March program: DA Michael Schrunk
Whodunit? Probably the meth-head

By Doug Swanson / Editor

RAPS members got an inside look at the Portland crime-and-punishment scene March 15 from Michael Schrunk ’64, the Multnomah County district attorney.

Schrunk, whose relaxed, engaging delivery was more reminiscent of Perry Como than a hard-charging DA, spoke at RAPS’ annual potluck. The event, held in Smith Memorial Union and featuring an assortment of salads, main dishes, and waistline-expanding desserts, drew 31 members.

Schrunk has served as district attorney for more than a quarter-century, plenty of time to get lots of free advice from the public. “Don’t mess with minor crime” was one of the most puzzling suggestions he received. “I couldn’t figure out what ‘minor crime’ was,” said Schrunk. Then it occurred to him. “Minor crime,” he explained, “is when someone else is the victim.”

Definitions aside, there is less crime today, said Schrunk, both nationally and in Multnomah County. One reason is youth programs, and another, he said, is the effect of Measure 11, Oregon’s “get-tough” initiative that was passed in 1994. It imposed long mandatory sentences for more than a dozen violent and sex-related offenses. Schrunk acknowledged that he did not, at first, support the controversial measure, but he became a believer. “Measure 11 has incarcerated criminals,” he said. “It works.”

While violent crime is down, property crime continues to the tune of 300 to 400 cases per month in Multnomah County. “Drugs fuel it,” said Schrunk. “Eighty percent of it is meth. It used to be heroin, then crack. Now it’s meth.”

Most of the home- and apartment-based labs have been shut down,
Upcoming programs

April 24: President’s Luncheon
The President’s Annual Luncheon for Retired Faculty and Staff and the RAPS awards event is Tuesday, April 24, from noon to 1:30 p.m. at University Place, 310 SW Lincoln St. RSVP by April 17 to the President’s Office at 503-725-4411.

President Daniel Bernstine will be our host and will talk about the state of the University, what lies ahead for PSU, and possibly current legislative activity. We will have the opportunity to visit with old friends, meet the RAPS Board, greet university administrators, and honor outstanding retired faculty and staff.

If you did not receive an invitation, please call the President’s Office at 503-725-4411.

May 17: ‘Escape from Nazi-Occupied Norway’
For May our speaker will be Leif Terdal, Ph.D., clinical psychologist and professor emeritus at OHSU. His talk and slideshow is entitled “Escape from Nazi-Occupied Norway: A Mother and Three Boys.” Please mark Thursday, May 17, at 1:00 p.m.

June 8: Willamette River Cruise
Please mark your calendar for a special evening, Friday, June 8, to be aboard Sternwheeler Rose, sailing from OMSI. This adventure will be shared with Friends of the Library and continue a tradition recently carried on by the Ferdinand Society, which ended its programs this past year. The Portland Rose Festival will be celebrating its centennial, and the fleet, including several tall ships, will be in. Look for details in the next RAPS Sheet.

President’s Message

The quality of programs that we have had this year is very high. Our March program, featuring Multnomah County district attorney Michael Schrunk, was no exception. Our attendance was good, but I only wish more of our members could have benefited.

Our organization is made up of retirees who are interested in learning, socializing, and maintaining their connection with the University. The RAPS leadership is made up of volunteers. Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary defines a volunteer as “one who enters into or offers himself for any service of his own free will.” Members of our board give a lot of themselves, and their service is much appreciated. There are a few persons, however, who have served above and beyond the call of duty.

Larry Sawyer is secretary of RAPS. To say that he is diligent is an understatement. Larry takes the most detailed board meeting minutes that I have ever seen—and I’ve seen a lot of minutes over the years. In addition he takes photos at our events, records our speakers, and is coordinator of the RAPS hiking group. Larry, thank you for all that you do for our organization. Steve Brannan has headed RAPS’ efforts at historical preservation at PSU. He has put in an inordinate amount of time meeting with deans, department heads, and faculty volunteers in order to assist academic units in preserving their own history. Roger Moseley has worked closely with Steve in this venture. Both of these gentlemen deserve our highest praise. Because of their efforts, several academic units have begun to trace their history and preserve their current records. Some academic units have not been so enthusiastic. Despite the latter, these gentlemen have moved forward and made a difference.

