



## Retirement Association of Portland State

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Office hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

## Officers

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Clarence Hein  
President-elect / Program Chair

Marge Terdal  
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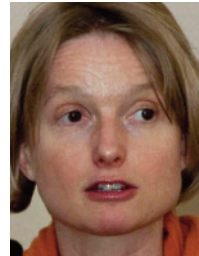
## Office Manager

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## Crops, seeds, and food they are a-changin'

**W**ithin the grasp of our parents' memories, and certainly within that of our grandparents', people bought their food directly from the people who grew it or caught it. When Grandma strolled down the road to buy a bunch of carrots from the neighbor who grew them, it's unlikely that politics, ethics, and science factored into the transaction.

How times have changed, as Lisa Weasel, a professor of biology, reminded about 40 RAPS members who attended the Feb. 18 edition of RAPS Program/Speaker Series. Weasel, a PSU professor since 2000, is the author of *Food Fray: Inside the Controversy over Genetically Modified Food* (American Management Association, 2009).



Lisa Weasel

And what a controversy. But it's not what that most people fear: will eating genetically modified food harm me? "We should think about the greater context," Weasel cautioned. "It's very important to think about the impact of the way food is grown, impacts on the land, the availability of water, and impacts on the air—is it safe and sustainable for all these other pieces of the ecosystem?"

That's where politics, ethics, and science come into food in a way unthinkable when Grandma was on the prowl for fresh carrots. It was about 40 years ago when the seeds of the genetically modified (GM) food controversy were first planted. Scientists realized then that DNA could be transferred from one species to another. These new developments sparked furious debate—what dangers might this new technology spur? Is it ethical? Could splicing DNA from a tumor virus into *E. coli*, a common bacterium found in the human intestine, produce a fearsome disease outbreak? And who would regulate these scientists who were, some charged, "playing God?"

"The outcome of these discussions was largely that scientists should self-regulate," explained Weasel. "The debate largely died down when no really terrible outbreaks happened." High school students perform similar recombinant DNA experiments today.

There are two main commercially produced GM plant traits. The largest is plants that are herbicide resistant. They resist weed killer, allowing farmers to spray an entire field, killing the weeds but leaving the crop unharmed. The other is a pesticide

## NEXT UP

Chet Orloff, former OHS executive director, talks about his virtual "Museum of the City."

**Thursday, March 18, 1 p.m.**  
**333 Smith Memorial Union**

See preview story on page 2.

## President's Message

LARRY SAWYER

**T**he new RAPS bylaws were approved. Thank you to all who voted. A question was asked about synchronizing the treasurer and secretary offices so they are up for election on alternate years. The 2006 bylaws addressed that question with the three member-at-large offices, and the RAPS Board of Directors plans to do the same procedure with the treasurer and secretary positions.

The treasurer will be asked to run for a one-year term just for this election. That will put the offices up for election on alternate years. The bylaws require the president, with board approval, to fill any vacated terms in order to prevent this problem. You will be electing a president-elect, a member-at-large, and either a secretary or treasurer annually. Committee chairs are appointed or re-appointed annually by the president.

Doug Swanson has been newsletter editor for three years and wishes to move on. I have talked to an interested party and will request confirmation at the March board meeting. The person is well known to all and will be an excellent editor. The webmaster position remains vacant for the time being, and our office manager, MiMi Bernal-Graves is performing the webmaster duties. MiMi will graduate this year and pursue an education to become a naturopathic physician. We will be interviewing for her replacement in a couple of months.

Finally, PSU is offering hard-hat tours of the new Lincoln Hall performance building. If you are interested, contact MiMi at our office, and she will work to coordinate a date and time. See you at the March potluck.

—Larry Sawyer

## Orloff presents 'Museum of the City' idea to RAPS March 18

**C**het Orloff, former executive director of the Oregon Historical Society and adjunct professor in PSU's School of Urban Studies and Planning, wants to build a virtual "Museum of the City" at Portland State because, as he told *The Oregonian* recently, "The more people know about the place they live, the better they can take care of it."

Orloff will discuss this project at the next RAPS meeting Thursday, March 18, in 333 Smith Memorial Union. Potluck lunch begins at 1 p.m. with the presentation beginning at 1:30 p.m.

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This museum won't be constructed of **bricks and mortar**. Rather, it will exist on the Internet.

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He wants to "house" this museum at PSU because, he said, "all great universities have at least one museum." But this museum won't be constructed of bricks and mortar. Rather, it will exist on the Internet. Using a grant from the International Council of Museums, Orloff created a project for his class on History of American Cities. By term's end, his students will have created the beginnings of the museum, in

essence a Web site, which will include a museum lobby, wings, and galleries.

