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Retirement Association of Portland State
(RAPS)

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RAPS Sheet, November 2008

Retirement Association of Portland State

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Retirement Association of Portland State

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Our traveling retirees

Israel: Walking on top of history

By Bruce Stern

During May of this year my wife, Sheila, and I visited Israel with a group of 27 people from our synagogue. It was our first visit there.

On our first full day our bus took us to the Western Wall Plaza. On the way we passed a district called the City of David. A huge excavation is under way there, and they think they have found the remains of King

David's Palace. In fact, at any time in Jerusalem you could be walking on top of historic, biblical areas that some day will be excavated.

We first went to the Western Wall Tunnel—something that is only about 10 years old. It is still being excavated but runs along the Western Wall for about three-quarters of a mile.

It was fascinating to see history (and bedrock from Mt. Mariah) up close. After that we went to the Western Wall, where I



Sheila and Bruce Stern in Jerusalem last May.

stuffed a written blessing for my family into the wall. At 10:00 a.m. sharp a two-minute siren sounded to commemorate Yom HaShoah—the Holocaust memorial day. It was a sobering time. Everyone (except the ultra orthodox) stopped in his or her tracks for two minutes of silence.

The Western Wall (or Wailing Wall) is the wall that runs alongside the Temple Mount (which was a way for the builders to level Mt. Mariah so that the temple could be built on top of it.) The Western Wall is the clos-

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Wiewel to speak to RAPS on Nov. 20

Portland State's new president, Wim Wiewel, will present his vision for PSU at the Thursday, Nov. 20, edition of RAPS' Program/Speaker Series. Wiewel will also take questions from the audience.

The program begins with social hour and snacks at 1:00 p.m. in 236 Smith Memorial Student Union. Wiewel is scheduled to speak at 1:30.

See the "Mark Your Calendar" box on page 2 for upcoming RAPS programs.

President's Message

In trying to decide what to write about for my monthly "President's Message," I skimmed through earlier issues of the *RAPS Sheet*. Three years ago in this column, Mary Gordon-Brannan wrote about the goals of RAPS. At that time, goals included increasing membership and participation at RAPS activities, and developing a more complete database of RAPS members and other retired faculty and staff.

Membership remains about the same, just over 300, and participation at activities continues to range from 20 to close to 100. Last year I noted that attendance increases significantly when food is part of the activity and when there is opportunity for members to socialize—the summer picnic, the potlucks, and the ice cream social. Nearly 100 members and guests attended the President's Luncheon in April and the Holiday dinner in December. We plan activities that reflect a variety of interests in hope that each of you will find three or four each year that particularly appeal to you.

In September members received our first RAPS membership directory. If your name was not included, contact MiMi Bernal-Graves, RAPS office manager, and fill out the form giving permission for your information to be included in a future update. Also phone or email MiMi if there was an error in your contact information.

Another goal from 2005 was to assist PSU in preservation of its history. Work by the RAPS History Preservation Committee, chaired by Steve Brannan, has led to the PSU Vanport poster now on display in Smith Union. *Portland State: A History in Pictures*, developed under leadership from Mary Gordon-Brannan, will be published this winter. You will learn more about efforts to preserve PSU history at the RAPS program in February.

Check the RAPS Web site, maintained by Webmaster Bob Pearson, to see how it has improved. The Web site, as well as the *RAPS Sheet*, help us fulfill our goals to provide pertinent information and to encourage communication among members.

Another goal is to support the aims and objectives of the University. At the October board meeting, Bob Vogensang and Larry Sawyer agreed to serve on a new committee to develop a plan for a RAPS scholarship. If you have ideas about the scholarship plan and would like to serve on this committee, please contact Bob or Larry.

One of my personal goals since retirement has been to travel internationally twice a year. So as you read this, my husband and I will be enjoying an Elderhostel in Greece and Turkey.

—Marge Terdal

Tutors needed to help Japanese grad students with writing

The Japanese program is looking for mentors to assist graduate students with their writing.

Since its establishment in 2003, the Japanese M.A. has graduated four students, three of whom have gone on to fully funded Ph.D. programs at the University of

Hawaii and Ohio State, according to Pat Wetzel, professor of Japanese.

