Friday, Jan. 13 was a lucky day for the RAPS hikers, who enjoyed a clear crisp day for a walk on the Eastbank Esplanade in Portland. The hikers took the loop from OMSI to the Steel Bridge and back over the Hawthorne Bridge to OMSI. Photo by Larry Sawyer.

Scholarship recipient Melissa Cannon reflects on upbringing, influences

Note: The editor asked Melissa Cannon, recipient of the first RAPS scholarship, to tell RAPS members a bit about her background and educational choices. She is in her third year of doctoral studies in Urban Studies, focusing on gerontology and community development.

I grew up in Berthoud, CO, a small city of 5,000 centrally located in the northern Front Range between Denver and Fort Collins. My parents separated when I was very young and both remarried later, granting me an expansive and complex family life. This experience helped my older sister and me develop values such as trust, responsibility and forgiveness as we jointly navigated various situations, and many of our similar interests and ideals hold steadfast today. Throughout adolescence I imagined becoming a professional cartoonist until I reached high school and shrouded myself in a fascination with politics and social issues.

After high school I volunteered with Cross Cultural Solutions at the Mother Teresa orphanage in Salvador, Brazil. Still undecided about my career path, I attended Front Range Community College where I completed my Associate of Arts degree. Afterward I joined the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps, through which I worked on a diverse team of 11 people serving communities across the southeastern United States in the areas of disaster relief, unmet human needs, environmental protection, and education.

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President’s Message

We are certainly busy at RAPS as the New Year begins. Several initiatives have been added to those we developed in the past year: we are working on a budget, we are developing our scholarship, we have a new task force working on membership issues, and we are beginning to plan for hosting a regional meeting of university retirement associations. And, in January, we had an extra program for RAPS members.

The first program of 2012, a tour of the library, was fascinating—not only because of the changed and enhanced physical spaces that we were shown, but because of the new philosophy of the library. No longer is it populated only by shelves of books, through which the lonely scholar is browsing. Now it is a vibrant center of technology, specially designed for students working together but a wonderful resource for all library patrons.

Books are, of course, still available—vast quantities of them in libraries scattered through the region—all discoverable on Internet systems. The change in availability of information brought by the new technologies is astounding. And the tour made me think about the nature of learning and thinking—what parts of it are best accomplished in interaction with others, and what parts demand solitary study and reflection.

As I write this, our second program, Governor Barbara Roberts discussing her latest book, has not yet taken place. Having read her book, *Up the Capitol Steps*, I am inclined to think that this program is going to be about the changes that can happen when energized groups work together for a cause. About the doing that comes after the learning and thinking. I’m looking forward to the program.

Among the changes, of course, are the career possibilities that opened to women during Governor Roberts’s lifetime (and ours as well). What interesting times we live in!

--Joan Shireman

University archivist Cris Paschild, third from left, gives RAPS members a glimpse into the past as she describes the University’s holdings of rare and historic documents. Paschild’s presentation was one element of the Jan. 19 RAPS program on the Branford P. Millar Library. Next to her (holding folder) is Michael Bowman, engineering librarian, who served as guide, describing new technologies and updating RAPS members on services available to them as PSU retirees. Photo by Larry Sawyer.
PAST TENSE

The Regional Research Institute
A Pioneer and a Survivor

In 1973 I became the founding director of the Regional Research Institute for Human Services (commonly known as RRI), serving as director for 17 years. Excellent new directors followed me, and the RRI continues to thrive.

The RRI’s initial funding came from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. There was to be one institute for each of the 10 federal regions; ours was Region 10. Today, ours is the only one that has survived. It now brings in $12 million annually in external research funds for highly respected work.

Portland State University deserves the credit for what we were able to accomplish during my tenure and that of subsequent directors. The lessons to be learned from our success are about what the University did to make it possible:

1) The State Board approved the research institute’s status, which was important in university politics.
2) President Joe Blumel gave the RRI standing as a department within the School of Social Work, with an independent core budget as part of the university’s annual budget, to which the president steadily added as additional external research funds came in.
3) The RRI director enjoyed sufficient autonomy in budget control, in hiring of interdisciplinary staff, and in shaping the research mission to build a vibrant research organization that conducted significant social research of far-reaching influence.
4) All of our projects were research partnerships with external community groups -- key to our success. These involved sectors of society such as parents, youth, families, and allied professions, as well as local, state and federal governments.
5) We enjoyed a high degree of cooperative assistance from the university’s business office. The University’s willingness, for example, to offer reduced rates of indirect costs on contracts with local community and state agencies facilitated the development of community partnerships.

