President’s Message

The results of the two RAPS ballots are in. Thanks to all of you who voted. All of the proposed changes in the RAPS By-laws passed. If you would like a copy of the revised By-Laws, contact our Office Manager, Darshana Patel, by e-mail or by phone. She will send you a copy after the revised document has been printed.

Congratulations to the newly elected RAPS Board members: Robert Tufts, President-Elect; Larry Sawyer, Secretary; and Robert Lockerby, Treasurer. We really appreciate the willingness of Larry and Robert to continue in their roles of Secretary and Treasurer. In July, Bob Tufts will begin a three-year commitment to serving on the Board beginning as President-Elect, moving on to President, and then on to Past President. I know he will do an excellent job. CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

As I mentioned last month, I was not able to attend the President’s Luncheon this year, but I am sure it was a nice event for all of you in attendance. We culminate the academic year with our annual Ice Cream Social on May 18, which will be held at the University Place. You’ll see me there, because, for me, there is no treat better than ice cream, especially when it’s topped with chocolate sauce. Also, be on the lookout for information about the August picnic at Willamette Park.

In moving our history preservation projects along, the Advisory Committee for the PSU Pictorial History Book has asked academic units to identify “milestones” for their individual units. We are especially interested in identifying events and accomplishments that have university-wide importance and so appropriate for inclusion in the Pictorial History Book. Some of you may be asked to assist in identifying such milestones and help the Project. To help, contact the RAPS Office, Steve Brannan who is chair of the History Preservation/Celebration Committee, or me as chair of the Advisory Committee. Retired faculty and staff are more likely to be able to identify significant past developments, while current faculty and staff can record current events and accomplishments.

With your dues notices, we will be sending a survey to complete and update our records. We will also be asking for your input about the desirability of publishing a directory of RAPS members. This Directory, if printed, will not be on-line and will not be distributed to anyone except members. I’ll be interested in your comments about the idea of a directory.

Steve and I are off on our Elderhostel tour of Athens and the Greek Isles but will be back home when you receive this issue of The RAPS Sheet. 

Mary Brannan
PRESIDENT BERNSTINE HOSTS RETIRED FACULTY AND STAFF AT ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The President’s Annual Luncheon for Retired Staff and Faculty took place on Thursday, April 20th, at University Place. President Dan Bernstine was our host and, along with Provost Roy Koch, talked about the state of the university and what new efforts lay ahead for Portland State. Both noted the completion of the new building for the Fariborz Maseeh School of Engineering, which will be formally opened this month. We also heard from Cassie McVeety, Vice President for University Relations, and Mary Anne Rees, Director of Gift Planning, about the university’s development efforts. We learned that the capital fund drive had exceeded its goal.

The occasion gave us the opportunity to socialize with old friends and meet the RAPS board and university administrators. In addition, outstanding retired staff and faculty (Brent Schauer, Robert Vogelsang, and Barry Anderson) were recognized with awards for their contributions to the greater good of the university and society.

PICTURES FROM THE PRESIDENT’S LUNCHEON FOR RETIREES

President Dan Bernstine addresses retirees

Vice President for University Relations Cassie McVeety

Three outstanding retirees: Robert Vogelsang, faculty; Brent Schauer, staff; Barry Anderson, faculty.

LaRay Barna, presenter, gives outstanding retired faculty award to Robert Vogelsang

Brent Schauer l. receives award from Robert Tufts r.

Barry Anderson l. receives award from John Cooper r.
RAPS ACTIVITIES

RAPS BOOK CLUB
At our gathering on April 18th, we discussed March, a novel by Geraldine Brooks that imagines the life of the father in Louisa May Alcott’s Little Women. Coincidentally, the day before our book group met, March was awarded the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Everyone in our group gave rave reviews of March, but we were reminded of a book we read last year that no one liked but which stimulated one of our best discussions. We hope others will join us as we discuss the book selected for May, Arthur and George.

