

ENCORE'S

CLASS ACT

March, April, May 2020

Vol. 19 No. 1



**Clatsop
Community
College**

Letter From the President by Dave Zunkel

Winter greetings to all ENCORE Members! Winter classes and the concurrent winter rains have begun in earnest. Attendance at classes has been impressive in spite of lower membership numbers for this year. Fully 30% of ENCORE members attended Seth Tichenor's first class on "Hellenistic Philosophy." A similar number of members have been attending Professor Erhard Gross' class on the "History of the English Language," being treated in his second class to a stirring reading by Erhard of "The Miller's Tale" from "Chaucer's Canterbury Tales." But those also attending Seth's second class were treated to his recitation of a passage from Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" in 'Olde English' – from memory no less! Well, you just had to be there to get the flavor of it all, but that's what makes these classes so interesting!

Other courses have included "The Astoria Library," "Smartphone and Computer Basics for Seniors" and "Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Horses, But Were Afraid to Ask" (my version of the course's title). Thanks to the instructors of all of these courses, as well as the continuing courses of "Stitchery," "Writing Exchange" and "Science Exchange." Reta Lindstrom and her curriculum committee are hard at work developing an equally interesting menu of courses for the spring quarter set to start in April.

As we head toward spring quarter, I want you to be aware of openings for three ENCORE positions. After serving as ENCORE historian for years, Marlene Colendich is retiring, leaving this position open. Thank you Marlene. In addition, the position of Media Liaison remains unfilled. This is an important position for ENCORE, involving development of relationships with our local print and radio media. It's one where ENCORE really needs the help of someone interested in media relations. Finally, the position of ENCORE President is open for next year with my retirement after 3 years. I'd urge any member who wishes to have some impact on the future

of ENCORE and senior education in our area to consider serving in this position. It is neither time-consuming or difficult, as witnessed by the fact that I could do it. Issues that ENCORE has faced over the prior two years have been resolved, and the next President will inherit a strong board populated by hard-working dedicated members. Please contact me at davezunkel@gmail.com regarding the vacant historian and media liaison positions and Frank Spence (Chair of the Nominating Committee) regarding the Presidency position. Frank's email is frspence@bellsouth.net.

I look forward to seeing you in spring classes and at June's General Membership meeting. Cheers!

Holiday Bash 2019 by Elfi Gross

Another Holiday Bash is on the books – I believe it was ENCORE's 10th such festivity. Rollie Lindstrom and his Membership Committee outdid themselves on 12/7/2019. Sixty-four persons enjoyed a good meal at the Astoria Senior Center, plus caroling led by Kit Ketcham, and happy visiting among our membership. With her usual competence, Aletha Westerberg officiated at the drawing of the door prices.

An entirely new component of the Bash was the presentation of creative writings by members of Eric Anderson's class "Writing Exchange." Eric had selected six of his students to read poetry and prose of pieces they had presented to the class during the last term. The six readers were Joan Masat, Dale Rue, Larry Thormalen, Tod Lundy, Erhard Gross, and Jean McGonigle. Eric's introduction of each reader provided a glimpse of the individuals' lives. Judging by the applause, this new aspect of the annual Bash was well received. Thanks a lot, Rollie, and please be encouraged to repeat this new feature in the future.

Among some of the announcements by ENCORE President Dave Zunkel was the fact that our CCC liaison, Leah Olson, has left her employment with the college. She was of great help to our leadership, and will be teaching some courses for our organization.

To our membership: Please continue your support of our social activities and don't hesitate to submit your ideas on how we can enhance our programs.

Notice: When you attend an ENCORE class or event, you will be entering a place where photography, video and audio recordings may occur.