I leave you with a mental challenge offered by George Carlin: “When someone asks you for a penny for your thoughts and you put your two cents’ worth in . . . what happens to the other penny?”

The devil made me ask.

—Bruce Stern
RAPS club reports

**Book Club’s next: The Piano Tuner**
The next gathering will be at the home of Maxine Thomas, 6535 SW Canyon Court, on Tuesday, April 17, at 1:30 p.m. Contact her at ondangwe@yahoo.com or 503-291-1279 to RSVP and for directions. The April selection is *The Piano Tuner* by Daniel Mason. The novel is described by Random House, Inc. (www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display):

An extraordinary first novel that tells the story of a British piano tuner sent deep into Burma in the 19th century. In October 1886, Edgar Drake receives a strange request from the British War Office: he must leave his wife and his quiet life in London to travel to the jungles of Burma, where a rare Erard grand piano is in need of repair. The piano belongs to an army surgeon-major whose unorthodox peacemaking methods—poetry, medicine, and now music—have brought a tentative quiet to the southern Shan States but have elicited questions from his superiors. . . . (A) the doctor’s fort on a remote Burmese river, Edgar encounters a world more mysterious and dangerous than he ever could have imagined. Sensuous, lyrical, rich with passion and adventure, this is a hypnotic tale of myth, romance, and self-discovery; an unforgettable novel.

At our gathering in February, we discussed *Saturday*, written by Ian McEwan, a Booker Prize-winning author. In March we discussed *The Memory Keeper’s Daughter* by Kim Edwards, which was her first novel and is currently a best seller.

Looking ahead, we selected *Always Coming Home* by Ursula LeGuin, a Portland writer, for May.

Come join us! — Mary Brannan

**Hikers stride through Oaks Bottom April 27**
Our next hike, on Friday, April 27, will be at the 160-acre Oaks Bottom wildlife habitat. Meet at the parking lot on Milwaukie Avenue near Mitchell Street. This is just south of Highway 99. From 99 from town, turn right onto the Milwaukie ramp. The parking lot is just to the right of the ramp. Meeting time is 9:30 a.m. Lunch will be at a local establishment.

Confirm your participation with Larry Sawyer at 503-771-1616 or larry_sawyer@comcast.net by the Thursday before the hike.

— Larry Sawyer

**RAPS Bridge Group deals on April 10**
The RAPS Bridge Group’s next meeting will be at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 10, at Irene Place’s home. Our new meeting time of 1:00 p.m. allows those who travel across town a good chance of beating the rush hour.

Drugs fuel property crime . . . continued from page 1

... according to Schrunk. In response, factory-sized labs have sprung up, mostly in Mexico, and the meth is smuggled north.

Education and prevention are the keys to solving what Schrunk called “an insatiable demand for drugs.” Schrunk’s office has used a “drug court model” that encourages treatment. An early offender, he explained, can have a clean record by attending classes and passing a court-approved monthly drug test for a year.

Another innovation was “neighborhood prosecution units.” The district attorney’s office teamed with the Portland Police Bureau to form the units, which target what Schrunk called “quality of life crimes—crimes that make you want to move to a gated community or move your business to a suburban mall.”

The first unit was established a few years ago in the Lloyd Center neighborhood, a high-crime area that was also ripe for redevelopment. Schrunk and a police lieutenant, Charles Moose MPA ’84, Ph.D. ’93—who went on to become chief of police—walked the neighborhood to garner support for the project.

