

ENCORE'S

# CLASS ACT

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## GREETINGS ENCORE MEMBERS!

With Thanksgiving 2017 and the holidays approaching, as ENCORE president, I'd like to use this President's message to say "Thanks for giving" to all the volunteers who make ENCORE successful. It is through the efforts of many that success and satisfaction are achieved.



You wouldn't be reading this newsletter without the efforts of Aletha Westerberg, Class Act's editor, and the many contributors to the newsletter. Aletha is assisted by husband Bob, her able proofreader, who persists in trying to prove that he can read.

A special shout-out goes to two busy ladies who make ENCORE work behind the scenes. Both also serve on the board: Lorri Bradley is your secretary and prepares the Board agenda and minutes diligently. Ellen Norris does double duty – she is ENCORE's treasurer, as well as the webmistress/webmaster. Those of you accessing the website know her work. Her skills are invaluable to ENCORE.

Your Board is completed by Past President Frank Spence, Vice President Mike Kenney, and yours truly. Sue Zerangue and Erhard Gross, as members, keep their eyes on the Board on a regular basis.

Other ENCORE positions admirably filled include Historian Marlene Colendich, Sunshine person, Elfi Gross, and Lunch Bunch coordinators Gerrie Penny and Carey Birkenfeld. Great job ladies!

Mary Kemhus is ENCORE's Community College liaison and has really filled this position with distinction. Her efforts with the Conference on Extraordinary Living have helped make it a success. We are sad to learn she is retiring from her position in December, but we wish her well in retirement. Evy Berger will be continuing on as ENCORE Program Assistant.

Our three major committees keep ENCORE moving forward.

Trip Committee under Art Limbird's leadership for three years includes Tess Chedsey, Gheri Fouts, Kathleen Hudson, Jean McGonigle, and Bob Westerberg. They work hard to bring ENCORE quality road trips.

Membership Committee is and has been chaired by Rollie Lindstrom for at least six years. This committee works hard to recruit and retain members in ENCORE and includes Elfi Gross, Art and Kay Limbird, Hazel Sealy, Aletha Westerberg, Gail Sunderland, Nancy Hutchins, Marlene Colendich and Charlotte Thiringer.

(Cont'd on P 2)

(Cont'd from P 1)

Curriculum Committee is chaired by Reta, “the other Lindstrom”. She has led this hard working crew of Sue Zerangue, John Ryan, Alan Batchelder, John Markham, Frank Spence, Tisha Tarver, Michael McGonigle, Anne Gant and Erhard Gross for a long time as well. They keep the membership tantalized by the curriculum offered each term – no easy job.

Thanks to all of you who make ENCORE succeed. But there are other groups I have not mentioned – and where would we be without them? First, our instructors – they are amazing! For most, it is a labor of love. And a shout-out to the class coordinators as well. Finally YOU – ENCORE MEMBERS, students, life-long learners – the reason ENCORE exists.

SO – THANKS to all for giving – your expertise, time, efforts, money, and inspiration make ENCORE the success it is!

Dave Zunkel

P.S. If I have omitted anyone, I apologize. Contact me. I'll make it right!

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## LOOKING AHEAD!

### Winter Term Classes

‘TIMES AND PLACES OF PEOPLES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION’ offered by Art Limbird

Between the mid 1980's and 2010, I have been able to travel multiple times to some parts of the Mediterranean region. My travels have taken me to Spain, Gibraltar, Morocco, and France in the western Mediterranean; to mainland Italy, Sardinia, and Sicily in the central Mediterranean; and to Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, mainland Greece, Santorini, Crete, Naxos, and Paros, and Turkey in the eastern Mediterranean. I have visited the Middle East at the eastern end of the Mediterranean including Lebanon, Israel, Syria, and Jordan, as well as Egypt.

Wherever I traveled, I always was impressed by the buildings, other structures, and ruins left by the peoples who inhabited these places at some time during the so-called “Classic Period” that historians refer to as being from about 2000 BC to about 500 CE. The treasures of these peoples also have shown up in local museums within each sub-region and in famous museums elsewhere such as the British Museum in London and the Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC.

Looking at these sites like pieces in a grand puzzle, I was able to see the parts but not really appreciate the ‘whole’ scope. Each location had its own times of occupation or extent of influence from the peoples that were mentioned as important to the local history and seen in the remaining evidence at the historic site. From these puzzle pieces, the Greeks and Romans seemed to have the greatest influence during portions of the Classic Period.

