



Leading the Way to Lifelong Learning

Conductor

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January/February 2023

President's Corner

Mary Pendlay, President



Mary and her grandson Ashton

I can't believe it! I'm the President of The Gentrain Society of Monterey Peninsula College. I follow the most distinguished leadership of Peter Purdue and Mary Alice Rennick, extremely capable and inspirational leaders, who have given so much to The Gentrain Society with their experience and knowledge. I am honored to be a major part of a Society who promotes lifelong learning in so many ways: the brilliant professors who teach the Western Civilization class at MPC, the dedicated Board of Directors who guide and promote a non-profit organization that provides thousands of dollars of scholarships to MPC students, opportunities to travel and understand the world, plus opportunities to enjoy all that our local area has to offer. Our Board and committee members, people who volunteer endlessly and give their time and effort to ensure the present and future of The Gentrain Society, deserve our greatest thanks and highest praise.

As the newly voted-in President of the Society, I hope to be worthy of the Society's past efforts and lead all of you to new educational opportunities, travels and exploration of our changing world. I hope to encourage new members who will benefit from our programs, classes and social events. Our Special Events Committee is planning a gathering for next year as we speak. Our Oregon Shakespeare Festival is looking at a new venue in Utah for 2023. Our Wednesday free Lectures twice a month will venture into the science of astronomy, the Monterey Civil Grand Jury and always, our local historians. The Gentrain Society has so much to offer, and we can't wait to bring you into our membership and future which will expand your lives, form new friendships, and engage you in learning you've never experienced before. Thank you for this opportunity to lead you. I welcome all your ideas and opinions. As the character Viola De Lesseps in the movie *Shakespeare in Love* says to her closest friend, "It is a new world."

Gentrain Society Board Meetings

The next Gentrain Society Board meetings will be held on campus on **January 18 and February 15** at 2:45 pm in MPC Social Sciences 104. Please notice we are now holding our Board meetings the third Wednesday of each month, directly after the Wednesday Lecture. Meetings are open to all Gentrain Society Members.

Membership Report

Merry Nolte, Membership Chair

Welcome to these new Gentrain Members: Sherry Brient and Brian Merrill.

Thank you to all our members who have renewed this year. If you received a final reminder from me last month, and have not responded, this is the last issue of The Conductor you will get! If this has slipped your mind, please send in your renewal right away, so you do not miss any issues.

How To Register For Gentrain Spring 2023

Go to www.mpc.edu and select WEBREG in the upper left corner. Select ADD / DROP / REG. Sign-in using your MPC ID number (9 digits) and pin code. Choose Add/Drop/Register. Term will be Spring 2023.

Enter section number 0253. The other sections will be linked. Your fees should be \$42.00. This will register you for all four sections of **Gentrain starting January 24, 2023 through May 18, 2023** with no class on March 21 and 23 for Spring Break. Please complete your registration before the first class meeting on January 24.

You may also want to purchase a parking pass online when you register or buy it on campus the first week of class. More detailed instructions on how to register can be found at www.gentrain.org under the heading Registration or on the www.mpc.edu website.

Scholarship Report

Vikki Logan, Scholarship Chair

Mary Anne Kane left a substantial amount in her will to benefit the Gentrain Scholarship Fund. Next Spring a \$5,000. Scholarship in her name will be

given. The remainder of the bequest will be used in future awards in her memory.

Meet Marlaina Fernandez, winner of the scholarship in memory of Lynn Swerrie: After many years of taking classes with little support, Marlaina was accepted into the Maurine Church Coburn School of Nursing at MPC which she describes as an "amazing feeling!" She is a first generation college student. She plans to continue studying at CSUMB. She hopes to work closely with the youth of our community because, "I was once that little girl that felt lost, afraid, and alone, but I want to assure the youth that there is help out there and people that do care." In describing Marlaina's many positive attributes, one of her instructors had this to say about her, "Marlaina has a true talent for communication with a gift of gentle humor that delights everyone."

Meet Angelica Olvera, winner of the scholarship in memory of Anne Flynn. Angelica is majoring in Early Childhood Education. Our Childcare Center at MPC has received many awards for excellence, and Angelica considers herself very lucky to be part of this professional program. This is what her Early Childhood Education counselor has to say about her, "It is truly my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Angelica. I have been in education for 29 years, and Angelica absolutely stands out as one of my most tenacious students for many reasons and has my utmost respect and admiration. Angelica is a very dedicated student who truly has a passion for learning and growing. Not only does she care about earning good grades, she also cares about learning as much as she can and becoming the best at whatever she does. The world would be a better place with a few more Angelicas.