This book by Julian Barnes was short listed for the 2005 Man Booker Prize. We will meet at Lloyd Place Apartments, the residence of Betsey Brown, on Tuesday, May 16th at 1:30. The address is 1500 NE 15th at the corner of 15th and NE Halsey in Portland. Call Betsey at 503-493-4870 to RSVP and for directions. The following description is from the Julian Barnes web page for Arthur and George:

“Arthur and George grow up worlds and miles apart in late 19th century Britain: Arthur in shabby-genteel Catholic Edinburgh, George in the vicarage of a small Staffordshire village. Arthur is to become one of the most famous men of his age[Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, inventor of Sherlock Holmes], George a Birmingham solicitor, is happy in hardworking obscurity. But as the new century begins, they are brought together by a sequence of events that made sensational headlines at the time as The Great Wyrley Outrages. With a mixture of intense research and vivid imagination, Julian Barnes brings into sharp focus not just this long-forgotten case but the inner workings of the two men and the wider psychology of the age. Arthur & George is a novel in which the events of a hundred years ago constantly set off contemporary echoes. It is a novel about low crime and high spirituality; guilt and innocence; identity, nationality and race; and thwarted passion. Arthur & George explores what we think, what we believe, and what we know.”

The book selected for June is The Sparrow written by Mary Russell. We will meet at Irene Place’s at Willamette View on June 20th at 1:30pm.

Mary Brannan

RAPS BRIDGE CLUB
We had a very pleasant afternoon at the home of Norm and LaRay Barna on the second Tuesday of April.

Our next meeting is at 1:30 pm on Tuesday, May 9th at Willamette View. If you would like to play, please call me at 503 292 0838 or e-mail colipat@easystreet.com as soon as you can and no later than Friday May 5th. I will send directions a few days before we meet. Anyone may also call or e-mail any time if there are questions about the group.

Colin Dunkeld

RAPS HIKERS
By press deadline the hikers had not yet held their April 28th hike to Council Crest. The May hike will be held on the third Friday, May 19th, as our usual fourth Friday will be the beginning of the Memorial Day weekend. Robert Tufts will lead a hike on a new trail from Oregon City Falls to Gladstone.

Meet at 9:30 am at the Willamette Falls viewpoint on 99E (next to the Museum of the Oregon Territory, once known as a Clackamas County museum). The hike will go through Oregon City to Clackamette Park (at the confluence of the Willamette and Clackamas Rivers), then on the new Clackamas River Trail and crossing to Gladstone on a pedestrian bridge. We will shuttle back to our vehicles. The hike is about 3.5 miles, all on paved trails, sidewalks or short shoulder sections. Lunch will be at the McMenamins pub in Oregon City. Then those who wish can visit one or more of the area’s historic sites, museums, or the End-of-the-Trail Interpretive Center. RSVP to Larry Sawyer by Thursday, May 18th at 503-771-1616 or larry_sawyer@comcast.net.

Future Hike Schedule:
Fourth Friday June 23rd: A level hike along the Willamette River. Meet at 9:30am at the OMSI parking lot. Travel counter-clockwise to the Steel Bridge, along the west side to the Hawthorne Bridge, and back to OMSI.

Fourth Friday July 28th. – Larry Sawyer leads a leisurely wooded hike along the Salmon River.

Larry Sawyer
Our program this month will take place on Thursday, May 18th, from 1:00 until 3:00 pm at University Place (the old Doubletree), 310 S.W. Lincoln, in the Willamette Room. We’ll begin with our annual Ice Cream Social, and once we’ve had our fill of ice cream and sundae toppings we’ll move into the educational component of our program.

Our speaker will be Jewel Lansing, formerly both City of Portland and Multnomah County Auditor. She will discuss the evolution of Portland’s city government which is the topic of her recent book, Portland: People, Politics, and Power, 1851-2001 (OSU Press, 2003). The hardbound version is in its third edition, and a softbound edition is now available. Jewel will have softbound copies on hand for purchase (in the $23 range) and signing, so bring your checkbooks!

Jewel has a well-rounded education, with degrees in journalism (BA) and education (MA), in addition to being a Certified Public Accountant. She has been involved in several civic organizations and is the recipient of several awards and honors. Her seventh book (Growing Up In Montana) is currently in development.

Don’t miss this opportunity to meet old friends, satisfy your sweet tooth, and learn about our city’s political history. Having served under mayors Bud Clark and Frank Ivancie, two very colorful characters, she will, I am sure, have some interesting stories to tell.

Bruce Stern

Letter to the Editor
To the editor of the RAPS Sheet:
I wanted to let your readers know about a PSU off campus creative arts program on the Oregon coast that has been offering weekend and week-long workshops in writing, art and music for thirty-seven years. The Portland State University Haystack Summer Program in the Arts is branching out a little this summer towards Astoria and is happy to add Royal Nebeker and Richard Rowland to the roster. They will be teaching classes in drawing and ceramics. Cannon Beach writing classes include poetry, oral history, and memoir and travel writing. We are also offering watercolor, sand painting, and nature journal writing this summer. For more information on these or other workshops in Cannon Beach and Astoria this summer, please call Elizabeth Snyder at 503-725-4186 or check the website at www.haystack.pdx.edu.

