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RAPS Sheet, December 2011

Retirement Association of Portland State

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Retirement Association of Portland State

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President-elect Dave Krug is flanked by Special Education faculty Ruth Falco (left) and Helen Young, who spoke on their autism research at the November RAPS meeting. Professors Falco and Young covered details of the CAPSTAR Project, a multi-year multimillion dollar federal grant awarded to PSU to study the effects of intensive research-based interventions on young children with autism who are in public school settings. Research results are expected to be published in 2013. Photo by Larry Sawyer.

RAPS programs finalized for 2012

The New Year brings a variety of presentations and social events to round out the program developed by President-elect Dave Krug and his Program Committee. First up in 2012 is **Michael Bowman** of the PSU Library leading a tour **Thursday, Jan. 19** to present the library's latest technological innovations.

Tom Potiowsky, back at PSU as Economics Chair after several years as the State of Oregon's economist, is on hand **Thursday, Feb. 16** to speak on "The Little Engine that Could: Oregon's On-Again Off-Again Budget Recovery."

March brings RAPS to the annual potluck, expertly organized by **Beryl Dahl**. The potluck is scheduled for **Thursday, March 15**, with PSU **Professor Larry Kominz** and actor **Naoka Iori** on hand to present history, video, vocal and physical demonstrations of Kabuki and Takarazuka, forms of Japanese theater.

The annual President's Gathering featuring – who else? – **President Wim Wiewel** is scheduled for **Thursday, April 12**. RAPS bestows its annual awards to outstanding staff and faculty retirees at this event.

Another spring tradition, the **Ice Cream Social**, occurs on **Thursday, May 17**, with the addition of a local disc jockey playing swing music from the 1940s and providing dance lessons.

President's Message

Two of my family members were adopted by a kitten today. Out walking (as those our age are advised to do), they were approached by a tiny, mewling kitten. When picked up, the kitten snuggled in their arms. By the time they had taken it home, dried it, warmed it, and fed it, they found they had consented to the adoption. I took my grandson to see it this afternoon— a beautiful ginger kitten with white markings.

This is a story for the holidays, isn't it? A story of rescue and adoption, and a story of reaching out to alleviate just a little bit of the misery in the world. The kitten is going to do very well now.

In this season when we are called on to reach out and share, let us do so willingly and generously, remembering how difficult these recession years have been for many and for the agencies that try to help. And may we each have our holidays brightened by a tiny ginger kitten.

Don't bring your kitten to the RAPS holiday dinner. But do bring yourselves—it should be a splendid occasion. I hope to see everyone there. With best wishes for the holidays.

--Joan Shireman



OCCUPY PORTLAND, 1970s STYLE. Protesters gather in the South Park Blocks during the tumultuous days following the May 6, 1970 deaths of four Kent State University students. See the PAST TENSE column on page 3 for RAPS member Susan Jackson's observations on protests at PSU, presented in the context of the Occupy Portland movement that began in October 2011. Photo from PSU archives.

PAST TENSE

Protests at PSU: Big, Small, Imaginary

As I was walking in November through the maze of tents at the urban village called Occupy Portland in Chapman Square, I noticed many PSU students. This is nothing new. PSU students have protested wars, on-campus military recruiting, campus credit card banking, police killings, tuition hikes, gay pride, anti-gay pride, and various guest speakers – to mention only a few.

The protests have been both large and small. I remember walking through the Park Blocks outside SMSU one day when the local itinerant preacher pointed his finger right at me and screamed, “You are all thieves, liars and fornicators.” There was the usual small protest.

On March 4, 2010, The National Day of Action, 200 Portland State students protested tuition hikes. Darrell Millner, Black Studies, said, “The good news is change can occur; the bad news is it is never easy.”

The largest and most famous protest at PSU (illuminated in the film *The Seventh Day*) occurred May 6, 1970 (see photo on page 2.) This protest was against the killing of Kent State University students and, of course, the Vietnam War. Thousands of students, faculty and staff demonstrated. So many crammed into the Park Blocks that traffic was halted. Some say this led to the City of Portland agreeing in 1972 to remove all vehicular traffic for six blocks through campus, as it is today.

Another result of that protest, told to me by an old-timer, is that the trees in the Park Blocks have been permanently “limbed-up” so protesters can’t climb up and occupy them.

A most interesting protest is the one that didn’t happen. People love to tell how PSU students chained themselves to the copper beech tree in front of the library in 1991 in order to save its life. It’s a good story but it’s an urban legend. The library administration had always planned to build around the famous tree.

However Occupy Portland proceeds, we know that protests at PSU will always continue in one form or another, large, small or imaginary.

--Susan Jackson

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.

RAPS club reports

Book Club members speak the plain truth

The RAPS Book Club meets Tuesday, Dec. 20 at 1:30 pm at the home of Betsey Brown, Holladay Park Plaza, 1300 NE 16th Ave. in Portland. Contact her at 503-280-2334 or aebport@hevanet.com to RSVP and for directions. We will discuss *The Plain Truth* by Jodie Picoult.