This year—2012—the School of Social Work celebrates its 50th anniversary as a degree-granting graduate program, and the RRI prepares to celebrate its 40th anniversary. These occasions will illustrate the kind of institution that Portland State University has become. Both events will draw attention to PSU’s extensive community partnerships and its excellent research partnerships.

—Art Emlen

PAST TENSE features glimpses into Portland State’s history. To submit a story (or an idea for one), email the RAPS History Preservation Committee at raps@pdx.edu.

RAPS club reports

Bridge Group deals hearts on Valentine’s Day
The RAPS Bridge Group meets at 1:00 pm Tuesday, Feb. 14 at Friendly House (corner of NW 26th and Thurman). For information about the group, please call Colin Dunkeld, 503-292-0838. If you would like to play, please call before noon Friday, Feb. 10. This gives us time to invite guests to join us if we need to make up a table.

—Colin Dunkeld

Book Club elects to read Roberts memoir
The RAPS Book Club meets at 1:30 pm Tuesday, Feb. 21 at the home of Marge Terdal, 997 SW Westwood Drive in Portland. Contact her at terdalm@pdx.edu or 503-224-5714 to RSVP and for directions. We will discuss Up the Capitol Steps: A Woman’s March to the Governorship by Barbara Roberts. Those of us who heard Governor Roberts talk about and read excerpts from her autobiography at the RAPS program meeting Jan. 25 are especially motivated to read this book. The book is described on the back cover as follows:

A personal and political memoir by one of the few women governors in the history of the United States, Up the Capitol Steps offers a behind-the-scenes glimpse of a woman’s life in politics. Barbara Roberts aims to demystify leadership by telling the story of her own unlikely rise to power. The mother of an autistic child before the advent of special education, Roberts began her life in public service as an advocate for the rights of children with disabilities. Up the Capitol Steps documents her expanding political career from school board member to legislator to Secretary of State and, finally, Governor of Oregon. Hotly contested elections and tough policy decisions are interspersed with intimate details of personal ups and downs.

Book club members have postponed discussing Blood Brothers by Elias Chacour until April, when Marge Terdal and Maxine Thomas will be available to talk about their trip to Palestine and Israel.

—Mary Brannan
I then spent five weeks as a volunteer English teacher in Zhengzhou, China with the Orbis Institute, a nonprofit organization based out of Denver, CO. Feeling a fresh sense of self-efficacy and determination, I enrolled at Portland State University and joined the School of Urban Studies and Planning’s community development undergraduate program, earning my bachelor’s degree with an emphasis in housing and economic development in March 2009.

I was originally drawn to the field of gerontology by the PSU Institute on Aging (IOA) program “Global Aging and Health: Enhancing Communities in Nicaragua.” The annual service learning course takes students to Nicaragua for approximately two weeks to help build capacity and develop services and institutional support for low-income Nicaraguan elders. Upon speaking to Alan DeLaTorre, a PhD student working in the IOA, I quickly realized that the aging of our population is a forceful demographic shift and a compelling topic for research. With Alan’s encouragement, I applied to PSU’s Urban Studies PhD program in the fields of gerontology and community development. Much to my disbelief and elation I was accepted into the program at 22 years of age.

Since fall 2009 I have been working as a Graduate Research Assistant for Dr. Margaret Neal, Director of the IOA, doing various tasks for the “Aging Matters, Globally and Locally” initiative which focuses locally on putting Portland on the map as an “Age-Friendly City.” I have been fortunate to engage not only in a variety of local experiences but also in the coordination of the “Global Aging and Health” program in which I had originally planned to participate before finishing my undergraduate work. I joined the 2010 group of students traveling to Nicaragua, where we spent time in an elder home (hogar) and developed activities for the residents.

We attended a discussion on elders and service learning and presented our experiences to the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Managua (UNAM). Different teams were formed to focus on individual projects such as hosting health clinics, collecting data, and demonstrating healthy nutrition and exercise routines. I was part of a construction team that built a home for an older woman living in substandard housing outside of Boaco. Our team used an innovative environmentally-friendly technique through which plastic bottles are secured into a metal frame using poultry wire and cement.

