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Retirement Association of Portland State
(RAPS)

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RAPS Sheet, May 2020

Retirement Association of Portland State

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The RAPS Sheet

The newsletter of the Retirement Association of Portland State

MAY 2020

Retirement Association of Portland State

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Park Blocks, Portland State University

MONDAY, APRIL 20
9:55 A.M.

ON ALMOST ANY bright spring morning the Park Blocks are packed with students. But the coronavirus pandemic has changed the picture. The University is closed—except for essential services—and on a day and time when Portland State should be humming with activity, the campus is all but deserted.

Burns hosts first virtual OMSI 'science pub'

RAPS MEMBER SCOTT BURNS was the featured speaker in the first virtual Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) Science Pub evening on March 31.



Scott Burns

The interactive program, which started out with a science quiz and featured Burns's presentation, "The Dynamic Geology of the Columbia River Gorge," concluded with a 45-minute question-and-answer session.

Burns, a professor emeritus of

geology, revealed that the evening had always been planned as a virtual session, but getting the technology ready was a real challenge. The presentation used multiple screens, including his Power Point slides, a video feed of Burns giving the lecture, and a separate screen for the ASL interpreter.

Burns emphasized the dynamics of geology in the region and revealed how

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CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

RAPS' online vote another way to keep safe and healthy

WE ARE LIVING THROUGH historically difficult times. We need to look back more than 100 years to learn from the 1918-1919 flu pandemic. That "Spanish flu" was a challenge to world health similar to our COVID-19 situation. We need to recall the Great Depression in the United States to see a shock to our economy similar to what we are dealing with now. One



aspect of our current situation is worse than the Depression: unemployment spiking rapidly. Shutting down the economy has cost roughly 10 years of job growth to disappear.

For weeks now Oregon has been under stay-at-home orders, allowing only essential work to continue in person at work sites. Evidence suggests we have been able to "flatten the curve" of new cases. Good job, Oregon! Oregonians' self-sacrifice allowed our health care system to have plenty of surplus capacity. Governor Kate Brown even sent "extra" ventilators to help New York state deal with its overwhelmed health care system.

PSU has shut down all but essential activity on campus. Most employees are working remotely. Your RAPS Board has cancelled or postponed all in-person events scheduled for the spring of 2020. Our office manager,

Emily Caparelli, has been working from home and doing a great job. The Board has moved into the new "keep our distance" world pretty well. We have become competent enough with online technology to hold group meetings with Zoom. The Book Group is experimenting with using Zoom for its monthly get-togethers.

RAPS will hold elections for the Board this spring. The

Board decided to keep our office manager safe by not using paper ballots this year. We instead will vote electronically, using an online survey hosted by PSU. When the email containing candidate photographs and biographies comes to you, please review the information. Make your choices. And vote electronically, by following the link in the email announcing the election. Emily can stay safe at home, with no need to be in the office to mail out and

The Board decided to keep our office manager safe by not using paper ballots this year.

handle returned paper ballots this year.

I hope you and your loved ones continue to keep your physical separation from others. Stay healthy. We will get through these tough times; RAPS will once again have events like our monthly programs and club activities. We may have to keep some distance, and even wear masks, but we will be together again.

—Steve Brennan

Burns hosts OMSI's first Science Pub presentation . . .

From page 1

such major events as the Missoula Floods and major forest fires have been shaping the geology of the Columbia Gorge over thousands of years.

The event employed the Facebook OMSI platform, and was presented using Zoom, which is now being used to deliver PSU classes. Burns reported that prior to the presentation, the event had received 2,000 "likes" and that the estimated attendance for the event was more than 5,000 participants from all over the United States. By the next day the virtual OMSI Science Pub went viral, and more than 34,000 people had downloaded the event.

Asked why the OMSI event was so compelling, Burns

said that people of the Pacific Northwest love the outdoors.

"We take our visitors to the Gorge and other places with great natural beauty," he said. "People just love knowing why these amazing places like Beacon Rock and Multnomah Falls formed and how they change."

You can view Burns's virtual Science Pub at: <https://www.facebook.com/9903008738/videos/216697786210412/>

—Eileen Brennan

Learn about upcoming Scott Burns talks on page 5.

RAPS Group Reports

Book Group

THE BOOK GROUP met this month on April 21 via Zoom, with Eileen Brennan, with her knowledge of technology, setting up the meeting for us. We discussed *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover, the story of a young woman who was, as a child, kept isolated from the world in a survivalist family. The decision to move away from that world, the difficulties encountered in entering the wider world, and the conflict evoked by leaving family are the subjects of the memoir.

Our experience with Zoom was good overall, though the flow of the discussion was awkward at times. We did enjoy seeing one another again and exchanging ideas. And it was nice to have Nancy Chapman's beautiful cat join the meeting for a time.

In May we are planning to discuss *Sapiens: a Brief History of Humankind* by Yuval Noah Harari. Eileen has agreed to set up another Zoom meeting for us. And we exchanged ideas on how to acquire the book, with usual sources not available. We will meet at our usual 1:30 p.m. time on May 19. Eileen will email directions to access the meeting.

