

ESCOM Journal

Nov/Dec 2021



Lifelong Learning

Lifelong Doing

Lifelong Friendships

Thanks for being part of ESCOM's growth

*Photos: Laura Milholland (left),
Harvey Abernathey (right)*

Dear ESCOM Members:

Thank you to every one of you for participating in the many ESCOM events and programs throughout this past year. It was and remains an unprecedented time impacting everyone's lives, yet we are proud to share that with your support and engagement, we have flourished and are stronger than ever.

Since ESCOM's founding in 1973, our membership has increased steadily year to year. We remain an innovative pioneer in the use of community college resources to enhance the lives of active adults in Marin County and beyond. Our all-volunteer organization needs your help. It takes significant funds to cover our operational costs. We are grateful to the College of Marin for our ESCOM

Centers, the use of campus facilities for clubs and events as

well as the generous administrative support they provide. However, we must cover our cost of operation as well as the necessary software and equipment to run our organization.

Our member communication costs include the newsletters, Journal, Marin Community Education catalog pages, and website. In addition, the financial support of our 30 Clubs, office supplies, member events and Author Series are a portion of the costs we incur each year.

Since we no longer require you to pay a membership fee to be part of ESCOM we ask that you consider a donation, in lieu of the fee, to help sustain our organization.

To keep ESCOM strong, this year, we have set a fundraising goal of \$10,000. We ask your help to get us there and together we can thrive.

Please visit this link, <http://escom.marin.edu/donate> to make your annual contribution to ESCOM.

Please email us at escom@marin.edu if you would prefer to donate another way.

Thank you for your ongoing support and our best wishes to you and your family for a healthy and peaceful 2022.

Sincerely,

Luanne Mullin, President

Lois St Sure, Chair
ESCOM Council and Chair,
ESCOM Membership and
Marketing Committee

Volunteer Positions Open

Curriculum Committee

The Committee is looking for a few new members. Working with staff from the Community Education Department of COM, the Committee is responsible for recommendations on matters affecting the selection of the curriculum, classes, instructors and Community Education events such as the annual Author Lecture Series. Classes selected by the Committee may be listed in the catalog as EC and receive a reduction in the registration fee.

The Committee meets at 10:00 am on the third Wednesday of each month, with the exception of July. For more information, or to express your interest in serving on the committee, email Dick Park rmpark162@gmail.com.

ESCOM Journal

Associate Editor, line editing of all prose, Knowledge of and experience with Microsoft Word is essential

Writer, to cover ESCOM related news stories

Photo Editor, help organize submitted photos. Computer essential.

If you are interested or have questions contact the editor at denizespringer@gmail.com



Laura Milholland



Anne Pearson

A small group of ESCOM volunteers and club leaders were treated to a discussion with Louis Bershad, a COM alum, ESCOM lifetime member and generous donor. He was visiting the campus to speak with students.

Louis grew up in San Francisco and attended College of Marin from 1958 until 1960. The impact of his time at the college and some professors who believed in him led him to ultimately establish two COM scholarships in their names, Weaver Meadows of the Business faculty and Fred Thon in Drama.

Louis shared stories of his career as a Hollywood talent agent as well as his perspective on making meaningful contributions to the lives of others.

Get Free Access to National Newspapers and Magazines?

College of Marin Librarian, David Patterson, led a lively ESCOM Zoom program, "Beyond Facebook and Wikipedia," on October 22.

Among the advantages revealed in this exploration of the Internet is that if you have a library card issued by any Marin County library (MARINet) you can check in online to read publications like The New York Times, The Atlantic for free, fact check, find discounts on local events and museum admission, find obscure books outside of the county and much, much more.

If you missed the event, go to the following link to get

David's notes and list of sources:

<https://libguides.marin.edu/escom>

Stone Serpent

She is still there,
 in the frail light of this new day,
u c o i l e d
 on her sandstone sanctuary.

All night she lay,
 unfurled.
 A banner...
 Beneath the star spangled sky.

And now,
 still open,
 both inside and out,
 she warms to ultraviolet rays.

Soon the busyness of
 dragonflies, skippers, chickadees, and dandelions
 will join this going nowhere scene.

Stone Serpent speaks to me...

I too,
 am going nowhere,
 and must learn to...
u n c o i l.

