



Leading the Way to Lifelong Learning

# Conductor

Website: [gentrain.org](http://gentrain.org)

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Gentrain Society  
of MPC

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September/October 2024

## President's Corner

*Peter Purdue*  
**President**



Fellow Gentrainers, Greetings!

As we begin a new year (September 1) we are putting the COVID impact further into the past. Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic we have not been able to organize a trip to the Ashland Shakespeare Festival. Finally, as this year drew to an end we were able to resume our participation in this highly desired activity. This is evidence of a return to more normal times.

Let us recall the mission of the GENTRAIN Society. The Society was formed to support the GENTRAIN Program of the MPC. As many of you know, GENTRAIN is an acronym for General Education Train of Courses. Okay, so what is that? It is a program to "provide an interdisciplinary education experience so that realms as diverse as literature, the sciences, music and art and their interrelationships could be appreciated and comprehended." MPC faculty provide the courses that carry out this mission. What do we do? We are given the mission to support the Gentrain Program, the intellectual, cultural, and social interests of our members, the community, and the College.

What do we actually do? We provide operational support to faculty who teach in the Program; help instructors with daily administrative details of lectures; help recruit students; and raise funds to support faculty in advancing their knowledge base and teaching skills. We established a check-out library of books and other materials that relate directly to course content. We run a bi-monthly lecture series (Wednesday Lecture series) to enhance and expand the intellectual horizons of our members. Other activities that support intellectual and cultural interests include group excursions to local and Bay Area theaters and museums. For many years we have organized and run charter buses to the Ashland Shakespeare Festival. And we have finally been able to restart the program! In 1991 the Gentrain Society Scholarship Fund was established in order to provide



**Allison  
Porter with  
check-out  
library**

funding to encourage older returning students to continue their education. We keep the social life of our members in mind by organizing events such as picnics, end of term on-campus tea and coffee get-togethers and related events.

During the 2+ years reign of COVID we lost a number of our members, and student registrations also dropped. We have not yet fully recovered. My major concern over the next year is to work with the Gentrain Board to recruit new members and to find ways to encourage those members who we lost during COVID to rejoin. We will need to expand the activities that we offer to attract new members and retain existing ones. We need to "sell" the value of Gentrain to our community by showcasing the ways we add to the intellectual and cultural life of the community.

It's time to get to work.

## Gentrain Society Board Meetings

The next Gentrain Society Board meeting will be held on campus on **September 18, 2024 and October 16, 2024** at 2:45 pm in MPC Social Sciences 104. These **Meetings are open to all Gentrain Society Members.**

## 2024/2025 Elections

**The Gentrain Society announces the election of Board Officers for 2024-2025:**

President: Peter Purdue  
Vice President: Patty Burke  
Secretary: Carol Harpster  
Treasurer: Mary Alice Rennick  
Members-at-Large  
Ruth Alota  
Stephanie Booth  
Melissa Newlin

## Membership Report

*Merry Nolte, Membership Chair*

**Welcome to these new Gentrain Society members:  
Vernon Brown, Patty Burke and Margaret Rodina.**

You should have received your membership renewal letters in early August, with this year's parking sticker included. If you did not get your sticker, please note it on the form when you return it with your check, and I will send you a replacement. If you did not get a renewal letter, you may have joined or renewed after April 1. In that case, you're already paid up, and you

should have received a parking sticker from me in the mail. If you did not get either a membership renewal letter or a parking sticker, please contact me at [membership@gentrain.org](mailto:membership@gentrain.org).

## **How to Register for the Fall of 2024 Gentrain Program**

Fall 2024 Gentrain classes are entirely in-person. A \$42 "student fee" is charged for "services." This is not a tuition fee. But you do have to pay that to register. Students who wish to attend "for credit" should refer to the Fall 2024 MPC catalogue. **The first day of class was Tuesday, August 20.**

**To register online**, follow the link just below the video at the top of the Gentrain **website**, **[gentrain.org](http://gentrain.org)**. If you do not have access to the internet or need more help, visit the Admissions Support Office located on the first floor of the Student Services building, or call 831 646 4002 during normal business hours.

## **Scholarship Report** *Vikki Logan, Scholarship Chair*

In the last issue of *The Conductor* we printed a lot of letters from thankful recipients of our scholarship awards! Remember that unlike other organizations, we have no overhead so all of your contributions go directly to them.