Senior Stitchery by Rose Power

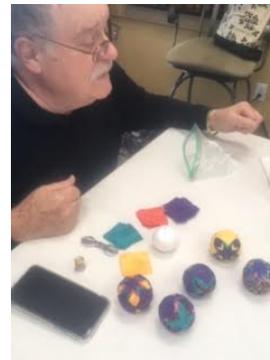
This is listed as a class, though there is no curriculum or instructor. What we have is a weekly gathering of people skilled at various kinds of handwork. We perch around the billiard table, take out our work, and chat.

Richard Foster, for instance, presses bright scraps of fabric into small styrofoam spheres, pinning and poking until they are intricately decorated ornamental balls.

Sue Zerangue does crewel work (wool embroidery), Irene Strattermuyer keeps the old-fashioned art of embroidered pillowcases alive, and Gayle Starr is into practical mending of clothes, for herself and friends.

Into this group, I came with my simple cross-stitch sampler, a gift for a sister. I joined in the discussions – the high cost of pharmaceuticals, how to run a successful flea market stall, how the other ENCORE classes are going, and whose pets are doing what. Other people wander in and join the conversations, and we show off what we've been doing.

Like I said, not your conventional ENCORE class but enjoyable all the same and they let every skill level in. For me, it's well worth a trip across the river every Wednesday afternoon.



The Hook by Erhard Gross

My other contact from the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) was my nephew, Steffen Gläser. Like his father and mother, he was basically apolitical. His hometown, a small farming village of fewer than 1,000 people, offered little in the way of entertainment to local youth. During the summers, the local outdoor swimming pool was the meeting place of young people. The place was badly in need of repairs, but there was no money for it. Steffen became a leader in the group of teenagers who organized voluntary repair activities. He thus came to the attention of the local mayor who suggested that he stand for election to the town council. Thinking that town council was apolitical enough, he allowed his name to appear on the ballot – and at age 18, was elected.

Like all young men he was drafted into the East German Peoples' Army. He reported to the assigned military installation, and shortly after arriving was contacted by a person who suggested that Steffen could be released from the service if he would provide certain information to the Stasi. Steffen reports: "One of the Stasi officers urged me to be of service in the stabilization and security of our

country against the evil counterrevolutionaries" — meaning Westerners. Although not identified during the initial contact, one of the targets of this reporting focused on his American uncle. Since Steffen did not categorically refuse to cooperate, he was released from military duty. Several weeks later, the same Stasi officer contacted him again. This time, my nephew flat-out refused to turn informer. And, although threatened with repercussions, was basically left alone.

If the hook did not hold in the teenage son, his father would become the next target. He was visited by two men in trench coats for the same purpose. The secret police agents wanted the father to report on the same American visitor and his West German brother who were known to arrive soon to visit their terminally ill mother in the summer of 1974. Father Gläser likewise rebuffed their attempts. Both, father and son, were politically fairly untouchable because Steffen had welded and set up a powerful receiver station for a high-ranking regional political leader in a nearby city in order that he could (illegally!) receive West German TV. Matter of fact, my brother-in-law advised me in the late 1970s to contact him immediately if I were detained by East German authorities. He had an influential friend.

Between my defection from East Germany in 1953 and the fall of the Berlin Wall, I crossed the Iron Curtain nearly 20 times. Even though there was never any guarantee that I would not be imprisoned for some trumped up charges, I got through unscathed. The secret police had attempted to set their hooks in my nephew and brother-in-law but didn't get a good bite.

ENCORE's May 17, 2020 public program "The Fall of the Wall" will present eye witnesses testimony to the arguably greatest political event of the second half of the 20th C.

This is from "Love, West Hollywood: Reflections of Los Angeles"

By Malcom Boyd and edited by Chris Freeman & James Berg

Submitted by Bod Westerberg

I know that I am facing mortality. So are you. We're all doing that. I perceive death as a major part of living. Always we are dying; always we are living. I realize I have no control over death, so I try to let it go and accept its coming. At the same time, I realize I have no control over life either. It's hard, poetic, mysterious, tender. While I'm still on the scene, at eighty-four, I have made a big decision to hang in there. Be. Do. Remain involved. Stay in community. Start new projects (like writing this essay). Listen to God, talk to God. Stay open. Forgive people. Ask them to forgive me. Embrace, rather than

become isolated. Refuse to join the walking wounded. Sign off as a victim. Wake up. Try to stay authentic.

