



Retirement Association of Portland State November 2006

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8:00a.m. -3:30 p.m.

Officers

President	Bruce Stern
President-Elect	Robert Tufts
Past President	Mary Brannan
Treasurer	Robert Lockerby
Secretary	Larry Sawyer
Editor	John Cooper

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Robert Pearson	(2007)
Roger Moseley	(2007)
Gwen Newborg	(2007)

Committees

Awards	Richard Brinkman
Elections	Mary Brannan
Membership	TBA
Social/Friendship	Beryl and Vic Dahl

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I saw a former student a few days ago at a professional basketball game. He asked me if I was still teaching at PSU, and I told him that I had been retired for three plus years now. He asked what I was doing now that I was retired. I mentioned my work with numerous boards and my involvement with RAPS. He suggested that with all that work I really might NOT really be retired. That got me thinking and remembering that his response was similar to my wife's.

What, then, is retirement? Well, my conception is that retirement is the *absence* of your former work. Some people choose to relax, read, and focus on hobbies, while others take another type of job, and still others choose to volunteer and give back to the community. Harry Emerson Fosdick, a minister and professor of practical theology, offers this advice: "Don't simply retire from something; have something to retire to." Everyone has a different set of "hot buttons," so find yours and follow that inner voice.

I hope that involvement in RAPS is part of your retirement activities. We have interesting monthly programs, tours, socials, a book club, a hiking group, and a bridge group. There is something for nearly everyone. You may want to check out our web page (designed and maintained by webmaster Robert Pearson) : <http://www.raps.pdx.edu>.

There you will find our mission, events, photos, list of officers, and activity links that you might be interested in. If you are interested in becoming involved in one of our committees, feel free to contact me at 503-626-5227.

Hopefully your image of retirement is more ambitious than that of former president Richard Millhouse Nixon, who said: "When I retire I'm going to spend my evenings by the fireplace going through those boxes. There are things in there that ought to be burned."

I look forward to seeing you in the coming months at our programs and events.

Bruce Stern

We Welcome New Members of RAPS

Walter Amacher, Business Affairs
Francis Bates, Professional Development
Susan Jackson, Library
Caroline Litzenberger, History
Rose Hill, Student Services
Robert O'Brien, Chemistry

RAPS ACTIVITIES

RAPS BOOK CLUB

At our last gathering on October 17th, six members took part in a discussion of *The Color of Water* by James McBride, a memoir about his mother who was born in Poland and immigrated to the US with her Jewish parents. Her two marriages to African American men produced twelve children. The author was the eighth child. His father died before he was born, so that he was raised with his siblings and stepfather. Several readers commented on the extreme poverty of his childhood and the tenacity of his mother and her focus on education for her children. Amazingly, all twelve children are college graduates. We liked the way the author interspersed transcripts of his mother talking about her life. Thanks to a list of discussion questions as well as contributions from all participants, it was a stimulating and delightful afternoon.

Please join us next month for a discussion of *Lost in Translation* by Eva Hoffman. Because of Thanksgiving, we moved the meeting date from the third Tuesday to the second Wednesday of November. The book group will be at hosted by Marge Terdal in her home, 997 SW Westwood Drive, 1:30 on Wednesday, November 15th. Please contact her at 503-244-5714 to let her know that you plan to attend or for directions. The book is described by *Publishers Weekly* as follows:

Daughter of Holocaust survivors, the author, a *New York Times Book Review* auditor, lost her sense of place and belonging when she emigrated with her family from Poland to Vancouver in 1959 at the age of 13. Although she works within a familiar genre here, Hoffman's is a penetrating, lyrical memoir that casts a wide net as it joins vivid anecdotes and vigorous philosophical insights on Old World Cracow and Ivy League America; Polish anti-Semitism; the degradations suffered by immigrants; Hoffman's cultural nostalgia, self-analysis and intellectual passion; and the atrophy of her Polish from disuse and her own disabling inarticulateness in English as a newcomer. Linguistic dispossession, she

explains, "is close to the dispossession of one's self." As Hoffman savors the cadences and nuances of her adopted language, she remains ever conscious of assimilation's perils: "But how does one bend toward another culture without falling over, how does one strike an elastic balance between rigidity and self-effacement?"