No Tut Tut - It's Ramses the Great !

Rene Kimzey

Hop in a pod, put on your goggles, strap yourself down and zip back 3000 years led by Queen Nefertari through a magnificent, ancient tomb and temple to meet her beloved husband, Ramses II. This was only part of a recent Gentrain Society special event enhanced by Tom Logan's pre-trip lecture on Ramses the Great who ruled for 67 years, creating the Golden Age of Egypt (1279-1213 BCE).

Ramses (born of the God Ra) had over 100 children and several wives, including a Hittite Princess as part of a peace treaty. For his most honored wife, Nefertari, he constructed an elaborate tomb in the Valley of the Queens, and her equally-sized statue resides beside him at Abu Simbel which also depicts his beloved mother Tuya. Atypically, women in this kingdom were allowed

to divorce, own property and had equality under the law.

The exhibition included 181 items featuring beautifully crafted sarcophagi, elaborate gold jewelry, and human and animal mummies. The intricate detailing of the gilded sarcophagus of Sennedjim (Servant of the Place of Truth) was a splendid example of the opulence of the Golden Age.



Exhibited for the first time were cat, lion, mongoose, crocodile and scarab beetle mummies reflecting the Egyptians' association of animals with gods. Elaborate necklaces, anklets, pectorals and earrings of gold, lapis lazuli and carnelian were frequently decorated with the lotus flower which symbolizes eternal rebirth.



Worshipped as a god during his own lifetime, Ramses excelled as a warrior, builder, and peacemaker. As a warrior, he personally led his armies to gain control over Canaan, Phoenicia, Nubia, and the Sheridan Sea Pirates. As a builder, he created cities, temples, monuments and factories purported to yield 250 chariots, 1000 weapons, 200 chariots and 100 shields per week. A prime building example is the awe-inspiring 66' high, rock-cut Abu Simbel entrance/temple which stands yet today, even after its 1968 relocation to avoid its being submerged with the construction of Lake Nasser. His peace treaty prototype is still used today.

The tour of *Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs* afforded Gentrainers the opportunity to experience a time 3000 years ago and half a world away through hi-tech imagery, a virtual reality experience and nicely done exhibits. Enhancing the experience is the knowledge that part of each ticket purchase helps fund

on-going efforts to excavate and restore the tomb plundered by raiders and floods.

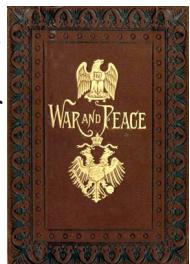
more exhibit photos



The Gentrain Book Club

Gerard Kapolka

The Gentrain Book club will read the second half of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in January and February. Meetings are on Zoom at 7:00 pm Wednesdays. If you wish to be put on the mailing list and receive reading assignments, please contact Gerry Kapolka at gkapolka@gmail.com.



Gentrain Society Program

Wednesday Lectures

Gentrain Wednesday Lectures are held in LF 103 from 1:30 to 2:30 pm. Visitors are welcome; no charge or registration is required.

January 4, 2023 - 1:30 pm

The Astronomy Institute - A History of MIRA

Dr. Wm. Bruce Weaver will describe the origins and 50-year history of Monterey County's first and only professional astronomical observatory and the development of the only fully-independent observatory of the 20th century. MIRA's research telescope is at 5000 feet altitude in the Santa Lucia mountains at one of the best astronomical sites in the world. He will explain how astronomers and local students, using only alternative energy sources for power, have studied the Universe for 40 years at this high-technology mountain-top observatory.



Dr. Weaver, MIRA's first astronomer, is the Director of the Institute. He published pioneering studies in the application of artificial intelligence to stellar classification and modern statistical analysis of star formation. He was co-author of a new stellar classification system in the near-infrared using instrumentation he designed and built. He was a co-discoverer of star spots on newly-formed stars and used those data to determine their axial inclinations. His current interests are a new way to

simulate the nonequilibrium transfer of energy in extreme stars and the development of new MIRA instrumentation. In his spare time, he invented the first route finding program for Ford Motor Company, a specialized computer chip for solving stratigraphy problems. He also raises orchids.

January 18, 2023 - 1:30 pm The Astronomy Institute - Current Research at MIRA

Drs. Jean Perkins and Daniel Cotton will give an overview of current research and activities at MIRA. They will focus on two techniques in which MIRA scientists specialize: asteroseismology and polarimetry. Asteroseismology is the study of star quakes - its application can reveal what the inside of a star looks like. Polarimetry measures the orientation of light waves; it is particularly good for understanding stellar geometry. Together these techniques promise to teach us more about the lives and deaths of stars and about the evolution of the Galaxy.