Amazon describes the book as "highly original. It begins about 70,000 years ago with the appearance of modern cognition. From examining the role evolving humans have played in the global ecosystem to charting the rise of empires, *Sapiens* integrates history and science to reconsider accepted narratives, connect past developments with contemporary concerns, and examine specific events within the context of larger ideas."

In memoriam: Harold Thomas Sims, 1935-2019

HAROLD THOMAS SIMS, who served Portland State and the Department of Art as stores clerk for many years, died at his home, in his studio, on November 5, 2019, after many years of declining health. He was 84 years old.



Mr. Sims was born in Harrisburg, Oregon, on March 27, 1935, and was buried in the family plot in Harrisburg.

Mr. Sims found a second home in the Department of Art. He graduated from high school in Forest Grove, where he grew up, and he faithfully attended his high school reunions, maintaining many lifelong friendships.

He enrolled as a freshman at Portland State, majoring in drawing and painting, and, under the tutelage of professors Fred Heidel and Richard Prasch, became an accomplished, working painter. He also had a great interest in architecture

RAPS Board scrubs picnic

THE SUMMER PICNIC, the annual event that signals the beginning of the programming year for RAPS, has been cancelled, a victim of the coronavirus pandemic.

The RAPS Board of Directors made the decision, and Nancy Eriksson, who organizes the event, cancelled the reservation with Portland Parks & Recreation.

In June we plan to discuss *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett. We hope to meet in person as a group again; if not, we will use Zoom. Additional information will be available later.

The Book Group meets on the third Tuesday of every month. New members are always welcome.

—Joan Shireman

Bridge Group

BRIDGE GROUP activities are suspended during the coronavirus pandemic. Look for further information in the next *RAPS Sheet*.

If you wish to participate in post-virus bridge, please contact Steve Brennan at 503-646-6297 or email Steve at the.steve.brennan@gmail.com.

Hiking Group

HIKING GROUP activities are suspended during the coronavirus pandemic. Hikers are advised to check the hikers' page on the RAPS website to get the latest updates:

<https://www.pdx.edu/raps/RAPS-Hikers>.

and, on his own, became knowledgeable of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright as well as of the work of the illustrious architects who have given Portland its flavor.

In the interim between his student days and his job in the Art Department, Mr. Sims was drafted into the peacetime Army Reserve, and was stationed in California. Returning from the Army, he worked for a time in the Portland Public Schools before joining Portland State.

Because of Mr. Sims's interest and support of Oregon artists, a fund has been established in his name for the installation, security, and preservation of the PSU Collection of Art, installed throughout campus. Donations to the fund may be made to The Harold Thomas Sims PSU Art Collection Fund, PSU Foundation, attention Jaymee Jacoby, PO Box 243, Portland OR 97207. Please write the name of the fund on your check.

In memoriam: Mary Gordon-Brannan, 1943-2020

MARY ELLEN FRAZIER GORDON-BRANNAN, who served Portland State for 30 years as a professor of speech and hearing sciences, died at her home in Portland on March 18. She was 76 years old.



Professor Gordon-Brannan was born June 15, 1943, in Lafayette, Indiana, to Lloyd Jr. and Wilma Frazier. She graduated from East Tipp High School in Lafayette in 1961, and was honored as salutatorian of her class. She was a speech pathologist, earning a master's from Purdue University and a Ph.D. from Wichita State University.

Professor Gordon-Brannan was the Speech and Hearing Sciences program director for the last 18 years of her 30-year career at Portland State, which began in 1972. On December 12, 1991, she married a fellow Portland State professor, Steve Brannan, at her home in Southwest Portland.

She is survived by her husband, Steve; her sisters, Alice (Roy) Knoy, of Lafayette, Indiana, and Kathie (John) Connelly, of Sarasota, Florida; and her brother, John (Carol) Frazier, of Brookston, Indiana.

A celebration of life will be held later this spring.

In memoriam: Leif Terdal, 1937-2020

LEIF TERDAL, a longtime RAPS member, died at his home on Sunday, March 8. He was 82 years old. Dr. Terdal was born in Brooklyn, New York, on December 26, 1937, to Alf Terdal and Harriet Hansen Terdal. He was the second of three children. When he was six months old, the Terdals returned to Norway to live in the village of Rubbestadneset, about 40 miles south of Bergen.



In May 1940 the Germans occupied Norway, and Alf Terdal was able to escape to New York City. About 18 months later, Mrs. Terdal and her children Roy, Leif, and Edward, made their escape.

In 2007 Dr. Terdal gave a talk entitled "Escape from Nazi-occupied Norway" to a RAPS general meeting. A story in the June 2007 *RAPS Sheet* related Dr. Terdal's memory of the family's escape: "On October 27, 1941, the Terdals boarded a fishing boat to make the 200-mile trip across the North Sea to the Shetland Islands. A German plane strafed the boat during the passage.

"I remember being below with my mother and two brothers, and you could see holes opening up in the side of the boat," Terdal recalled. The plane made two passes, then left. One crew member was killed." Three months later, the family was reunited in New York City.

