

3550



*John Bergerson*



**NANCY MOSS**  
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President

**G**lory be to God for dappled things," writes the poet Gerald Manley Hopkins. Walking along Pennoyer Street on a sunny day, even in winter, produces what Hopkins calls "pied beauty," the shifting shadows of branches in the wind, the red and pale green coleus brilliant against the darker grass, possibly what Hopkins is getting at with "skies of couple-colour" and "rose moles all in stipple upon trout."

The last chapter of Ed Yong's "An Immense World" — which tries to expand our senses by explaining how dogs use smell and bats, radar — decries the noise and light pollution that characterize our modern world. Walk the Greenway and you hear the humming of motors: cars moving along unseen roads, boats powering along the river, the hammering of nearby construction. Less obvious is the soft lapping of the Willamette against its bank, the call of water birds to each other, the sound of wind moving through the leaves. (The harsh cawing of crows, those natural comedians, falls in the middle of the noise spectrum.) Finding a spot with no mechanical noises can be rare, even on a walk by a river.

Writing on happiness in a past 3550, Rita Effros urges people to "train their brain to pay attention to the good stuff," the "small joys," possibly the low call of a goose over the water. What is it saying, a listener wonders: "Where are you?" "Good eating right here!" "I miss you."

Hopkins ends the poem "Pied Beauty" with "whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?) with swift, slow; sweet, sour; a-dazzle, dim." Returning to the poem's beginning, he ends "Praise him."

Well, Hopkins was a Jesuit. Wordsworth, whose message is simpler than Hopkins's, says "My heart leaps up when I behold a rainbow in the sky."

That's what poets do: remind people of the wonders around them, that small things — hearing a particular bird song, being surprised by a butterfly's errant path, seeing waves dapple the river's surface — can save an otherwise mundane day.

**A** primary focus of my service as RAMP President this year is to facilitate and encourage residents to take advantage of what Portland Mirabella has to offer and to help make living and working here in our premier facility better for everyone. We are well on our way with the capable council members you elected to manage RAMP, as well as with the energetic residents who have stepped up to chair our many committees. The numerous resident-formed interest groups here are also important to the effort.

I suspect all of us can participate and contribute in some way, regardless of our age, duration of residency, or physical limitations. Try some classes or personal training with our Fitness and Wellness staff; check out ping pong, billiards, bocce ball, pool volleyball or cornhole with drinks on the terrace; enjoy in person or on channel 1981 our many theater and music performances, lectures, films and other entertainment; learn in our studio and shop to create your own paintings, crafts, or woodwork; head out of town with our travel group or out to dinner with our supper club; join a book reading, film discussion, memoir writing, card or mah-jongg playing, walking or bike riding group; sing with our new choir; or even learn how to play the ukulele well enough to perform at Mirabella birthday parties. Experience frequently, and with others, our newly remodeled 24th floor dining and lounge venues with their spectacular views.

Support our committees, join or start an interest group, and frequently thank our staff.

The possibilities for resident participation, enjoyment and help to others are nearly unlimited at Mirabella Portland.

So, please participate more to add to the fun for everyone, and to improve the experience and quality of life for our entire Mirabella Portland community.

And especially, learn a bit about and root for the Blazers, Thorns and Timbers — Portland's best sports teams, dear to my heart.



**Front Cover**  
 "I wanted to keep that moment,"  
 Hebe Greizerstein says of her painting,  
 "Wait for me," about a little boy  
 and ducks.  
 Photo: Robert French



**Back Cover**  
 Sunrise at Tilikum Crossing  
 Photo: Bert Van Gorder

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Photo: Ron Mendonca

### Art Acquisition: Photography

Mirabella’s art acquisition committee has accepted, and Executive Director Sharon Van Eaton approved, Bettianne Goetz’s donation of photographs of architectural details of Hollywood Theatre by local photographer Harland Edwards. The foundation’s cultural enrichment fund helped with the expense of framing. The photographs are in the hallway just off the Pennoyer Street lounge.



Photo: Stanley Berman

### A Gift of Music

Resident Tom Mark has donated his Baldwin piano, built in 1957, to Mirabella. Tom purchased the piano in 1962 and later had it completely rebuilt, with a new sound board, strings and hammers. It’s “essentially a custom piece,” he says and praises its mellow tone.

### Terri Hopkins’ Poems in Nine Gallery

Terri Hopkins’ poems formed part of Trude Parkinson’s show “Plea” in Nine Gallery, part of Blue Sky Gallery in the Pearl District. “Nine” refers to the number of artists supporting the gallery.

A room was filled with small hanging silver boxes, oxidized silver leaf on paper with one word, handprinted in capital letters by Sharpie, in each box. Read together, the words formed a poem by Trude. “We could use some love and benevolent laughter,” one group of boxes said. Another read “We are desperate to hear your voice. Sing us a lullaby.”

Terri’s poems, on paper, occupied the front and back walls of the gallery. The show closed on Oct. 28.

### Mirabella Players’ Holiday Show

The Mirabella Players plan to present a staged reading of Dylan Thomas’s “A Child’s Christmas in Wales.” First read over the radio in 1952, Thomas’s work presents Christmas in a small Welsh village. Judy Seubert will add recorder music.

In past years the Mirabella Players have performed works by Truman Capote and David Sedaris.

## South Waterfront a Safe Neighborhood

**Along with Slabtown** in the Northwest, the South Waterfront is Portland's safest neighborhood, according to Pete Collins, executive director of South Waterfront Community Relations, the nonprofit that oversees the holiday lighting and hanging flower baskets, among other things.

Asked why homelessness is rare in the South Waterfront, Pete mentions the area's location and relative lack of accessibility. In addition, the South Waterfront community association provides "eyes on the street," individuals who walk the street looking out for problems. The biggest budget item, Pete says, is for graffiti abatement. Residents sometimes take photos of new graffiti and send them to Pete at [pete@southwaterfront.com](mailto:pete@southwaterfront.com).

Pete mentions the quarterly clean-up of SOLVE, (originally Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism) as one of the activities keeping the South Waterfront safe. "A clean community helps," he says.

Recent break-ins to Ovation coffee shop and Growler Guys show that oversight needs to continue; Pete is confident that the combination of organizations and volunteer help will keep the South Waterfront one of Portland's safest places.

The new section of the Greenway won't be open, Pete says, "until Alamo Manhattan completes Block 41 and residents are in the building." Alamo Manhattan will hold a grand opening at that time.



Grffiti on a column supporting the Ross Island Bridge.

Photo: Bert Van Gorder

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## Front Porch Series Lights Up

**Working together**, Larry Levy and Charlene Zidell are organizing a program of eight speakers, to be held on the fourth Monday of the month through June, at 7:30 p.m. in Willamette Hall. Zidell will host a reception after each talk.

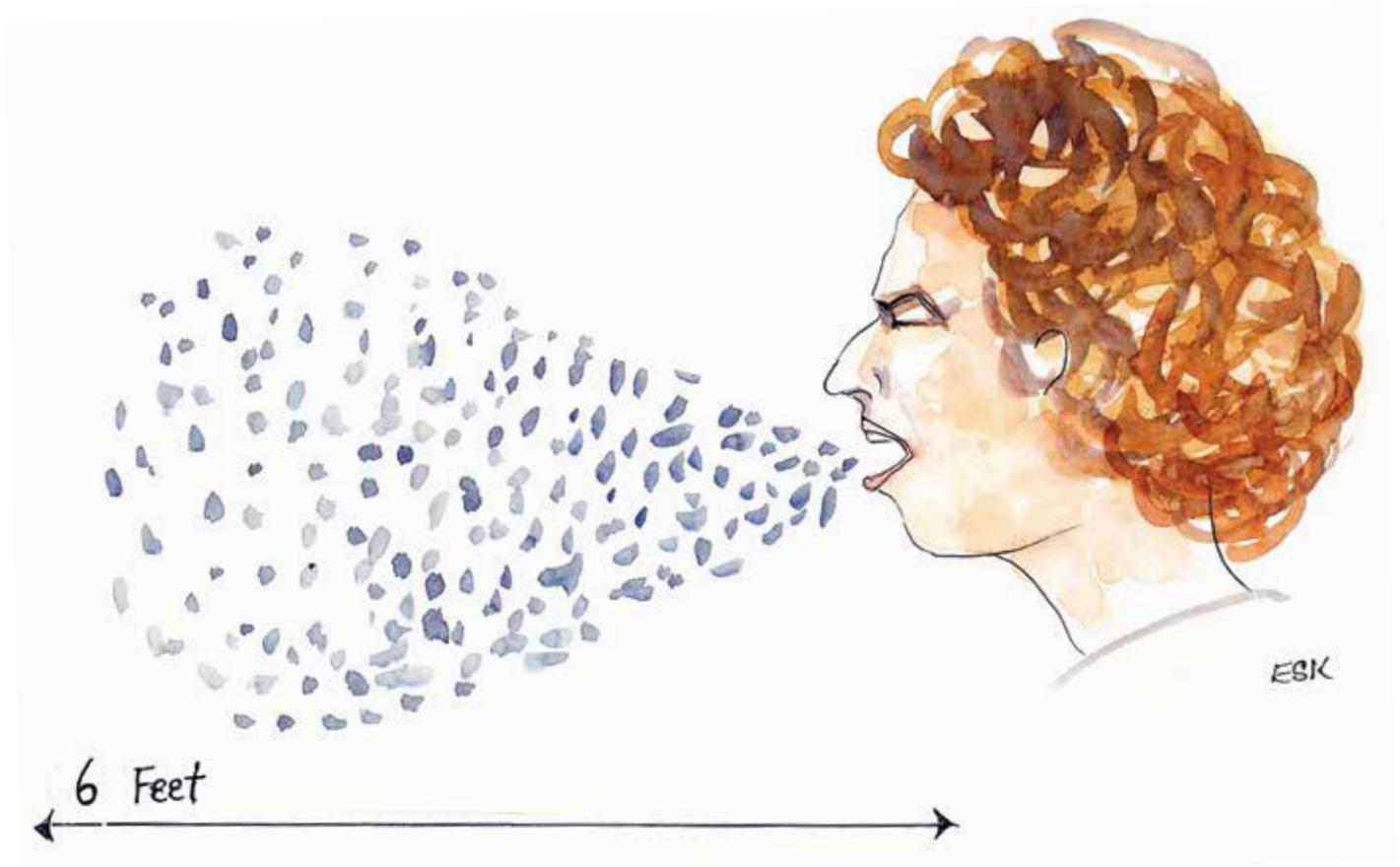
Ted Van Alst, chair of Indigenous studies at PSU, is scheduled to speak on Nov. 27. Larry calls Van Alst "a best-selling author with an amazing story."