Dr. Perkins got her PhD in Astronomy in 2017 from New Mexico State University. She spent three years in postdoctoral research at Yale University before coming to MIRA in the fall of 2020. She studies the lives of stars through a technique called asteroseismology. By studying star quakes Dr. Perkins gains valuable information about the insides of stars. In particular, she



looks at stars that are older and more massive than the Sun. Additionally, Dr. Perkins leads the outreach and education programs that MIRA hosts. Outside of her research and education activities, she enjoys square dancing, knitting, and reading.

Dr. Cotton has been a MIRA astronomer since 2021. He grew up near Newcastle, Australia where he also went to university. There he completed a PhD in Physics in 2008 on nanoscale lithography of plastics with electronic properties. Since then he has worked in

space and astronomy, first in space telescope instrumentation in Leicester in the UK, then studying the atmospheres of planets and stars at the University of



New South Wales and working for Anglo Australian Telescope. His major achievements include mapping the distribution of carbon monoxide on Venus and realizing decades old predictions of polarization in stellar atmospheres caused by rapid spinning and harmonic resonance induced pulsations. Outside of astronomy he participates in outdoor sports and has published poems and short fiction.

February 1, 2023 - 1:30 pm Visualizing Science

Before photography allowed scientists to document their findings in the field and lab, they relied on illustrations drawn or painted by hand to communicate their discoveries.

Even in today's world, in which powerful telescopes, microscopes and cameras can reveal so much about the world around us, science illustration still plays an important role in conveying complex ideas, from virology to earth science to botany. Science illustrator and artist **Erin E. Hunter** will give a history of science illustration through the ages, then present many of the ways in which it remains a crucial tool for researchers and educators today.





Erin Hunter is a trained science illustrator with a background in graphic design. She splits her work between fine art paintings depicting the natural world, and technical illustrations for an academic science journal (*Annual Reviews*).

February 15, 2023 - 1:30 pm What's New In Rome?



Gentrain Philosophy Instructor **Stephanie Spoto** spent the summer traveling through Rome and Paris in order to study Ancient Greek and to soak up the art and history of the region.

When most people think of Rome, they immediately think of the ancient Roman world, and tourists from all over the world flock to Rome to experience this history. However, Dr. Spoto was interested in the kind of art that breaks with the



This is a photograph Dr. Spoto took of a sculpture by Sun Yuan and Peng Yu at the Cloister of Bramante in Rome. This sculpture is part of the exhibition *Crazy, the madness of contemporary art*. A great exhibition project, curated by Danilo Eccher.

traditions of the past and seeks out new forms of expression. In this lecture, she will discuss her favorite traditional galleries full of Medieval and Renaissance art, but most of the lecture will be looking at what's new in contemporary art on exhibition in the various modern art galleries of Rome.

Dr. Spoto teaches Humanities at California State University, Monterey Bay and philosophy at Monterey Peninsula College. She holds a PhD in English Literature from The University of Edinburgh, with her doctoral work exploring the influence of esoteric and occult philosophy on early modern literature and politics. She has had many published works in Europe and the United States. She has talked literature and philosophy on The SRB Podcast and Not Radio, and has been the coordinator of a community philosophy reading group at Old Capitol Books in downtown Monterey for more than four years.

MPC Fall Gentrain Program

January 24, 26, 31 - February 2, 7, 9, 14, 16

WRLD 404B: THE ROMAN EMPIRE (14 - 400 CE)

This course is designed for older adults to examine the rise and fall of the Roman Empire and the influence of early Christianity on its development. Art, literature, history, philosophy and religion are studied in order to draw universal observations that enable older adults to think about constructions of family, community, and historical global issues as they relate to their lives.

February 21, 23, 28 - March 2, 7, 9, 14, 16

GENT 405: THE MEDIEVAL WORLD: PART I (400-1100 CE)

The course begins with a look at the Western world after the collapse of Rome. It then traces the incursion of the Germanic tribes into the West and the culture which was produced by the combination of Roman, Christian, and Germanic elements: its theology, art and architecture, and literature. A brief excursion into the Byzantine world relieves the gloom of the darkest ages in Western history.