"All of the students reported back to us that they are grateful for the intensive work in writing that they had to do as part of their graduate work at PSU," said Wetzel.

There are currently 12 M.A. candidates, 10 of whom are native speakers of Japanese. Wetzel said that "we would like to prepare these students as well or better than the four who have already gone on. If any RAPS members have the time to assist one of our students through even one term paper, we would be very grateful."

Probably the most challenging aspect of graduate school for any non-native English speaker is writing, said Wetzel, but it is particularly challenging for those students who come from Asian languages. If you would like to make a difference in the academic experience of one of our students, please contact Wetzel at wetzelp@pdx.edu or 503-725-5277.

Mark your calendar

Nov. 20, 1:00 p.m.

President Wim Wiewel

236 Smith Memorial Student Union

Dec. 17

Holiday Party

Multnomah Athletic Club

Jan. 15, 1:00 p.m.

Tom Palm on Estonia

236 Smith Memorial Student Union

Feb. 19, 1:00 p.m.

Charlie White chairs panel on RAPS history programs

236 Smith Memorial Student Union

Vogelsang Scholarship awarded to communication students

Two communication students received the Barbara Exner Vogelsang Scholarship this fall from RAPS member Robert Vogelsang, professor emeritus of communication.

Leta Walker and Kelly Brennan were selected for the honor by the Communication Department faculty based on need and promise. Vogelsang endowed the scholarship in memory of his wife, Barbara.

He plans to offer scholarships each year to students

in the department; next spring he'll offer a scholarship to a student in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, an area that was part of the Communication Department when Vogelsang was chair in the 1970s.

This fall term he will award memberships in the Western States Communication Association to an undergraduate and a graduate student in communication. Vogelsang is past president of the WSCA.

Fear in Israel? Only of the Israeli drivers . . . *continued from page 1*

est point to where the temples were built, and therefore is considered the holiest place.

Cardo, the oldest shopping street in the world, dates back to Byzantine times. There we walked through the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian sections. Later that afternoon we went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre where we saw the final four Stations of the Cross—where Jesus was nailed to the cross, where they think the cross was placed, where he was ceremonially washed after death, and the vault in which he was buried.

The next day we started out at Yad Vashem—the Israeli Holocaust memorial. It is located on a large campus, and it is a moving and heavy experience—especially the children's memorial. In the history museum we saw the actual Schindler's List.

On the afternoon prior to the Sabbath we visited the Machaneh Yehuda open market. It was like Pike Place Market on drugs—food everywhere, people hustling and bustling, bumping into you, forcing themselves ahead of you in line. Believe it or not, I saw two friends from Portland there.

We then visited the site of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovery and had a tour of the area. It was really hot there—maybe in the high 80s or low 90s—a far cry from the balmy mid-70s in Jerusalem. We then continued our descent to the Dead Sea Basin (minus 1,300 feet in elevation) and checked into our hotel. We changed clothes quickly and crossed the street to the beach and proceeded to float in the Dead Sea. What an experience!

After an overnight stay at the Dead Sea we went to Masada, a formidable fortress and location of King Herod's secure home. It was no coincidence that we were in the Masada synagogue when the two-minute siren sounded signifying Yom Hazikaron—memorial day for those Israelis killed in wars or by terror

attacks.

We then drove to a Jewish settlement and talked to a person who was about the most highly dogmatic person I've ever met. He told us his opinions about the Palestinian-Jewish issues and ended by saying he was right and that we should not think another way. Dogmatism on both sides clearly hinders the peace process.

A fascinating visit was to a "kibbutz," which was the cover for a clandestine munitions factory used prior to 1948. The Ayalon Institute near Rehovot is now a museum and was a fascinating tour.

During the trip we never felt that we were in danger, and, as a result, we walked during the day and night without fear. The only fear we had was of Israeli drivers.

This was a wonderful trip that showed us historic sites and demonstrated that peace in the region is a very complex issue that is not likely to be resolved any time soon. Cooperation between Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scientists is, perhaps, a start to larger-scale tranquility.

RAPS to the rescue!

