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RAPS Sheet: Monthly Newsletter

Retirement Association of Portland State  
(RAPS)

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2-2019

## RAPS Sheet, February 2019

Retirement Association of Portland State

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# The RAPS Sheet

The newsletter of the Retirement Association of Portland State

FEBRUARY 2019

## Retirement Association of Portland State

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**Melody Valdini, PSU associate professor of political science, speaks on February 21 in Room 333 Smith Memorial Student Union.**

## February 21 member meeting highlights shifts in democracy

**MELODY VALDINI**, PSU associate professor of political science, takes up “The Decline of Democracy in Governments Across the World: A Temporary Shift or a New World Order?” at the RAPS member meeting Thursday, February 21.

Professor Valdini joined the PSU faculty in 2006, the same year she completed her doctorate in political science at the University of California San Diego. She earned an MA in political science from UCSD in 2002 and a bachelor’s degree in the same field from University of California Riverside in 1999.

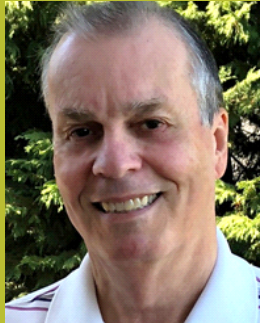
She teaches courses on comparative politics with a focus on representation, institutions, and the regions of Latin America and Europe.

Professor Valdini’s research focuses on the consequences of institutional design, with a particular focus on electoral systems, political parties, and women’s descriptive representation. She is co-author (with Richard Clucas) of *The Character of Democracy: How Institutions Shape Politics*, published in 2014 by Oxford University Press. Her second book, *The Inclusion Calculation: Why Men Appropriate Women’s Representation*, is scheduled for publication this spring by Oxford University Press.

The February 21 meeting starts with a light lunch at noon in 333 SMSU. Professor Valdini’s talk begins at 12:45 pm.

## CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Take it from those that know

**AT OUR JANUARY** RAPS Board meeting, we learned that RAPS had received a check from Collette, the tour company that led our November trip to Italy. The check was the result of four people booking the trip through RAPS—two members and their friends. The great benefit to RAPS is that a portion of each person's fare goes to the RAPS Scholarship. Our check from Collette for the Italy trip was a tidy \$1,916. That's the beauty of working with Collette. The company's philanthropic arm, Collette Cares, supports education and hunger relief efforts around the world.



This fall we have a new Collette trip, to Eastern Canada. Once more the RAPS Scholarship will benefit. Actually, book any Collette tour—they cover all seven continents, so your choices are immense—mention you're a RAPS member, and a portion of your fare will go to the scholarship.

So what's it like to travel with Collette? To get the inside story, your intrepid reporter tracked down two Collette tour veterans. Diane Sawyer, wife of RAPS Board member Larry

Sawyer, has toured with Collette eight times. She's already visited Eastern Canada with Collette, and is looking forward to returning next fall. "We had two-night stays in each major city and enough free time to experience the 'Frenchness' of Québec," she said. "In Québec City, the shopping was just wonderful."

Diane praised Collette's guides for their knowledge and professionalism. "I've never had any kind of issue that our Collette guide could not deal with. You ask them to arrange something special, and they'll try to do that."

Joan Shireman is a professor emerita of social work who sits on the RAPS Board. A few years ago, Joan and her granddaughter booked a Christmas markets tour of Austria, Germany, France, and Switzerland with Collette.

She recalled the Collette guide fondly. "Our guide's love of the lands we visited was evident," Joan said. "On one occasion he added a city to our tour because he thought that, as a university city with a medieval cathedral, it deserved a visit."

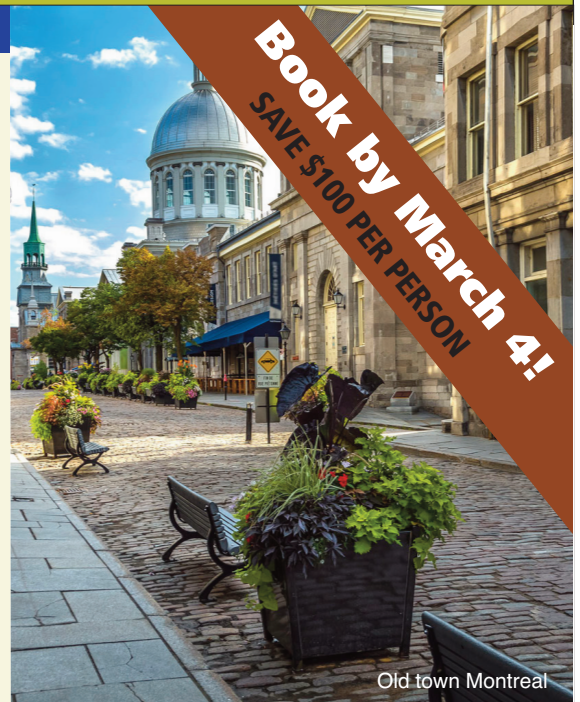
"We both enjoyed ourselves," Joan said, "and have frequently said that we would like to repeat the trip."