Larry, Mirabella's impresario, will turn over Mirabella's weekly showing of movies to a committee of residents. Following popular demand Larry instituted weekly discussion of the previous weekend's movie on the following Monday from 9 to 10 a.m. in the Park View Room, a discussion that sometimes attracted 13-14 people. "I didn't know more than anyone else but learned a lot," Larry says of the detailed analyses he emailed residents. He prided himself on choosing "movies that people haven't heard of."

When Covid struck in 2020, Rosemary Hole started showing movies each week as much-needed entertainment for housebound residents. Larry carried on the tradition.

# 'Tis the Season

By JOSEPH KANE, M.D.



Art: Eileen Kane

*Dr. Kane is a retired infectious disease and epidemiology consultant for Kaiser Permanente in Portland.*

In Star Wars parlance, “A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away,” influenza was the dominant respiratory virus during the “flu season,” typically from late October through April. Following the ending of most COVID indoor mask mandates in March 2022, the 2022–2023 flu season presents challenges from influenza, SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).

These three respiratory viruses can cause severe infection leading to hospitalization, secondary bacterial pneumonia and death for chronologically mature people. Available vaccines reduce the risk of severe disease and complications from these viruses.

Influenza, COVID-19 and RSV have elements in common that lead to a unified preparedness and response plan.

When an individual infected with COVID-19, influenza or RSV breathes out, coughs or sneezes, droplets that generally do not travel beyond six feet, or small particles which

can travel farther and remain airborne longer — more likely with COVID-19 — that contain the virus can be inhaled by susceptible people, who become infected. These droplets or particles can land on the eyes, nose or mouth, or contaminate surfaces; susceptible people touch them and then touch their face without washing their hands or using hand sanitizer, resulting in viral infection.

For all three respiratory viruses, the risk of spread is reduced if an infected person wears a mask and a susceptible person also wears a mask. A standard medical face mask reduces the risk of spread of all three viruses. An N95, KN95 or equivalent mask is more effective in preventing COVID-19.

Other preventative strategies include:

- Frequent hand washing or use of hand sanitizer.
- Six foot physical distancing if possible.
- Staying home if you are sick, wearing a mask if you must go out.
- Respiratory etiquette: covering coughs and sneezes.
- Keeping up to date with vaccinations (see next page).

## VACCINATIONS:

### 1. COVID-19

The new COVID-19 vaccine booster targets the XBB omicron subvariant, which was most common in early 2023. A closely related omicron subvariant EG.5 recently became the most common circulating omicron descendant in the U.S. Because of its similarities to XBB, the updated COVID-19 vaccine booster will likely be effective against EG.5. Current highly mutated omicron descendant BA.2.86 will (hopefully) also be covered by the updated COVID-19 vaccine, though testing is in process.

Bottom line: Residents should obtain the newly updated COVID-19 vaccine. It can be received at the same time as the influenza vaccine. Federal health officials plan to shift toward annual COVID-19 vaccination, depending on COVID's journey of mutations and how well existing vaccines provide protection.

### 2. INFLUENZA

Circulating influenza viruses mutate and vary from year to year, leading public health authorities to recommend that pharmaceutical companies manufacture quadrivalent vaccines, active against the two likely influenza A strains and two likely influenza B strains to be circulating in North America for the coming flu season.

Everyone 6 months and older should receive an annual influenza vaccine unless they are highly allergic to the flu vaccine or its components. People with a history of egg allergy can get a flu vaccine.

Influenza vaccinations ideally occur in September or October to maximize protection during the entire flu season. Vaccinations should continue as long as influenza viruses are circulating.

Influenza vaccine can be given at the same time as COVID-19 vaccine or RSV vaccine. At this time receiving all three vaccines at the same time is not advised.

Adults aged 65 years and older should receive any of the following high dose or adjuvanted influenza vaccines:

- Quadrivalent high dose inactivated influenza vaccine (HD-IIV4)
- Quadrivalent recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV4)
- Quadrivalent adjuvanted inactivated influenza vaccine (all 4)

### 3. RSV

In May 2023, the FDA approved the first two RSV vaccines, Arexvy and Abrysvo, as similarly effective and safe for prevention of lower respiratory tract complications (severe cough, shortness of breath, wheezing, pneumonia) from RSV infection in adults age 60 and over.

Although RSV vaccination has not been shown to reduce the risk of hospitalization or death, in June 2023 the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended that persons age 60 and over receive a single dose of RSV vaccine after discussion of risks and benefits with their healthcare provider.

Unlike COVID-19 and influenza, RSV does not mutate. There will likely not be a need to update the RSV vaccine or re-dose every year. The RSV vaccine is safe to give at the same time as influenza vaccine. You cannot receive all three vaccines together.

Residents with symptoms of possible COVID or other respiratory infection should wear a mask when they are outside their apartment or walking through Mirabella indoor public spaces and should promptly test for COVID infection. Rapid at-home testing for influenza or RSV is not available.

Currently, in the absence of public health mandates, we rely on available guidance from trusted resources, our personal and group biases — justified by our critical thinking — and common sense. ●



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# Exercise: Don't Just Sit There

By DOROTHY DWORKIN



Photo: Robert French

*Sherry watches Jim Lee work on the Precor cable machine in the gym.*

If there is one mantra that defines Sherry Bonekat's approach to her profession, it is total wellness. Sherry, who joined the Mirabella fitness staff in June 2023, sees her role as being a wellness coach and coordinator for residents who wish to participate in her programs.

"It's not just about exercise," she says. "There are so many other areas that can improve one's life: diet, sleep habits, stress responses, mental health issues and positive responses to change. When the body gets rigid, the brain also becomes rigid."

With her training as an exercise physiologist and a master's degree in education and exercise science as well as certification in medical exercise and pending board certification in wellness coaching (spring 2024), she is able to analyze a person's medical history and prescribe the best exercise and fitness routine for that individual. The goal is to improve cardiovascular function, body composition and flexibility. Sherry is trained to serve as a bridge between physical therapy and cardiac rehabilitation with the desired outcome of helping the person resume activities of daily living.

Physical therapists work with people recovering from injury and may also prescribe preventive care for chronic conditions. Personal trainers, on the other hand, focus on performance exercise. Sherry sees herself as a bridge between the medical profession and her expertise. Rather than tell clients what to do, she tries to organize plans that fit their lifestyle and abilities with realistic goals for residents in their 70s and beyond.

With a background in education and a love of teaching, she has begun a series of informative talks on a variety of wellness topics in what she calls "a shift from life span to health span." She started with a lecture discussing gluteus muscles emphasizing how important they are in being able to get up and down, especially after a fall.

In another lecture, Sherry talked about a condition called sarcopenia, age-related muscle loss.

"Sarcopenia leads to muscle frailty and loss of skeletal mass. Strength and performance are always negatively affected. The good news is that muscles are easier to change than bones but prevention of the illness in the first place is the

goal. Medicine often aims at treating illness not preventing it," she says.

Future talks on stress reduction and other wellness related topics are in the works.

"Activity drives health," according to her philosophy, "and a sedentary life is health's enemy. It is simply a question of moving more and finding activities you enjoy," she says. "Progressive resistance, doing a little more each time, is strength training."

Hand weights, resistance bands and chair sit-to-stands are all part of strength training. Sherry follows the standards of the American College of Sports Medicine.

For a research study at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health aiming to evaluate fitness in the elderly, 1,600 sedentary seniors were recruited. The target goal was for the participants to do 150 minutes of walking per week. Results found that moderate activity helped aging adults maintain the ability to walk at a rate 20% higher than for those who didn't exercise. Consistent exercise resulted in a 28% reduction in loss of mobility.

"Better Bones and Balance" is a 10-week training program that Sherry is excited about bringing to Mirabella. It is based on research from Oregon State University and is designed to target strength and balance, in order to reduce the risk of falls among participants and prevent osteoporosis. As always, enrollees are encouraged to check with their healthcare professionals to assess whether the program is safe and appropriate for them. The program is designed for people who are able to stand for the period of time needed to participate in each class; they must make a commitment to meeting three times per week.

Sherry is enthusiastic about Mirabella's well-qualified

instructors who have been providing an excellent variety of classes.

