Grant Farr to analyze Middle East

By Richard Brinkman,
Professor Emeritus of Economics
Grant Farr (SOC) will speak on problems of the Middle East at the RAPS Lecture/Potluck meeting for November. The event will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 25, at 6 pm in the Cascade Room, SMSU.

Farr is currently chair and professor of sociology in addition to being the associate dean for special projects, CLAS. He has a recognized reputation for scholarship and teaching excellence at PSU. The subject matter of his lecture, "The Middle East in Transition", is both timely and of importance. Grant usually receives standing room only attendance for his lectures that manifest scholarship, wit, and a clear articulation of his subject.

PERS bills are law, but face court challenges

The PERS muddle that went into the 2003 legislature emerged just about as murky. Mark Feldsman (ANTH) traced the path of decisions, laws, and potential challenges of PERS–related legislation at the RAPS October general meeting.

Feldsman indicated the problems could have been ameliorated, if not solved, in 1994, but the PERS Board rejected its own actuarial’s advice about up-dating the mortality tables. The subsequent market crash, plus other extraneous factors, compounded the negatives.

He noted that only six of 15 PERS-related bills were of significance. HB 2001 and 2003 effectively eliminated earnings growth for most accounts.

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HB 2004 not only changed the actuarial table base, but it also requires that the actuarial tables be up-dated every two years.

HB 2005 reduces the size of the PERS Board from 12 to five. The new members will represent the private sector (3), a state manager (1), and a union representative (1).

HB 2020 primarily increases the age at which members may retire with either part- or full-benefits. There are already 11 cases pending for breach of contract or other unconstitutional factors. The nine state cases are fast-tracked to go directly to the Oregon Supreme Court. The “ugly” takes on several forms.

(Continued on Page Six)
Solie still active in music, including publishing

(Editors’ Note: This is the first of what is hoped will be a number of articles by and about RAPS members. The Board agreed that there would be considerable interest in such information before it became grist for the obituary mill. Please convey your interest in participating in this series to the editor via email: hpenk2@aol.com).

By Gordon A. Solie
Professor Emeritus of Music

After reading the latest issue of The Hooter, I realized how much there was to learn about the accomplishments of those who have recently left us. No longer will we be able to talk with them nor ask them questions about their accomplishments, their work, their travels, their publications, or their hobbies. I resolved right then and there to let my colleagues know what I’ve been up to since retirement - whether anyone might be interested or not.

As I, like many of you, retired BC (before computers), I soon realized that this newfangled contraption was in itself a new challenge and something that could open up new vistas for me. As we all know now, retirement is a myth. It only exists as a word in the dictionary. Being a music prof for 30 years and a performing musician (bassoon) for over 50, I’ve been exposed to thousands of musical works and in that period of time I got to know the repertory very well, especially in the world of music for woodwind instruments.

As I’ve always had a fascination for Latin American music (perhaps my mother had a Latin lover), I had the greatest thrill of my life when I toured South America with the famed Robert Shaw Chorale and Orchestra (first bassoon).

Before this two and a half month tour, I had contacted many musicians and composers in the cities in which we were to perform, telling them the dates we would be in their city and asking them if they could meet with me and tell me about their compositions for woodwind instruments. As our tour was sponsored by the U. S. State Department, part of our job was to make friends for America. What better way than through music!

With the assistance of several cultural attachés in the U.S. Embassies (once in a while US embassies ARE helpful), I made contact with a wide variety of musicians and composers, each one eager to have their works published or at least performed in the United States. I’m sure we all know that the Latin America/U.S. leg of the Europe/United States/Latin America triangle is the weakest, they knew very little about the musical life in our country. Very few musical organizations from the United States toured South America (and none in Central America or the West Indies I might add) compared to a wide variety of like organizations touring from Europe.

I told these eager composers that some day I might be able to publish music and would be most anxious to publish theirs. Little did I know that this would soon be possible via the computer.

With my “door stop size” (now ancient) MAC, a fledgling software program called FINALE, and a couple of courses at Clackamas Community College, I was on my way to publishing the 15-20 works I had gathered in South America. My thinking at the time was that these would be the only compositions I would ever publish.