I am grateful every day that I have this opportunity to help shape the future of our society as one of many who are researching its most powerful demographic shift, the aging of the population. I owe much of my gratitude and resolve to the support and love of my boyfriend, the encouragement of my family and friends, and to the guidance of the leaders, mentors and role models who surround me every day. I am so thankful to RAPS for the great honor of receiving the first RAPS scholarship in 2011.

--Melissa Cannon

Melissa Cannon and fellow graduate student Alan DeLaTorre in 2010, completing a test model of a house partially made of recycled bottles in a rural community outside Boaco, Nicaragua. Cannon and DeLaTorre were engaged in a service learning program through PSU’s Institute on Aging.

I am grateful every day that I have this opportunity to help shape the future of our society as one of many who are researching its most powerful demographic shift, the aging of the population. I owe much of my gratitude and resolve to the support and love of my boyfriend, the encouragement of my family and friends, and to the guidance of the leaders, mentors and role models who surround me every day. I am so thankful to RAPS for the great honor of receiving the first RAPS scholarship in 2011.

--Melissa Cannon

RAPS club reports, cont.

RAPS Hikers like long walks on the beach
On Friday, Feb. 10 we will hike on the beach at Oswald West State Park. Due to the tides schedule, we will meet to carpool at the Cedar Hills Shopping Center DMV at 8:00 am. RSVP to Larry Sawyer 503-771-1616 or larry.sawyer@comcast.net by Thursday, Feb. 9. We will have lunch on the coast before heading back to Portland.

--Larry Sawyer
In memoriam: Harold Christen Jorgensen, 1928-2011

Hal Jorgensen, Emeritus Professor of Education, was born Aug. 23, 1928 in Malott, WA and died Nov. 7, 2011 in Spokane.

After high school graduation Hal served in the United States Air Force until 1950. He enrolled in Eastern Washington University, earning bachelor’s (1954) and master’s (1956) degrees in education. He pursued graduate studies at Oregon State University, completing MS and EdD degrees in 1961 and 1966, respectively.

Professor Jorgensen launched his distinguished educator’s career with elementary classroom teaching (1954-56) at Fairchild Air Force Base, WN. Subsequent high school science instructional assignments at Medical Lake (1956-57) and Seattle (1957-59) broadened his experience. During graduate studies, he held year-long classroom appointments at a Corvallis public school and at OSU. From 1962 until 1967 Hal was an assistant professor at the University of British Columbia, instructing science teacher candidates in the Faculty of Education.

In 1967 he joined the PSU School of Education as an assistant professor with primary responsibility for developing its Elementary Science Education Program. He taught science methods courses along with improving the science education curriculum through employing current research to prepare competent teachers.

Hal’s willing and innovative service coincided with the institution’s expansion of the metropolitan area’s graduate education opportunities. He played a significant role in developing the school’s master’s degree program, growing science education and allied components, and training large numbers of science teachers for Northwest classrooms.

In the early 1970s, Professor Jorgensen directed the School’s Environmental Education Center, a first for Oregon higher education. During the next decade, he developed the School’s initial computer education course and spearheaded formation of the microcomputer laboratory. Later, he initiated and managed the Student Advisement Center.

At various times Hal fulfilled important ad hoc departmental and school administrative roles. Colleagues came to rely heavily upon his professional expertise and through constitutional committee assignments he became well known across the university.

Hal married Joan Fergen and this very active couple at various times operated a hazelnut orchard, a candy enterprise, and a bed-and-breakfast business. Hal and Joan enthusiastically participated in international travel, winemaking, salmon fishing and the American Field Service international high school student-exchange program. Failing health prompted the Jorgensens to move to Spokane in 2008 to live near family members. Joan died Dec. 11, 2011 -- less than a month after Hal’s passing -- of Alzheimer’s disease.

Their daughter Patricia and Hal's sister, Genon, survive them. Our organization sends its heartfelt condolences to the family. For his exemplary service, the University owes Hal a deep debt of gratitude. Memorials may be made to the Alzheimer’s Association.