The book is described on the back cover as follows:

The discovery of a dead infant in an Amish barn shakes Lancaster County to its core. But the police investigation leads to a more shocking disclosure: circumstantial evidence suggests that eighteen-year-old Katie Fisher, an unmarried Amish woman believed to be the newborn’s mother, took the child’s life. When Ellie Hathaway, a disillusioned big-city attorney, comes to Paradise, Pennsylvania, to defend Katie, two cultures collide—and for the first time in her high-profile career, Ellie faces a system of justice very different from her own. Delving deep inside the world of those who live “plain,” Ellie must find a way to reach Katie on her terms. And as she unravels a tangled murder case, Ellie also looks deep within—to confront her own fears and desires when a man from her past re-enters her life.

We have had good reads this year and are looking forward to 2012. In January we will discuss *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali.

--Mary Brannan

Bridge Group convenes Dec. 13

The RAPS Bridge Group meets at 1:00 pm Tuesday, Dec. 13 at Friendly House (corner of NW 26th and Thurman). For information about the group, please call Colin Dunkeld, 503-292-0838. If you would like to play, please call before noon Friday, Dec. 9. This gives us time to invite guests to join us if we need to make up a table.

--Colin Dunkeld

RAPS Hikers plan for the New Year

The RAPS Hikers meet at noon Saturday, Dec. 10 at the home of Larry and Diane Sawyer for a potluck lunch and planning session for hikes in 2012. Past and potential hikers are invited. RSVP to Larry Sawyer at 503-771-1616 or larry_sawyer@comcast.net.

--Larry Sawyer

HAPPY HOLIDAYS from the RAPS Board!

In memoriam: Gertrude (Fleming) Rempfer, 1912-2011

Emeritus Professor Gertrude “Gert” Rempfer, born Jan. 30, 1912 in Seattle, died Oct. 4, 2011 in Forest Grove. Her husband, Professor Emeritus Robert Rempfer, longtime PSU mathematics professor and



Gertrude Rempfer

department head, preceded her in death. Family members, PSU colleagues and friends gathered in Smith Memorial Ballroom Nov. 29 to honor her 99-year life. In high school Gert displayed abiding science interests— notably in physics, math, and botany—which afford opportunities for understanding nature’s patterns and organization. In 1930 she enrolled at the University of Washington, moving from forestry to physics. There she completed BA (1934) and doctoral (1939) degrees, laying the foundation for pioneering research in electron optics and microscopy.

At a time when women scientists faced limited academic employment opportunities, Professor Rempfer launched a distinguished, seven-decade long career, gaining international recognition in the process. After filling in as a one-year replacement (1939-40) in the Mount Holyoke College physics department, she began a two-year instructional stint at Russell Sage College. Two years later she met and married mathematician Robert Rempfer, who then taught at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Wartime mobilization dramatically expanded opportunities for physicists, and from 1942 to 1944 Gert held high level research positions in the Manhattan Project at the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory and at Columbia’s Special Alloy Materials Laboratories. At war’s end, both Rempfers worked in private industry on electron microscope development, with Gertrude serving (1945-51) as a physicist and project engineer for the Farrand Optical Company.

In 1951 the Rempfer family—which then included three children—moved to Antioch College in Ohio where Gert held an appointment as an associate professor in engineering while Robert taught mathematics. Their Ohio careers coincided with vicious assaults on academic freedom stemming from that era’s anti-communist fervor. The College’s administration did not tolerate the Rempfers’ public expressions favoring universal civil liberties, prompting a move to Fisk University in

Nashville, TN, an institution founded to educate newly Freedmen in the Reconstruction Era. After four years at Fisk, the controversy arising from the Supreme Court’s public school desegregation decision induced the Rempfers to move to the Northwest where they encountered an atmosphere more conducive to their consistent support for human rights, justice and peace.

Ohio University (Athens, OH), recognizing Gert’s contributions to science and the circumstances of her departure from Antioch, awarded her an honorary doctorate of science in 1992. At its annual Freedom Day Convocation in 1996 Fisk University bestowed upon her a certificate for service as an educator “. . . concerned for the greater good of humankind.”

After coming to PSU in 1959 Professor Rempfer taught both undergraduate and advanced physics courses while actively pursuing research. After advancing to emerita status in 1978, Gert continued to commute to the PSU physics laboratory from her farm home near Forest Grove until a few weeks before her death.

During “retirement” Professor Rempfer deployed her experience and prestige to generate partnerships between the University and industry, while her research produced numerous patents and key publications that laid the theoretical foundation for the emerging area of photoelectron microscopy. Her electronics optics expertise attracted significant international attention from industry and governmental organizations. A longtime research partnership with University of Oregon Chemistry professor O. Hayes Griffith yielded the world’s first ultra high vacuum photoemission electron microscope.

At PSU’s 1993 Commencement President Judith Ramaley honored Professor Rempfer with a citation recognizing her University service in scholarly and scientific achievements as well as for her “dedication to principle.” With a grant from the Rempfer family and donations from a variety of sources, PSU established the “Gertrude F. Rempfer Endowed Chair in Physics” in June 1997. In August 2010, she was named a Fellow of the Microscopy Society of America.

Gert’s name was recently placed along PSU’s “Walk of the Heroines,” which honors women for their contributions to society. At least a dozen scholarly groups and academic institutions have bestowed honors and recognition upon Gert Rempfer. To her children, Richard, Jean, Bill, Sarah and Rhoda, and to her grandchildren, RAPS extends its heartfelt sympathy.

--Emeritus Professor of History Victor C. Dahl