### **Meet Yasmine Poxton, winner of the Lynn Swerrie Memorial Scholarship:**

In reviewing Yasmine's scholarship application, I came across this letter written by Connie Hebert, Mathematics Instructor at MPC. "This letter is to recommend Yasmine Poxton. I first met her last year in my PreCalculus class. She was studious and deeply engaged in the class. Her quick wit was always a delight in the class discussions. As the class went on, it was wonderful to see how she got caught in the joy of learning mathematics. There were concepts that challenged her, but she enjoyed the challenge.

The more I got to know Yasmine, the more I saw her beautiful heart. If there was someone within her power to help, she helped them. She volunteered to be a note-taker for a classmate who needed the accommodation. She regularly helped classmates through difficult math problems during the problem-solving sessions in class. But beyond helping, Yasmine radiates positivity. Because of her past difficult experiences, or maybe in spite of, she chooses to have a positive outlook on each situation. She chooses growth instead of worry. Instead of complaining, she encourages. I've seen the effect she has on her classmates. Students get caught up in the wave of her enthusiasm. Each time after talking with Yasmine myself, I'm inspired to be a better instructor and person. It has been a pleasure to get to know Yasmine over these last two years. I highly recommend Yasmine Poxton for a scholarship!"

**Meet Jesus Jimenez, winner of the Anne Flynn Memorial Scholarship.** Jesus is OUTSTANDING IN EVERY WAY! His major is Biological Science, and he plans to be a physician. He is a first generation college student. "Any scholarship will help me tremendously towards accomplishing my educational goal of becoming a doctor. I am a full-time student, and with that, I have sacrificed working full-time, so financial fears are something I struggle with. I live on my own so I have many expenses. I am somewhat in debt, but it is okay because it has all been to support my dream of higher education. I wish I could ask my parents for money, but that is impossible because they are in the same struggle of living paycheck to paycheck. With sacrifice I know that I will persevere and accomplish my dream.

"Despite his rigorous coursework, Jesus has maintained a 4.0 GPA. Luke Spence, math instructor, has this to say about him, "Jesus is precisely the type of student that MPC should be supporting through scholarships. His academic achievement (4.0 GPA), outstanding work ethic, and the way he gives back and looks after other students should be encouraged and supported."

**Recent donation by Vikki Logan in loving memory of her dear high school friend, JoAnn Garner Shankle.**

**A donation from Wayne and Linda Cruzan In memory of Mary Ann Kane.**

## **The Gentrain Book Club** *Gerard Kapolka*

**The Great Books discussion group will take a break through September and resume in October to discuss *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.** We meet on Zoom on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm. The discussions last about an hour. If you wish to join our group, email me, Gerry Kapolka, at [gtkapolka@gmail.com](mailto:gtkapolka@gmail.com) to receive a reading list and Zoom invitations. We welcome all newcomers.

## **Continuing and Professional Education Program Update**

***Alexis Bollin, Continuing and Professional Education Interim Director***

This fall the Continuing and Professional Education program is bringing back community education classes to Monterey Peninsula community members! After a hiatus, Monterey Peninsula College and the Continuing and Professional Education program are happy to provide community members with classes in the areas of cooking and the arts this fall. Classes provide community members with an opportunity to engage in continuous learning activities, build community, and allow them the flexibility to learn on their time. **Classes this fall include things such as Harvest Pies: Sweet Fall Flavors, Sourdough Secrets: From Starter to Loaf, Granola Bliss: Mix, Bake, Enjoy!, Beginning**

## Improv Comedy, Introduction to Crochet, and many more!

To learn about what classes are being offered this fall join us on our website at [www.mpc.edu/ContinuingEd](http://www.mpc.edu/ContinuingEd). To find details about each class, select from one of the five categories under "Fall 2024 Class Offerings." Once you have found a class and are ready to enroll, click on the "Enroll Now" button, which will take you to our registration system. **Please note, the classes in Continuing Education do not require you to apply to the college in order to enroll**, you simply select the class you want to enroll in, add it to your cart, and go through the check out process. Enrollment is quick, easy and can be done through your phone, tablet, or a computer. If you prefer to enroll in-person, please give me a call at 831-646-3009 and we can make arrangements to have you come to the Monterey Campus and I can walk you through the registration process.

I am excited that we are able to provide you all with additional class opportunities and I look forward to seeing you all this fall!



# FALL CLASS SCHEDULE

## ART Classes

8/21 - 10/9	Beginning Improv Comedy
8/31 & 9/7	Introduction to E-Etching for Jewelry & Metal Arts
10/5 - 10/26	Introduction to Crochet

## Culinary Skills & Cooking Classes

8/22	Bagels & Dips & Spreads, Oh My!
8/26 - 11/18	Nourish Together- Community Meal Prepping Class
9/6	Harvest Pies: Sweet Fall Flavors
9/27 & 9/28	Sourdough Secrets: From Starter to Loaf
10/04	Paella Party!
11/16	Granola Bliss: Mix, Bake, Enjoy!