However, other peoples seemed to ‘pop up’ from time to time and place to place. The more common ones were the Minoans, Mycenaeans, Etruscans, Phoenicians, and Byzantines. I realized that I needed to know more about these peoples and their times and places in the region. In addition, lesser-known groups such as the Lydians, Phrygians, Nabateans, Dorians, Dacians, and Thracians were mentioned in some specific sites. But, how broad was the influence of each of these peoples? And, when during the Period did they flourish?

(Cont'd on P 3)

**TIMES AND PLACES OF PEOPLES** (Cont'd from P 2)

My goals in the proposed class are to look at each of the peoples mentioned above; place them into the proper geographic context within the Mediterranean region; and, put them into their

position in the time line of the "Classic Period". If time permits, we also will look at the spread of Judaism and early Christianity because these are included in the patterns of peoples and their places especially in the latter part of the Period.

I look forward to having you present in this class!



**The Other Slavery**

Offered by Erhard Gross

When we hear the word slavery, most of us think of African Americans. Yet, black slavery was instituted in the Americas much later (Virginia, 1619) than that of the Indian population. Nearly all slaves held in the Americas prior to 1619 were of Native American origin --- Indios, as they were referred to by the Spanish discoverers of the New World. This Other Slavery, by whatever name it is called, persisted for centuries. A search of publications dealing with the subject confirms that very little research was dedicated to this subject prior to the 20th century. In Andres Recendez' book, *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*, the author states that there are about 15000 publications on black slavery but only a dozen on the other slavery. One possible explanation for the dearth of research on the latter could be that it presumes English/Spanish bilinguality. True, there are several hundred thousand speakers who have a working knowledge of both languages, but are they necessarily qualified to carry out painstaking research into documents that go back centuries, and also have the writing skills to present them in peer-reviewed books and articles?

Whereas slavery has been documented to have existed since ancient Sumer in Mesopotamia (3500 BCE), Egypt, Old Testament times, the Inca, and most Indian tribes of the Americas, slavery was not understood to be immoral. On the contrary, it was perceived as the backbone of some industries and the prerogative of the upper classes.

It certainly existed in Spain when Columbus set out to find the westerly route to the Orient. It is therefore no surprise that he snatched several Natives from the Caribbean island where his ships first made landfall. From that time forward, enslavement of the "Indios" became a lucrative industry. Whether the production of tobacco or sugarcane in the islands or the extraction of coal and silver from New Spain (present-day Mexico), it all was done on the backs of Native Americans. Members of the Spanish government commissioned slaving raids in order to secure laborers for Mexican silver mines and the sweat shops that were established to produce cheap garments for sale in Spain.

Very few persons know about the other slavery. And yet, researchers estimate that 2.5 million to 5 million Native Americans lived in some kind of bondage since Columbus discovered the New World. This bondage existed in outright slavery, forced labor, debt peonage, and convictions to perform hard labor (the latter could be purchased from the authorities). It is the objective of my class to acquaint members of ENCORE with the history of the enslavement of a large segment of the Native American population.

Among the most fertile slaving grounds were the villages of the Pueblo Indians of the U.S. Southwest. Unlike the migratory Plains Indians, the agriculturist Pueblos were easy targets for slave hunters. After decades of suffering under the often brutal authoritarianism of the Spanish military and the Catholic Church, the Pueblo Indians revolted in 1680 and forced out their oppressors until reconquered in 1692.

(Cont'd on P 4)

**THE OTHER SLAVERY** (Cont'd from P 3)

The Spanish crown, in concert with the Catholic Church, had been fairly successful with its New Law of 1542 in limiting slavery in Spain but had largely failed in New Spain where, except for stopping the branding of slaves on cheek or forehead, bondage continued for centuries. Even after Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821, civil authorities and even the church protected continued peonage.

Among the more current Christian sects in North America, it is the Mormons who engaged actively in slavery. Although under the guise of saving souls of the Lamanites by turning Natives into "delightful" people, the Mormons of Brigham

Young's time found that the Bible requires slavery. In one case, the Timpanogos, Young decreed the extermination of an entire tribe. All males above a certain age were executed; women and children were enslaved.