Orloff has been working with Jennifer Portis, program manager of PSU's Multimedia Professionals Program, and her students to create the Internet presence. This term, his students are working on individual history projects concerning any city they choose. He'd like them to focus on sustainability, ports and waterfronts, or transportation. The projects will go into the museum's archive. Eventually, anyone anywhere will be able to submit exhibits for this museum and, if accepted, they will become assistant curators.

Orloff believes the museum project will be another example of PSU fulfilling its motto, "Let Knowledge Serve The City."

### Potluck pointers

The March 18 presentation by Chet Orloff also serves as RAPS' annual potluck. Here are your potluck marching orders:

- ◆ Bring sandwich makings, salad, or dessert.
- ◆ Plates, utensils, coffee, and tea are provided.
- ◆ RSVP to the RAPS Office by Thursday, March 11, and tell MiMi Bernal-Graves what you plan to bring. Call MiMi at 503-725-3447 or e-mail [raps@pdx.edu](mailto:raps@pdx.edu).

## In memoriam: Phyllis J. Hochstettler (1915-2010)

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**P**hyllis J. Hochstettler, professor emerita of education, was born July 2, 1915, and reared in small western Nebraska towns—Aurora and Bayard—by parents who underwent heavy personal sacrifice during the drought-ridden Great Depression years to educate her and a younger sister. After completing a B.A. degree in 1937 at Hastings College, Prof. Hochstettler launched an outstanding professional education career encompassing various assignments in Nebraska, Colorado, Washington, and Oregon. She died Jan. 22, 2010.

Stellar service as a high school teacher and principal prompted Prof. Hochstettler to develop a school librarianship vocation. To that end, she earned an M.A. degree in library science at the University of Denver in 1951. Recognition for outstanding accomplishments soon led to an appointment as a school librarianship consultant for Nebraska's Department of Education.

In 1959 the Oregon State Department of Education designated her to be its first head of statewide public school library development. In that role she traversed the state, thoroughly familiarizing herself with public school library conditions and engendering a highly regarded reputation within the educational community.

During the 1960s Prof. Hochstettler numbered among several highly qualified educators that PSU engaged to facilitate its transition to comprehensive university status. In 1967 during a period of a phenomenal expansion of teacher training offerings, she joined the School of Education faculty in order to initiate a graduate program in educational media/li-

brarianship. In the early years, she directed the program and taught most of the courses. She assumed primary responsibility for establishing and nurturing a highly esteemed and popular course of study that enabled an extensive number of matriculating graduate students to qualify for school librarian positions on a nationwide basis.

Prof. Hochstettler, a RAPS member, retired in 1976. Three decades later, on Sept. 14, 2006, she shared some reflections with a colleague, Professor Emerita Maxine Thomas:

“I'm most proud of the successes of our graduate students, who went on in Oregon and other states to do good things, to be successful librarians, and to earn the respect of their students and colleagues in the schools. When your students are successful in their jobs, that makes you feel successful, and I was fortunate in having a lot of successes.”

Prof. Hochstettler participated in many professional organizations and presided over the American Association of School Librarians. She was well known and highly regarded across the campus. Her willing and able service contributed significantly to this institution's fulfillment of its assigned mission to enhance educational opportunities within the Portland metropolitan area and the state of Oregon. The University at large owes her a large debt of gratitude.

Her sister, Dorothy, preceded her in death. To surviving nieces Sharon Mattioli, of Port Townsend, Wash., and Linda Dunham, of Chattaroy, Wash., our organization extends its condolences. An *Oregonian* obituary and guestbook are accessible.

—*Victor C. Dahl, Professor Emeritus of History, and  
Steve A. Brannan, Professor Emeritus of Education*

## RAPS Board of Directors election ballots due March 25

**A** ballot for election of board members has been included in this issue of the *RAPS Sheet*. Be sure to return it to the RAPS office by March 25. New officers will be introduced at the President's Luncheon on April 22.

**Joan Shireman** is the nominee for president-elect. This is a three-year term, beginning as president-elect, with responsibility for planning monthly RAPS programs. Joan was a professor in the School of Social Work, where her teaching and research centered on issues in child welfare. In retirement, she has continued in volunteer work that concerns children and families. She has participated in RAPS as a member of the Bridge Group and the Book Club, and has served two years as board secretary.

**Bob Lockerby** is the nominee for secretary, a two-year term. Bob worked in the Library from 1967 until his retirement in 2000. He held a number of positions: assistant director of the Audio Visual Library, circulation librarian, assistant science librarian, engineering librarian, department head, and assistant library director. He has even served as librarian for the Mazamas and enjoyed mountain climbing and hiking until his knees gave out. He served as RAPS treasurer for three years.

