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RAPS Sheet: Monthly Newsletter

Retirement Association of Portland State  
(RAPS)

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1-2022

## RAPS Sheet, January 2022

Retirement Association of Portland State

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# The RAPS Sheet

The newsletter of the Retirement Association of Portland State

JANUARY 2022

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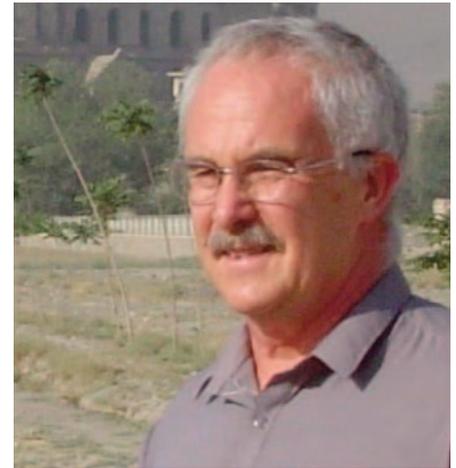
## What happened in Afghanistan? Grant Farr offers some answers

**IN NOVEMBER 2018**, PSU emeritus professor Grant Farr spoke to RAPS on “What’s Happening in Afghanistan?” In the wake of the shockingly swift collapse of the Afghan government last August following the removal of U.S. troops, Farr returns to RAPS to talk about “What Happened in Afghanistan?” His presentation will be the focus of the monthly RAPS meeting, held over the videoconferencing platform Zoom on Thursday, January 20, beginning at noon.

Widely recognized for his expertise on the Middle East, Farr’s connection with Afghanistan began in 1966 when he spent two years in Kabul as a Peace Corps volunteer. In the five decades since, his teaching, research, and publications have focused on Middle East and Asian culture, politics, and society, with country emphasis on Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

Farr earned a Master of Arts degree in 1970 and a Ph.D. in 1974, both from the University of Washington. He joined the Portland State sociology faculty in 1975 after teaching for two years at Pahlavi University in Shiraz, Iran.

During his long tenure at Portland State, Farr held a variety of administrative positions. He chaired the Sociology Department from 1983 to 1992 and again from 1998 to 2005. He also served as director of the Middle East Studies Center. He was PSU’s



**Grant Farr will speak to RAPS over Zoom on Thursday, January 20, at noon.**

first vice provost for international affairs and served as associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences until his retirement in 2012. That same year he was named professor emeritus of sociology and international studies.

Although the RAPS meeting starts at noon on January 20, the “Zoom Room” will open at 11:30 a.m. to allow RAPS members to log in ahead of time and visit with one another.

RAPS will provide the link to join the meeting several days in advance of the event. Farr’s presentation will begin a few minutes after noon.

## CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# Holiday party, scholarship challenge make it bright

**HAPPY NEW YEAR.** That used to mean something, but it's a little uncertain this year, as it was last year. Let's keep a good thought and, knowing that we are vaccinated, believe that this new version of the virus will be short-lived.

Here at RAPS we do have some good news! We had a wonderful



holiday party at Augustana Lutheran Church, thanks to Ansel Johnson, a member there. It was a festive and delicious occasion and everyone enjoyed being together in person! Thanks to Nancy Eriksson for organizing a wonderful brunch, and to Joan Shireman for creating a fun and successful "treat table." Our members provided fabulous baked goods, photo cards, holiday décor, and even a Cuisinart for sale, all to benefit the scholarship.

Speaking of the scholarship, that is another piece of exciting news. While we haven't had time to tabulate the

results of our scholarship challenge, we thank all of you who participated by writing checks to our scholarship fund. Our donor, who made the challenge, will be match-

ing your gifts, and will be expanding the match for those who increased their donations from last year. We will probably announce preliminary results by the end of the year, and final results some time in January.

RAPS Scholarship Committee member Barbara Alberty observed the importance of the scholarship: "This has really been a tough year for all of us. . . We know how very expensive it is for most of the students at Portland State. They need our help more than ever. Most of our students don't have all of the family support they need, and many of them have no family support at all." Now some students will have our increased support.

Looking forward to seeing you all on Thursday, January 20, to hear Professor Emeritus Grant Farr talk about "What Happened in Afghanistan?"

—Pat Squire

We thank all of you who participated in our scholarship challenge by writing checks... Now some students will have our increased support.

## Nominations sought for RAPS retiree, special recognition awards

**ARE YOU AWARE OF A RAPS MEMBER** who has been active in community service or University affairs or professional activity?