Lunch Bunch by Gerrie Penny

Six Encore members met at Fultano's Pizza on January 3 for some good tummy warming food. We all took advantage of the "all you can eat salad bar along with pizza slices, cookies with drink offer." Salad bar offered many healthy offerings which were offset by the not so healthy pizza slices. Some of us were very good and didn't eat any pizza. Those present were Ellen Norris, Lynn Ryan, Judith McGowan, Tom Schaefer, Frank Spence & Gerrie Penny.



Our Library by Dory Lukas

The "Our Library" class at the Astoria Public Library was an incredible description of the historic underground archive treasures in the basement below the library. Director Jimmy Pearson described the library's history and the proposed future renovation. The present location is the sixth library building since 1892. Four speakers included the director, the Astoria city historian, the library archivist, and a computer expert who makes the archives accessible to the public. The basement is a quarter of a city block



with a twelve-foot ceiling and is full of old books, magazines, newspapers, documents, and family heirlooms. The room is temperature controlled with a constant humidity to preserve the records. The presenters described methods for handling the old and crumbling documents and the endless job of scanning and cataloging the records to preserve them forever.

Please note that for now the Newsletter will no longer have a summer edition. As ENCORE would have to pay for the printing and mailing this will save us some funds and give our writers a summer to get creative and send in more of their articles. We really need more articles submitted. PLEASE!

A One Horse Town by Dave Rue

I have got to get out of here he told his whisky-drinking friends
People call me the town drunk and an old has been
I need a fresh start and to leave this town
It just ain't been the same since the mill closed down!

I hear Alaska is the place you wanna be
With miles of open space and millions of trees
I'll get work as a logger and fall them all down
Cause I got to get out of this one-horse town.

I'll build me a log cabin and learn a new skill
It won't be like here with so much time to kill
I'll trap and hunt and live off grid
Like the old timers before did.