**Bob Vogelsang** is the nominee for treasurer. This will be a one-year term. He was chair of the former Speech Department (now Communication) in the 1970s and executive secretary of the Western Speech Communication Association. He had a Fulbright Exchange to Germany in 1980-81. He has served in every office in RAPS, and has been treasurer for the past three years. He founded the Northwest Regional Committee and helped generate the RAPS Scholarship Fund.

**Susan Jackson** is the nominee for member-at-large. This is a three-year term. Susan spent 28 years at Portland State, and in 2006 retired from the Library Music Room, where she worked as a library technician. She is currently filling a vacancy in the member-at-large position, and is eager to continue contributing to RAPS.

You will note on the ballot that after each nominee there is a space labeled "Other." This space can be used to write in the name of someone who would be a strong addition to the RAPS Board. Even if this person does not receive enough votes this time, he or she will be considered by next year's Elections Committee for a slot on the board.

—Marge Terdal, *Elections Chair*



## Portland State: A History in Pictures

AVAILABLE AT:

**PSU Bookstore**

**University  
Market in  
Smith Union**

**Annie Bloom's Books**

**Oregon  
Historical  
Society**

**Powell's City of  
Books**

It's taken three years, but the wait was worth it. *Portland State: A History in Pictures*, is a handsome, large-format book that documents PSU's history in text and more than 300 color and black-and-white photos spread over 180 pages. This history of PSU is a superb addition to your personal library. Writing by Richard Sanders '57, photo editing by Brent Schauer, and editing by Charlie White and Clarence Hein '65.

## RAPS club reports

### Book Club: 'The Elegance of the Hedgehog'

The RAPS Book Club will be hosted on Tuesday, March 16, at 1:30 p.m. by Felicia Wertz, 1125 SW St. Clair Ave., Portland. Call her at 503-227-7902 to RSVP and for directions. We will discuss *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*, by Muriel Barbery. From the dustcover:

We are here in an elegant *hôtel particulier* in the center of Paris. Renée, the building's concierge, is short, ugly, and plump. . . . In short, she is everything society expects from a concierge at a bourgeois building in a posh Parisian neighborhood. But Renée has a secret: she is a ferocious autodidact who furtively devours art, philosophy, music, and Japanese culture. With biting humor she scrutinizes the lives of the building's tenants—her inferiors in every way except that of material wealth. Then there's Paloma, a super-smart 12-year-old and the youngest daughter of the Josses, who live on the fifth floor. Talented, precocious, and startlingly lucid, she has come to terms with life's seeming futility and has decided to end her own on the day of her 13th birthday. . . Paloma and Renée hide both their true talents and their finest qualities from a world they suspect cannot or will not appreciate them. They discover their kindred souls when a new tenant arrives, a wealthy Japanese man named Ozu. He befriends Paloma and is able to see through Renée's timeworn disguise to the mysterious event that has haunted her since childhood.

Looking ahead to April, we will read the Multnomah County Library "Everybody Reads" 2010 selection, *The Ghost Map*, by Steven Johnson.

—Mary Brannan

### Bridge Group: Second Tuesdays

The RAPS Bridge Group meets at 1:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. The group is open to all members of RAPS. If you are interested in playing or need information about the group, please call me at 503-292-0838. —Colin Dunkeld

### Hikers: Headin' to the West Hills

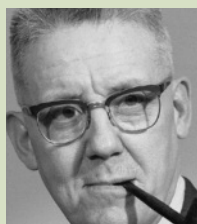
The Tuesday, March 23, hike will be from the Oregon Zoo to Council Crest, to OHSU, down the tram, the streetcar to MAX and MAX back to the Zoo. A senior all-zone ticket or a Tri-Met pass will be necessary. Lunch will be in the Zoo/Sylvan area. It will be necessary to take the elevator at the Zoo. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the top of the Zoo Max elevator.

Confirm your participation with Larry Sawyer at [larry\\_sawyer@comcast.net](mailto:larry_sawyer@comcast.net) or 503-771-1616.

—Larry Sawyer

## Past Tense FERDINAND SOCIETY

The Ferdinand Society began in 1956 as an organization of teaching faculty and administrators. Founded by Professors Mitchell Kerr (chair), Social Sciences, John Allen, Science, and Emerson Hoogstraat, Business Administration, the society's constitutional purpose was "to promote fellowship, intellectual discussion and association with leaders in all phases of Portland community life. . . . The society was created in the name of Ferdinand the Bull, whose physical power, friendliness, curiosity, and love for the esthetic symbolize the purpose of this organization." These men initiated a series of monthly informal luncheons for faculty to help them "stay in touch" and invited outside speakers to promote interactions of faculty with leaders in the community. Following the Ferdinand theme, the presiding officers became the Matador (president), Toreador (program chair), and Picador (secretary/treasurer).