GENTRAIN EVENTS - VIRTUAL

In person Special Events are limited because of Covid-19, and many organizations are filling in the gap locally and at a distance with an amazing array of creative online presentations, both live and recorded. **We will be using the Special Events space to share some "events" we have found that will be available in 2023.** Some are direct links and some are links to websites with information of interest.

Monterey County Theatre Alliance

Monterey County Theatre Alliance (MCTA) website: theatremonterey.org has regular updates on local live theatre events, primarily virtually. Here are the MCTA Virtual Live Theatre presentations created and presented by Howard Burnham and Carol Marquart. For more information about these shows, go to TheatreMonterey.org or email Andrea McDonald at admin@TheatreMonterey.org

You may register to attend any or all of these presentations at theatremonterey.org. Once registered you will be sent a Zoom link to a live webinar of the presentation. No fee for each performance, but a link to an optional shared donation to the presenter and the MCTA (to help pay for tech and presentation costs) will be available at the conclusion of each presentation.

Jan 7 *Jules Verne, the Father of Sci-Fi* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Jan 21 *Alan Pinkerton and his Detective Agency* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Feb 4 *Tsar Nicholas II and Family, as recalled by Sydney Gibbes, their English tutor* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Feb 5, 5:30 pm *The Murder of Rasputin* by Carol Marquart, Living History Company & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Feb 18 *Bosie"- Lord Alfred Douglas, Oscar Wilde's nemesis* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Mar 4 *General W.T. Sherman* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Mar 18 *"I will be good"- Aspects of Queen Victoria* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Apr 1 *God's Megaphone* - C.S. Lewis - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Apr 15 *Springtime in Paris - aspects of the City of Light* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

May 6 *H.C. Andersen, the (un)ugly storyteller* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

May 20 *General Jimmy Doolittle (for Armed Forces Day)* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

June 3 *An excellent seat on a crocodile - the eccentric Squire Waterton* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

June 17 *Karl Marx in his London exile* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

July 1 *Thomas Paine, stormy petrel of two revolutions (for July 4)* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

July 15 *Thomas Babbage, the father of the computer* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Monterey Public Library - Online Resources -

[https://monterey.org/services/library/
education_research/articles_databases.php](https://monterey.org/services/library/education_research/articles_databases.php)

E Books and Audio Books

Especially for Children

Books and Literature

Career Pathways

General Reference

History and Genealogy

Language Learning

Monterey Newspapers

Science

Tutoring

Veteran Resources



January 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 lect1	5	6	7
7	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 lect2 meet	19	20	21
22	23	24 unit4b	25	26 unit4b	27	28
29	30	31 uni4b				

February 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1 lect3	2 unit4b	3	4
5	6	7 unit4b	8	9 unitb	10	11
12	13	14 unit4b	15 lect4 meet	16 unit4b	17	18
19	20	21 unit5	22	23 unit5	24	25
26	27	28 unit5				

**Yes, I would like to contribute to the
Gentrain Society Scholarship Fund
980 Fremont Street, Monterey CA 93940**

(Please make your checks payable to MPC/Gentrain Society)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Key to Calendar

lect1= LECTURE - THE ASTRONOMY INSTITUTE - A HISTORY OF MIRA

lect2 = LECTURE - THE ASTRONOMY INSTITUTE - CURRENT RESEARCH AT MIRA

lect3 = LECTURE -VISUALIZING SCIENCE

lect4 = LECTURE - WHAT'S NEW IN ROME?

meet = GENTRAIN SOCIETY BOARD MEETING

unit4b = WRLD 404B: THE ROMAN EMPIRE (14 - 400 CE)

unit5 = GENTRAIN 405: THE MEDIEVAL WORLD: PART I (400-1100 CE)

Invitation to Join

Dues: \$35 per year, \$50 Couples
Send your check payable to the *MPC/Gentrain Society*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please clip out and send to:
Membership, *Gentrain Society* - MPC
980 Fremont St., Monterey CA 93940

The Gentrain Society of MPC

2022 - 2023

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Acting Vice President:	
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Member-at-Large: Linda Wessel	(707) 483-1595
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Lectures: Paul & Terry Blum	(831) 372-0895
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Allison Porter	(831) 394-8051
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The Gentrain Society of Monterey

Peninsula College

980 Fremont St Monterey, CA 93940

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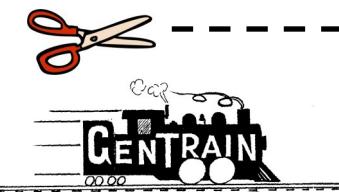
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GENTRAIN SOCIETY JANUARY/FEBRUARY

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