is 1.3 miles long, for a total out and back of 2.6 miles with only minor elevation gain. Even on rainy days, the trail provides wonderful views of the Willamette River and the surrounding area, including seasonal waterfalls.

The trail also features historical information about the Native Americans who settled in the area and the early industrial buildings that brought the iron and wood products industries to the town that is now Lake Oswego. Ruins of some of these early industrial buildings can be viewed along the hiking trail. There is also access to the waterfront, and a path to Marylhurst University for those who might like to hike farther. We plan to eat lunch at Nicoletta’s Table at 333 South State Street, Suite M, about a 5 minute walk from George Rogers Park.

The January hike was a 7 mile loop across the Willamette River involving two bridges: the Sellwood Bridge and the Tilikum Crossing. Seven hikers participated and ate lunch in the Sellwood area at Grand Central Bakery.

If you plan to hike in February, contact Larry Sawyer at 503-771-1616 or larry_sawyer@comcast.net. For more details, please consult the RAPS hikers’ website: https://www.pdx.edu/raps/RAPS-Hikers

—Larry Sawyer

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Dedicated hikers enjoying a well-deserved lunch at Grand-Central Bakery after a 7-mile loop hike over the Sellwood Bridge and the Tilikum Crossing.

—Photograph by Larry Sawyer
In memoriam: Graham Patrick Conroy, 1925-2017

GRAHAM PATRICK CONROY, who served Portland State for three decades as a professor of philosophy, died December 21 in Portland. He was 92 years old.

Professor Conroy was born in Portland on April 30, 1925, to Earl Patrick Conroy and Florence Elizabeth Casey Conroy Butson. He was a fourth generation Oregonian and a lifetime resident of the Portland area. His great-grandfather, James Casey, emigrated from County Loth, Ireland, in 1849. He joined the Aaron Rose oxen train as the official blacksmith for the Rose party, which traveled from Michigan on the Oregon Trail to found Roseburg in 1851.

A 1943 graduate of Lincoln High School, Professor Conroy briefly attended Reed College before enlisting in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He served as the xerographer's mate—or weather forecaster—on USS Maryland (BB46), a Colorado-class battleship. On November 29, 1944, during the Battle of Leyte Gulf, a kamikaze aircraft struck the Maryland, killing 31 crew members and wounding 30. The attack was aimed at the bridge, where Professor Conroy was posted, but anti-aircraft fire blasted off the plane's wing, diverting it toward the decks below.

After receiving an honorable discharge in 1945, Professor Conroy continued his education, graduating from Stanford University in 1948. It was at Stanford that he met students from Iran who introduced him to the Baha'i faith, which centers on the belief in the unity of all religions and humanity. As a faithful Baha'i, he was honored in death by funeral rituals that included being washed and wrapped in a white shroud and wearing a burial ring with the inscription, “I came forth from God, and return unto Him, detached from all save Him, holding fast to His Name, the Merciful, the Compassionate.”

Professor Conroy earned a master’s in 1951 and a Ph.D. in 1957 from the University of California, Berkeley, becoming Berkeley’s youngest recipient of a doctorate in philosophy. He wrote his dissertation on Bishop George Berkeley, for whom Berkeley, California, was named.

In 1960 he became a professor at Eastern Washington University, where he met and married Frances Rose Goodrich. The couple had two daughters, Sheilagh and Gillian.

He joined Portland State in 1962 and was given an office in Neuberger Hall, only a block away from Lincoln Hall, where he had been a student when the building served as Lincoln High School.

Professor Conroy’s life beyond the Portland State campus ranged from his love and knowledge of classical music to being the oldest member of the Jackie Chan Fan Club. He worked at the Pickwick Bookshop in Hollywood, was as well versed in the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein as he was in the jazz of Dizzy Gillespie (who was a fellow Baha’i), and once spent a night on a Persian carpet in Lake Oswego with the mythically reclusive author Thomas Pynchon. Professor Conroy was a voracious reader—his home held wall-to-wall bookcases of scholarly works, all of which he had read multiple times.

Professor Conroy is survived by his daughter Gillian Conroy, brother David Butson, and grandchildren Molly Conroy and Casey Foster. He was preceded in death in 1994 by his daughter Sheilagh Conroy, as well as siblings Bill Butson and Reah Earlene Conroy Walker. He is also survived by his companion, Mary Constans, and his dog, Spock.

A funeral was held December 26, followed by commital with military honors at Willamette National Cemetery.

Remembrances can be made to the Portland State University Alumni Association Scholarship Fund, PO Box 1326, Portland 97207; https://giving.psu.edu/.

—Doug Swanson
In memoriam: Lyndon Russell Musolf, 1922-2017

LYNDON RUSSELL MUSOLF, an urban studies faculty member in the 1960s and longtime affordable housing advocate, died in Portland on December 7 at age 95.

