



CLASS ACT

NEWSLETTER



Fall Term Sept 2026

<https://encorelearn.net/>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings ENCORE members,

It's "Back to school" time! Fall Term classes start on September 21 and continue through December 14, with seasonal readings by local authors on December 21.

Check the outstanding lineup of classes in this newsletter and add a few to your calendar. We've also planned a few educational tours, so please mark those dates as well.

Meanwhile, we will host a Fall Term intro meeting on Monday, September 14 at 11:30 at the Astoria Senior Center. Come learn about the classes, mingle with your fellow ENCORE members, and get a light bite to eat.

If you have suggestions for future classes, please share them when you renew your dues. This will help with curriculum planning.

Our new website is under development! A volunteer work group vetted website developers, and the Board selected Lighthouse Digital to design the site. We expect to roll it out in early October.

Our web designer, Jacob Bentley, will join us during our September 14 meeting to offer a sneak peek at how to find information about classes on our new website.

Do you have a marketing background? If so, and you would like to review website content, please email encorelearn@clatsopcc.edu, and someone on the

work group will reach out. As our new website rolls out, our work group welcomes tips from voices of experience.

The Board is developing recruiting tools to increase our pool of ENCORE volunteers. We appreciate our volunteers and need members to help us carry out our vision: ENCORE is the premier learning organization for members in retirement. Please stay tuned for new volunteer opportunities.

Enjoy the final days of Summer, and I will see you in class!

Sharon Borgardt, President, ENCORE Learn

LOGO UPDATE

We are updating our logo to roll out with the new website. The compass and book represent exploration and lifelong learning. It is still a work in progress, and we welcome your feedback.

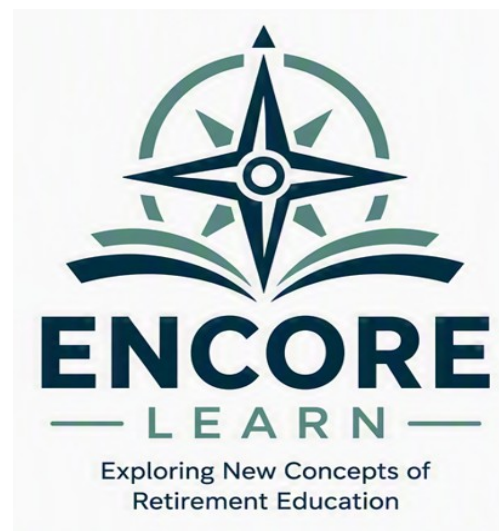


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THE QUOTERY

“Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans.” ~ Allen Saunders

Popularized in *Beautiful Boy (Darling Boy)* by John Lennon

NOTICES & REMINDERS

ENCORE Dues Now due!

ENCORE’s academic year follows the Clatsop Community College academic year, which is July

through June each year. ENCORE’s accounting year is July 1 through June 30. Hence, the July date for member dues.

We hope that clears up any confusion! If you have not renewed for 2026-2027, you can download a

Membership Form using this link:

<https://encorelearn.net/Membership-Form.pdf>.

Thank you!

Your Membership Committee



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Northwest Nordic Center (Portland area)

Wednesday, September 16

9:30 AM

Trip to Portland area's Northwest Nordic Center to see the 19-foot tall Ole Bolle troll. We will have a 2-hour presentation and then see the troll created mostly of recycled wood by Thomas Dambo. Lunch follows at Norwegian restaurant, Broder Soder, or take a picnic lunch. We leave the senior center at 9:30 AM.

Seafood Dock Tour (Ilwaco, WA)

Thursday, September 24

Further details TBA

BOOK/MOVIE REVIEW

"Project Hail Mary" by Andy Weir

Reviewed by Gerrie Penny

I just finished reading "Project Hail Mary" by Andy Weir, having seen the movie earlier this year.

I later learned that one of the main characters—a rock appropriately named Rocky—was portrayed by a puppet rather than CGI. It is amazing that only five strings and two levers controlled Rocky's body and claws. The lead professional puppeteer also voiced the character, supported by a team of five assistant puppeteers. I don't think this gives anything away but may add an extra layer to watching the movie.

I also read the book to better understand the science, as Weir is known for his deep research. While the book includes copious amounts of math and science that were well beyond my understanding, that never detracted from the emotional weight of the story as the characters faced their challenges.

Best of all, through danger and high drama, there is great humor in their relationship. Two thumbs up!