However I soon learned that when the word got around and these publications were reviewed in journals, I would be practically inundated with requests from other composers and arrangers. I will spare you the details as to what transpired in the past fifteen years, but suffice it to say that I now have composers and arrangers under contract in the United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico and the Czech Republic and have published over 110 works to date.

These works range from music for solo woodwind instruments through duets, trios, quartets, quintets, sextets, octets, through works for voice (s) and woodwind instruments to full concertos with full orchestra, string orchestra, band and even guitar ensemble. At least ten more works are pending final editing plus a backlog of untouched music.

A great many of the 115 are works never before published. Others are long out of print and many were found be scrounging through dusty archives in libraries, conservatories and even a Spanish monastery.

Being an ‘international music publisher’ may look good on a résumé, but one doesn’t have to mention that EditionsVIENTO© is a one man,

Page Two
Special events groups gear up programs

RAPS, under the leadership of President Maxine Thomas, has initiated a new program entitled *Special Events.*

What is the Special Events Program? It is an amalgamation of several special interest groups that emanated from the interest survey conducted by RAPS a few months ago (See the President’s Column on page six of this issue).

In the survey, members were asked to indicate which of several activities they would be interested in being a participant. The possibilities ranged from bridge to golf, potlucks to hiking, golfing to dancing, as well as a writing support group, a book club, and a discussion group. As might be expected, with our multidiscipline membership, interest was expressed in all of these activities and some others as well (e.g., group travel to Tahiti?!).

What should we do with the information? As all good researchers, we (rather Alyse, Office Manager) tallied the items and compiled lists of persons interested in each of the areas, along with contact information.

Now what? How might we provide opportunities for members to participate in these interesting, fun activities? Maxine and I (Mary Gordon-Brannan, Special Events Coordinator) met with six groups of RAPS members and spouses, representing six interest areas. The purpose of these meetings was to facilitate the organization of these interest groups. To date, four groups have been formed: bridge, hiking, book club, and writing support groups.

Also, soon to come is a discussion group that might focus on current state and national issues, depending upon the outcome of our organizational meeting that will be held by the time you read this article.

If you haven’t already done so, we invite you to participate in one or more of these groups. The October issue of *The Hooter* and/or this issue have more detailed information for the bridge, hiking, book club, and writing support groups. Additionally, you can contact Mary Gordon-Brannan (503-239-1077 or mgbrannan@teleport.com) if you have further questions or suggestions. Future issues of *The Hooter* will keep you posted about these special interest group activities. If you have ideas for other special interest groups, let Mary or Maxine Thomas know, and we’ll go from there. Chances are that other RAPS members have the same interests.

Book club sets meeting date, selects first novel for discussion

By Mary Gordon-Brannan, Special Events Coordinator

A group of RAPS members and spouses met recently to form a book club and to develop guidelines for the initial operation of the club. Two or three books will be selected in advance of the meetings. The person who is hosting the meeting will ultimately select the book to be read with suggestions from, and discussion by, the group.

There will not be a general theme of the books to be selected; rather, a variety of types of fiction and nonfiction books will be read. The host/hostess will lead the discussion. The book club will meet once per month, except for December, with the day of the week to be determined at the next meeting.

The next RAPS Book Club meeting will be held on Thursday, Nov. 20, at 1:30 at Ken and Donna Dueker’s home. Call the Duekers at (503) 274-0067 or e-mail at duekerk@pdx.edu for directions and to RSVP.

The book selection for the November meeting is *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress* by Dai Sijie. The description of the novel from the back cover reads –

*In this enchanting tale about the magic of reading and the wonder of romantic awakening, two hapless city boys are exiled to a remote mountain village for re-education during China’s infamous Cultural Revolution.*

(Continued on Page Four)

Bridge, discussion, and hiking club stories on page four
Hikers brave rain on Forest Park Maple Trail

Three hikers participated in the first hike of the new hiking group. The site of the walk was the Forest Park Maple Trail. The full trail is a 7.5 mile loop with an elevation gain of 400 feet. The trail was in good shape with almost no mud, but we chose to take the short version of the hike due to the rain. We had a good time even though the maple leaves had yet to change color. It also gave us an opportunity to check out our water resistance.

The next hike is scheduled in the Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge on Friday, November 14th, at 9 am. It is an easy 2.9 mile loop with little elevation gain. It is a wetland, so we should see aquatic wildlife. The hike is listed in Sullivan’s 100 Hikes in Northwest Oregon. Contact Marge Terdal (503) 244-5714 for more details and the meeting location.