## 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.*

## September 4, 2024 - 1:30 pm Preventing the Next Pandemic

Only a few years after the COVID-19 pandemic, experts warn that the world could face another global pandemic or an even worse biological threat. But what can we do to prevent the next crisis? In this talk, Erik Dahl argues that much of the answer lies in improving our intelligence, surveillance, and warning capabilities to anticipate and detect health threats. That intelligence comes from medical and public health surveillance systems as well as from traditional intelligence agencies, but the bad news is that we are not much better prepared today to detect global health dangers than we were in 2020. Dahl outlines what must be done as we prepare for the next pandemic.

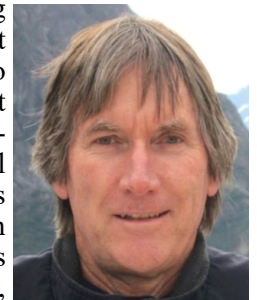


**Erik J. Dahl**

Erik J. Dahl, Ph.D., is an associate professor of national security affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, where he specializes in intelligence

## September 18, 2024 - 1:30 pm The CIA's Attempt to Recover the Soviet Submarine and the Connections to Monterey

Mike Clancy shares an amazing intelligence mission. Project Azorian was a CIA project to covertly recover the sunken Soviet ballistic missile submarine, K-129. The K-129 went down with all hands approximately 1,600 miles northwest of Hawaii on 8 March 1968 at a location that was unknown to the Soviets. However, using underwater surveillance technology, the U.S. Navy was able to determine where the submarine sank within about 6 miles. Subsequently, the U.S. Navy submarine Halibut was able to find and photograph the K-129, more than 3 miles down on the ocean floor. This enabled a covert recovery operation, which was launched in June of 1974, using a remarkable ship built specifically for this task, the Glomar Explorer.



**Mike Clancy**

Project Azorian was one of the most complex, secretive, expensive and potentially rewarding intelligence gathering operations of the 20th Century. The marine technology it employed in the attempt to recover the submarine was like nothing seen before or since.

There are three significant connections between Project Azorian and Monterey. This presentation will highlight these connections while reviewing the history of this



incredible and extraordinarily dangerous episode of the Cold War. In addition, the speaker will present a novel theory on the root cause of the K-129 disaster.

Mr. Clancy is a former Technical and Scientific Director of the U.S. Navy's Fleet Numerical Meteorology and Oceanography and a previous Gentrain Society speaker.

**Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 - 1:30 pm**  
**The State of Journalism Today - A**  
**Retired Newspaperman's Perspective**

**Reg Henry**, a former editor of the Monterey Herald and the son of a Reuters correspondent, has lived and breathed journalism almost his entire life with a career spanning three continents. He has seen the profession at its peak and witnessed its startling decline, which can be measured not only in falling readership and viewership but also in the denigration of those who carry on the craft. How did the once proud Fourth Estate fall so low? Was it inevitable? Can journalism be revised to serve the



**Reg Henry**

mission that Thomas Jefferson believed was vital to the health of a democratic republic? Henry will try to provide answers informed by his long experience.

Reg Henry was born in Singapore and grew up in Australia. His mother was Australian and his father was an Englishman who worked for the Reuters news agency, including a stint as a war correspondent during World War II. Reg spent 45 years as a journalist working for newspapers in Australia, Britain and the United States. From 1988-1993, he was the editor of *The Herald* in Monterey.

He began his career at the *Courier-Mail* in Brisbane, Australia. After serving with the Australian army in Vietnam as an army reporter, he moved to England in 1973 and worked five years on the sports desk of *The Times of London*. He moved to the United States in 1978 and spent most of his career at the *Post-Gazette* in Pittsburgh, PA, then a sister paper of *The Herald*. He retired in Pittsburgh at the end of 2014 as deputy editorial page editor and a nationally syndicated columnist and moved back to Monterey County. In retirement, he is the editor of the *Point Lobos Foundation Magazine* and has written a novel titled *Love in the Late Edition*.