LIMELIGHTS LITE

How I Got My Doggy, Auggy, to Bark Less

When I tell my little dog, Auggy (aka Diablo) to stop barking, he ignores me and barks again. I used to tell him again to stop. But he'd bark again. So I'd yell at him to *stop*. He'd pause... and bark *again*.



Auggy-Wan Kenobi

I have learned to tell him to stop barking, then tell *myself* to stop telling him to stop barking. If I give him the last word, he stops.

~ Rodney Merrill



LIMELIGHTS

U Naajil Yuum K'iin ***(The House of the Sun Father)***

A hot breeze brushed our faces as we left the last paved street in Mani, Yucatan, Mexico, and bounced down the clay roadway generously strewn with fist-sized stones. Clutching the rusting pipe which framed our mototaxi, only a bare board for our seat, our driver, perched behind us on a high seat, steered down a narrow lane onto a grassy path. This brought us to the apiary.

We walked toward four men sitting beneath tall tropical trees in a small clearing, and were greeted by a small statured man who introduced himself as Padre Louis Armando-Quintal Medina. He told us his three childhood friends were visiting, but we too were welcome. An ordained priest, Padre Louis' life work for the past thirty years had been the care and management of U Naajil Yuum K'iin, a meliponario y cabanas, sponsored by the Yucatan State in Mexico to preserve native bees of the Yucatan. [Meliponario, meaning a sanctuary for the *Melipona beecheii* stingless bees and cabanas, referring to an open hut.]

Padre Louis explained, in his calm, quiet manner, that 500 native Yucatan bees, "Xunan Kab," were captured from the wild to start the colony. His colony had three huts to house the bees, and the Padre was working on a fourth. Each hut was made up of hollowed out logs, stacked like a tent or pyramid, and was 10 logs wide and 10 logs high. These were protected under an open thatched roof. A shallow water-filled trench surrounded each hut for the purpose of discouraging hive destroying ants, a natural predator of the native bee.

Each log, hollowed out with primitive hand tools by Padre Louis and his helpers, was about two feet long and one foot wide, and sealed by a waxy substance at each end with a hand-tooled wooden disc. A small hole was drilled in the front side of each

log to allow the bees to enter. Each log housed a separate hive.

As we viewed the hives in the 98 degree F. weather, the shade and breeze kept us comfortable. Padre Louis said not to fear the small stingless bees. A bee stood facing outward in each hole of the hive. The Padre explained this was a guard bee to detect and warn of any predators, such as an ant or European honey bee, from accessing the hive. He also said if approached by a predator, the bee would alarm the hive. When alarmed, 10-12 worker/defender bees responded and would sacrifice themselves, secrete a waxy substance around themselves, and seal the hole.

Padre Louis pried open one end of a log to show us inside. The inside contained bees, of course, honeycomb, and a pile of black grainy-looking propolis which the bees use to seal the hive. The bees collect propolis from various plants and it is valued by humans for its antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant properties. Another hive we looked into held a nursery where baby bees were tended. The hives were divided every 6 months. The small amount of honey and propolis were harvested once a year in April.

Although a hive of European honey bees produces 165# of honey each year, the native *Melipona beecheii* produce only 2.2# per year. Padre said the native bee's honey has intense sweetness. Literature identifies it to be rich in minerals, amino acids and flavonoids, with a low glycemic index.

For thousands of years, this tiny stingless bee was cultivated by Mayans who regarded them as sacred. Today this bee, once nearly extinct, is threatened due to massive deforestation, use of agricultural chemicals, and the arrival of larger and more productive bees. Padre Louis stated the threat of extinction was affecting his hives, as these bees mainly harvest pollen from blossoms high in tropical trees, and there was much deforestation in the lands surrounding his 30 acre preserve.

To finish our tour, we tasted two different grades

of the honey, as well as a tincture of propolis. Padre Louis placed a drop of each on the top of our hand, and asked us to do the lick test. Sweet indeed.

~ Marilyn deFreese 2026

Picking the Figs

The padlocked chinked
as I unlocked the rusty gate.
The morning air fresh,
I settled among tangled branches,
Worked my way to
swollen tear-shaped fruit.

“This is as fun
as finding Easter eggs,”
my younger self whispered.
I giggled, the calisthenics
of stretching and ducking,
reaching and bending rewarded me.

I bent over my neighbor’s fence,
to collect “my” figs.
I scolded, wondered
why the tree could not stay home.
Leaving two ripe fruits for the birds,
I scanned the canopy,
satisfied with my harvest

A friend will make fig jam.
~ Marilyn deFreese 08/13/2026



LUNCH BUNCH

Don’t forget ! Lunch Bunch meets about 12:30 on the first Friday of most months. Order upon arrival.