Some worthwhile and challenging opportunities await RAPSters who are looking to volunteer their time, knowledge, and skill.

- ◆ **Develop a plan for a new RAPS scholarship**
Contact: Bob Vogelsang, 503-292-5955
drvogie@yahoo.com
- ◆ **Mentor writing skills for Japanese graduate students** (see story page 2)
Contact: Pat Wetzel, 503-725-5277
wetzelp@pdx.edu
- ◆ **Send cards and/or visit RAPS members who are ill or grieving**

In memoriam: Joseph J. Kohut, 1938-2008

Joseph James (“Joe”) Kohut, professor emeritus and science librarian, died Oct. 10 as the result of a tragic accident while hiking in the Triple Falls area of the Columbia Gorge. Prof. Kohut, an experienced hiker and avid skier, had developed a close familiarity with the Triple Falls area, where he died after apparently falling from a cliff. His dog and hiking companion remained with him and attracted a rescue team, which regrettably could not save him. Family members and friends gathered for a celebration of life at the Old Church in Portland on Oct. 16.

Prof. Kohut was born April 26, 1938, in Lorain, Ohio, and earned a bachelor’s degree (1960) in geology at Ohio State University. After serving four years as a United States Navy officer, he returned to Ohio State to earn a doctoral degree (1967). He completed a master’s degree in library science (1970) at Case Western Reserve University prior to launching his distinguished career as science librarian at Portland State in 1972. He was promoted to professor in 1976 and awarded emeritus status in 1998.

His wide-ranging career achievements included instruction, research, and bibliographical supervision. Prior to coming to PSU he held a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship (1967-1968) at the University of Oslo; served as assistant professor of geology (1969-1970) at Lawrence University, in Wisconsin; and, from 1970 to 1972, he headed the United States Geological Survey Library’s department of reference and circulation in Washington, D.C. His intellectual inquisitive-

ness prompted research investigations that enabled him to contribute refereed articles to at least 10 scientific journals. Post-retirement pursuits included studying Spanish and learning the Argentine tango.

His departmental colleagues and academic faculty members who interacted with him universally regarded him as a worthy colleague whose contributions merited respect. He often provided guidance and assistance to various academic governance committees, notably the Graduate Council, which benefited from his competence in science disciplines and librarianship. Working with Joe was always a pleasant experience.

Professor Kohut’s arrival at PSU coincided with the institution’s emergence as a comprehensive instructional and research university, and through diligence and attention he contributed significantly to that process. All of us who knew and worked with Joe owe him a debt of gratitude for his lasting contributions to a shared intellectual enterprise.

Our organization extends its condolences to his survivors, including son, Anton, and daughter-in-law, Lara, Copenhagen, Denmark; sister, Louise Pousho, Fremont, California; first wife, Dorothy Anton, Portland; and second wife, Johanna Cummings, Portland. Moreover, we should remember his faithful Chow dog, Misha, who survives him.

Remembrance contributions should be made to the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office Search and Rescue team at www.mcsosar@gmail.com.

—Victor C. Dahl, *Professor Emeritus of History*

In memoriam: Thomas B. Stoel

Thomas B. Stoel, husband of the late Professor Emerita of History Caroline Stoel, died at the family home on Sept. 27. An extensive obituary appeared in the Oct. 19 *Oregonian*.

A celebration of Mr. Stoel’s life was held on Saturday, Nov. 1, at the First Unitarian Church in Portland.

Professor Caroline Stoel and her husband, Tom, made an indelible impression upon Portland State University through their 2001 endowment of the Caroline P. Stoel Editorial Fellowship, supporting the engagement of exceptional History Department graduate students in scholarly editing of a major historical quarterly, *The Pacific Historical Review*.

Editorial management for this journal, the official organ of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association, has been established in the Department of History since 1996.

The PSU community owes a debt of gratitude to the Stoel family for supporting this significant scholarly undertaking that enhances the institution’s national and international recognition. Our organization extends its sympathy to the Stoel family.

Remembrances may be sent to the Oregon Community Foundation or the Lawyers Campaign for Equal Justice.