"Time to step it up a bit," she believes, "and offer more challenges and vibrancy to the people who participate. It's not enough to stay at the same level. It's like eating the same thing every day," she says. "Your body tells you it needs more variety and spice to make things more challenging. It's an individual assessment of how much more a person can handle."

Sherry is a prime example of practice what you preach. She is a runner who participated in marathons and triathlon teams in her 20s and 30s but cut back to half marathons as she aged. She still runs two or three times a week. Her philosophy of meeting exercisers where they are and stepping it up a bit fits her own personal exercise regime. She gets exercise gardening, enjoys dancing, cooking and baking with healthy ingredients. She is also a creative writer.

Sherry moved around the country quite often as a child and to alleviate the stress of many changes, she found exercise and physical movement helpful. Her mom is an artist and dad, a physician. Sherry is a combination of both parents with her scientific approach to health and her ability to design creative programs on an individual basis.

"It's the quality, not the quantity, of exercise that matters," says Sherry, who takes a holistic approach to improving health.

"The people here have been wonderful," she says, "with lots of feedback, encouragement and appreciation."

Sherry reminds us that she is a wellness coordinator and not simply an exercise guru. She loves working at Mirabella where her position supports her personal belief in lifelong learning and growing. ●



Photo: Robert French

Sherry leads a Pilates class.

In their personal lives, Viki White and Gordon Davis remodeled homes for resale or to keep as rental properties. What they did in their professional lives is extraordinary.

Gordon is quiet. You might never learn that he was the public face of the aerial tram that a block away from Mirabella lifts riders up to the OHSU facilities on Marquam Hill. As a highly regarded urban planner, he was part of a team that in 1988 updated Portland's downtown Central City

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## Resident Profile:

# Gordon Davis and Viki White — Shepherding Portland Icons

By PAMELA LINDHOLM-LEVY

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Plan. The mostly vacant, previously industrial waterfront area south of PSU was part of that plan. At the time it was called North Macadam. Transportation in and out of that area was limited.

The city wanted OHSU to expand onto this land but had no specific plan for it to do so.

Inaccessibility was one reason OHSU had rejected the idea of building on what began to be called South Waterfront. A new OHSU board of directors envisioned a huge expansion of the medical complex which was not possible on Marquam Hill. Gordon became part of a four-person team retained to explore options. Transportation between the South Waterfront site and the hill was still a sticking point.

An extensive survey showed that shuttle travel times could vary from five to 37 minutes. Other options included a funicular (impractical) and an aerial tram, OHSU's preference. Gordon became the spokesperson and the face of the tram. It was time to go public. The city was supportive of a tram. Convincing neighbors wasn't so easy.

At community meetings and in the media, controversy erupted. Given today's reaction to almost everything, you would wonder whether Gordon had armed security. But no. Gordon says, "I did not receive any threats, calls, or mail directed to me personally outside of these public settings, but it was exhausting and difficult and lasted more than a year." Viki says that in addition to a Scotch she "had to wipe Gordon's weary brow after the hearings."

Residents of Lair Hill, over which the tram rides, were the most vocal opponents, fearing their privacy would be breached. Some Portlanders objected to the cost (which is another story). Another objection was that there was only one other urban tram in the whole U.S. and that was in New York, and it was ugly. At a recent presentation to RAMP's Mirabella South Waterfront committee, Gordon excused himself at one point to don, as a joke, an anti-tram T-shirt invoking some timely words to the Cole Porter tune "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off."

With the city's support of the tram, Gordon went on to manage the international competition for the tram's design. Of four finalists, the design by a company with offices in Zurich and Los Angeles was chosen. Gordon makes clear that the process from beginning to end was much more complex than can be described here.

Gordon was born in Chicago, the son of a military chaplain and a woman who loved California. The family moved there after World War II and stayed while Gordon's father was activated for the Korean War. Gordon started college as a math major at the University of LaVerne near Claremont, California. Transferring to Arizona State, he studied architecture, then went to the University of Washington for a master's in urban planning. He was hired by a national engineering firm that sent him to Tucson. There he did master plans for the cities of Las Vegas, Scottsdale and Irvine, California, plus work with what is now the Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation. After three years he was transferred to Portland.

Eventually Gordon established his own firm, offering public policy and urban planning for residential and commercial projects, long-range plans for internal business management

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## Gordon became the spokesperson and the face of the Portland Aerial Tram.

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and collaboration with business and business management. One of his clients, Tidewater Barge Lines, brings grain down the Columbia from Eastern Oregon and Washington fields to Portland and Vancouver grain ship docks. The company hired Gordon to work with the river town of Boardman, Oregon to approve and build a landfill so the barges could

*(Continued on page 12)*



Photo: Robert French

# Gordon Davis and Viki White

*(Continued from page 10)*

return upstream not empty but laden with trash from Clark County, Washington. Tidewater still consults with Gordon on certain issues.

In the late 1970s Gordon was consulting with the City of Vancouver to manage placement of auto dealerships when he met project manager, Viki White.

Viki's position was with Vancouver's Community Development Department. She was involved in the auto dealers' project to create a sort of auto row in east Vancouver. Viki and Gordon recognized common interests and remained business friends for years. They were married in 1986.

After leaving the City of Vancouver, Viki worked for Cox Cable, leading the successful effort to win the cable television franchise for Clark County. She became the station's program director and created a local news program.

Return now to home renovations. Viki's first power tool was a tile cutter. She and Gordon did most of their own work. Besides city properties they found a project in Manzanita

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## **Viki never dreamed she would be throwing a party for a massive sculpture.**

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that resulted in their beach house. As their rental business grew with Viki as the manager, other rental property owners asked whether she would take on management for them as well. Viki found that she would need a property management license, something that required study and testing.

At the same time she was working for the Association for Portland Progress (now the Metro Chamber), where she was director of marketing. One of Viki's projects there brought lots of Portlanders downtown: the lighting of the first Christmas tree in Pioneer Courthouse Square, now a treasured tradition.

All new Portland public buildings were required to spend 1% on art (currently 2%). The Portland Building, the colorful creation of architect Michael Graves, was finished in 1982 but didn't get its art installation until 1985. It was worth waiting for: Portlandia, the 6½-ton copper sculpture of a trident-bearing woman reaching down to Portland mortals. She was sculpted by Maryland artist Ray Kaskey and shipped in pieces by rail to Portland.

Viki produced a festive reception for Portlandia, a boat parade escorting her, now in one piece, on her barge up

the Willamette. She floated to the downtown seawall, was hoisted onto a flatbed truck and slowly hauled to 1120 S.W. Fifth Avenue, where the street was full of Portlanders reaching to touch her outstretched hand. Amidst adoring crowds and speeches by officials, she was lifted to her perch 30 feet above the sidewalk, where she has been for 38 years. At that time, Bud Clark was Portland's colorful mayor. He joined the boat parade on his paddle board. People lined the bridges. Viki rode with the artist and other guests in the paddlewheeler escorting the barge, but, sadly, not on the truck.

This reporter loves Portlandia and recommends a trip to see her, preferably after the trees below her lose their leaves. In her way she is as awe inspiring as the Statue of Liberty.

Growing up in a Kansas City suburb and studying math and science education at Kansas State University, Viki never dreamed she would be throwing a party for a massive sculpture.

Although she burned out on teaching full time, the classroom still drew Viki. For 10 years she volunteered one morning a week before retirement and three mornings afterward at Community Transitional School, a K-8 school for homeless Portland kids. The students had meals and transportation to the school. It closed during the Covid-19 epidemic, but though it is operating again Viki has not returned. She was also a docent at the Portland Art Museum and a member of the ArtQuake board and Metropolitan Arts Commission.

In retirement, Gordon has tapped into his artistic side, creating sleek and heavy metal sculptures that are grounded and yet may fly away. An auto body garage became his studio, where he was taught to apply auto paint to his sculptures, learning that it isn't as easy as just spraying on a few coats. Gordon's work can be seen at [www.gordondavis.net](http://www.gordondavis.net). The metalwork became heavier than Gordon wanted to lift anymore, so he has transitioned to shaping and placing color-brushed plexiglass in graceful groupings.

Viki and Gordon's enjoyment of cocktails and music prompted Viki to create Tuneful Tuesdays at Twilight for Mirabella residents. Knowing local musicians, she realized that a 5 to 6 p.m. gig on a weeknight worked for them, as they usually play later in the evening. The musicians agreed and have filled Aria/Bistro on the second and fourth Tuesdays while 24th-floor restaurants have been under renovation.

Having watched their parents struggle in retirement and some friends wait too long to move, Viki and Gordon relocated to Mirabella earlier than some retirees might. They enjoy the community and activities here. Gordon is an at-large member of the RAMP board and liaison to the mobile emergency team. His workout routine graced the back inside cover of the June 2023 issue of this magazine. Perhaps it expresses the twists and turns of being "the face of the Portland Aerial Tram." ●

# Health Care Stays Active

By NANCY MOSS



Photo: Stanley Berman

*Social Services Director Jodi Childs and members of Mirabella's ukulele orchestra, ready to entertain healthcare floor residents.*

In Mirabella's memory care lounge 12 residents sit in a circle around a dark-haired young man who is flanked by a couple of large black bags. After telling the residents he is going to show them the "oldest family of instruments: percussion," Steven passes around drums and shakers, which include maracas and bracelets of African seeds.

Steven starts a beat on the drum in front of him and six residents join in, then seven, then eight, all of them on the beat. This event is part of the activities program run by activities coordinator Bob Borowiecki and social services director Jodi Childs. They have some activity every day, Jodi says, including exercises and music. Popcorn gets popping every Friday.