If you book the Eastern Canada trip by March 4 you'll save \$100 per person. Bon voyage!  
—Doug Swanson

## RAPS GOES TO Eastern Canada! SEPTEMBER 3-10, 2019

Discover the best of Eastern Canada with RAPS September 3-10, 2019! Our tour is led by Collette, a travel company with more than 100 years' experience. And if you book by March 4, 2019, you'll save \$100 per person! ● We start in **Montreal**, one of UNESCO's Cities of Design. ● Then we're off to **Québec City**, where we can explore everything from a local sugar shack to world-class museums. ● **Ottawa**, with its small-town vibe, has great museums and galleries. ● A short drive takes us to **Rockport**, where we'll enjoy a memorable cruise through this historic region. ● Finally, we visit exciting **Toronto** and cruise to the base of thundering **Niagara Falls**.

A PORTION OF YOUR FARE SUPPORTS THE RAPS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM!



Old town Montreal

**\$3,199** per person if booked by March 4

**BASED ON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY**

Includes: R/T airfare from Portland ● Hotels ● Hotel Transfers ● Air Taxes, Fees / Surcharges

**TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT:**

Larry Sawyer, Retirement Association of Portland State  
503-771-1616  
larry\_sawyer@comcast.net

**Book by March 4!  
SAVE \$100 PER PERSON**

# RAPS Group Reports

## Book Group

**THE BOOK GROUP** met on February 15 at Nancy Chapman's home and discussed *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. It is an acclaimed book, winner of many awards, and offers a framework for understanding the racial history of America, and its current tensions. As a group of older white men and women, we found it difficult at times to fully comprehend the anger and despair of its young African American author. The discussion was sober, as we sought to truly understand the themes of the book.

In February we will read *Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys, a story of refugees fleeing the advancing Soviet army in 1945, and of the sinking of the *Wilhelm Gustloff* in the Baltic Sea, a major maritime tragedy that is not well known. We will meet on Tuesday, February 19, at 1:30 pm at the home of Marge and Leif Terdal in Terwilliger Plaza, 2545 Terwilliger Blvd., Apartment 812. There is complimentary valet parking at the main entrance. Call Marge at 503-808-7438 or email her at [dbmt@pdx.edu](mailto:dbmt@pdx.edu) and let her know whether you will be there.

For those who like to plan ahead, in March we plan to read *Perfume River: a Novel* by Robert Olen Butler, and in April we'll discuss *Evolution's Captain* by Peter Nichols.

The book group meets at 1:30 pm on the third Tuesday of every month. New members are always welcome.

—Joan Shireman

## Bridge Group

**THE RAPS BRIDGE GROUP** meets in the afternoon, generally on the first Tuesday of each month. We begin play at 12:15 pm. We try to finish up by 4 pm. We meet in Smith Center, on the second floor.

Please mark your calendars for the following upcoming bridge group meetings during winter and spring terms:

- Tuesday, February 5, in SMSU 258,
- Tuesday March 5, in SMSU 258,
- Tuesday April 2, in SMSU 258,
- Tuesday May 7, in SMSU 258,
- Tuesday June 4, in SMSU 258.

I will send out the reminder email notice about one week prior to each date we play.

The RAPS Bridge Group members are very friendly and are always looking for new players. If you wish to join us, please contact Steve Brennan, 503-646-6297. My email address is [the.steve.brennan@gmail.com](mailto:the.steve.brennan@gmail.com).

—Steve Brennan

## Hiking Group

**THE RAPS HIKING GROUP** has planned a hike on Portland bridges from Tilikum Crossing to past the Hawthorne Bridge, on Tuesday, February 26, 9:30 am to early afternoon. We will meet at Terwilliger Plaza Lobby at 9:30 am to begin the hike. The valet will park your car at no charge, no tips.