Dr. Musolf was born on September 4, 1922, in Yale, South Dakota, a small town about 100 miles northwest of Sioux Falls. He was the fifth of six children born to William and Emma Musolf. He lived in Yale throughout his childhood and graduated from high school there.

After graduation, Dr. Musolf enlisted in the Army and became a glider pilot, and on June 6, 1944, he flew a glider in the Allied invasion of Normandy. After the war he returned home to obtain a degree from the University of South Dakota. He then moved to Los Angeles, where he received a Ph.D. in political science from UCLA.

Dr. Musolf came to Portland in 1966 and served the University until the early 1970s, when he became executive director of the Housing Authority of Portland. He left the Housing Authority in 1980 and co-founded Innovative Housing, Inc., a nonprofit that provides housing to individuals and families.

In 1998 Dr. Musolf’s advocacy for affordable housing was recognized with the naming of Innovative Housing’s flagship building for him. The Lyndon Musolf Manor is located at 216 NW Third Avenue, Portland. Dr. Musolf was also a co-founder of the Urban Affairs Association, from which he received a lifetime achievement award in 2013.

Survivors include his wife, Barbara; his children, Chris, Sande, Michael, Stephen, and Kirstin; and his grandchildren, Lila, Ariel, Nate, and Sage. He was preceded in death by his oldest son, David, and his first wife, Oma.

Remembrances may be sent to Innovative Housing, Inc., 219 NW Second Avenue, Portland 97209 or www.innovativehousinginc.com, to help support Dr. Musolf’s passion for affordable housing.

An online guest book is available at www.oregonlive.com/obits.

—Doug Swanson

RAPS Awards Committee seeks nominations

KNOW SOMEONE who is a RAPS stalwart and also has been active in community service or University affairs or professional activity? Of course you do. Why not nominate her or him for the 2018 Outstanding RAPS member award? There is a nomination form in the January RAPS Sheet or you can get one from the RAPS office, but you don’t need a form—nominations on ordinary paper or by email are fine. Current RAPS Board members, listed on the first page of this issue, are not eligible for awards.

RAPS also bestows Special Recognition awards on any person, often a current PSU employee, who has aided RAPS and also is engaged in community or university affairs.

Please send nominations by post or email to the Retirement Association of Portland State (RAPS), PO Box 751, Portland, OR 97207-0751 or to Awards chair Charlie White at chaswhite@comcast.net; or postal address 2004 SE 32nd Avenue, Portland OR 97214. Details or questions: contact Charlie White at his email address or 503-232-3089.
Past Tense: The Ferdinand Society, 1956 to 2006

THE FERDINAND SOCIETY was founded at Portland State College in 1956 by a group of faculty members who wanted a way for faculty from different disciplines to meet socially and share ideas. Once a month, members would meet for lunch and conversation. The Society was also interested in making connections with the Portland community, and local politicians were invited to participate. To make sure that no part of the College and, later the University, dominated the meetings, each division was assigned a specific number of members, depending on its size.

Passing years brought changes, but the Society preserved its original purpose as a place for faculty to socialize and converse. The original Society was limited to male members. That changed finally with the admission of Maxine Thomas, who was nominated using the gender-neutral name “Max Thomas.”

The original plan for the monthly lunches was that they should be like a conversation around a boarding house table. In fact that notion may have lain behind the Society’s name, which was taken from the children’s story of Ferdinand the Bull. Meetings were to be “bull sessions.” (The other rationale for the name was that, like Ferdinand, members would rather smell the flowers than fight.) The venue for luncheons was local restaurants and finally meetings were moved to the Cascade Room in Smith Center. In later years, meetings, though still social, were more formal, with presentations by outside speakers, in a lecture plus questions format, very much like our RAPS luncheons. The Society also had a couple of other gatherings, a dinner in the winter holiday season and a get-together in the summer. In the early years of the 21st century, RAPS and the Ferdinand Society sometimes sponsored joint activities.

The founding members belonged to an earlier – or “greatest” — generation, for whom liquor played a larger role in their life, and early years of the Ferdinand involved the consumption of a fair amount of whisky. Retiring members were given a bottle of Four Roses until that brand went out of business. In fact, the Society owned a considerable collection of bottles of liquor. History seems not to have recorded what happened to them.

Though membership was limited, the Society did partially fill the function of a faculty club. Indeed, members talked about the possibility of establishing a faculty club at PSU. Instead, life at PSU went in the opposite direction. The increased workload of faculty members meant that most felt that they could not set aside the time for the once-a-month gatherings, and it was impossible to attract enough new members to sustain the Society, as older members retired.

The end came in the fall term of 2006, when the last President or Matador, Scott Burns, announced that the Society was no longer sustainable. Its demise was the front-page story of the Vanguard for November 2006 and was noted in the RAPS Sheet for March 2010. Many RAPS members recall with affection their membership in the Ferdinand. Friendships still survive that were formed across disciplinary boundaries. The records of the Ferdinand Society are now in a metal box that will be turned over to the University archivist.

—Jack Cooper