This is part of Mirabella's patient-centered program.

The transition of Mirabella's memory care unit from skilled nursing to residential "has not affected the standard of care there," says Health Services Administrator Stephanie Cook, who points out that it has "saved nursing wages" while retaining certified nursing assistants (CNAs) who know the residents well. Mirabella Executive Director Sharon Van Eaton

says the change "lessens the administrative burden" of the extensive paperwork required under a skilled nursing license including the bed tax.

Mirabella has passed savings from the licensing shift on to residents. Sharon says that the lowest monthly memory care rate, of \$9,500, dropped to \$8,500 in July. However, she sees no further trimming of the rate this year.

As part of its struggle to pare last year's heavy losses on health care, Mirabella has raised the memory care fee by 10.8% this year. Sharon says she will need a year under the new residential license to assess its impact.

The other change in the healthcare floor, the training of CNAs to replace expensive contract workers, has started. Mirabella is sharing a newly hired RN with Holladay Park Plaza, which will lead classes that started in October and will end in December. Stephanie cautions that there won't be much impact on the budget until the second and third classes have been completed.

Meanwhile, life goes on in memory care. ●

“If you cook with love,” says Mirabella lead cook Olga Vysotskaya, “food will taste good,” adding after a moment’s thought, “And experience. Knowledge.”

Born in Yekaterinburg, a city of 1.2 million in Russia’s Ural Mountains, Olga left Russia in 2018 with her husband, Vadim, and son, Danil, to settle in Portland, which, she says, is much like where she grew up: “Perfectly beautiful nature

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## Staff Profile:

# Lead Cook Olga Vysotskaya Cooking with Joy

By **NANCY MOSS**

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— mountains, creeks, lakes.” Yekaterinburg is colder than Portland, however, with temperatures as low as 40 degrees below zero. There is more rain in Portland, Olga adds.

Olga attended Ural Forest University and wanted to major in perfumery — “I like good smells,” she says. When that specialty was closed to her, she ended up in plastics and synthetic materials, which she found “toxic.”

After university, Olga had a government job in forest resources for five years but felt you “couldn’t rise in the system.” “I am not a political person,” she says, but she didn’t enjoy her job experience in Russia.

Ten years as human resources manager for a major company followed, but Olga found that the owners and manager of the company were not honest, that she couldn’t tell candidates the truth about benefits. “I was broken in the system,” she says now, adding “the government is not helpful for small business.” “It’s crazy,” she adds. Once again she was uncomfortable with the system in which she worked.

Once in America, Olga turned to cooking. “All my life I am always cooking,” she says and mentions a tomato scramble she made at age six and adds, “Cooking is my hobby.”

In Mirabella as lead cook Olga has created some specials, such as her dumplings or pelmeni, with pickled vegetables that one resident declared “the best meal I have eaten here.” Those dumplings, Olga says, took her and another chef five hours to prepare. Working in the Bistro, she once cooked a grilled sandwich; the server returned to say that a resident called it the “best grilled sandwich I have eaten in 15 years.” She looks forward to preparing Georgian chicken.

“If you like your job, the food you cook will be good,” Olga says.

Olga enjoys traveling and says that her “main interest in traveling is cuisine.” She always returns from places with a bag full of sauces and spices she has picked up. “Anything weird,” she says and mentions some spicy pickled chicken’s feet she picked up on a tour of China. “I not only tried it, I bought it for my family,” she says. “I need to try new, interesting dishes.”

Olga loves visiting Hawaii and sampling the multicultural food there from Filipino lumpia and Portuguese malasadas to Chinese dim sum — more dumplings. There are dumplings in every cuisine, Olga says.

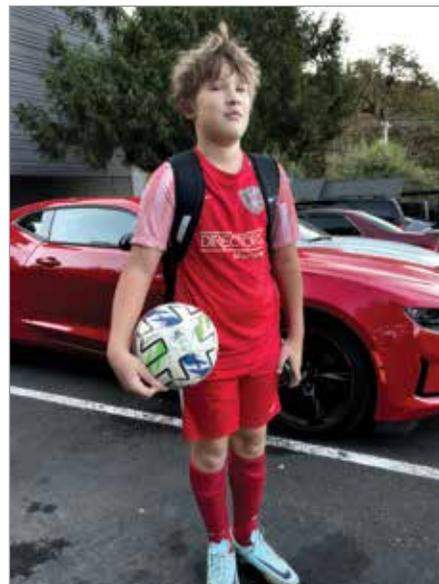
Aside from cooking for her family, which means dumplings every two weeks, Olga enjoys trout fishing, walking with her two Labs and watching culinary shows on television. “Every culinary show is good for me,” Olga says, providing entertainment along with the knowledge of new techniques.

Or she and Vadim, who came to America to work in construction with a friend, may watch one of Danil’s soccer games. Danil, 13, has played soccer for five years.

Olga has worked for Mirabella, her first job in America, for four years. She started doing prep work, then moved to cook one and finally lead cook. “I don’t want to work in one position for a hundred million years,” she explains. She likes the way Mirabella gives her the opportunity to do something special, to choose special ingredients and spices.

Mirabella residents, who find some repetition in Aria menus, benefit from Olga’s willingness to experiment, to create new dishes.

“I am excited to see people happy,” she says of working here. ●



Danil with his soccer ball.

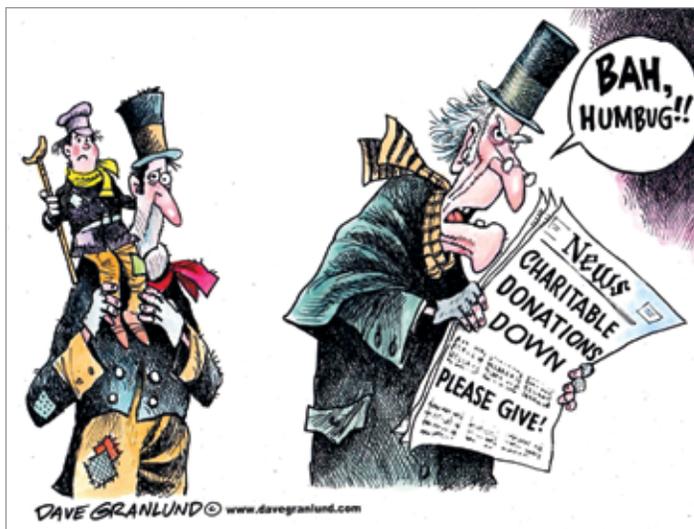


Photo: Ron Mendonca

# Olga Vysotskaya

# Foundation Merger Delayed

By ED PARKER



**T**he merger of Mirabelle Portland Foundation, Inc. into Mirabella Portland, a change that Mirabella residents voted to approve in September 2022, has been delayed until the first quarter of the new calendar year.

Based on legal and financial advice from Pacific Retirement Services (PRS), Mirabella's parent company, the Mirabella Portland board gave higher priority to refinancing Mirabella's bond debt. The administrative costs that the merger will save are tiny compared to the large savings that will result from lower bond interest on the debt used to construct the building. Changing the legal structure first would delay the refinancing.

The final step of that refinancing is for Mirabella to give the new lender, Truist Bank, the audited financials for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2023, to confirm compliance with the terms of the new financial agreement. Sharon Van Eaton, Mirabella's executive director, said that the audited financials would show that Mirabella is meeting the terms of the refinancing agreement.

If consistent with prior fiscal years, the audit report should be available in January. When that last refinancing step is completed, the Mirabella Portland board will submit the merger documents to the Oregon secretary of state and establish a new resident foundation committee to replace the previous Mirabella Portland Foundation board of directors.

Under the terms of the merger agreement, donations to any of the foundation funds will still be tax deductible, and residents will have greater oversight over how the funds are used.

The foundation reference manual, which is on the foundation committee page under the RAMP tab on Miranet, says, "The mission of the Mirabella Portland Foundation is to support and enrich the quality of life for Mirabella Portland residents and staff." That mission has not changed.

Foundation funds supplement the services and support provided to residents and staff from the regular Mirabella Portland budget. Resident fees cover the costs of services provided by Mirabella. Donations to foundation funds permit additional services and benefits that would not otherwise be available or would require an increase in resident fees to provide.

## Foundation Reference Manual

A subcommittee of the Residents' Association of Mirabella Portland (RAMP) foundation advisory committee has created a revised draft of the foundation reference manual. The full committee, at its September meeting, recommended that the Mirabella Portland board approve the revision. The manual was submitted to both the Mirabella Portland and Mirabella Portland Foundation boards for review at their October meetings.

The main change in the manual was to describe the post-merger organization. The manual also includes committee-recommended changes to the procedures for using money from the employee scholarship fund with respect to

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**The main change in the manual was to describe the post-merger organization.**

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staff eligibility and changes to clarify procedures for using the foundation general fund.

The reference manual describes the new legal structure for the foundation funds and the policies and procedures to be followed for donation to and expenditures from each of the seven foundation funds: the residence assistance fund, the employee scholarship fund, the cultural enrichment fund, the employee hardship fund, the medical transportation fund, the health center fund and the general fund. Appendices to the document include the forms to be used for fund requests. ●

# More Birds Around Us

By JOHANNA KING

**Over 500 bird species** have been reported in Oregon. Of these, about 350 are either regular residents or pass through on their migration to other areas. Only five states see more birds. This high number is partly because Oregon is so large. But more important, it is because it has a wide variety of distinct habitat types, including offshore islands and beaches, mountains, riparian areas along rivers, high desert and open grassland.