-- Gail MacMillan

Laura Harrison



Laura Harrison

Harvey Abernathey



MEMOIR



Laura Milholland

City Hall

One night I got a call from City Hall in San Francisco. It's a big place, takes up two blocks. Several stories. They called because there was a bat flying around in there and it being City Hall, they wanted Animal Control, a City department, to get rid of the bat.

Usually when we got a bat call, we'd go in with our coffee can, and find the bat, typically on a curtain or something. Easy. Slip the can over the bat, which usually has no idea what's happening, slide the lid over the can and that's it.

This was different. Here there's a mezzanine, kind of a second floor, a rotunda maybe a hundred feet across, with the dome above. You can walk all the way around and come back where you started, which was what the bat was doing. It was flying around and around,

making serious distance if you added it all up, about ten feet above the marble of the second floor. Going like a, well, bat outta hell.

The maintenance guys watched with expectation, but I had no hope of getting that damn thing. Not with my coffee can anyway. I guess they knew what I was thinking and felt sorry for me. But I had a card up my sleeve. I asked them to wait while I went out to my truck and got a bass net. We used it for cats, mostly, and raccoons. I brought it back inside where the bat was still circling on the mezzanine.

I'm 5'10 and the handle was 4', so I missed the first try but got him neatly the third time he came around. Carefully I transferred him to the coffee can and I was done. Or thought I was.

The maintenance guys were impressed and gathered around to watch and kibitz. We were trading stories when one asked me if I'd ever been to the top of the City Hall Dome.

Bingo. I used to have a Finnish ride-along, a photographer named Mikko who always talked about *having access*. He'd been all over the City with me. We both laughed when I said he was waiting for me to get bit so he could shoot a picture. He said he'd been a lot of places chronicling the unusual. Spent some nights at S.F. General Hospital with the Institutional Police. Took photos of them struggling with combative, drugged-out customers in the emergency department. Mikko would have had a stroke if he knew he'd missed this.

"Never been up there." "Well, come with us!" They unlocked an obscure elevator. We went up, then through a locked door and up some stairs that brought us to another circular walkway. Now we were inside the dome, with another dome covering us, in a place as weird and secret as in a monster movie. We faced a long ladder that followed the contour of the dome (it had graffiti that said something funny about heart attacks). I climbed up and reached another, steeper ladder with a door at the top.

"Go ahead, open it and take a look!"

I went through the door and emerged into a gazebo on the tip-top of the City Hall dome. You can look up and see it from the street. It was a clear, cold night, a perfect place to see the city lights. Not many native San Franciscans have been there. Not even many City employees. I enjoyed it for a few minutes, then went back down and out to my truck. No pictures, though; sorry Mikko. Now whenever I see a photo of San Francisco City Hall my eyes go right to the top of the dome. -- Mike Holland

Marcia Summers



Ode to the Eagle

Circling you spiral down to earth
 Your great wings slicing the air
 Sharp golden eyes intent
 On prey that splashes
 Innocent of its final breath.
 A quick strike and upward
 Rising and landing
 To share the days repast and rest.



Laura Milholland

You reside between heaven and earth, land and sky
 Bridging the distance
 From mountain to river
 Cloud to mist, fire to stars.
 Sentry, messenger, lifemate
 Overseeing the landscape
 Discovered and claimed
 That has become yours.

Your ancient lineage and visage inspire
 serve as symbol of great nations and deeds
 Of deities and victorious leaders
 As soaring, flying and gliding you travel
 Gracefully beating majestic wings
 Occasionally dropping a feather
 That found becomes sacred
 A gift from the gods.

-- Anne Mulvaney

Musing on 80th Birthday

This Pandemic Year
 80 in August
 Irish genes
 Sensed the sorrow
 The horror, the history
 Early, I knew I belonged
 To "the least of them"
 Humans, like I
 Who feel, think and love
 Survive daily, or not
 In terror and anguish
 The youngest - the worst
 Images we have seen
 Of terrified children
 In arms of desperate parents
 Escape blocked
 As famine and violence await
 In this mountain of suffering
 Where is a path
 Mr. Rogers told children
 the simple message
 when bad things happened
 "Look for the helpers"
 Better yet, be a helper
 Choosing to breathe in hope
 I welcome a new day.