Where the Spanish had conducted slaving raids into what is now New Mexico and California, the economically weakened post-independence authorities of Mexico now purchased its slaves from the Indian tribes of the American Southwest, whom they had formerly raided. To this day, human trafficking continues, whether it's for illegal labor or sexual purposes. The other slavery still continues at a strong pace, even if it is under different names.

**Class meets six sessions, 1:30 PM, starting 1/18/18 in the Council Chambers, Astoria City Hall.**

The Clatsop County Historical Society's Director, Mac Burns, urgently needs docents:

**The Flavel House Museum is looking for volunteer docents. The museum provides training and you get to welcome visitors from all over the world. Most docents hold a regular 2 ½ hour weekly shift, but they also are looking for people who can be "on-call" when there is an opening in their schedule. Some volunteers are snowbirds who only volunteer in the summer and others give 2 hours a month. All are appreciated and needed. To learn more, email [cchs@cumtux.org](mailto:cchs@cumtux.org) or call the museum at 325-2203.**

Having a few ENCORE members work with the Historical Society could be mutually beneficial.

Submitted by Erhard Gross



CONTINUING IN THE VOLUNTEER MODE.....

## VOLUNTEERING WITH NORTH COAST LAND CONSERVANCY (NCLC) FROM 2010 ONWARD

Submitted by Art Limbird

My connection to the NCLC began in 2009 when Katie Voelke, now director of the NCLC, made a presentation and short walk with persons from the Surf Pines Community describing NCLC activities in protecting and preserving lands in our area. I spoke to her about my interest in volunteering with the NCLC and my qualifications related to soils and land use.

My first role was sampling soils across the area of Stanley Marsh on the north edge of Seaside. We sampled the soils every 25 feet in a grid across the area of the marsh - about 200 holes. We identified both wetland soils and 2 former stream channels with alluvial soils. Twelve water depth wells were installed in the marsh that I monitored for 18 months. With the soils information and the depth records from the wells, stream channels were restored and now beaver have returned to the marsh and the ponded areas are habitats for salmon fingerlings.

Next, I sampled soils along transects on four NCLC properties where there were remnant coastal meadows (prairies). These properties were chosen as potential locations for habitat restoration in order to re-introduce the endangered Silverspot Butterfly. We found that there were some locations of weakly developed soils where plants such as Dune Tansy, Yarrow, and especially Early Blue Violets seemed to be growing. These plants have been recognized as important for the butterfly.

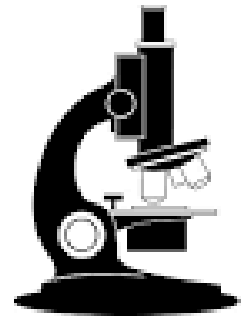
From this sampling work, I was asked to monitor 6 NCLC properties in the Clatsop Plains where there were some chances for habitat restoration. There are specific photo points where pictures are taken once a year

(same time period) to record changes in plants and their growth; and, 3 times per year to record invasive species, any infringement from adjacent properties, and the presence of important nectar plants and their distributions. This monitoring has been going on since 2011.

Three of these NCLC properties were selected by the Institute of Applied Ecology (IAE) for test plots where 3 different treatments have been tried for butterfly habitat restoration possibilities.

My role, as advisor for topsoil removal, aided in preparing these particular plots for seeding with nectar plants and blue violets.

Most recently, we have sampled and described soils, and sent these soils for lab testing. The interpretation of test results will help to understand changes in soil character with age of the dunes of the Clatsop Plains - from recent (less than 100 years old) to more than 4000 years old. This work is being done with local botanist, Kathleen Sayce.



*SAVE THE DATE!!!*

***ENCORE'S HOLIDAY BASH  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>  
ELKS LODGE***

*Detailed Invitation coming soon*

**Additions and Corrections to the Membership Directory (the 2017-2018 version with the yellow cover, which you should have received in the mail the first week of November):**

**This information is for ENCORE members only.**

**If you are a member and cannot find your copy of the newsletter,**

**Contact [webmaster@encorelearn.org](mailto:webmaster@encorelearn.org)**

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**



**LOOKING BACK – – “The Fun Lunch Bunches”**

Greg Dotson, owner of Coastal Custom Computers and Electronics was our guest speaker at the October Lunch Bunch. He described the many services he offered such as computer set up and repair and troubleshooting computer difficulties. He also will set up TV systems and save us that headache. One member already hired him and reported great success.