Some of Oregon's most common birds, like the White-breasted Nuthatch and Tree Swallow, are widely distributed in the U.S., while others, like the Brown Pelican and the Black Oystercatcher, are restricted to specific habitats. Some species, like Spotted Owls and Marbled Murrelets, have seen

their suitable habitat vastly reduced by industrial logging. The degradation of sagebrush habitat in central and eastern Oregon has critically affected the numbers of Greater Sage-Grouse, and increased human activity on the beaches has destroyed nesting and feeding habitat for the Western Snowy Plover. Buildings with a lot of glass and buildings lighted at night kill millions of migrating birds in the U.S. every year, primarily small species like warblers and sparrows. According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, we have lost 2.9 billion birds in North America since 1970.

Most of the birds in these photos can be seen in the Portland area, though to see the Brown Pelican and the Black Oystercatcher you would have to go to the coast. ●



The **Black-billed Magpie** is in the Corvid family, along with crows and jays. They are all noisy, gregarious and often entertaining birds. They can be seen in eastern Oregon.

*The Downy Woodpecker is small and dainty; this male sports a red cap. It is a common visitor to bird feeders.*



*These **Black Oystercatchers** use their strong (and beautiful) bills to pry up mussels, limpets, barnacles and other food items. They rarely eat oysters.*





*The current abundance of the Brown Pelican along the coast is due to the banning of DDT in 1972. The pesticide caused the thinning of the shells of pelican eggs and other birds' eggs; this primarily affected large birds whose weight crushed their eggs.*





The secretive and rare **Least Bittern** is found only in south-central Oregon. Its huge feet allow it to cling to marsh reeds while foraging for fish.



*Cedar Waxwings can be found in Oregon year-round. They love fruit and berries such as these Oregon grapes.*

*The Osprey, found all over the U.S., is frequently seen along the river behind Mirabella. Its amazing talons enable it to grasp slippery fish with confidence.*

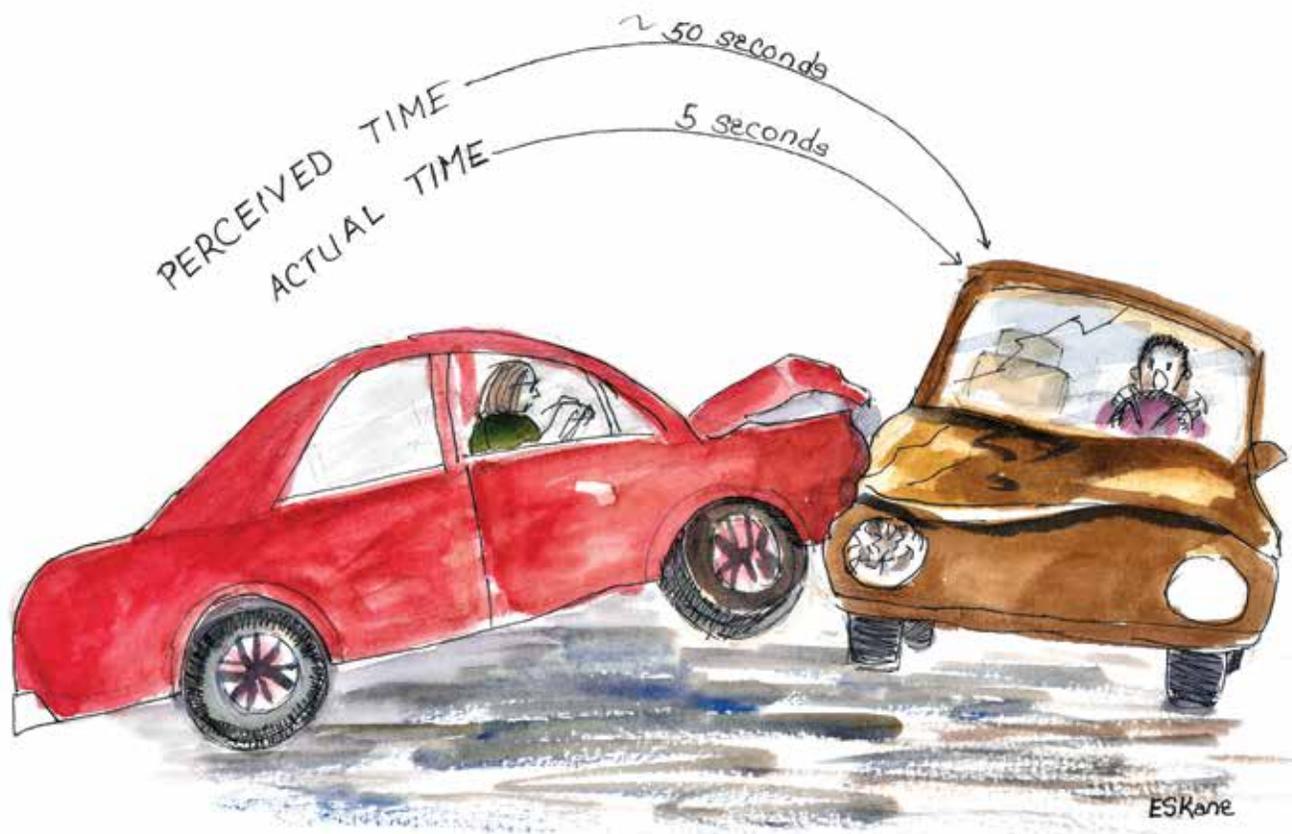




*Did you think only Robins ate earthworms? This Crow is enjoying an early morning breakfast right behind Mirabella.*

# The Strangeness of Time

By RITA BRICKMAN EFFROS



Art: Eileen Kane

**T**ime, the most commonly used noun in the English language, seems like a straightforward concept. We know that it both flies and stands still, things happen in the fullness of it, and clocks measure it.

Yet philosophers debate the very existence of time. Neuroscientists ponder how our brains connect the you that is starting to read this with the you at the end of the article. And physicists teach us that physical time is not organized into a straightforward past, present and future.

Playwright Michael Frayn is fixated on the concept of “now.” He writes: “Ah now! That odd time — the oddest time of all times; the time it always is ... by the time we’ve reached the ‘w’ of ‘now,’ t he ‘n’ is ancient history.”

The neurologist Oliver Sacks noted that time is plastic; memories of earlier events are more detailed than those of recent events.

Sacks, fascinated with the process of ferns unfurling, compared it to time unfurling. He took photos of the ferns every hour, then combined them into a flipbook. Thus, he compressed time photographically into several seconds.

Radio producer Tony Schwartz did a similar project with sound. In “Nancy Grows Up,” he merges recordings of his niece’s voice from birth until age 12 into a two-minute audio piece.

Leland Stanford, founder of the eponymous university and owner of one of the largest railroad companies, was obsessed with speed. It has been told that he bet a friend that all four feet of a galloping horse are off the ground at the same time. Using sequential images of 24 cameras to freeze the horse mid-gallop, he proved that he was correct.

Rapidly captured sequential images led to movies. The technique was also used to film factory workers in an effort to speed up productivity. During World War II, the motto was “the hands of our factory workers must be as relentless as the hands of our clocks.”

The opposite of time compression was done by Scandinavian artist Leif Inge with Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. He stretched a recording of this 70-minute piece

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

over a full day with no pitch distortions, creating an ethereal listening experience.

Attendees at this artistic event in both Portland and San Francisco likened it to “floating time ... feeling like being in a trance.” The emotions described resembled those associated with prayer, meditation and love.

Jay Griffiths’ book, “A Sideways Look at Time,” provides a brilliant exploration of how time has been measured throughout the ages. The author points out that early clocks used different spices to designate the time of day — cinnamon for 1, turmeric for 2, etc.

In Papua, New Guinea, birds became clocks. Children learned that the singing of a certain bird in the morning signaled that it was time to go to school. A different birdsong in the late afternoon meant it was time to rush home before dark.

Griffiths also posits that time may be perceived differently by men and women. She argues that through their monthly menstruation cycles, often affected by the moon, women are much more in tune with cyclical concepts of non-linear time.

In 1751, Carl Linnaeus, the Swedish naturalist and categorizer of everything, developed the “flower clock.” Time was based on the opening and closing of certain flowers, like morning glory and evening primrose, throughout the day.

Minutes as a measure of time, invented by the Babylonians, were not really needed until the Industrial Revolution. By 1850, there were as many different official “times” as there were clocks in a town, and there was no reason to synchronize them until the advent of the railroad.

Railroad companies created “railroad time” and began putting up clocks of their own. People rebelled, claiming they had lost their personal freedom. Eventually, railroad time was accepted, and the currently used time zones were formed.

Neuroscientists have identified the brain region that tracks time. But certain drugs and neurotransmitters can affect our perception of time. Chemicals that cause neurons to fire more quickly than normal speed up time, whereas decreased neuron firing slows down time perception.

When time seems to speed up, the brain is distinguishing more events within a particular interval. This explains why time seems to fly when you’re having fun. By contrast, time slows down during emergencies or danger. The region of the brain that makes memories becomes more active, and as more memories form, time seems to be drawn out.

The brain’s involvement in time perception and memory formation may explain why older people report that time is moving faster than when they were young. Psychologists believe the brain forms more memories of new experiences than those of familiar ones. Since fewer new memories are built later in life, time seems to pass more quickly.

We are obsessed with time, especially in cities, where time seems to move more quickly than in rural areas. Indeed, urban modernity seems to live under the assault of clocks. And when we say “time is running out,” it’s not time’s fault but rather our overscheduled modern society.