Members will hike across Duniway Park, past the Under Armour corporate grounds, up a dead-end street, and then up a trail with 40 steps to Terwilliger Blvd. We will then hike up a path and steps (or take an elevator) to take the Portland Aerial Tram down to the South Waterfront terminal. Hikers will then walk north along the west side of the Willamette River, cross Tilikum bridge, then proceed north past OMSI to the Hawthorne Bridge. We will cross this bridge and continue walking north along the waterfront—or south to a restaurant for lunch.

On January 22, eight hikers explored the Tualatin River Greenway trail on a remarkably rainy day. This trail provided views of the river as well as educational signs that linked the trail with Ice Age floods, megafauna like the Tualatin Mastodon, and erratics (boulders moved by the floods from distant locations). Hikers also visited the Tualatin Library and viewed the bones of a mastodon skeleton dug up in 1962 by Portland State College student John George from a swampy area near Nyberg Road in Tualatin.

Please contact Larry Sawyer at 503-771-1616 or [larry\\_sawyer@comcast.net](mailto:larry_sawyer@comcast.net) for further information.

For more details about upcoming hikes please consult the RAPS hikers' website: <https://www.pdx.edu/raps/RAPS-Hikers>

—Larry Sawyer



**RAPS Hiking Group members discussed the Ice Age trail markers along the Tualatin River Greenway while on the February hike.**

—Photograph by Eileen Brennan

# In memoriam: Eleanor Rigdon, 1923-2018

**ELEANOR RIGDON**, who served Portland State in the Registrar's Office, Department of Mathematics, and the Duplicating Office, died December 9 at age 95.



Ms. Rigdon was born in Little Falls, Minnesota, on February 19, 1923, to Nora and Walter Frances. She was one of four children. She started playing golf as an adolescent, and in 1940, while on a vacation trip to Portland with her family, she discovered Eastmoreland Golf Course.

"It was the prettiest course I had even seen," she said in a 2017 article by Patsy Pitts on the East-

moreland 100 Golf History Project website, which commemorates 100 years of public golf in Portland. "I decided then and there I wanted to play it for the rest of my life."

Following high school graduation, Ms. Rigdon attended St. Cloud State Teachers College (now St. Cloud State University) for a year. In 1942 she moved to Portland to work in the shipyards as a crane operator. She married in 1950 and later divorced.

She joined the Portland State Registrar's Office in 1950, when the institution, known informally as Vanport College, was located in the old Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation building on North Burgard Street. She began taking courses toward a degree, completing a bachelor's in 1965 and a master's in 1978. She taught grades two through eight in the North Clackamas School District, then returned to Portland State after she retired in 1985.

Ms. Rigdon was profiled in the May 2003 edition of *The Hooter* (the predecessor of the *RAPS Sheet*), when she was honored with the Outstanding Retiree Award. The article said that Stephen Epler, the founder of Portland State, hired Ms. Rigdon. "Epler sensed her great potential as a hard worker and great innovator," the article said. "She quickly became indispensable in the (registrar's) office and was instrumental

in shortening the lines of students at registration, which often stretched three blocks long."

While working in the Registrar's, she volunteered to help out in the Duplicating Office. Charlie White, professor emeritus of history, arrived on campus in 1952 and recalled Ms. Rigdon's contributions. "I believe she was the entire Duplicating Office," he said. "The entire faculty was reliant on her for class handouts, syllabi, and photos."

Professor White also recalled Ms. Rigdon's work in the Mathematics Resources Lab. "Eleanor had an extensive games collection, and she invented games and puzzles for the lab, frequently using physical objects—blocks of wood or colored paper—that illustrated mathematical principles," he recalled. The 2003 *Hooter* article said that she continued to work in the lab "three or four days a week, and she has provided individual help to at least 13,500 students."

Her golf legacy includes winning the Eastmoreland Club Championship in 1973 and qualifying for the U.S. Women's Public Links Championship three times. She excelled in tournament play through the 1980s, winning tournaments in Oregon, Washington, and Nevada, including the Women's City Tournament at Eastmoreland. Ms. Rigdon started a golf tournament for senior women, The Vintage Classic, which drew more than 200 players annually. According to *The Hooter*, the tournament featured a scoring system, devised by Ms. Rigdon, that "takes the pressure off golfers and minimizes the embarrassment of a flubbed hole."

The article on the Eastmoreland 100 website mentioned that many years after moving to Portland, Ms. Rigdon returned to her birthplace, Little Falls, for a visit. "Wanting to play the course where she began her golfing life," the article related, "she called the pro shop for a tee time. A tournament was scheduled that day, so Eleanor decided to sign up."