—Victor C. Dahl, *Professor Emeritus of History*

RAPS club reports

Book Club: Hosseini's *Splendid Suns*

The selection for November is *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini. It is described on the cover as “a breathtaking story set against Afghanistan’s last 30 years—from the Soviet invasion to the reign of the Taliban to post-Taliban rebuilding—that puts the violence, fear, hope, and faith of this country in intimate, human terms.” Marge Terdal will host the November Book Club gathering in her home at 997 SW Westwood Dr., Portland, at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 18. Please contact her at 503-244-5714 if you would like to join the discussion.

At the October meeting, all readers in the RAPS Book Club agreed that all 754 pages (880 pages including notes) of *Team of Rivals*, by Doris Kearns Goodwin, were engaging. Her way of integrating the four major players (the team of rivals) into the book was masterful, as was her description of how Lincoln could build a team from these very successful men who had opposing views and personalities. It was not a dry history, but one in which Goodwin brought out the humanity of all the characters. The group was particularly interested in aspects of daily life of the era that appeared in the book, and we talked of how commonplace illness and loss seemed to be. The author concludes the book with a fairly long quote from Tolstoy: “Now why was Lincoln so great that he overshadowed other national heroes? He really was not a great general like Napoleon or Washington, he was not such a skillful statesman as Gladstone or Frederick the Great; but his supremacy expresses itself altogether in his peculiar moral power and in the greatness of his character” (page 748). As one RAPS reader said, “It is such a good book!”

—Mary Gordon-Brannan

Bridge Group: Cuts the deck Nov. 11

The RAPS Bridge Group continues to meet for fun, frivolity, and bridge on the second Tuesday of each month. For information about joining us at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 11, in the Terrace Building of Willamette View, call Colin Dunkeld at 503-292-0838 or e-mail him at colinkeld@gmail.com. —Maxine Thomas

Hikers: Hike moved to Nov. 21

The November hike date has been moved up a week due to the Thanksgiving holiday. We will meet at the Fort Vancouver Visitors Center, located off of East Evergreen Boulevard, at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 21. Exit I-5 at East Mill Plain Boulevard, right on Fort Vancouver Way, and left onto East Evergreen until you see the signs. It is a building in the open next to a picnic shelter.

This hike will be a short walk over paved pathways with several stops to read information signs or look down on the fort. We will walk by the fort, go through the orchard, view a reconstructed house in the old village, and cross over the new land bridge to the water. The land bridge has several viewpoints with information on fort history and a very old apple tree.

Returning, we will visit the fort (\$3 admission fee). Lunch will be at a restaurant in Vancouver.

People who have a Golden Age Passport get in free, along with all passengers in their car.

Please confirm your participation by Nov. 20 to Larry Sawyer, 503-771-1616 or larry_sawyer@comcast.net.

—Larry Sawyer

PAST TENSE

PSU gets national exposure on ‘College Bowl’

In 1965 Portland State gained national recognition and credibility when its team of college students competed academically against other college



teams on the *GE College Bowl*, a popular national television program. Coached by speech professor Ben Padrow, Portland State’s team answered tough questions on various topics and won five straight contests, retiring undefeated and setting a record for total points scored. In honor of Michael J. Smith, one of Portland State’s team members, who later died of cystic fibrosis, the student center was renamed the Michael J. Smith Memorial Center in 1969 (now Smith Memorial Student Union).

—From *Portland State: A History in Pictures*

Past Tense features glimpses into Portland State’s history. To submit a story (or an idea for one), email the RAPS History Preservation Committee at raps@pdx.edu.



Portland State: A History in Pictures

Three years in the making, this project of the Retired Association of Portland State contains more than 300 color and black-and-white photos that document PSU's history, events, and people. At 180 pages and in a big, 8-1/2 x 11 format, *Portland State: A History in Pictures* is a great addition to your personal library and makes a terrific gift. Writing by Richard Sanders '57, photo editing by Brent Schauer, and editing by Charlie White and Clarence Hein '65.

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For further information, contact MiMi Bernal-Graves, RAPS office manager, at rapspdx.edu or 503-725-3447. *Portland State:*

A History in Pictures will be available winter 2009.