Dr. Terdal lived with his family in Staten Island, New York, until he was about 12 years old, when the Terdals moved to Muskegon, Michigan. He received a bachelor's degree in psychology from Taylor University, Upland, Indiana, in 1959. It was also at Taylor that he met fellow student Marjorie Starkweather. They married on June 13, 1959, one week after their graduation.

Dr. Terdal earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Michigan State University, and was a clinical psychologist and professor emeritus at Oregon Health & Science University. He

was involved with Portland State during his career, serving as a presenter in the School of Social Work's social services certificate program in the 1960s. He also collaborated with Master of Social Work students and faculty on a research study leading to their joint thesis on assisting parents of preschool children with seizure disorders.

In 1994 Dr. Terdal was appointed to a State Board of Higher Education committee tasked with considering the reorganization of public higher education in Oregon.

His RAPS involvement included being an original member of the Hiking Group and a longtime Book Group member. He and his wife, Marjorie, professor emerita of applied linguistics, frequently hosted Book Group discussions at their home.

Dr. Terdal is survived by his wife, Marjorie; sons Erik and Paul; and grandsons Finn, Reed, Lukyan, and Levko. His brothers, Roy and Edward, preceded him in death.

A memorial service will be scheduled at a later date.

Collette extends Portugal trip deadline

THE DEADLINE FOR booking the RAPS trip to Portugal has been extended to May 31. The coronavirus pandemic prompted Collette, the company that RAPS partners with for the trip, to extend the deadline.

The 10-day trip, scheduled for October 3 to 12, will visit Lisbon, the Portuguese Riviera, and several other stops, including five UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The cost is \$3,749 per person, which includes round-trip airfare from Portland and 12 meals. Part of your fare will benefit the RAPS Scholarship.

To get more information, contact Larry Sawyer at 503-771-1616 or larry_sawyer@comcast.net. To learn more trip details, go to <http://gateway.gocollette.com/link/944136>.

Squire, Sluys running for Board in RAPS' first 'email' election

FRIDAY, MAY 8, is the deadline for RAPS members to vote in the Board election. An email containing a link to the ballot was sent to RAPS members on April 19.



Pat Squire

Previous elections have employed paper ballots that were filled out and mailed back to campus. Not so this year. The 2020 election is being conducted solely by email, a move dictated by the coronavirus pandemic and the shuttering of the Portland State campus. With the RAPS office closed, Emily Caparelli, the office manager, cannot collect “snail” mail.

Eileen Brennan, professor emeritus of social work, created the online ballot by using survey software, hosted on a

secure PSU web page. The email itself contains statements by the candidates and directions for voting. A link at the bottom of the email takes voters to the ballot.



Pati Sluys

The two candidates for the board are Pat Squire and Pati Sluys. Squire, who is running for co-president, is the former executive director of the PSU Alumni Association. Her career at Portland State spanned 25 years.

Sluys retired as the finance officer for the Graduate School of Education in 2015 after serving the University for more than 36 years. She is running for member-at-large.

More Scott Burns talks on the docket in coming weeks

IF SHELTERING IN PLACE has got you down and you're tired of doing yoga and experimenting with new recipes, here's some good news: three more Scott Burns talks are scheduled to be available via Zoom in the coming weeks.

Although the Zoom logins are not yet available, you can email Burns at burnss@pdx.edu about a week before the talk for the login information.

“Dynamic National Parks of the Pacific Northwest”

Stanford Alumni of Portland

Friday, May 15, 4 p.m.

On Zoom

“The Dynamic Geology, Glaciers, and Environmental Problems of Antarctica”

Oregon Association of Environmental Professionals

Thursday, May 21, Noon

On Zoom

“The Dynamic Geology of Iceland”

Geological Society of the Oregon Country

Friday, June 12, 7 p.m.

This lecture will likely be on Zoom

“Earthquakes in Oregon: Are We Ready for the Big One?”

Clackamas Rotary

Thursday, June 25, Noon

On Zoom

A note from your fearless editor

THE RAPS SHEET is going on hiatus for a few weeks. In the next issue, which is scheduled to be emailed in late July, we hope to announce fall programs, activities, and get-togethers.

Of course, the fate of those events, as so much else, hangs on the success of the battle against the coronavirus pandemic. So do your part and play it safe. And keep your fingers crossed.

In other news, the pandemic is affecting how we deliver the *RAPS Sheet*. Some RAPS members receive the newsletter by U.S. Mail rather than email. Unfortunately, those members did not receive the April issue and will not receive the May issue, because those issues were not

printed and mailed. They were sent only via email.

Here's why: the Portland State campus is closed—except for some services deemed essential—which means the RAPS office is closed, and our office manager, like the rest of us, is stuck at home and cannot mail the *RAPS Sheet* to those who requested that service. So if you're longing for your ink-on-paper *RAPS Sheet*, or know someone who is, we apologize. We hope to resume the mail service once the Portland State campus re-opens.

In the meantime, stay healthy and have a great summer!

—Doug Swanson