Time seems to have taken over our lives. A child’s ability to learn is measured by progress speed rather than depth of understanding. We purchase a pair of shoes and the receipt indicates both the date and time (to the minute) of the event. Even our fridges remind us of time; some milk cartons indicate both the date and exact time when the milk will expire, as if it would spoil one minute later.

Speed is alluring; everything seems to be speeding up more, including relationships, fast food, temp jobs, microwaves, quickie divorces, even drive-through funeral parlors. Interestingly, Japanese train engineers can be fired if their timing is “off” three times — including being too early.

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## Urban modernity seems to live under the assault of clocks.

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In our effort at time precision, we may not be aware that even the earth’s time is not perfect. One might think that atomic time, based on the oscillations of the cesium atom, would be the most precise of all times. One second is defined as 9,192,631,770 oscillations, officially recorded by the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Boulder, Colorado.

Yet even this time is not perfect; the oscillations are influenced by the earth’s spin. And this spin changes up to a thousandth of a second in some years due to the gravitational pull of the moon.

Throughout the world, there are different ways of marking time. Most societies have some form of time period. Our seven-day week was designed by the Babylonians, but some “weeks” can range from 3–16 days. For example, the Incas used an 8-day week, at the end of which the king swapped wives.

Modern western time is totally dissociated from the diversity of the clocks of nature. An Indian tribe in Brazil defines age as the number of times the guavira has flowered in one’s lifetime. So time is truly alive and embedded in the natural world in so-called “primitive” societies.

Among animals, bees have an extraordinary internal

clock. They stay punctual and adhere to a daily rhythm, even when moved across continents.

Co-parenting Emperor penguins have choreographed time perfectly. After laying her eggs, mom leaves the nest and hunts for food, at which point dad takes over. He sits on the eggs for two months without eating until the eggs hatch, then feeds the chicks from "milk sacks." These run out after 10 days, the precise time when mom returns.

The sea is the ultimate source of time. Tides ebb and flow; humanity has long understood sea times, such as the precise day and time of the annual spawning run of fish. Otis Redding wisely chose to sit on the dock of the bay for wastin' time, since the sea seems to create endless time.

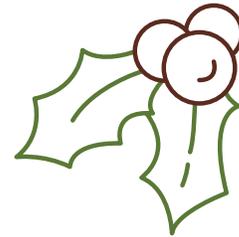
The connection between time and the sea is deep and wide. In Old English, the word for time is etymologically related to the word tide. And "current" refers to both time and the sea.

Time and the sea are also connected in a historical sense. Britain's maritime supremacy led to the worldwide acceptance of Greenwich Mean Time, with Greenwich assigned as the zero meridian.

In 1913 in Paris, Stravinsky's Rite of Spring spoke profoundly of nature's time. During that same period, Einstein was arguing that there was no such thing as simultaneous time — that every frame of reference or moving body has its own time.

In a more philosophical vein, physicist Michael Faraday wrote that "time is the longest and shortest thing in the world ... the least valued and most regretted ... without which nothing can be done ... gives life and spirit to everything that is great."

There is much to ponder when considering the nature of time. ●



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Photo: Logan Peirsol

## Care from the Air

By PETE SWAN

If you live in Portland's South Waterfront district and have a west-looking view, you may have seen helicopters landing on the roof of the Doernbecher Children's Hospital high atop Marquam Hill. Such transports are the operations side of Life Flight Network [LFN].

The Network is owned by a consortium of four health-care systems: OHSU, Providence, Legacy Health and Saint Alphonsus in Idaho.

In many instances, e.g. strokes, serious automobile accidents, heart attacks, premature births and industrial accidents, speedy delivery to hospital care may make the difference between life and death. When time matters and when traffic is heavy or country roads are in poor shape or under repair, air-borne delivery can be optimal.

The Network has ambulances based in Aurora, Kennewick, Richland, Spokane and Bozeman, but its distinctive advantage lies in its 10 fixed-wing aircraft and 29 helicopters. Each aircraft has its own dedicated crew.

Life Flight's Bell helicopters (429s and 407GXs) have ranges from 350 miles to 510 miles, are equipped for night flying and have 3-D terrain-mapping capability. Each copter and plane has medical equipment and blood on board like that found in an intensive care unit.

Flight crews include, besides the pilot, a registered flight nurse and a paramedic. The latter are listed on a national registry and vetted on a state-by-state basis (in our state, by the Oregon Health Authority). These certifications must be renewed every two or four years.

Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) operate at a basic level but can, through experience and further training, carry out greater responsibilities. LFN requires in-house semi-annual training of all its paramedics.

On flights delivering a neonatal passenger, a flight respiratory therapist takes the place of the paramedic.

Your reporter spoke with Victor Walco, now director of business development for LFN, who was himself a paramedic for 22 years. Victor said it felt wonderful to know he had helped save a life or relieve excruciating pain. He remembers many emotional and stressful moments reassuring the families of patients about to be transported.

Victor has even assisted in a childbirth en route. He said he always felt "fortunate to be able to provide help and aid."

Pilots and medical crew are on standby at each of Life Flight's 29 bases spread over Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. Helicopters typically take off within eight to 10 minutes after dispatch.

Flights land at OHSU daily.

An LFN crew member will handle communications with the receiving hospital to update any changes in the patient's condition en route, thus ensuring a continuum of care.

How do patients gain the services of LFN? They pay an annual — non-tax deductible — membership fee (from \$115 to \$160) and then suffer no out-of-pocket expenses should they require emergent, medically necessary transport service.

Spouses, domestic partners, dependents claimed on the member's income tax return and living in the member's household as well as elderly and disabled persons in the household are covered.

LFN sometimes transports non-members and then recoups costs that can range from a low average of \$19,500 to nearly \$100,000 from the patient's insurance. LFN also has a foundation that provides what it describes as "robust financial assistance" for patients who cannot otherwise afford to pay.

Dispatching aircraft is done by hospitals, first responders and 911 centers. LFN does not itself make dispatching decisions but rather responds when requested by its hospital or Emergency Medical Assistance partners. Factors involved in the dispatching decision are the patient's condition, the level of specialized care available at the potential receiving hospital, distance and patient's preference. LFN goes "wherever is best for the patient."

At hospitals with helipads, the LFN crew will unload the patient and work collaboratively with hospital staff until the patient's care has been fully transferred. In the event that the

hospital does not have a helipad (most do), LFN will coordinate with one of its many ground emergency medical service partners to complete the delivery.

Life Flight is regulated under Part 135 of Federal Aviation Administration rules and does not provide "air rescue services," although it does partner with military and other search and rescue operations on a regular basis.

Patient testimonials on LFN's website describe transports for an Oregon man whose legs were crushed in a truck accident, a man critically injured when a compact car rolled over, a woman who injured both legs in a climbing accident at the City of Rocks — where the LFN crew ascended to reach her and then got her down to the chopper — and a man who suffered a crushed vertebra in a snowmobile accident.

Each LFN base has the tools and dedicated mechanics to effect routine maintenance and repair on LFN's aircraft. Heavy maintenance and annual inspections take place at the Boise or Aurora, Oregon, hubs.

Your reporter appreciated the cooperation of LFN's public relations specialist, Natalie Hannah, in researching this story. Natalie has worked for LFN for eight years. Natalie occasionally participates in ride-alongs to ensure that she remains "connected to the work LFN does and [to better] understand ... [LFN's] patient care practices."

From afar, the rest of us see the exciting spectacle of a helicopter landing on Doernbecher hospital's roof but, for the Life Flight folks, it's another day of high professionalism and saving lives. ●

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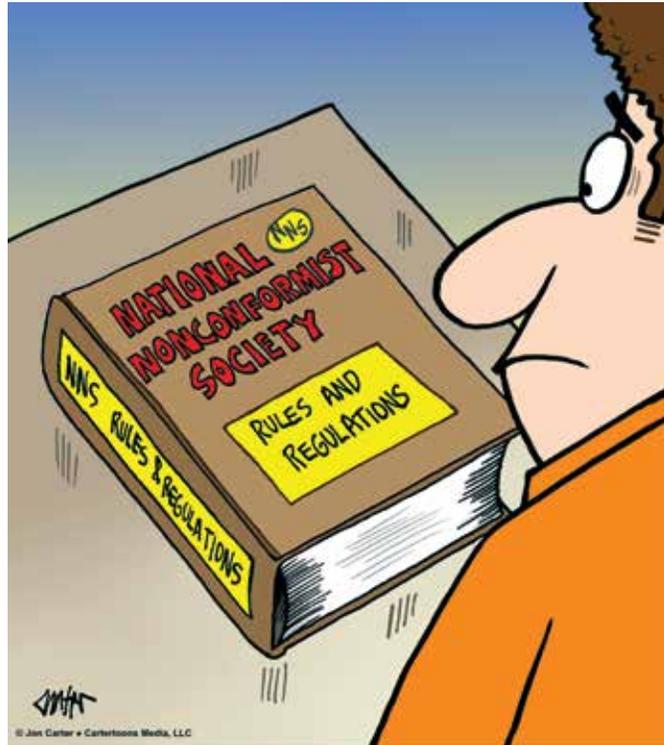
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# New Rules for New Bylaws

By JOHN FOREMAN AND ED PARKER



**T**he Residents' Association of Mirabella Portland (RAMP) approved a major revision of its bylaws at the September annual meeting. The vote was 202 RAMP members in favor and two opposed. Bylaws serve as the constitution for the organization and can only be changed by a supermajority vote of members of the association.