Because of the holidays, we will not meet in December. Happy Reading!

Mary Brannan

RAPS BRIDGE CLUB

The RAPS Bridge Group meets at 1:30 pm on the second Tuesday of each month – usually at the home of one of the members. For information about the next meeting or for answers to any questions about the group, please call or e-mail Colin Dunkeld at 503-292-0838 or colipat@easystreet.com or mailto:colipat@easystreet.com.

Colin Dunkeld

The October hike in Forest Park occurred on October 26. The hikers constituted, in the words of Robert Pearson, "a small, select group." Robert parked his car at the end of the trail, then hiked back to the starting point, where he met the other three hikers, Marge Terdal, Mary and Laird Brodie. They hiked down the Wildwood trail to the McCleay trail, and then followed the trail down the Balch Creek canyon to the Forest Park headquarters. The weather was bright and sunny, but the air was cool in the woods. The whole hike had a descent of several hundred feet, except that Robert Pearson had to climb it to meet the other hikers, thus doing it twice. The hikers then adjourned for a hot lunch at the Skyline Restaurant.

At press time, the hikers had not decided on where to make their November hike. Larry Sawyer, who coordinates most hikes, is still out of town. The hike will occur on November 17th, because of the Thanksgiving Holiday. Once a decision has been made, the information will be posted on the RAPS web page, www.raps.pdx.edu. You may also contact Larry at 503-771-1616 or at larry_sawyer@comcast.net.

RAPS FALL PROGRAMS

November Program

In November, our speaker is Robert C. Donnelly, Ph.D., whose topic is “The Portland Vice Scandal of 1956.” Join us on Thursday, November 16, at 1:00 pm in SMC 236. Light refreshments will be available. Dr. Donnelly is currently an Assistant Professor at Gonzaga University, Spokane, Wash. He received his M.A. from PSU in 1997. His Ph.D. was earned at Marquette University, May 2004, with the dissertation: “Corrupting Portland: Municipal Corruption, Organized Crime, and the Teamsters Union in a Post-World War II City.”

In his research, Dr. Robert Donnelly has collected mounds of evidence to prove that politicians and law enforcement officials in the 1950s tolerated, sanctioned, and profited from the Rose City’s lucrative vice industry. Using FBI files, congressional and state documents, oral histories, and wiretap recordings, he traces the bribes from “Vice Czar” James Elkins and others to City Hall and county offices. He concludes that there was a “stench behind the roses.”

October Program

The first presentation of our 2006-07 Program year was held in Smith Memorial Center, room 236, on October 19. Forty RAPS members, guests and visitors socialized and enjoyed light refreshments before the presentation.

Our speaker was Dr. Basil Dmytryshyn, Professor Emeritus of History, who joined the fledgling Portland State College in 1956; he retired in 1989. He recounted his journey “from the Carpathians to the Cascades,” encompassing the early turbulent years from 1939 to his first impression of PSU’s Old Main in 1956. His story started in Dukla, Poland, his hometown, and the nearby Dukla Pass, an area with a history of many invasions. His Ukrainian Gymnasium education was interrupted by the Nazi invasion from the west on September 1, 1939 and the Soviets on September 16 from the east.

Basil followed his personal odyssey of arrests, escapes, military service (including being a partisan in the Slovak resistance) to his eventual arrival at a West German displaced persons camp in 1946. He interspersed his talk with references to the evolution of military occupation from invasion to eventual reaction and resistance. This process began with the behavior of front-line soldiers, followed by occupation authorities and their repressive measures and terrorist control methods, then eventually the reaction and formation of resistance organizations. In July 1945, Basil returned to Dukla to find his village destroyed.

In early 1947 he found his way to New York City, with the assistance of papers provided by his father, who resided there. He had to learn English, which quickly joined his repertoire of many languages. His academic career moved rapidly through the University of Arkansas (where he met his wife, Virginia) and on to UC, Berkeley and a Ph.D. in 1955.