**October 16, 2024 - 1:30 pm**  
**The History, Art, and Culture of the**  
**Etruscans:**

**9th century BC to 1st century BC.**

**Jack Erickson** will give a lecture on the Etruscans, the

dominant Italian people who lived in central Italy from Rome north to Bologna. There were twelve major Etruscan cities, all located on hills and surrounded by stone fortresses to provide defense. Etruria was eventually taken over by the Roman Empire in the 4th century BC. On recent travels to Italy, Erickson has visited several Etruscan cities including Lucca, Volterra, and Tarquinia. In Volterra, he visited the Guarnacci Etruscan Museum which has more than 300 alabaster urns used for storing the ashes of wealthy Etruscans. Urns were designed by artists who depicted the faces and figures of the Etruscans whose ashes are stored in the urns.



**Jack Erickson**



Jack Erickson has a fascinating bio. He was a USAF intelligence officer, a speechwriter for three Senators,

senior editor at a national trade association, free-lance writer for *The Washington Post*, *The Washington Star*, and other newspapers and magazines. He received an MA in Russian Studies from Georgetown and was an exchange student to Leningrad in 1972 to study intensive Russian. Along with other exchange students, he traveled around the Soviet Union including Kizhi, Tallinn, Moscow, and Kiev. He's had two publishing careers, starting his publishing company RedBrick Press, and writing five books on the emerging microbrewing industry. His first book, *Star Spangled Beer: A Guide to America's Microbreweries and Brewpubs* was awarded best self-published book in 1987. He's written about 20 books including the Milan Thriller Series. He travels to Italia every year and has American and Italian friends and researchers. He also has access to high level anti-terrorism DIGOS police at the Milano Questura. In June, he and his researcher were invited to meet the new Questore (Police Chief) at the Questura. He was the capo of DIGOS anti-terrorism police in Milan who provided Erickson with valuable information for his four Milan Thrillers.

### **MPC Fall Gentrain Program**

**August 20, 22, 27, 29 and September 3, 5, 10, 12**  
**GENTRAIN 1/401: PREHISTORY AND**  
**EARLIEST CIVILIZATIONS TO 1200 B.C.**

Human origins: where, when, and how. Cave paintings and prehistoric world views. The agricultural and urban revolutions, and two of the planet's first great civilizations: Sumeria and Egypt.

**September 17, 19, 24, 26 and October 1, 3, 8, 10**  
**GENTRAIN 2/402: FOUNDATIONS OF THE**  
**CLASSICAL WORLD - 1200-500 B.C.**

Minoan, Mycenaean, and Hebrew civilizations. Agamemnon, Helen and the Trojan War, and Homer: the Heroic Age. The heroes of the Old Testament, Greek art and Greek and Hebrew history, religion, literature, and world views.

**October 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, 31 and November 5, 7**  
**GENTRAIN 3/403: THE GOLDEN AGE OF**  
**GREECE - 500-300 BCE**

One of the most amazing periods in Western history: the Persian Wars, Plato and Aristotle, the Parthenon and Greek sculpture, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; and as the context for all of this, the world's first experiments in democracy.

### **ASHLAND REPORT**

*Allison Porter*

Bright and early on July 1, thirty intrepid Gentrainers left Monterey for the first trip to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival since 2019. About half were newbies; the rest were excited to be reprising a beloved summer adventure. Don has retired, and we had a new driver, Ash, who managed well, and he quickly won the confidence and affection of the travelers.

Our usual 7-play week was curtailed, due to OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL not offering a full complement of plays. This made for a more relaxed schedule. For years, people had been suggesting that an "extra day" in Oregon might be nice, and we were now afforded the equivalent. On Tuesday, several of us took a long walk to the reservoir at the top of Lithi Park, and we sure wish we'd brought our bathing suits! It was getting warm. By the end of the week, temperatures were reaching 110 degrees.

Some stores and restaurants have shuttered since Covid, but many favorites remain. The shopping and eating in Ashland are still top notch. One night, before going downstairs at Thai Pepper to eat on the terrace by the river, we ordered Moscow Mules in the upstairs bar, in memory of our good friend Jane, who introduced me to all the "good spots" in Ashland the first year I went, when I knew no one. All the ice cream shops are still in business, but sadly, ginger ice cream has been scrubbed from the line-up at Zoey's.

We saw two plays in the Bowmer Theater and two in the Elizabethan (outdoor) Theater. The OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL is definitely trying to work its way back into full performance mode, but it isn't there yet. Both theaters used essentially the same sets for their plays, and the costumes sometimes seemed as if they had been pulled at random from the company's racks of garments from seasons past. None of this seriously detracted from the performances, which were enjoyable. Our after-play discussions were unusually rich and informative - possibly because there was more time for each play.