The new bylaws authorize the RAMP council to establish more detailed rules consistent with that governing charter. A draft of the new rules was distributed to residents for comment in early October. The new rules, scheduled for a council vote on November 15, consolidate in one place all previously approved policies and procedures that the council wishes to retain and add new rules to implement the new bylaws.

Properly written bylaws are general statements that describe who belongs to an organization like RAMP, why it exists, what it does and how it works. Some bylaws like the newly passed RAMP bylaws passed by a supermajority of all the members authorize the governing body of the organization, the RAMP council, to create more specific rules that can be used by its members as tools to operate RAMP the way the bylaws intend.

The original bylaws of RAMP, hand-me-downs from a residential community in Madison, Wisconsin, had been

modified in a piecemeal fashion 13 times before the overhaul approved at the recent annual meeting.

In addition to the bylaws, RAMP had an accumulation of Council-approved policies, procedures and rules for the operation of RAMP. Those rules and policies will become part of rules organized to implement the new bylaws. The new bylaws and new rules each have a table of contents at the beginning that to make finding the relevant bylaw or rule easier. Making each document more user-friendly helps because the bylaws contain nearly 7,000 words and the rules run to more than 12,000 words.

The ad hoc committee of Ed Parker, Judy Seubert and John Foreman appointed by then-president Jim McGill in 2021 to draft the bylaws amendments was continued by incoming president Reese Berman, the RAMP Council representative on the original committee. Bob Hopkins followed Walt Grebe and acted as liaison from RAMP. Pete Swan joined when Judy Seubert stepped down in 2022, and the committee transitioned from drafting bylaws to drafting rules to implement them.

A year's delay in the drafting process allowed incorporation of the changes caused by the merger of the Mirabella Foundation, Inc. into Mirabella Portland. The delay allowed

the rules-making to catch up to the bylaws. The ad hoc rules committee reviewed drafts with the council in work sessions and distributed a draft to residents for their comments.

Some other editing and housekeeping revisions of the bylaws discovered in the process of writing the rules may be addressed by a minor bylaws' revision scheduled for the semi-annual meeting in March of 2024.

Using the authorization in the recently passed bylaws, the council has incorporated into the rules new provisions for voting and conducting elections that offer help to those who need assistance voting and procedures for dealing with questioned ballots. Also included are rules about what meetings must be open to members and what records must be available for inspection by members, authorization for emergency meetings and emergency action by the council and rules about using RAMP funds for committee work. Other rules are about putting together the annual budget, authorization to use funds from sources other than Mirabella Portland, what records need to be kept and who should keep them and how committees and interest groups operate.

Adoption of the rules will allow members who are new to Mirabella or are starting a volunteer job with RAMP to quickly find how it operates. This should make RAMP more consistent and effective. The resident-approved bylaws provide the overall structure. The council now has the authority to change rules without requiring bylaw amendments.

The only constant for the operation of an organization is change. New members come and go. New officers are elected and serve. New administrative staff for Mirabella arrive and move on. Unanticipated challenges like the pandemic arise. All can influence the way RAMP functions.

The tools in RAMP's new toolkit will make adapting to the constant change easier for our members and those to come. ●



Dr. Mila Loussifova is a residency-trained optometrist with a diverse background and widespread training in comprehensive eye care. A graduate with honors from New England College of Optometry, Dr. Mila maintains and practices the highest standards in optometric practice. Her approach to patient care is systemic with an emphasis on ocular nutrition and disease prevention. She is passionate about eye care and health, and she takes the time to educate her patients on how to maintain healthy eyes.

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# Portland Diary

By NANCY MOSS



Photo: Richard Mounts

## Chris Medberry, Transportation Manager

When Mirabella's transportation manager, Chris Medberry, has some free time, he may either reach for his guitar or head to the coast. Having played the guitar since he was 10, Chris has played what he describes as "heavy metal, rock" in bands for 12 years. "Not pushing for stardom," he says — just enjoyment.

Chris grew up in Ohio but has lived in Portland for 23 years. He has worked in the hotel industry for 20 of those years "managing the front of the house" and doing concierge work.

— Nancy Moss



I  
I am sitting in the front car when the driver announces, "Anyone not clothed, on the top or bottom, cannot ride this streetcar."

Heads whip around. The white-haired woman sitting in front of me turns to regard the back of the streetcar, her pale blue eyes wide.

Shortly after that announcement we stop. A streetcar employee enters, and we hear high-pitched yelling, "I'm not getting off this f'ing car; you can't f'ing make me."

A small person, wearing what looks like the top part of a dress over jeans, is making the noise. The crotch of their jeans is at knee level.

The streetcar employee guides the still shouting person out the door.

Heads turn back. The streetcar resumes moving forward.

II  
Walking toward Tilikum Crossing in early May, I watched workers fill the enclosed spaces between the sidewalk and Moody Avenue with grasses and plants. Won't work, I thought: dry summer coming up. At summer's end most of those plants are bleached and dry, a few weeds and dandelions flourish, still green.

III  
Rex Nails and Spa, on Gaines Avenue, crams a lot of ornament — six chandeliers, plus one over each customer's chair, a tree full of artificial yellow flowers and hanging red lucky-money envelopes — into a spartan space: bare concrete walls and track lighting.

The man in the chair next to me tells the Rex worker filling his footbath with water, "My toenails are weird."

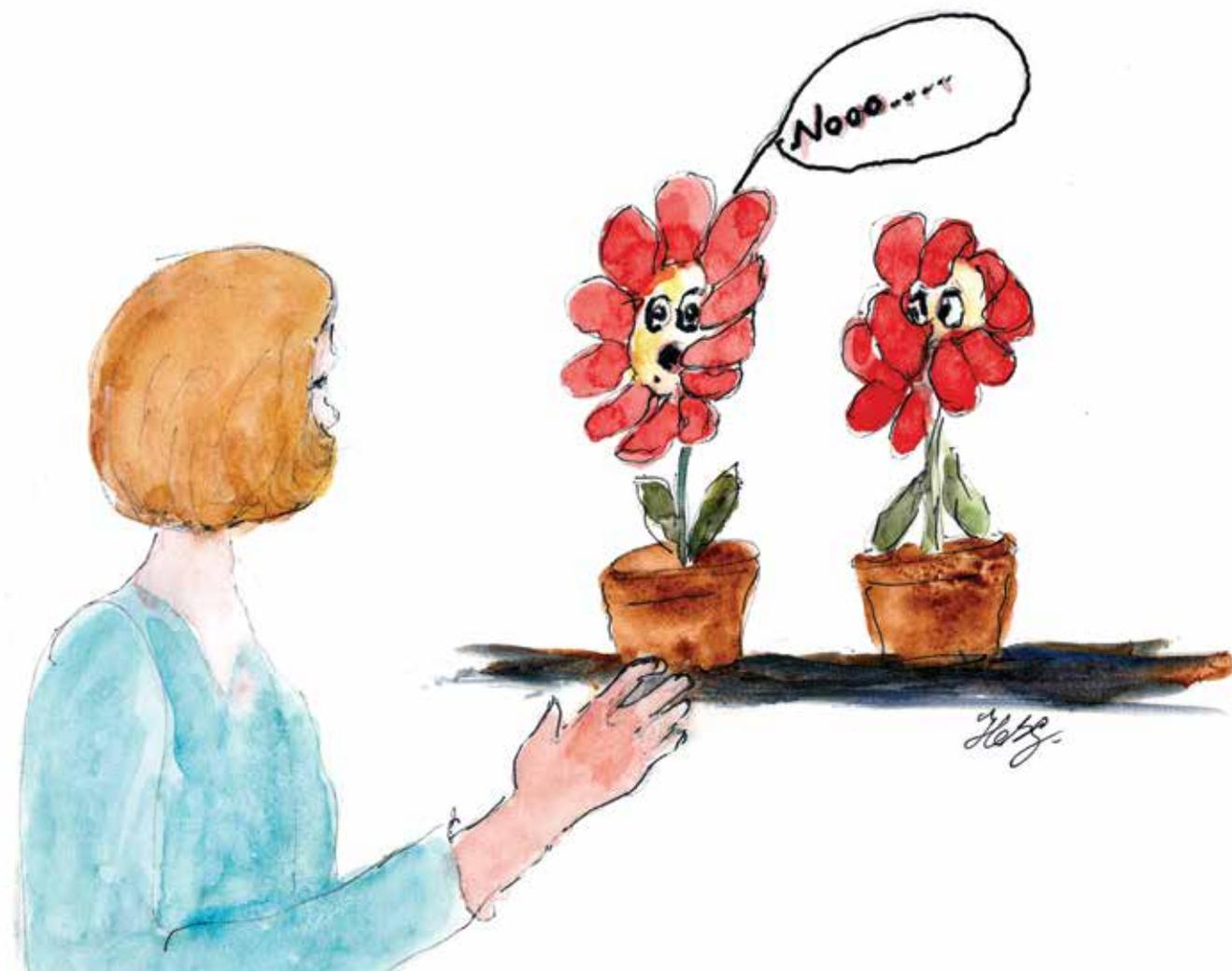
They evidently are. Soon two workers — one clipping, one watching — bend over the foot not covered by water.

"Thank-you," he tells them.

I sit back, my toenails a bright orange, listen to space music and enjoy my massage chair that knows when to stop. This country does some things right. ●

# No Green Thumb

By JANE WACHSLER



Art: Hebe Greizerstein

**E**arly in my life, my neighbor — who was quite a gardener — helped us with our victory garden; many years later I realized those little orange flowers were not “Janie Birds”, but marigolds.