Elizabeth Snyder,
Director, PSU Haystack Summer Program in the Arts

Mark Your Calendars

Be sure not to miss the following events sponsored by RAPS. Detailed information about our May program is in this newsletter.

Thursday, May 18, 2006
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
University Place, Willamette Room, 310 S.W. Lincoln
Ice Cream Social
Featured Speaker: Jewel Lansing
Topic: History of Portland City Government

Thoughts on the Season

A little madness in the Spring
Is wholesome even for the King - Emily Dickinson

Among famous traitors of history, one might mention the weather - Ilka Chase

But cheerful Spring came kindly on
And show’rs began to fall:
John Barleycorn got up again
And sore surpris’d them all. - Robert Burns

Every year, back comes the spring, with nasty little birds yapping their fool heads off and the ground all mucked up with plants. - Dorothy Parker
In an earlier RAPS Sheet and at our annual potluck, RAPS members learned of our colleague, Ladis Kristof’s, escape from communist Rumania and his long journey that brought him to Portland State. Our faculty has been enriched by another colleague with an equally dramatic escape from a communist country that led to a distinguished career at Portland State, Pah (Paul) I. Chen, Professor Emeritus of Mechanical Engineering.

Professor Chen was born in Fuzhou, the capital of Fujian province in China during the Sino-Japanese war. One early childhood memory is of Japanese soldiers armed with sword and rifle searching his house, although he did not know what they were looking for. His father was off fighting with the Nationalist army. His mother took him up river to a small village to avoid the Japanese, who occupied only the capital. There she worked for a pittance and starvation became a real possibility. His life, literally, was saved chiefly by an aunt who saw that he had something to eat before his day in school and by a brewery in town that made rice wine, whose workers in the brewery let children eat the rice left over from the brewing process. His mother was disturbed that, day after day, when she returned home, she found her son with a face flushed like a drunkard from the effects of the rice.

The end of that war was followed, as we all know, by the civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists. Young Pah could hear the guns of the approaching Red Army and see dead bodies floating down the river. Because his father worked for the Nationalist government, he and his parents were among the few allowed to escape to Taiwan. There he earned a bachelor’s degree at the National Cheng-Kung University. A scholarship from Virginia Polytechnic Institute allowed him to come to the United States and to earn his Master’s and PhD. He came to PSU immediately upon earning his doctoral degree, and his entire career was spent here, apart from two years teaching in Saudi Arabia at the University of Petroleum and Minerals.

He was a productive researcher in his years at PSU, with a long list of refereed articles and co-authorship of a book on pneumatic and fluid control systems. He worked for PGE on their nuclear power plant and for the US Army Research and Development Center, and he was invited by host universities to be a visiting professor in Taiwan and China. In 1995, he received the high honor of being named a Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, something that happens to fewer than one member of the profession in a hundred.

Since he retired in 2003, Professor Chen has taught voluntarily part-time. He is currently teaching a course for University Studies on the science of a hydrogen economy, in the belief that hydrogen is the energy source of the future, especially now that fuel cells have been developed with much greater efficiency. His principal activities, however, have been writing and recording Gospel messages and recording Gospel sermons to be broadcast by short wave to China. Christianity is very much underground in China, despite its more liberal constitution. Pah expects that his message is heard mostly by farmers, who constitute 80% of the population of China and who, because of their isolation, are freer to listen to foreign radio without fear of being reported by their neighbors. The regime in China, he believes, favors intellectuals (in an ironical reversal from the Cultural Revolution), has been forced to address the needs of factory workers, but neglects farmers. Farmers, he says, have been the source of every change of dynasty and regime in China. His wife, May, is currently a missionary in Macau.

Professor Chen has had unpleasant experiences along with his obvious successes in America. Especially in the 1960s and 70s, he encountered resistance from students because of his accent and “foreigness,” though that has happily decreased, and he made many good friends among his students. Once he was physically assaulted in Milwaukie by two young men who thought that he was Vietnamese and told him to “go home,” but he holds no bitterness, and his career here has been brilliant. He and May have three children, all of whom have attended distinguished universities, MIT, Oxford, and Duke. Portland State, Oregon, and America have benefited by the presence here of another survivor of horrifying events overseas.