Basil’s daughter, Tania Thompson, has written a delightful article in the current issue of the *Portland State Magazine*, entitled “My Father the Professor.”

Coming Events

For December, mark your calendar for our annual Holiday Dinner, December 21, Thursday, at the Multnomah Athletic Club. Reception at 6:00 pm. Details will be provided in the December *RAPS Sheet*.

For January, we will take a tour of the new engineering building, the Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science. This facility at SW Fourth and College opened its doors last Winter Quarter. **Please mark January 18, Thursday, 1:00 pm in your calendar.**

Murder on the Menu - Detective Fiction for Foodies

Food and crime would seem to be an unlikely combination in fiction, yet an increasing number of mystery novels blending these two ingredients have descended on us recently. Perhaps the earliest exponent of this mixture was Mary Daheim, with her bed-and-breakfast mysteries. Others who have claimed this territory are Susan W. Albert with her China Bayles books, redolent with the spices and herbs of the Southwest, and Diane Mott Davidson, author of *Dark Tort* and other tasty treats.

Another prolific writer in this category is G.A. McKeveitt, whose main character is Savannah Reid, a private eye in California. All her novels have titles that hint at their ingredients: *Bitter Sweets*, *Killer Calories*, *Cooked Goose*, and *Sugar and Spite*. Then there is Joanne Fluke, whose central character runs a bakeshop that is the setting of *Strawberry Shortcake Murder* and *Blueberry Muffin Murder*. Add Claudia Bishop, whose *Fried by Jury* is set in the aptly named Hemlock Falls. In this novel, a deep-fat frying contest proves fatal, as rival chicken franchises drive the plot.

The king of the killer cereal game is indeed a King – Peter King, an aerospace engineer turned crime novelist who ten years ago introduced his food expert turned crime solver, the nameless “Gourmet Detective.” He travels worldwide, giving lectures and demonstrations on food preparation. A recent typical example of his work is *Eat, Drink, and Be Buried*, in which he is hired by a family of British aristocrats to recreate a medieval menu. When one of the guests dies of poisoning, the food expert must solve the crime in order to clear his name. Along the way, he introduces us to *frumenty*, a pudding made of whole wheat and nuts.

Two entries (entrees?) in this category have recently appeared: *Blood Orange Brewing* is set in Charleston, South Carolina and centers around Theodosia Browning, who runs the Indigo Tea Shop and does a little detecting on the side, much to the annoyance of the local police chief. At one of her catered parties, a much-admired politician falls to the floor stabbed from behind. Theodosia assists in the investigation, almost getting trapped by the murderer. Even the dangers she faces, however, do not deter her from constantly experimenting the new blends of tea, such as Formosan Lapsang, Chinese Keemun, and Japanese Matcha, and making her favorite dishes to serve in her tea shop, sweet potato muffins, apple raisin soup, and killer blood orange scones, for example. Her dog is named Earl Grey.

As for *A Meal to Die For*, its title can be taken quite literally, for it involves the preparation and serving of a many-course dinner, at whose conclusion one of the guests is destined to be bumped off. Benny Lacoco, owner of a gangster-supported restaurant in Brooklyn, has been asked to prepare a meal for a group of top-level mobsters called together by the big boss. He has learned that one of his underlings has ratted him out to the police, and he is determined to make an example of him by stuffing him with fine food then having him killed. This book has an odd organization. It all takes place on one night and is divided not into chapters but into courses – appetizers, salad, soup, meat, and so on. Each course is lovingly described, and recipes are included for such dishes as seared foie gras with roasted apricots, crawfish bisque, and chicken with fresh artichokes and sausage. The suspense comes from wondering which guest will pay the ultimate price for the meal.

Both of these books are stronger in their culinary than in their criminal contents. *Blood Orange Brewing* loses credibility when its heroine dashes off on her own to face the murderer, and, in *A Meal to Die For*, the gangster characters are almost indistinguishable from one another. One can hardly care about them. Fortunately, the fragrance of rare teas permeates the first book, and the redolence of tastefully prepared food saves the second one. They are culinary rather than mystery triumphs.

Stanley Johnson