Of course you are.

Why not nominate her or him for the 2022 Outstanding Portland State Retiree Award? You don't need a form—although one is available on page 7 of this *RAPS Sheet*. Nominations on ordinary paper or by email are also 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 U.S. mail to RAPS, Portland State University, PO Box 751, Portland OR 97207-0751 or by email to Eben Yemoh, RAPS Office manager, at [rapsmail@pdx.edu](mailto:rapsmail@pdx.edu).

The deadline for receipt of nominations is Wednesday, March 2, 2022.

Members of the current RAPS Board are not eligible for nomination.

Questions? Please contact Steve Brennan, chair of the Awards Committee, at [the.steve.brennan@gmail.com](mailto:the.steve.brennan@gmail.com) or 503-889-0146.

# RAPS Scholarship recipient focuses on end-of-life care

*The RAPS scholarship is awarded each year to a student whose work focuses on an aspect of gerontology. Recipients in past years have worked in a variety of fields; some have focused on health care, others on the economic and social challenges of old age. The accompanying article describes this year's recipient, her rather different focus, her many years of volunteering, and her sense of mission.*

*You have been very generous in the past year, and the recipients of the scholarship thank you.*

*—Joan Shireman, Chair, Scholarship Committee*

**THE RAPS SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2021-2022** has been awarded to Jett Koda. She is in the final year of a three-year program leading to a master's degree in social work, with a concentration in health across the lifespan.



Koda's area of particular interest and expertise has been hospice care. She worked in this field as a volunteer prior to the pandemic, and seeing the need she decided to become a social worker. Her current internship is with Care Partners and Palliative Care, where she is co-facilitating grief and family caregiver support groups.

During her first year in the social work program she interned at Disability, Aging and Veteran Services in Washington County. There she had opportunity to work with Death Café and Age Café.

I didn't know what those programs were; I had to look them up on Google. There I learned that in a social setting (tea and cake in the original British café) participants discuss death as a means of appreciating and maximizing their experience with life, and normalizing death.

I am eager to learn more from Jett. Perhaps she will be our guest at the President's Luncheon in the spring, and we will all have a chance to chat with her. Her work is distinguished; she reports that "as a part of the LGBTQ+ community, I developed, hosted, and facilitated LGBTQ+ Death

Café in a virtual setting. I had the distinct pleasure of presenting at last year's PNW Social Work Conference on Death Café: Normalizing Conversations on Death, Dying, Grief & Loss. Continuing to find ways to bring conversations around death, dying, grief, and loss is important to my work in this field."

Following are excerpts from her thank you letter.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the scholarship for my study of aging. I am so grateful to be a recipient and the investment you are making in my future.

"I expect to graduate in June of 2022 and am interested in licensing as a medical social worker as well as pursuing my Ph.D. in social work research with a focus on hospice, end-of-life care, and complementary therapies in health care. As an alternative health practitioner for the last 25 years, I am interested in the current growth of complementary care and discovering ways to create access for patients within the health care system.

"Our role as social workers is to find ways to support vulnerable populations in a model that is often burdensome for families and our service users. I hope that my work in the field of aging and end-of-life care contributes to the aid and support of those in need. The scholarship I have received helps to fund my continued work and educational goals. Again, thank you so much for your support!"

*—Joan Shireman*



**The Treat Table at the Holiday Brunch, held December 9 at Augustana Lutheran Church, netted about \$300 for the RAPS Scholarship. The table is a regular feature of the brunch, and this year's table featured yummy baked goods, toys, and even a food processor.**



Several members of the Hiking Group met at Larry and Diane Sawyer's house in December for a potluck and 2022 planning session. Left to right: Terry Rohe, Deve Swaim, Cilla Dieterich, Tom Dieterich, Mary Lane Stevens, Pati Sluys, Tom Hard, and Diane Sawyer.

## RAPS Group Reports

### Book Group

**THE BOOK GROUP** was scheduled to meet on December 28—a week later than usual. We were unable to picture ourselves settling down to read a book in the week before Christmas. Our plan was to discuss Elizabeth Kolbert's *Under a White Sky: The Nature of the Future*. It is the sequel to her prizewinning *The Sixth Extinction*, which we read earlier.

In January we will discuss *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray, a novel about Belle da Costa Greene, J. P. Morgan's personal librarian. The daughter of the first Black graduate of Harvard, she was hired to curate a growing collection of rare manuscripts, artwork, and books. She became an important person in New York society, while hiding her identity as a Black woman.