-- Jan Ardell

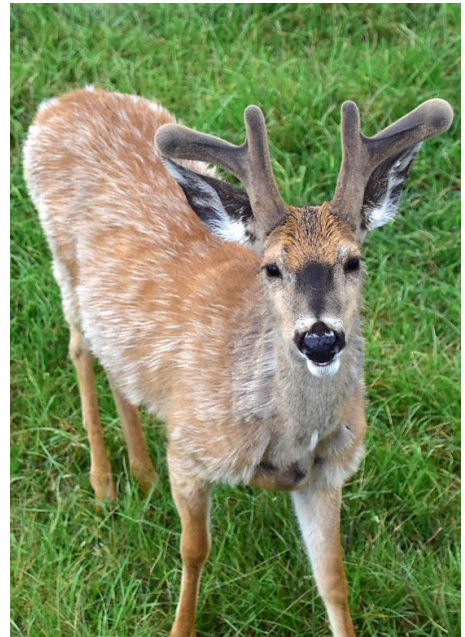
Brown Eyes

It was on the walking path,
 beneath my balcony,
 that I saw you in the form of a deer.

Big brown eyes that I loved,
 now looking back at me through a soundless moment.

We took time to stare,
 to study,
 to examine.

We, fixed in stillness,
 bearing our intrinsic stories of life,
spoke a language without words
 as if meeting once again to say (goodbye)
 let's try.
 -- Nora Manfredi



Laura Millholland



Photos: Laura Harrison (above),
Laura Millholland (left)



Hope

Lichen on a tortoise shell
Muted green patch yellow-brown
Swallowing the summer sun,
Marin hills wait for winter water.

Jean Stromberg

Grow Old Along With Me

(with apologies to Robert Browning)

Grow old along with me. The best is yet to be.

Give me your hand, take me with thee.

The last of life, for which the first was made:

Let's do the things we want to do,
we'll laugh and dance and drink and woo,
let's see – bring out your plans best-laid!

When they ask us how we are today,
We'll laugh and joke and jump and say OK!

But not too long as time goes on:
And seasons pass and tides recede,
and trees in the wind send out their seed,
we'll sing a different calmer, milder song.

We'll be so busy - moving all the time and humming,

But one day we'll forget about running!
Hand in hand we'll walk along the sea:
Yes, the best-laid plans will gather dust,
And some recollections will turn to rust.
And do you remember where I put my keys?

As we both become less eloquent,
And the trips to the bathroom more frequent,
We must step slow and not fall down:
Promise you'll catch me when I fall,
It seems like once you were so tall!
Tomorrow shall we go to town?

Laura Harrison



Come with me along the path, and be careful to see,
I know your eyes are not what they used to be.
The years will pass and the years will show:
Let's get a phone with big numbers to push,
In case we need 911 and we're in a rush.
Since time was fast and now it's slow.

And I will smile and fix and heal
the many woes that your body must reveal,
As you slowly walk with me along our way:
The measure of a life and worth, it's true,
not decided by anyone else but me and you.

No one else can look except to say:

Grow old along with me!

The best is yet to be.

-- Julio Burroughs



Laura Milholland

Hints of Autumn, Marilyn Bagshaw



Robert Kilby

Work in Progress.

At the autumn of my life
that inevitable pause portends-
one of uninvited solitude:
a soliloquy of silence.
Unsaid in this enigmatic time
is the fact that I am not alone.
Ages of departures have
preceded mine.
Yet, to shrink from this
would forfeit the essence
of what life is.
I must meet it head on.
Spirit each day;
celebrate sunrise;
savor the muted lilt of a mourning dove,
and lift my face to a gentle rain.
Mother Nature surely is,
and I must relish some small part
of this huge wellspring of life.
A gift I will embrace
to the fullest extent of being.

-- deidre silverman

Money, Men, and God

How many times does this move make?
Too many to count, yet here I am
Piles for this, piles for that
Baskets, bags, some for recycle,
Some for the trash bin, some from
All the places I've been.

And the journals! Over 45 years-worth,
My daily companion for so many years
Confidant, friend, psychotherapist.
Oddly enough not many entries
In recent years! And now they're gone.
You ask the recurring theme?
Money, men and God.
Guess I've moved on.