Location of the next Lunch Bunch is announced by email sent to all ENCORE members two weeks and then again one week ahead of time.

For more information contact Sue Korpela 503-298-0422 or Bernie Thomas 503-861-2695.

NATURAL WONDERS



African red-headed agama. Kenua

HAIKU U2!

Shiny black cricket
Dances with its shadow,
until sun sets.
~ Rodney Merrill

ACTIVITY FLASHBACKS

Fort Clatsop Field Trip

Photos sent by Susan Woodgaines

Text by Mary Kemhus

Just returned from the Fort Clatsop field trip. What a wonderful day. The weather started out a little drizzly and then broke into a beautiful clear but not overly warm day.



So informative, including a tour of the fort and a guided nature walk down the trail to the canoe landing. Then, we all enjoyed interesting conversation and a picnic lunch under a covered shelter. We had a talk about firing a flintlock rifle with a live demonstration, something you don't see everyday. There was time to visit the museum and gift shop.

I highly recommend going with the group to the Fort if they offer it again.



SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Arranged by Starting Date

All classes will be held at the Astoria Senior Center

*Notice: When you attend an Encore Learn class or event,
you are entering a place where photography, video and audio recordings may occur.*

September 21 - October 12

Mondays 11am - 1pm

4 weeks

Astoria Senior Center
Classroom

Geology of Volcanoes, Our Coastal Ocean and the Columbia River Estuary

Instructor Ed Joyce

The Geology of our local region will be presented through various geological formations and their unique effects on our coastline and environment. Main topics include: where and why volcanoes occur; overview of Oregon coastal geology; overview of coastal Oregon oceanography; and the Columbia River Estuary and its connection to the ocean.

Objectives:

1. Increasing awareness of volcanic activity in Oregon and what it means to residents.
2. Providing explanations of various geological events and their effects on our land and sea.
3. Instruction on identifying geological formations and their historical roots.

October 19 - November 16

Mondays 11am - 1pm

5 weeks

Astoria Senior Center
Classroom

Financial Management for Retirees

Instructor Thom Allison

This class will identify the six major components of effective personal financial management, the four components most relevant for retirees, and learn about strategies to help provide financial security during retirement

Weekly Subjects:

1. The six major components of personal financial management and how they tie together.
2. Learn tax management strategies and investments specific to retirees.
3. Increase knowledge about effectiveness working with an advisor.
4. Learn how to manage financial risks.
5. Learn how to develop a generosity plan.

September 21 - December 7

Mondays 2pm - 4pm

12 weeks

Astoria Senior Center
Classroom

Local Authors Series . Various Local Authors

Second Annual Local Authors Series will include local poets and writers of fiction and non-fiction. There will be both returning and new writers this year, all from our local area. All have published works and are interested in community education and sharing skills. They will share published material and give inspiration and pointers to interested attendees.

Weekly schedule will be published separately.

The last class (December 21) will be Holiday/Solstice themes by several authors.

September 25 - November 6

Fridays 10am – 12pm

7 weeks

Astoria Senior Center
Classroom

Astronomy: The Universe – From Here to the Edge

Instructor Dave Ambrose

A seven-part course starting here on earth and expanding out into the universe. There will be some history of how we humans discovered what is out there and the facts we learned along the way. Each segment is one hour and consists of short videos, lectures, and demonstrations. No math is required, but participants are encouraged to “do the math” with a calculator to find some surprising answers. This class may extend to 8 classes, per the Instructor.

Topics for each week:

1. Introduction - Numbers for astronomy, the little particles that make our world.
2. The Earth and the Moon – Speed and distance
3. The Solar system – the Sun and the planets
4. The Milky Way Galaxy – So many stars, Dark Matter
5. The Local Galaxy Group – Gravity and Dark Energy
6. In the beginning/in the end – The Big Bang
7. Our place in the Universe – We are at the center

Learning Objectives:

1. To give those with no math and science background a better understanding of how our universe operates
2. To learn some math shortcuts to increase learning and discovery.
3. To gain some understanding of our place in the universe both in time and space.

September 25 to October 23

Fridays 2pm – 4pm

5 weeks

Astoria Senior Center
Classroom

Discussions – Current Topics on our Minds

Facilitator Elizabeth Hayes .

Providing an opportunity for ENCORE members to express concerns and solutions for common issues in our current society and explore the complications that are inherent in all of them. Staff will provide discussion points and support the various voices that will be within the membership.