John Allen



Mitchell Kerr

The society gained a strong following, increasing its membership from 16 in the 1950s to over 125 in the 1990s. The organization's success during these years was attributed to its collegial appeal, the 1971 addition of emeritus faculty/administrators, and the inclusion of women faculty, which occurred in 1980 when Mary Constans, Art, and Maxine Thomas, Education, became members. Interest in the society waned in the 1990s with the increasing demands on teaching faculty, and by 2005, membership had dwindled. Scott Burns, Geology, and Ellen Reuler, Speech and Hearing Sciences, who had generously led the society over its last years, organized a farewell function on Nov. 13, 2006. While saying goodbye to a PSU tradition, participating members attested to the benefits of social exchanges among colleagues as being an important part of academia.



Emerson Hoogstraat

*Past Tense* features glimpses into Portland State's history. To submit a story (or an idea for one), e-mail the RAPS History Preservation Committee at [raps@pdx.edu](mailto:raps@pdx.edu).

trait—a protein, which is toxic to the target pest, is engineered into the crop. The pest comes along, takes a bite, and dies.

In the United States, the majority of soy, corn, and cotton crops are genetically modified, Weasel said. Canola, grown largely in Canada, is also a GM crop. Most recently, sugar beets have been genetically modified to resist herbicide, sparking fears among organic farmers in the Willamette Valley that pollen from the GM crops could cross pollinate with their crops, rendering them worthless. But no GM crops find their way to your grocery store's produce section.

At least they're not supposed to. In 2001 a GM food controversy made headlines when GM corn intended for animals—it's approved for animal consumption—was mixed into corn intended for humans. There followed reports of people getting allergic reactions after eating the GM corn, although Weasel said the reports were never confirmed.

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### Organic farmers in the Willamette Valley fear that GM crops might **cross-pollinate** with theirs, rendering them worthless

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"Only about 10 percent of the corn grown in this country makes its way into human food in any form," she said. "Most is going out to animals, but we don't have a separate system to keep nonapproved food out. Inevitably, corn intended for animals is mixed with corn intended for humans."

Another contamination event occurred the following year. A small company, attempting to produce experimental drugs using engineered corn, planted a test plot in Nebraska. The federal government had forbidden the use of that plot for several years after the experiment concluded. But the very next year, a USDA inspector found that the plot had been used for soybeans.

"The food was recalled, and the company was fined," Weasel said, "but the company did not reveal the identity of the experimental pharmaceutical compound because it was considered confidential business information. You can understand that, but it's very hard to decide if there are any health or environmental

concerns when we can't see what the protein is."

While in the United States GM foods are largely accepted, such is not the case elsewhere. There is a moratorium on growing GM crops in Europe, and Europeans, seeing them as "unnatural," will not eat GM foods. In Africa, GM foods have been rejected by some countries despite food shortages. Among other issues, the Africans are concerned that cross-pollination with their crops would endanger their exports to GM-intolerant Europe.

India, with a large part of its population connected to agriculture, has been very cautious in approving GM crops. One GM crop—Bt cotton, so called because it contains *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a toxin lethal to specific insects—has been approved, but no food crops have.

In *Food Fray*, Weasel describes how Indian farmers found their Bt cotton crops "besieged with pests, despite its supposed inherent pesticidal properties." She describes both the quantity and quality of the Bt cotton crop as poor, netting lower prices—although the farmers paid more for the seeds.

Monsanto, a worldwide player in the GM field, countered with a market-research study extolling the wonders of Bt cotton. "And in the meantime," Weasel writes, "cotton farmers across India continued to commit suicide in alarming numbers."

With most U.S. corn, cotton, and soybeans produced from GM varieties, neither the technology nor the controversy is going away. Weasel described recent ballot measures and court cases involving genetically modified foods, and more legal cases are undoubtedly in the hopper. The battle over GM foods is far from over.

Finally, are you eating GM foods? The answer is almost certainly yes. Although it's highly unlikely that you'll find genetically modified foods in your grocer's produce section, GM food ingredients are in more than two-thirds of processed foods on grocery store shelves. It's in the packaged food, Weasel said, the breakfast cereal, the coffee creamer, in all those things that contain byproducts of soy and corn. But it's not in your lettuce or strawberries.

Well, not yet.