Local businesses responded by donating equipment, office space, and a secretary. An electronics store donated radios, and Portland police helped coordinate the 18 private security forces that businesses had hired to protect themselves.

“It was a raging success,” Schrunk said.

One media outlet didn’t agree. *Willamette Week* responded with a story headlined “Justice for Sale,” which implied that it was the donations that prompted the establishment of the neighborhood prosecution unit in the Lloyd Center area. No donations, no justice. And Schrunk thought he was in big trouble.

“But we didn’t get any complaints,” Schrunk said, smiling. “But we did hear from other neighborhoods who wanted one, too.”
In memoriam: Selmo Tauber, 1920-2007

Selmo Tauber, professor emeritus of mathematical sciences, born August 24, 1920, in Shanghai, to parents who had fled from the Russian Revolution, died February 10, 2007, in Portland. Private family memorial services have been conducted.

After his birth the Tauber family resettled in Beirut, Lebanon, then under the French Mandate, where Selmo attended French-language schools. In 1943 he received a diploma in civil engineering, and from 1944 to 1955 taught science courses in Beirut’s French academy and medical school. After World War II he earned an advanced degree at the University of Lyon in France (1947) and completed doctoral studies in mathematics and theoretical physics at the University of Vienna (1950).

After teaching mathematics for two years at the University of Kansas, Professor Tauber came to Portland State in 1959 as an associate professor. His international training and work experience contributed significantly to the young institution’s development of applied mathematics offerings to support expansion of its newly inaugurated applied sciences and engineering programs.

Professor Tauber justifiably took pride in his supporting role for the institution’s emergence as a major university that has gained global recognition for high-quality research and instruction. To that end, he energetically engaged in research investigations that resulted in findings for numerous publications and presentations. A highly inquisitive intellect, supplemented by fluency in several languages, enabled him to keep abreast of scholarship on a global basis. Colleagues enjoyed and profited from their associations with him, and highly respected his achievements. Professor Tauber, a member of RAPS, was well known and highly regarded for his committee service.

Selmo and his spouse, Edith, who died three years ago, are survived by their son, Louis, born in Lebanon, and grandson, David, born in Portland. Both have earned PSU degrees; “Lou,” an electrical engineer, is employed by the Bonneville Power Administration, and David, a 2006 graduate, is aquatics director at the Mittelman Jewish Community Center. Thus three generations of the Tauber family have been associated with PSU.

To Louis and David, the RAPS membership extends its sympathy. The University community will always be grateful to their father and grandfather for his valuable contributions.

—Victor C. Dahl, Professor Emeritus of History, with assistance from Leonard Swanson, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics

Cast your ballot for RAPS Board

The ballot for new members of the 2007-2008 RAPS Board will be mailed to you next week. Please complete the ballot and return to the RAPS Office by Wednesday, April 18.

For a number of reasons, the terms of all three members-at-large expire on June 30. The board decided to “stagger” the terms of the three members-at-large so that one member will be elected per year beginning for the 2008-2009 year. Therefore, one current member-at-large will continue for one year, a second will be elected for a two-year term, and a third will be elected for a three-year term.

Past lectures on audio

In case you regret missing a recent RAPS lecture, regret no more.

Audio CDs of the Tom Poitiowsky lecture (state and national economic update), the Robert Donnally lecture (Portland’s history of civic corruption and local crime), and the Jewel Lansing lecture (the evolution of Portland and its local government) are available to RAPS members.

Call (503-725-3447) or email (raps@pdx.edu) the RAPS Office for more information.

Club reports . . . continued from page 3

Once again we thank Irene for hosting our monthly bridge session. Attendance has been very good, and we appreciate being able to host four tables in one place. Thanks, too, to Joan Shireman and Bruce Stern for coffee and homemade cookies.

If you would like to play, or have any questions about the Bridge Group, please call (503-292-0838) or email (colipat@easystreet.com) me (not Irene) as soon as you can and no later than Friday, April 6.

—Colin Dunkeld