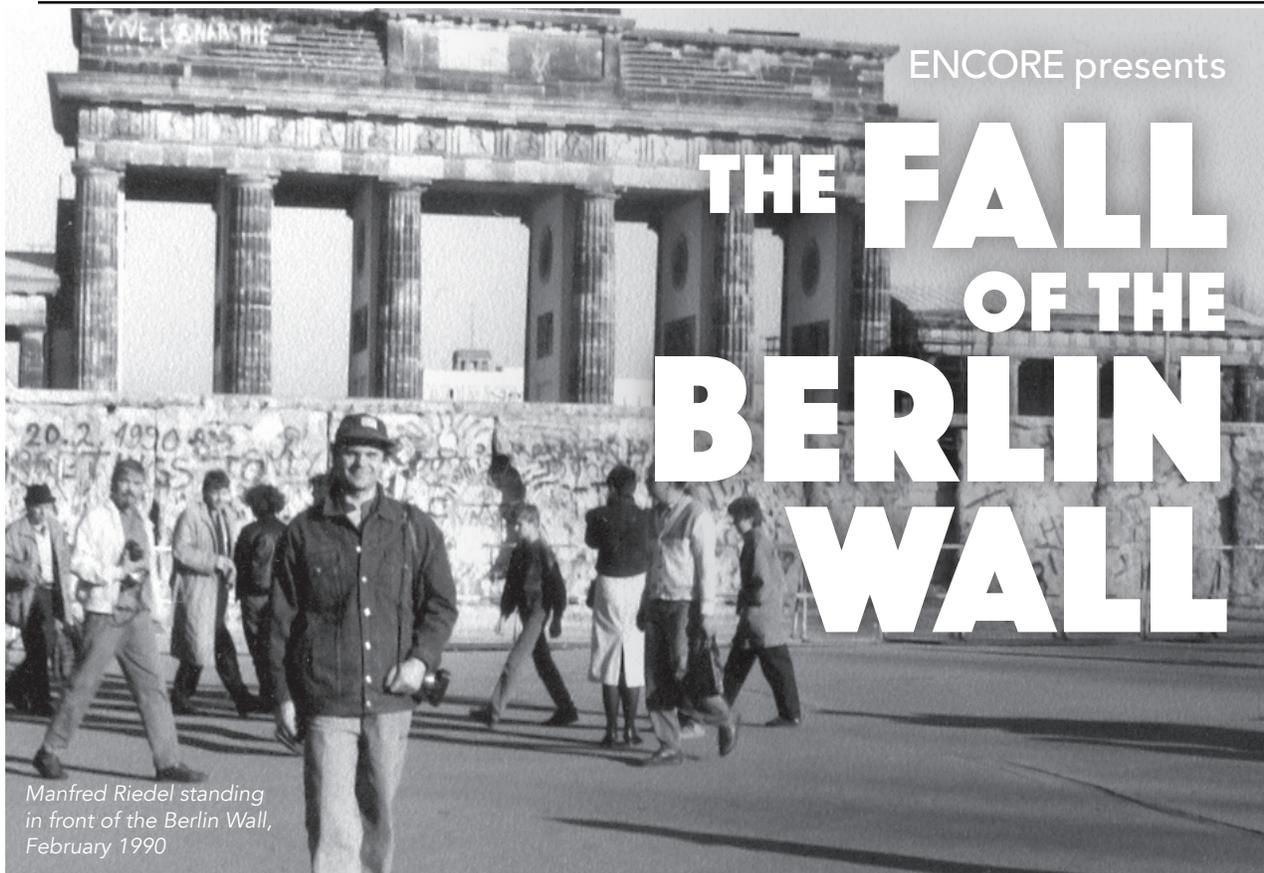
I'll get a big gun and shoot me a bear
Out there somewhere in the middle of no-where
I'll write you all letters and tell about my life
Perhaps I'll meet an Eskimo and make her my wife.

So, he sold his old pickup and his furniture too
And bought a rifle in Anchorage and some surplus boots
He rented an old trailer at the edge of town
And shot himself a moose before the sun went down.

I'll have a few drinks and skin the moose after dark
And with flashlight in hand he set out from the park
Lost in the woods he walked round and round
Snow crunching under his new boots — the only sound.

Now there is that moose — it should be here somewhere
And he sat on a log to rest in the frigid night's air
He took off his boots and put his gloves on his toes
And fell over backward in the sub-zero snow.

His buddies back home waited for their long-overdue letters
I am sure he is up there somewhere living his live for the better
So they toast their friend and watched the bar's evening news
About some guy found frozen in Alaska and wearing no shoes.



Manfred Riedel standing
in front of the Berlin Wall,
February 1990

The Fall of the Berlin Wall

Presented by Manfred Riedel who participated in the demonstrations that ended Communist East Germany

Manfred Riedel and his wife Petra lived in East Germany during the run-up to the fall of the Berlin Wall, which occurred November 9, 1989. They will share with us their personal experiences, observations, hopes and tribulations as their fellow citizens engaged in ever increasing but always peaceful demonstrations. The demonstrators demanded basic rights and freedoms from their government. When Russian president Mikhail Gorbachev refused to authorize troops and tanks to prevent the demonstrations, the hated Berlin Wall fell.



FREE
and open to
the public

Sunday, May 17, 2020, 1:30 to 4 pm

Performing Arts Center, 588 16th St, Astoria, OR
Doors open at 1 pm

For additional information, call Erhard Gross at
503-468-0752.

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Next "Class Act" deadline is Friday, August 7, 2020