We all had a wonderful lunch at McMenamins Sand Trap Restaurant in Gearhart. It was such a beautiful day; we really enjoyed looking out over the golf greens. Jim Hudson won the door prize. In attendance were Ellen Norris, Bernie Thomas, Kathleen and Jim Hudson, Doug and Cecilia Balcomb, Aletha Westerberg, and Carey Birkenfeld.



**HALLOWEEN 2017**

By Jean McGonigle, Fall Writer’s Exchange  
Instructor, Eric Anderson

GHOSTLY FIGURES, PLEASE  
STOP AND STARE!

THIS IS THE WEEK,  
THEY ARE EVERYWHERE.

WHO’S THAT FIGURE ON YOUR BED?  
CLOTHED IN WHITE, A PET LONG DEAD!

ENORMOUS SPIDERS ON THE WALL,  
INVITE YOU TO JOIN IN THEIR CREEPY  
CRAWL.

AND OFF IN THE CELLAR ,  
WHAT’S THAT YOU HEAR?

IT RATTLES YOUR BONES,  
YOU SCREAM IN FEAR!!

MACABRE DANCE OF THE NETHERWORLD,  
FLOATS IN A MIST, SOULS UNFURLED.

GREEN BREW OF WITCHES IN THE  
KETTLE,  
DESIGNED FOR A DRINK, AND TO  
UNSETTLE...

THE SPIRITS OF A STORMY NIGHT,  
HAVE SUCCESSFULLY SNUFFED OUT  
SUMMER’S LIGHT

**ANOTHER "ENDORSEMENT" OF ERIC ANDERSON'S FALL WRITING CLASS.....**

**LEARNING TO WRITE IN ENGLISH**

By Erhard Gross

In the fall term of 2017, ENCORE offered a Writing Exchange course. I signed up in order to learn to write English. The instructor, Eric Anderson, handed out weekly assignments and written pointers on how to get better. He taught poetry, prose, memoir and other types of writing. I just want to learn to write a plain letter. Writing letters is an ancient art form that was already practiced by people like the Romans and the biblical Saint Paul. He wrote them to communities as well as to individuals. Since the introduction of smart phones and Twitter, letter writing seems a dying art; a wall of illiteracy might trump former notions of how to communicate. I'm relegated to the use of letters because I don't have a smart phone. Still, I hope to convey a thing or two about our travels to Mexico.

We were here last year and had no trouble finding this country geographically exactly where it was in 2016. It's located down on the map; gravity helped us save lots of gasoline. I'm thinking about turning the map around for the return trip to Astoria but don't know yet whether that will yield the same results. With our friends Kay and Art Limbird, we have rented a two-bedroom pad at *Condominios Pilar*. It's owned by friends from ENCORE. The distance from Astoria to San Carlos is only 1800 miles. Some folks think our driving to Mexico foolish and dangerous. Even though the police chief of Sonoytes and several of his officers have been murdered in recent years, we've driven through unscathed. We like to drive to Mexico in two cars so we can carry more stuff. To preserve every inch of space for all of Elfi's toiletries, etc., I only take socks that go up to the ankles (I save the non-skid hospital socks for this purpose). Hauling capacity can determine whether Art and I wind up hitchhiking back to Astoria. One can start to experience Mexico within the first few feet after crossing the border in Nogales. Eager windshield washers will dart between cars with great dexterity. You can get your windshield washed a half dozen times in the first 50 feet. Just make sure to have plenty of tip money at the ready. Failure to slow down for Mexican speed bumps can take out your car's entire exhaust system.

Our condo here is attractive. Since the owner had windows installed, our three air conditioners have become more efficient. We have to run tap water only 12 minutes before it turns warm. Drinking tap water in Mexico is said to cause "Montezuma's revenge." Elfi and I have not been conquered by the legendary conquistador because we don't drink more than half a gallon at one time. Yesterday the temperature reached 95. I agree with local weather reporters who said the daily high was excessive. They did not say how one could transfer the excess to Astoria. San Carlos, Sonora, is located on the east shore of the Sea of Cortez. The beach here is full of beautiful shells. We've met a seafood monger who has several piles of shells five feet high. We tend to feel guilty for even just looking at these shells because the owner of our condo told us not to collect any. The bowl on her coffee table contains only about 150 shells. She also told us not to eat any shrimp as that would take away the food of the dolphins. Last night my wife did prepare shrimp for dinner but used only dead ones. After dinner we always play some kind of card game. Among those I particularly love is "Five Crowns." Even the stodgiest member of the human race will find this pursuit exhilarating. I'm confident I'll soon win my first game as I've learned a lot in the first 199.