The third hike is yet to be selected. If you have any suggestions or would like to coordinate the third hike, contact Marge Terdal.

Bridge, discussion, and writing groups set agendas

Bridge club to meet on November 11

The RAPS bridge group will celebrate Veterans’ Day by having their second meeting on November 11 at 1:30 pm at the home of LaRay Barna, 7210 SW 86th Ave, (near Garden Home Road). Everyone is welcome, couples or singles. We are an affable group which can adjust to whatever number attend.

So if you would like to come for an afternoon of social bridge, call or e-mail LaRay for directions. To RSVP, phone (503) 768-4160 or e-mail BARNAL@pdx.edu.

Writers to share work and resources

A small, but enthusiastic, group met to form the RAPS Writing Support Group. Recognizing that there is a variety of writing interests from prose to poetry and from memoirs to fiction to professional writing, all types of writing will be accommodated. The purposes of the group will be to share writing, to receive feedback on writing, and to provide resources and references for successful writing. The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 17 from 1 to 3 pm at Maxine Thomas’s home. Come to the meeting with 5 copies of writing (double-spaced, please) and/or writing hints and resources you wish to share. The organizational guidelines will be finalized at that meeting. Call Maxine at (503) 291-1279 or e-mail at ondangwa@yahoo.com to RSVP and to get directions. All are welcome to come.

Discussion group meets November 19

A RAPS discussion group was a popular choice on the RAPS interest survey. An organizational meeting for forming such a group has been held. The composition of the group will determine the directions and the topics of the discussions.

The next gathering of the discussion group will be on November 19 from 10 am to noon at Maxine Thomas’s home. Come join us for some stimulating discussion topics. Call Maxine at (503) 291-1279 or e-mail her at ondangwa@yahoo.com to RSVP and to get directions.

Book club . . . from page 3

There they meet the daughter of the local tailor and discover a hidden stash of Western classics in Chinese translation. As they flirt with the seamstress and secretly devour these banned works, they find transit from their grim surroundings to worlds they never imagined.
Dashiell Hammett’s black bird flies again

By Stanley Johnson
Professor Emeritus of English

Another academic murder in a genteel library setting! Who would believe it?

Don’t worry. It’s only fiction. It couldn’t happen here.

The book in which it does happen is a new and highly literate novel by a professor of English (who else?) at Fordham University, Joanne Dobson, who has now written five novels with university settings and many bookish references.

Her new work is The Maltese Manuscript, the very title of which conjures up memories of Sam Spade and his search for the gem-studded statue of the famous black bird.

Dashiell Hammett’s The Maltese Falcon – which may be the greatest American detective novel – opens with a visit to Sam Spade’s office by the evasive Miss Wonderly, who wants him to find her sister who has run away with a man. The Maltese Manuscript begins similarly. Its first sentence is “The door to my office opened and a dame walked in, bringing Trouble with her.” The “dame” is Sunnye Hardcastle, a celebrated detective novelist; “Trouble” is her dog, and the narrator is Karen Pelletier, a professor of English at a northeastern university that is about to host a conference on mystery fiction.

The conference begins amid pompous utterances from some of the academic types about murder as “a mode of hermeneutical rhetoric,” but it is cut short when the body of a book collector is found in the library stacks and a number of priceless books, including the original manuscript of Hammett’s Maltese Falcon, are found to be missing.

The loss gives occasion to assess Hammett’s work and to acknowledge the “Falcons” importance. “It established a transformative myth in the American imagination,” Professor Pelletier says, “the loner private eye – an incorruptible man in a crooked universe.”

Pelletier and her cop friend Charlie Piotrowski investigate the murder from different standpoints, and finally discover it to be part of a large-scale attempt to steal valuable books and manuscripts from college libraries. Fortunately, they recover the stolen books and put safeguards in place to prevent such thefts from occurring again. (The book would be a valuable how-to-do-it manual for all librarians.)

The Maltese Manuscript is an affectionate view of the academic world with an ingenious plot dealing with one of its most precious assets, its book-filled libraries. It is not without its touches of satire, especially in the dialogue of some of the professors at the conference. One of them, finds that a female detective’s significance lies “in the manner in which the character destabilized the subtexts of performative femininity”. Belittling the literary value of detective fiction, he goes on to say, “Literary aesthetics do not account for the recuperation of heterogeneity from hegemony.”