The Book Group meets the third Tuesday of each month, traditionally in the homes of various members. Currently we are using Zoom for our meetings. Any RAPS member is welcome to join the group.

—Joan Shireman

### Bridge Group

**THE BRIDGE GROUP** has not played in person for well over a year. I have been looking forward to a time when case counts declined to a low level before restarting in-person bridge sessions. COVID-19 cases in Multnomah County do not seem to be declining to a "moderate risk" level. In fact I believe the omicron variant will take over from the delta variant in the Portland area. I think we will not be playing

in person until late spring, if then. Let's hope I am wrong!

When we do start playing again, we will need additional players; do you want to join us?

I would like to hear from any interested RAPS members or others you know who might want to play in our group. The RAPS Bridge Group does not require RAPS membership; your friends and relatives would be welcome to join us.

Please contact Steve Brennan, 503-889-0146. My email address is: the.steve.brennan@gmail.com.

—Steve Brennan

### Hiking Group

**NINE OF THE HIKERS** met at Larry and Diane Sawyer's house on December 14 for a potluck followed by a 2022 hike planning session. We discussed several hiking options and chose 11.

Because not all of our hikers are as strong as they were a few years ago, we selected a range of hikes from easy to difficult. The first hike will be an easy one on Tuesday, January 25, to Oxbow Metro Park on the Sandy River just beyond Troutdale. We will find a food place or lunch in the Troutdale Factory Stores shopping center.

More information about the hike is available from Larry Sawyer at larry\_sawyer@comcast.net. or from the following link:

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!Asvnmw2QV39fajkqL3AJfGZ7jIPsC?e=z74Wxo>

On the link, choose the hikers directory and the calendar sub-directory. If that link doesn't work, try this one:

<https://1drv.ms/w/s!Asvnmw2QV39fanF7PMuhHoLmdi-zet?e=NzP5WM>

# RAPS sets two New England trips for next fall

**IF NEW ENGLAND FALL COLORS** and Boston history and culture sound appealing, the Scholarship Committee has a couple of suggestions for you.

“Autumn in Vermont” and “Spotlights of Boston” are scheduled for next October and are led by Collette, and part of your fare will benefit the RAPS Scholarship. (You can read more about the scholarship and this year’s recipient on page 3.)

“Spotlights of Boston” begins October 6 and concludes October 11, 2022. “Autumn in Vermont” runs from October 14 to October 20, 2022.

Both trips begin and end in Boston and are three days apart. You have the option of enrolling in either one or both with a three day layover in Boston. We have customized flyers and web pages for both.

The Boston trip highlights both historical and modern Boston. The Vermont trip focuses on the autumn colors, but you’ll also see historical sites such as Fort Ticonderoga and Lake Champlain.

Because no one can guarantee the time for the best colors in Vermont, the weather, or the course of the virus, it’s prudent to buy travel insurance. Collette has the best trip insurance in the travel business. For about \$250, you can cancel at any time for any reason and get a refund for all but your



**A featured stop on RAPS’ “Autumn in Vermont” trip next October is Fort Ticonderoga. Located on the south end of Lake Champlain, in northern New York, it fell into ruin after the Revolutionary War. It was restored in the early 20th century.**

insurance payment.

Custom websites are:

Boston: <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1088346>

Vermont: <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1088348>

PDF flyers:

[https://1drv.ms/u/s!Asvnrw2QV39fanF\\_zQ2yfRQPzrYA-?e=W1YSQU](https://1drv.ms/u/s!Asvnrw2QV39fanF_zQ2yfRQPzrYA-?e=W1YSQU)

## Upcoming RAPS events

*In response to changing conditions relating to the coronavirus pandemic, the RAPS Board is not yet sure whether the first few meetings of the New Year will be held on campus as originally planned or offered over Zoom. RAPS will keep members informed via emails from the RAPS Office and in future editions of The RAPS Sheet.*

### FEBRUARY

#### Thursday, February 17

“The Inside Story on Who First Planted Pinot Noir in Oregon: It Might Not Be Who You Think,” presentation by Michael Alberty, wine writer for *The Oregonian*. To be offered on campus or via Zoom; announcement to come.

### MARCH

#### Thursday, March 17

Annual March Potluck and spring opera preview

with PSU opera program director Harry Baechtel and student performers. After a delay of two years, PSU Opera is mounting the previously planned production of *Merry Wives of Windsor*, an operetta in three acts by Otto Nicolai. Potluck subject to cancellation due to COVID restrictions. Spring opera preview subject to postponement. Announcements to come.