Among the advantages of a trip to these parts is the availability of competitive dental services. All four of us will avail ourselves. The more teeth you want extracted, the cheaper it gets. I've heard it said that dental work here is as low as one quarter of what the dentists of Astoria charge. I'm having two bridges installed. Each time my dentist and his assistant have my mouth full of their fingers and equipment, they ask me how I am doing. Yesterday Dr. Martinez kept telling me "open" and "close" in such rapid succession that I actually bit down on his fingers. No extra charge! He had me in his chair for three hours straight, and gave me 14 shots of Novocaine. Americans constitute 99% of his patients. We promote him. However, is it morally defensible to deprive our Astoria dentists of the ability to afford a private airplane or deny them their annual big game hunting trip to British Columbia? It might even force our DMDs to work five days a week.

(Cont'd on P 8)

**LEARNING TO WRITE IN ENGLISH** (CONT'D FROM P 7)

To recuperate after an arduous day of vacationing and writing, we regularly consult Margarita. She is flexible and will warm to me by the time I finish this letter. If Eric Anderson is not too severe in evaluating this homework, I'll recommend that he repeat his course or something similarly useful.



***FALL DENDROLOGY CLASS SPARKS INTEREST***

Submitted by Gail Sunderland

Wow! As we walked into the classroom, there was an amazing display of boughs, twigs, cones, bark, etc. spread all over the table; each with a label stating the type of tree it came from.

We learned how to tell the difference between pine, spruce and fir and that the Western Red Cedar is not actually a cedar at all! Who knew?

We also learned how to tell the difference between oak and maple as the oak has alternate branching while maples have opposite branching. Now if I can just remember which was which when I am out in nature!

We took a break for lunch and continued our class with a field trip. We carpoled and our first stop was the Astoria River Walk where we found willow, silver poplar and acacia. Erhard was a great instructor. Instead of

just naming the trees we viewed, we had to guess using the information we learned earlier in the classroom.

We then continued to Bond Street where we saw a sycamore in someone's yard. We proceeded to the Flavel House where we walked around the whole block seeing sequoia, ginko, Monterey cypress and elm.

Okay – on to the arboretum at the Oregon Department of Forestry where we viewed redwood, Norway pine and the true firs. A lot of the trees have identifying markers. If you have never been there, you should take a trip out there some day and enjoy.

We ended the tour at River Point looking at and identifying Sitka spruce, noble fir, big leaf maple, birch, etc.

A great time was had by all.

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**TRAVELS SHARED.....**

**Grapes & Lakes in Italy**

Submitted by Lynne Ryan

I have a British friend, Maureen, who is retired and living in a hill village north of St. Tropez, France. Since her husband died a few years ago, we've taken turns arranging trips in different parts of the world. This year was Maureen's turn and she suggested we visit the Italian Lake region and asked which lake(s) would interest me. I looked at maps and travel websites and noticed that the town of Barolo was between Nice (where I was arriving) and Lake Maggiore... therefore, I suggested that we check out the Langhe wine region en route to Lake Maggiore.

The main town in the region is Alba known for white truffles and, from what we could see, churches and cathedrals. But the real draw are the

hill towns throughout with beautifully maintained vineyards on every hillside. Barolo, Barbaresco and Nebbiolo wines are all from Nebbiolo grapes and there is a requirement in Italy that Nebbiolo grapes be grown on hillsides. I was curious about why good Barolo wines are so expensive and found the 'old style processing' meant a huge amount of tannins were extracted and required at least 10 years in the large barrels to 'soften' and become drinkable. Some 'modern' Barolos are fermented more quickly and aged in smaller oak barrels, but critics claim the wines taste more of oak and less of grapes. So, I developed a fondness for the Nebbiola de Langhe which comes from younger vines or less desirable plots of land and is very drinkable (and inexpensive) without long aging!