--Victor C. Dahl, Emeritus Professor of History, and Steve Brannan, Emeritus Professor of Education

Nominations sought for staff, faculty standouts

The RAPS Awards Committee is seeking nominations for the Outstanding Retired Faculty and Staff Awards. The awards will be presented at the annual President’s Luncheon to be held Thursday, April 12, at University Place.

Awards recipients are selected based on their achievements since retirement in at least three of the following categories:

- Service to the community
- Service to the University
- Professional/career achievements
- Service to RAPS

Both members and non-members of RAPS are eligible. Nominations will also be accepted for special awards to persons who excel in a single category.

Deadline for receipt of nominations is Thursday, March 15, 2012. Forms may be obtained by calling Maya Burton, RAPS Office Manager, at 503-725-3447 or emailing raps@pdx.edu. For questions, please email Larry Sawyer at larry_sawyer@comcast.net or call him at 503-771-6161.
In memoriam: Bernard (Ricky) Ross, 1916-2011

Emeritus Dean of Social Work Bernard (Ricky) Ross, born Jan. 1, 1916, died in Portland Dec. 19, 2011. Ricky enrolled in Reed College in 1932 but, like many young people in the Great Depression Era, interrupted his education to wander -- sometimes “riding the rails” -- in search of employment. Later he transferred to the University of Oregon, where he earned an AB in 1938. Subsequently he earned advanced degrees at the Universities of Pittsburgh (MS 1941) and Michigan (PhD 1958).

From 1944 to 1948 he took employment in New Deal reform agencies, serving as Regional Director and Racial Relations Adviser in the San Francisco office of the Federal Public Housing Authority. He launched his academic career at Michigan State University, where he served as a faculty member from 1958 to 1966. He next moved to Bryn Mawr College’s School of Social Work, where he held positions variously as professor, director and dean.

In 1977 Dr. Ross became the second dean of PSU’s School of Social Work. From 1986 until his retirement in 1988 he served additionally as interim Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies.

During Dean Ross’s stewardship, the School of Social Work’s instructional and research activities continued to grow as its undergraduate and graduate degree programs underwent various transformations. In 1984 the School received its third accreditation affirmation and obtained funding for the Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children’s Mental Health.

Ricky’s colleagues remember him for his quick wit, enthusiasm, and dedication to social work education. The institution owes him a great debt of gratitude for his willing service that laid the groundwork for a Social Work PhD program.

Ricky is survived by his wife, JoAnna Henry Ross; his children, Jonathon, Marc, and Natalie; grandchildren, Hallie and Elias; and stepson, Julian. To them our organization extends its heartfelt condolences. Memorial contributions may be sent to the Portland Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

An obituary appeared in the Oregonian Dec. 25, 2011 and may be consulted in the RAPS files. A guestbook may be signed at www.oregonlive.com/obits.

--Victor C. Dahl, Emeritus Professor of History

Last chance nearing to update listing

The window of opportunity to make changes in your RAPS Directory listing is narrowing, reports Larry Sawyer, who is updating the RAPS database in preparation for publication of a new directory.

To confirm that your listing in the current directory is correct, to update your information, or to instruct RAPS to withhold certain information, please send an email to raps@pdx.edu or call the RAPS Office, 503-725-3447.

You may also give the information directly to Larry Sawyer, 503-771-1616 or larry_sawyer@comcast.net.

Did you know . . . that PSU’s birthday is Feb. 14?
That’s the day in 1955 legislation was signed making Portland State a four-year college. Among those present when Governor Paul Patterson signed the legislation were Stephen Epler, Portland State’s founder, and John Cramer, its first president.

Potiowsky speaks to RAPS Feb. 16

“The Little Engine that Could: Oregon’s On-Again Off-Again Economic Recovery” is the title of Tom Potiowsky’s talk to the RAPS group at its February meeting, to be held in 338 SMSU from 1:00 to 3:00. Potiowsky, professor and chair of economics, served as the State of Oregon’s economist from 1999 until 2006 and from 2007 to 2011.

Coming up in March: the annual RAPS potluck, Thursday, March 15 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm in 338 SMSU. with PSU Professor Larry Kominz and actor Naoka Iori presenting vocal and physical demonstrations of Kabuki and Takarazuka, forms of Japanese theater.

Coming up in April: the annual President’s Gathering hosted by President Wim Wiewel, scheduled for Thursday, April 12 at University Place. RAPS bestows its annual awards to outstanding staff and faculty retirees at this event.