Unfortunately, in the ensuing years my gardening knowledge has not improved.

Moving to Mirabella has been a disaster; I am surrounded by people with no end to their gardening knowledge.

I have given it a try. This year I went to Cornell Nursery and bought \$100.09 worth of plants. You could actually hear the little plants whispering, “Don’t buy me.” My reputation had preceded me.

I planted my flowers, and immediately the weather broke all heat records.

I have given up.

My neighbors are very generous and leave their overflow of flowers and fruit on their ledges outside their apartments. But they are usually gone by the time I reach that floor.

So I have worked out something of a sting.

If I sit in front of Mirabella, people pass me on their way back from the community garden. Their bags are overflowing, and they are a generous bunch.

So I too have fresh vegetables and flowers; if the weather reaches 105 and I have forgotten to water, so be it.

Meanwhile, “Janie Bird” took on another identity; it became the name of our little sailboat. ●

# Taco Bell and Me

By BETTIANNE GOETZ



Art: Arletha Ryan

Coming back from the hospital, my daughter and I stopped at Taco Bell, one of our favorite fast-food places. After enjoying our savory foods, we headed toward her Vancouver home. I had dropped her off and was heading back to Portland when I reached for my purse to get my sunglasses.

Nothing there. I pulled off to the side of the road to check to see if I had put the purse on the back seat. Nope, not there.

I had left it hanging on the back of my chair at Taco Bell, I realized. My heart pounding, I turned around to go back. On my way my head began taking an inventory of my purse: money, driver's license, credit cards.

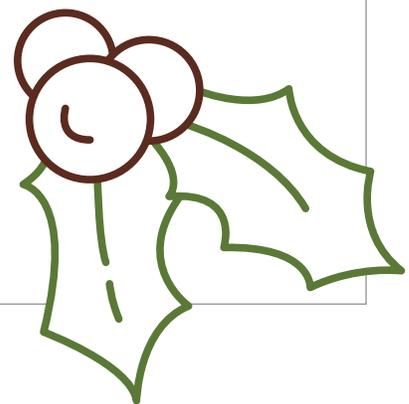
Panic began to build.

I walked into Taco Bell and saw that my purse was not hanging on the back of the chair I had used. My heart sank. As I headed up to the counter, the people behind it noticed me and began to smile and cheer. I did not even have to ask. "Yes, we have your purse," they said, big smiles on their faces. Relief flooded over me. One of the employees opened the safe where they had safely stored my purse.

They handed me a package wrapped with brown paper and securely taped. It felt like Christmas. On the package they had written "Grandma" and drawn a big heart. As I ripped it open, they were all smiling and clapping.

I couldn't say "thank you" enough. The experience added to my belief that most people are good and honest. ●

Happy Holidays  
from the 3550 staff!



# MEPS in Action

By NANCY MOSS

*Ron Mendonca with his FRS radio and script for the Great ShakeOut.*



Photo: Stanley Berman

**T**he Mirabella Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee, generally called MEPS, plans the community's response to disasters — fire and earthquake, which includes a possible "Big One" in the Cascadian subduction zone.

This year, under the leadership of Carol Domenico, MEPS carried out fire drills throughout the building. Committee members saw that new residents received copies of the Emergency Action Guide (EAG).

Anyone wanting to see the EAG should go to the emergency preparation tab under RAMP committees on the Miranet, click on "Planning for the Big One" link and open the EAG.

MEPS also oversaw the distribution of cases of 50-year water, a small part of the water supply residents are advised

to keep in their apartment. The EAG gives suggestions for the amount of water needed.

In October, MEPS ran a detailed drill after the Great ShakeOut where floor leaders and zone captains reacted to the sorts of events that could occur after an earthquake. Committee chair Paul Knoll had written a script which detailed possible problems that could arrive after an emergency.

MEPS is looking for new members. Join and you may find yourself testing radios, checking common areas of the building with the mobile team or knocking on floormates' doors during a fire drill to see who is sheltering in place.

MEPS meets at 2:30 p.m. in the Park View Room on the second Thursday of each month. ●

# Helping Employees Help Themselves

By MARY FINNERAN

**J**anet Schmitt, chair of Mirabella Foundation's Employee Scholarship Fund, says it's "Important to help people who want to better themselves," who may be the first in their family to seek out higher education.

Mirabella's Employee Scholarship fund, established in 2012, attracted a record number of employee applications in 2023. Eighteen scholarships were awarded, 16 for full-time employees and two for part-timers.

Replenishing the fund will be Mirabella's valentine to our staff.

Sometimes the benefits of staff education are obvious to us. Christina Dye is using part of her scholarship for an

on-line program in graphic design. Since she is the engine behind the Musings, we see the results every month.

In the case of Nathan Seldner the benefits can be both seen and tasted. After attending a cooking retreat, Nathan brought his newly acquired Italian techniques to our dining tables. You may have noticed more pasta items on the menu lately.

Others may have taken their new skills and experience elsewhere. But resident contributions to the foundation's scholarship fund have proved to be a valuable investment in young people's futures. ●

# Calling Pet Lovers

By PAMELA LINDHOLM-LEVY

# Great Escapes: The Travel Club



Photo: Art Moss

*Kaiulani emerges from her condo.*

**The pet interest group** or Pet Page (it's never really had a title), is back on Miranet. The new format, unlike the old, does not show rolling photos of our pets, but computer whiz Teresa Goodwin has built one to show Mirabella residents' beloved cats and dogs again.

Photo by photo, Leonardo Hole or Cosmo Enright and their like can be clicked through.

Under the RAMP tab on the Miranet site, choose Committees to bring up lots of options, among them Pets.

Choose it and on the left side of a collage of pictures, click on Photos. This brings up Cool Cats and Hot Dogs. Click on one. Click on the first photo and use the black arrows at the top of each photo to change to the next or the previous. Each photo shows the name of the pet as well as the owners. Some photos are large, so scroll down to find the name and the whole animal. Tap on Close Window to return to Cool Cats and Hot Dogs.

Please note, the directions above do not apply on smart phones or pads; they do not show the list of options to the left side of the collage.

Though we have lost some of our furry friends as well as the old picture format, please welcome and enjoy Mirabella pets in person if possible but also on the — let's call it — Pet Page. ●

**The Travel Committee**, whose goal is to help residents enjoy Portland and its environs, manages trips as well as Sunday Supper events. Over the years it has sampled over 30 restaurants — varied ethnic offerings as well as all-time favorites.

In June, the travel club visited Timberline Lodge. Completed in 1937 as a WPA project, the lodge features artists in textiles, wood, stone and iron, who combined their efforts to create a refuge for visitors to experience the magnificent high-alpine environment of Mount Hood. After the tour, lunch followed at the Cascadia Room.

Other trips have included an excursion to Multnomah Falls, followed by lunch at the 1925 lodge at the foot of the falls, and one to Mt. Angel Abbey, founded by Benedictine monks in 1892. That excursion included a traditional German meal at the Glockenspiel Restaurant. During another outing, at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education, the group saw newspapers published secretly by boys interned during WW II.

Are you curious about Mount St. Helens? Trinity Episcopal Cathedral? The Bilal Masjid Mosque? Portland's Japanese garden? Bettianne Goetz, chair of Mirabella's travel committee, says it would "consider repeating popular trips" such as those mentioned above.

The committee is looking for new members; interested residents can either contact Bettianne or show up on the second Tuesday of each month, its scheduled meeting time. ●



Photo: Stanley Berman

*Clarklewis restaurant house salumi plate.*



# Residents Win Dragon Boat Gold Medals

By ED PARKER

**M**irabella residents **Anne Clark** and **Ed Parker** each won a gold medal for paddling on a winning Portland team in an international dragon boat competition in August in Victoria, Canada.

The races, all 440-meter sprints, took place in Victoria harbor across from the Empress Hotel. Anne and Ed both paddled on the Golden Dragons PDX mixed team that competed in five races during the two-day festival event.

About 40 teams competed, including two Golden Dragons PDX teams, a women's team and a mixed team (half men, half women). Each boat in dragon boat races has 20 paddlers (10 on each side) plus a caller and a tiller.

Ed, 91, was the oldest paddler on the team and the oldest competitor in the festival. Anne, 80, was the second oldest on the mixed team. The other members of the mixed team were all in their sixties or seventies. The "golden" in the team name refers to team members' age. The team takes pride in being competitive with younger paddlers in events that are not age restricted.

Based on average times in preliminary heats, competing



*Ed and Anne in racing gear.*

teams were placed into four groups, with group D being the slowest in the mixed team competition. The Golden Dragons mixed team showed their right stuff in the group D final by pulling away to win by a full boat length with a finish time faster than the winners of both groups B and C.

The Golden Dragons practice year-round between 9 and 10 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Most members are recreational paddlers who do not compete in races but enjoy being out on the water, the camaraderie of a team sport and healthy exercise.

There are usually enough paddlers for three boats, a training boat for newer paddlers, a recreational boat and a race-team workout boat. Except for race team practices, no commitment of regular attendance is required. People just come whenever they can. Visitors and newcomers are welcome. The first three practices are free, and fees are about \$30 each calendar quarter thereafter. The club loans paddles and personal flotation devices (PFDs) to new paddlers. Contact Anne or Ed if you are curious enough to give this sport a try. ●

Photo: Richard Mounts

*The Golden Dragon PDX mixed-team boat speeds past the second-place finisher at the red buoy that marks the finish line.*