Of course, as might have been expected (but wasn't) the one play NO ONE was looking forward to was *Lizard Boy*. It is a musical - a grungy piece from Seattle about a boy mentally and physically damaged when a dragon monster attacked his kindergarten class. It was not originated by OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL and has been playing around the country for several years. It was great. The three creators and original cast members play many instruments and sing original songs that are upbeat and poignant at the same time. Everyone's favorite and even Arlene Haffa, a notorious musical-phobe agreed. It was the last play we saw, and we left the theater buoyant and happy. Alan Haffa chose *Lizard Boy* for his commemorative T-Shirt.



**photo by**  
**Justin Sincoff**

The Festival is planning a full complement of plays next year, and our deposit is due soon. I hope all of you who didn't get to go this year will join us next summer.



# The Oregon Shakespeare Festival

photos by Ruth Alota

## Ruth meets cast members of *Lizard Boy*



**Justin Huertas. - Trevor, director,  
producer and composer**



**Kiki deLohr - Siren**



**William A.  
Williams - Cary**

## The Theatres



**Allen Elizabethan  
Theater in the day time**



***Lizard Boy* in the indoor  
Thomas Theater**



**Allen Elizabethan  
Theater at night**

## Exploring Ashland



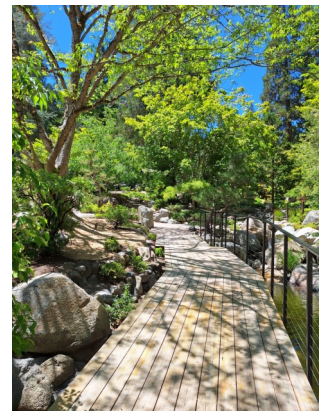
**4th of July parade**



**The Sundial Garden**



**Green Leaf for lunch**



**Lithia Park**

September 2024						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 unit1	4 lect1	5 unit1	6	7
8	9	10 unit1	11	12 unit1	13	14
15	16	17 unit2	18 lect2 meet	19 unit2	20	21
22	23	24 unit2	25	26 unit2	27	28
29	30					

October 2024						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1 unit2	2 lect3	3 unit2	4	5
6	7	8 unit2	9	10 unit2	11	12
13	14	15 unit3	16 lect4 meet	17 unit3	18	19
20	21	22 unit3	23	24 unit3	25	26
27	28	29 unit3	30	31 unit3		

### Key to Calendar

**lect1 = LECTURE - PREVENTING THE NEXT PANDEMIC**

**lect2 = LECTURE - THE CIA'S ATTEMPT TO RECOVER THE SOVIET SUBMARINE AND THE CONNECTIONS TO MONTEREY**

**lect3 = LECTURE - THE STATE OF JOURNALISM TODAY - A RETIRED NEWSPAPERMAN'S PERSPECTIVE**

**lect4 = LECTURE - THE HISTORY, ART, AND CULTURE OF THE ETRUSCANS: 9TH CENTURY BC TO 1ST CENTURY BC.**

**meet = GENTRAIN SOCIETY BOARD MEETING**

**unit1 = GENTRAIN 1/401: PREHISTORY AND EARLIEST CIVILIZATIONS TO 1200 B.C.**

**unit2 = GENTRAIN 2/402: FOUNDATIONS OF THE CLASSICAL WORLD (1200-500 BCE)**

**unit3 = GENTRAIN 3/403: THE GOLDEN AGE OF GREECE (500-300 BCE)**

**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: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

### 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  
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**The Gentrain Society of MPC  
2023 - 2024  
Board of Directors**

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Vice President: Position open  
Secretary: Carol Harpster (510) 410-0822  
Treasurer: Mary Alice Rennick (831) 375-0702  
Member-at-Large: Melissa Newlin (831) 869-0646  
Member-at-Large: Stephanie Booth (831) 393-1679  
Member-at-Large: Ruth Alota (831) 392-5034  
Imm. Past President: Mary Pendlay (831) 224-0478  
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Communications:  
Paul & Terry Blum (831) 372-0895  
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Membership: Merry Nolte (831) 659-4387  
Scholarship: Vikki Logan (831) 625-8653  
Special Events:  
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Michael Sovereign (831) 646-1912  
Oregon Shakespeare Festival:  
Allison Porter (831) 394-8051  
Webmaster: Mary Alice Rennick (831) 375-0702

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## **GENTRAIN SOCIETY SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER**

**September 4, 2024 - 1:30 pm - PREVENTING THE NEXT PANDEMIC** - Only a few years after the COVID-19 pandemic, experts warn that the world could face another global pandemic or an even worse biological threat. But what can we do to prevent the next crisis? In this talk, Erik Dahl argues that much of the answer lies in improving our intelligence, surveillance, and warning capabilities to anticipate and detect health threats.

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