(Cont'd on P 9)



**GRAPES & LAKES IN ITALY** (Cont'd from P 8)

The hill towns including Barolo, Barbaresco, Nieves and others are lovely with palazzos or castles turned into museums, restaurants and hotels, all with magnificent views of the countryside. I would,

however, recommend having a driver like Maureen who is accustomed to steep, narrow, twisting roads!!

**FIELD TRIP TO CENTRAL OREGON**

Submitted by Rose Power

On Thursday, September 28th, four vans and a car left the parking lot of the Maritime Museum and headed out on yet another instructive field trip organized by Erhard Gross. This one was to take us up the Columbia Gorge to The Dalles, then inland to selected historic places, including Sherars Bridge, Madras and the Warm Springs Reservation.

It was a beautiful sunny day, and the trip went smoothly, through the outskirts of Portland and into the Gorge. We observed sites where recent wildfires had burned swaths of trees, particularly near Multnomah Falls. Smoke still hung in the air, but little actual fire was seen, and along the highway, log salvage had already begun.

Our first stop was at The Dalles, where we visited the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center and Wasco County Museum. After a buffet lunch, we had time to walk through the various sections, devoted to the Chinese immigrants to the area, along with the indigenous Indians, and the settlers following the Oregon Trail in the 1800s.

High point for me were the native dugout canoes, measuring at least 50' long, and the replica of a mammoth, with actual teeth and tusks on display. The size was overwhelming!

Continuing on our way, we branched onto highway 197, south into steep hilly country,

where our first stop was White River Falls State Park. The falls, even in the dry season, were impressive, and the overlook provided a view of the remains of the early hydroelectric power plant below.

Our next stop was Sherars Bridge on the Deschutes River, site of a former pioneer settlement, which included a store and hotel, built in the 1870s by Joseph and Jane Sherar. None of these now exist, but they were important in their day. It was interesting to see the dip-net platforms at the edge of the Deschutes River, which are still used by the Warm Springs Indians during salmon runs.

Continuing through Maupin, we drove over miles of dry grassy range land - some devoted to wheat growing, some to cattle. As we drove south west, scattered juniper appeared, especially in the valleys, with a few signs of habitation.

Arriving at Madras, we checked into our hotel - the Inn at Cross Keys Station, an excellent choice (thanks Erhard!). Our evening meal was at the nearby Mazatlán Mexican restaurant, where we met Jane Kirkpatrick, well known Oregon author of historical novels. Her book *A Sweetness to the Soul* tells the story of the Sherars and their life in the area. Jane shared that she felt a special affinity with them, as many points in their lives paralleled her own.

(Cont'd on P 10)

**FIELD TRIP** (Cont'd from P 9)

It was interesting to hear about her life in the Madras area, working in the mental health area as well as farming on a remote ranch, and her increasing closeness with the Indians on the Warm Springs Reservation. An excellent speaker, she kept our interest and added a lot to our understanding of the area and its inhabitants.

Friday morning found us enjoying a complimentary breakfast, then loading into the vans for a short drive on US 26 to the Museum at Warm Springs - an impressive structure using local rock and water features to display a very interesting collection of local artifacts, including wikiups constructed of cat-tail plants, and tule matting - historic building materials. Two small theaters showed award-winning movies about the tribes' history and relation to the environment.

A special treat was a presentation by the museum's operations manager, Sunmiet, a tribal member who also lent her name to a character in Jane Kirkpatrick's book. She spoke about the history of the people, and the four important points in their collective

life - the importance of the landscape around them, their relationships, particularly with their family, their spirituality, both Christian and native; and their work, mainly local, both on and off the reservation.

After this, each vehicle was on its own - some to lunch at the nearby casino, others to head over Mt. Hood and back to the Columbia Gorge and down river to Astoria.

I believe all of us enjoyed the experience a great deal, and learned a lot about the history of Oregon and the people who shaped it, and lived here.



**BE THE KIND OF PERSON**

**YOUR PET THINKS YOU ARE!**



**GREEN NUMERALS**

By Erhard Gross

In recent months, ENCORE has offered several travel reports under the heading "Where in the World Have You Been?" They were well received by our members, especially when based on great photography. Most of my travels to Europe before 1989 included visits to East Germany, where cameras were routinely confiscated from Western visitors. Below I'm sharing one of my experiences for which taking pictures would have been a perilous and even stupid enterprise.