Would any professor at Portland State be caught talking like that?

Nominations for retiree’s awards for service due March 1, 2004

For the benefit of new RAPS members and old RAPS members whose memories need jogging now and then, let me remind you that each year we honor a retired PSU faculty or staff person for his/her continuing activity in - and service to - the University and our community.

RAPS members may make nominations for the Outstanding Retired Faculty or Staff Award between now and March 1, 2004.

It would be helpful to the awards committee if the nomination took the form of a single page résumé of the nominee’s background, activities and achievements since retirement. Don’t forget to include a paragraph or two describing why the nominee is worthy.

Application forms may be secured from the RAPS office on the second floor of the Benson House. The presentation of the award is a featured event at the President’s Luncheon in the spring. Although spring may seem a long way off, it’s time to start your thinking process NOW. You will be reminded (or nagged) from time to time in the Hooter until you have submitted your nomination(s).

Further information may be obtained from the RAPS office (503/725-3447) or by calling or e-mailing Gordon Solie at either: 503/244-3060 or GSolie@aol.com.
President’s Column

RAPS is moving in many directions for interests

By Maxine Thomas
RAPS President

RAPS is on the move!! Plan to attend one of the "Special Interest Groups" that RAPS is offering the membership. As you can see from last month's and this month’s Hooter, some of the special interest groups are happening. The hikers are hiking, the discussers are discussing, the bridge players are dealing (and trumping), the writers are writing, and the book club has chosen their first book!

Our President-Elect, Richard Brinkman has incorporated three potlucks along with a presenter. All this is happening as a result of you completing the interest survey last spring/summer.

You, the members, not only identified your particular interests) when you returned the survey, but you also gave comments and suggestions. Below are some of the additional suggestions.

- Occasional off-campus visits to interesting places are fine, (Alpenrose visit/Chinese Garden)

Solie: ‘forced’ to travel about
(From Page 2)

organization run out of one of my bedrooms. It didn’t start out as non-profit, but it ended up that way.

This is truly a labor of love, but many excellent reviews and most favorable comments from musicians from many countries thanking me for introducing them to much new (and some times old) music, make it all very worthwhile indeed. Naturally, this line of work forces me to travel to South America and/or Europe most every other year. But that’s the price one has to pay. I try to keep my Spanish up to date and am about to take a PCC course in Brazilian Portuguese.

I most also add how proud and happy I’ve been to serve REPPS/RAPS in every board post except treasurer (am I being told something?)

The goal of this article is to prod some of you into telling our members of your work, avocations and hobbies since retirement before we have to read about them in a future Hooter article when you won’t be around to read them. Please take pen in hand (or computer in lap) and tell us of the myriad of interesting accomplishments that you have made and are continuing to make.

Page Six

- I already belong to a book group and a discussion group but have enjoyed and recommend continuing off-campus tours such as Shanghai tunnels under Old Town, Japanese Gardens, Art Museum, etc.
- I would attend more if in evenings.
- How about singing (karaoke)?
- I would like to learn a skill or craft I don't have.

These are just a few of the suggestions and the board will continue to seek out ways to meet your interests. Check the Hooter for dates and places of activities that may interest you. Even if you didn't check it on the survey, you’re welcome to join a group.

You may also check the RAPS website calendar for happenings (www.raps.edu). If you need transportation to one of the activities let the host or Alyse, RAPS office manager, know.

Thanks to those of you who sent in your dues for renewal of membership and welcome to the new members! Each of us can encourage retired faculty and staff colleagues to join if they haven’t yet joined.

If there’s nothing of interest for them, let us know and perhaps we can MAKE something interesting for them. Who knows what the future holds for RAPS!?!? Stay tuned!!

Feldman/PERS . . . From Page One

The first is that the legislature made no contingency provisions in case any of the laws are overturned by the courts. The second is that the colossal debt may well require a cut in benefits or higher taxes or both. And finally there is still a possibility that PERS might be eliminated.

Legislation allowing that was already passed in a previous legislature.

Coming in December
Dr. M and Tomato
Magician and Clown