### APRIL

#### Friday, April 29

President’s Annual Luncheon for Retired Staff and Faculty hosted by President Steve Percy. To be held in the PSU Ballroom. If the luncheon is canceled due to COVID restrictions, Percy will speak to RAPS members via Zoom.

# In memoriam: Robert Leonard Casteel, 1931-2021

**ROBERT L. CASTEEL**, who served Portland State as a professor of speech communication for more than 25 years, died October 8 at the age of 90.

Professor Casteel was born March 4, 1931, in Aloha, to Robert F. Casteel and Mable Casteel (Dodson). A 1949 graduate of Beaverton High School, he participated in debate and made all-conference in football and track.



PSU Archives Digital Gallery

The Casteel family was involved in raising and racing greyhounds, and during high school Professor Casteel began working at Multnomah Kennel Club. After graduation from Beaverton High, he enrolled at Vanport Extension Center, which was located at the former

Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation buildings following the Memorial Day flood of 1948 that destroyed Vanport City. He later entered Pacific University on a debate scholarship.

While at Pacific he met Barbara Jo Pelton. They were married March 13, 1954, at Aloha Community Baptist Church, and Professor Casteel graduated from Pacific later that year. Professor Casteel received a master's degree from the University of Washington in 1960 and a Ph.D. from the University of Oregon Medical School (now Oregon Health & Science University School of Medicine) in 1969.

# In memoriam: Raymond P. Mariels, 1936-2021

**RAYMOND P. MARIELS**, who graduated from Portland State with a bachelor's degree in 1961 and retired from the University as a professor of English 41 years later, died in Portland on October 13. He was 85 years old.

Professor Mariels was born on August 25, 1936, in



PSU Archives Digital Gallery

Astoria to Jess Raymond Mariels and Annette Mildred Martin. He graduated from Lincoln High School in 1955, then entered the U.S. Army and was stationed in Germany.

After his discharge from the Army in 1957, Professor Mariels completed a bachelor's degree at Portland State, then entered the University of Oregon, where he received an M.A. in 1963 and a Ph.D. in 1967. He joined PSU that same year as an assistant professor. He was promoted to associate professor in 1970 and to professor in 1993, and became an emeritus professor upon his retirement in 2002.

During his years in the Department of English, Professor Mariels served as assistant department head, graduate program coordinator, and coordinator in English for Teacher

Professor Casteel joined the Portland State faculty in 1966, but his association with PSU began 10 years earlier. According to a "Past Tense" article written by Mary Brannan for the June 2009 edition of *The RAPS Sheet*, Professor Casteel started teaching courses in 1956, and was one of the early leaders of the Speech and Hearing Sciences Program, along with Robert English and James Maurer.

Professor Casteel was recognized with the Frank R. Kleffner Clinical Career Award for his work to better the understanding and treatment of stuttering and was a fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. He twice served as president of OSHA and received OSHA's Honors of the Association, and also served as the academic adviser for the PSU Athletic Department.

In July 1992 he suffered a major stroke. He retired from Portland State and was promoted to professor emeritus.

Professor Casteel is survived by his wife, Barbara Jo; their son, Robert G. Casteel (Lori); daughter, Joann Marie Price (Steven); and seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, as well as several nieces and nephews.

Remembrances may be made to the general scholarship fund of Pacific University, attention Zach Wallace, 2043 College Way, Forest Grove, OR 97116.

Education. He taught British Romantic literature and specialized in courses on Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley. Professor Mariels was an avid reader, and was most interested in William Blake as an author, poet, and artist. He visited London several times to visit the Blake Museum and other historical sites related to the British Romantics, and published numerous poems in reviews and journals between 1959 and 1994.

As much as he enjoyed traveling overseas, Professor Mariels and his wife, Maureen, were also fond of the Oregon coast, particularly Cannon Beach.

Professor Mariels is survived by his sister, Jan Wagner; his eldest son, Kurt Mariels, and middle son, Tim Mariels, from his first marriage, and his youngest son, Nathan Mariels, from his second marriage. He is also survived by his step-daughter, Jennifer Turner Bitterman, and her two sons, Austin and Hugo Bitterman.

Professor Mariels's ashes were interred next to those of his wife of 35 years, Maureen Mariels (Anderson), at Riverview Cemetery.