From the time of my arrival in the United States in January of 1957 until a year after taking my first professorship, my first extensive trip was to visit my family in East Germany. I had not seen my mother and siblings since Christmas of 1956. The year of this trip is 1968.

Prior to my departure for Germany, I had ordered a new Mercedes for pick-up at the factory in Stuttgart. All went well until I arrived at the crossing of the Iron Curtain near Muenchberg, Bavaria, which is located northeast of Bayreuth on the Autobahn Munich-Berlin. An East German customs agent there stamped my visa "Restricted to Village" and, without prior notification, raised the compulsory currency exchange

(Cont'd on P 11)

**GREEN NUMERALS** (Cont'd from P 10)

requirement from the published 10 Marks to 15 West Marks per day. When I questioned the increase, the agent hissed: "You must already know that because American propaganda reports everything." Perhaps the driving force behind the East's collection of fees in convertible, i.e., Western, currency requires an explanation. It was well known that East Germany had fallen farther and farther behind in providing a reasonable standard of living for its population. In order to get their hands on West Marks, the Communist government of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) had decided to fleece western visitors. If I wanted to visit my mother and sisters, I would have to pay 15 West German marks per day based on a one-to-one exchange (the official exchange rate was nearly 4 to 1 at the time). The Western visitor also had to pay road usage fees plus buy and affix temporary license plates for the duration of the visit. The numerals on those license plates, unlike those of the East German civilian vehicles, were green in color. There were even special gas pumps for persons who were paying with Western currency. The Communists also had put so called "Intershops" in major cities. They sold goods imported from the West to customers with Western passports and currencies. I took my mother to the Intershop in Karl-Marx- Stadt, but East German citizens were not allowed to enter the shops. All these fees and restrictions, in my opinion, were legalized highway robbery.

It was August 20, 1968, when I crossed the Iron Curtain. I had done so well before daylight and was surprised that all rest areas along the Autobahn were barricaded. There were military vehicles filling every parking area. I reached my mother's house shortly after daybreak. After an emotional reunion, we all went to my sister's place in the neighboring village, where we spent the rest of the day getting reacquainted.

I had long ago decided that I would also visit my boyhood friend, Horst Wagner. He lived near the Czechoslovak border. As I got within about 10 miles of my friend's village, the highway, too, was barricaded, with large signs announcing that the area was restricted and closed to all persons not living inside this area. Even though my visa had the special stamp restricting me to my mother's village, I decided to drive up to the barricade. Two policemen with submachine guns approached my car and demanded to see my papers. I handed over my U.S. passport. They looked at it and deliberated out of earshot. And to my considerable surprise handed the document back to me and opened the barrier for me to drive through.

As along the Autobahn, there were military trucks, artillery, tanks and soldiers all over. I never saw another civilian vehicle all the way to my destination. No one at my friend's house knew anything about the apparent military staging along the highway. It certainly did not cast any shadow on our reunion.

I left the restricted area near midnight that night, but it was not till the next morning that the reason for the restrictions became known. West German radio reported that on the night of August 21, 1968, approximately 200,000 Warsaw Pact troops and 5,000 tanks invaded Czechoslovakia to crush the "Prague Spring"— a brief period of relaxation of Communist rule. The Warsaw Pact invaders, which included Soviet, Polish, Hungarian and Bulgarian troops, had invaded Czechoslovakia in the early hours of August 21. The stated purpose for the invasion was the removal of the "revisionist" Czechoslovak government. Though its leader, Alexander Dubček, was a communist, he erred on the side of reform, which was endeavoring to give Communism a human face.

Two days later, I had to drive to the nearby big city of Karl-Marx-Stadt in order to find a small appliance repair shop. Not knowing its location I asked a couple of police officers for directions. The older of the two said that the shop was located near where he lived and that he was just getting off duty. I offered him a ride and he accepted. After some small talk, he asked me to which country's diplomatic corps I belonged. According to the officer, many western diplomats drove Mercedes cars and all had green numerals on their license plates. My "diplomatic status" must have been the reason why I was not kept from entering the restricted zone or got arrested two nights before.

**ENCORE/CLATSOP COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

“Exploring New Concepts of Retirement Education”

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www.encorelearn.org

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