Weekly Topics to include:

1. Homelessness/unhoused
2. What has happened to education?
3. How do we live with AI?
4. Scams and how to deal with them
5. What it means to be white in a multicultural world

Discussions will aim to be productive experiences with respect for all attending.

Objectives:

1. To introduce the idea that expressing thoughts and ideas in a group can be respectful and productive.
2. To increase confidence in taking in information and being able to form one's own opinion.
3. To educate participants in how to find resources and sources of information to help them be aware of these topics and discover ways to help others.

September 22 - November 10

Tuesdays 1pm – 3pm

8 weeks .

* Astoria Public Library,
Media Room (lower level)

Writing Exchange – Awaken the Writer in You Class – IN PERSON section *

Instructor Eric Anderson

This short course writing class is aimed to awaken the writer within. Share memoirs, short stories, poems or fiction and receive kind and constructive feedback.

Objectives:

1. To provide a safe environment for new writers to feel able to share their writing and receive feedback.
2. To encourage all levels of writers to continue their work and stretch their wings.
3. To enable pieces of writing to be developed throughout the course with weekly feedback and encouragement.

September 22 - November 10

Tuesdays 9:45am - 11:45am . 8 weeks

Via ZOOM

Writing Exchange – Awaken the Writer Within You— ZOOM Class

Instructor Eric Anderson

This short course writing class is aimed to awaken the writer within. Share memoirs, short stories, poems or fiction and receive kind and constructive feedback.

Objectives:

1. To provide a safe environment for new writers to feel able to share their writing and receive feedback.
2. To encourage all levels of writers to continue their work and stretch their wings.
3. To enable pieces of writing to be developed throughout the course with weekly feedback and encouragement.

To join this ZOOM class, contact Eric Anderson (503) 325-3131 .
ericcander@aol.com

November 13 & 20

Fridays

2pm – 3:45pm

Murphy's Law and Advocacy: Planning Ahead with Confidence

Ian Murphy, Attorney at Law

Series Description:

Across three sections, we will provide an overview of the legal tools that help elders protect their autonomy, secure their wishes, and access the benefits they've earned. Each session focuses on a core area of planning: **advance directives, estate planning, and veterans' benefits** (including survivor benefits). Participants will learn practical strategies, understand key documents, and gain clarity about how to prepare for the future with confidence.

Session 1: Advance Planning & Powers of Attorney

Explains the legal tools that allow adults to maintain control over their medical and financial decisions. We cover **durable powers of attorney, medical powers of attorney, and advance directives**—how they work, when they activate, and how to choose trustworthy agents. Participants will learn how these documents prevent court involvement, reduce stress for loved ones, and ensure their wishes are respected.

November 23

Monday

11am - 1pm

**Astoria Senior Center
Classroom**

Session 2: Wills, Trusts, and Estate Planning Essentials

Offers a broad, easy-to-understand overview of the core tools used in estate planning. We introduce the basic purpose of **wills**, **revocable living trusts**, and **beneficiary designations**, and explain how they work together to carry out your wishes. Participants will learn what probate is, why it exists, and common ways people simplify or avoid it. The focus is on giving attendees a clear picture of the major options available—what each tool does, problems it solves, and how to think about choosing the right approach for each situation.

Session 3: Veterans' Benefits & Survivor Benefits

Focuses on federal veterans' benefits many older adults or their spouses may qualify for. We cover **VA disability compensation**, **VA pension**, **Aid & Attendance**, **survivor benefits (DIC)**, and how service records, medical evidence, and eligibility rules interact. Participants will learn what benefits exist, how to apply, documentation needed, and how accredited representation can help. This session is especially valuable for veterans, widows/widowers, and adult children assisting aging parents.

**October 30
Friday 2pm - 3:45 pm
Astoria Senior Center**

Halloween Arrives but Once a Year

Instructor Maureen Balaam .

There will be a short presentation about Halloween traditions, including the original purpose of witches and how society came to see them as something wicked. Review of some scary stories from Astoria.

This will be followed by social time, sharing stories if you have one.

Wear costumes, bring treats to share.

ENCORE CLASS ACT INFORMATION

Encore's Class Act is published quarterly except summers – December, January & February; March, April & May; September, October & November by Encore Learn (Exploring New Concepts of Retirement Education). Rodney Merrill, Editor 503-298-7776 or email rodney.merrill@gmail.com. Josh Allison, CCC Liaison, phone 541-290-5989 or email jallison@clatsopcc.edu/clatsop. Next Class Act submission deadline for Spring: November 5, 2027.



Encore Learn
c/o Clatsop Community College
1651 Lexington Ave
Astoria, OR 97103
www.encorelearn.net



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