"I won! It felt like a full circle, as this was the same course where I won my first tournament as a 13-year-old."

Ms. Rigdon was preceded in death by her parents; a sister, Lucy Little Milner; and a brother, George Little. She is survived by a sister, Catherine Little. An informal memorial for Ms. Rigdon will be held on February 11. Email Sylvia Giroux at [sylviag@pdx.edu](mailto:sylviag@pdx.edu) for details.

—Doug Swanson

—Photograph from Portland State University archives

# In memoriam: Jack L. Taylor, Jr., 1933-2018

**JACK L. TAYLOR, JR.**, associate professor emeritus of business administration, died December 22. He was 85 years old.



Professor Taylor was born in Portland on October 16, 1933, to John L. Taylor and Margaret (Ferschweiler) Taylor. He was a graduate of All Saints School and Central Catholic High School, where he was a member of the 1952-53 state high school football championship team. He joined the Coast Guard in 1953 and served until 1957.

In 1961 Professor Taylor earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from Portland State, and in 1964 he received a master of business

administration from the University of Portland. He began his teaching career at PSU in 1962, retiring as associate professor emeritus in 1994.

He is survived by his wife of nearly 63 years, Maureen (Hurley) Taylor; a son, Michael Taylor, of The Woodlands, Texas; daughters Susan Lindquist, of Portland, and Eileen Gaeth (John), of Vancouver, Washington; eight grandchildren: Emily, Carolyn, and Amanda Taylor of The Woodlands; Alleh Lindquist, of Portland; Ashley Tocco, of San Diego; Inian Moon, of Portland; and Nick and Megan Gaeth, of Vancouver; sister, Mary Kathleen Taylor; brother-in-law, Thomas Hurley; and sister-in-law, Joan Taylor. He was preceded in death by Robert L. Taylor and daughter-in-law, Julianne Taylor.

A funeral Mass for Professor Taylor was celebrated on January 8. Remembrances may be sent to Central Catholic High School, 2401 SE Stark Street, Portland 97214.

—Doug Swanson

—Photograph from Portland State University archives

## Upcoming winter and spring term member events

**MARCH** (Thursday, March 21) Annual spring potluck and presentation by Christine Meadows, director of PSU's Opera Program. Opera students perform excerpts from the 2019 spring opera, Mozart's *La Finta Giardiniera* (*The Pretend Gardener*).

**APRIL** (Thursday, April 18) Annual ice cream social and presentation by Thomas B. Cox, chief governance officer at StrongBlock, who will speak on "BlockChain Changes How We Trust: What You Need to Know about Bitcoin and Other Cryptocurrencies."

**MAY** (Monday, May 6) Annual President's Luncheon for retired PSU faculty and staff hosted by Rahmat Shoureshi.

## RAPS Awards Committee invites 2019 nominations

**KNOW SOMEONE** who is a RAPS stalwart and also has been active in community service or University affairs or professional activity? Of course you do. Why not nominate her or him for the 2019 Outstanding Portland State Retiree Award? There is a nomination form in the January *RAPS Sheet* or you can get one from the RAPS office, but you don't need a form—nominations on ordinary paper or by email are fine.

RAPS also bestows Special Recognition awards to any person, often a current PSU employee, who has aided RAPS and also is engaged in community or university affairs.

Please send nominations by US mail to RAPS, Portland State University, PO Box 751, Portland OR 97207-0751 or by email (you don't have to use the form) to Ilana Tarasyuk, RAPS Office Manager, at [rapsmail@pdx.edu](mailto:rapsmail@pdx.edu).

**The deadline for receipt of nominations is Friday, March 29, 2019.** Questions? Please contact Steve Brennan, chair of the Awards Committee, at [the.steve.brennan@gmail.com](mailto:the.steve.brennan@gmail.com) or 503-646-6297.



**RAPS members explored the Colosseum in Rome as part of their 13-day tour of Italy with Collette Travel last November. The tour also included stops in Italian cities Pompeii, Capri, Tuscany, Florence, Venice, as well as Locarno, Switzerland.**



**The RAPS Board for 2018-19 is pictured in Benson House. Front row: Nancy Eriksson, Joan Shireman, Charlie White, Eileen Brennan, and Brian Lewis. Back row: Larry Sawyer, Steve Brennan, office manager Ilana Tarasyuk, Ansel Johnson, Dawn White, Steven Brenner, David Krug, and Doug Swanson. Not pictured: Barbara Alberty and Nancy Koroloff.**

—Photographs by Larry Sawyer