-- Barbara McDonald

Song of two Otters: Love stirs the Waters

*Imagine a still sea, with islands of amber kelp home
to dark otters, herons balanced on logs, sea birds
dipping low.*

Would you like to share
my abalone dinner?
His whiskered face invited.
A pearly shell lay open
on his belly.
She spun beside him
dove beneath, rippled the sea
slid along his sleek coat
And took a nibble.

He bit it up, juices running
down his chin.
Full, he caught a wave
plunged deep into it
lifted her
nudged her shoulder up.
Head to head
He lightly bit her nose.

She ducked and swam below
rolling, surfing the sea swell
tails speeding,
splashing
catching kelp.
Wrapping him.



Slow spin together
 chests connecting
 slipping upward, downward
 And now sliding apart.

Webbed feet to feet
 eye to eye
 toppling the waves
 Swimming through circles of sunset.

~Brita Ostrom



Penny Hansen



Harvey Abernathey



Tami Tsark



Laura Milholland

Space Is the Place

Scientists tell us our planet is spinning faster now
I tell my husband I need more space
I can't seem to find enough these days

I turn my bathroom into Paris
Create a cabaret in the kitchen
My bed is a boat that sails

But when I find space
I eventually need you
or another view

What is it about space that seduces us so?

Empty space desires
and desire drives all

Then matter arrives
with a big clunk
And we want to throw it away

They say the world spins faster now

As zoom echoes in this room
I'm busy looking for a broom

We go out, then back in
Hoping the echo
of ourselves disappears

Day for a night, and we start all over again

Do planets desire us, as we do them?
Can time travel bring us in?

Everything dances between matter
But empty space demands a platter

Will this spinning planet throw us off again?

-- Marcia Taylor Smith



Laura Harrison

Who Believes the Winter Comes From Work

Let the winter bring us rain,
Cool the Earthly water and send it echoing into the skies
And back to us from clouds formed from sea salt and the ice no
longer melting.

The garden plants surround toes pacing in search of rain,
But the rain won't come
It has abandoned the Earth as a cruel monster called drought.

The angels cannot hear our prayers for water.
They are at war seeking safety
In search of God who is fighting off a devil with no time to make
rain.

The angels wings, mistaken for a land bound duck's
Cannot fly through the skies anymore than the rain in the drought
And alas the duck too cannot find water.

The storms of God cry, what are you doing to my people,
Why do I hear them pray night and day
Dear God where is the water?

Once we enjoyed dancing on the ices of winter,
We can enjoy the ices again
But that will not come by osmosis.

-- Karen Arnold



Harvey Abernathey



Harvey Abernathey

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE JOURNAL?

NEXT DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 15

Please send your final draft to
denizespringer@gmail.com

PLEASE ADHERE TO THESE SPECIFICATIONS

Submit only one piece of final, proofed work. Changes, unless absolutely necessary, will not be accepted after submission.

Include your name in the file name and on the page of your document. **You must be an ESCOM member. Membership is free but is no longer automatic with class registration. To join, go to:**
<http://escom.marin.edu/join-escom>

WRITTEN WORK (**750 words MAX**): must be single spaced, left margin oriented, and ATTACHED as a Word doc. Do not submit PDFs of written work (as these cannot be properly transferred or edited). **Please submit only one piece per issue.**

ART and PHOTOGRAPHY: Borderless images only in file size no larger than 300 kb and attached to the email in the .pdf or jpeg format (not imbedded in email message). **Images larger than 300 kb or saved as a tif file cannot be considered.**

POEMS: (**50 lines MAX including the spaces between stanzas**) If your poem must be centered, please note this.

Misspellings, grammatical errors and erroneous line breaks could be mistaken as the author's intent and not corrected. Proof your copy before sending it in.

Information for "In Memoriam" must be verified with an obituary that appears in an official resource such as a newspaper.

ESCOM (Emeritus Students College of Marin) is a student organization of active adults affiliated with the Community Education Department of College of Marin. Founded in 1973, ESCOM provides diverse opportunities for lifelong learning, lifelong doing, and lifelong friends.

ESCOM Journal

Editor, Denize Springer

Web Content Manager, Richard Jensen

The ESCOM Journal, a publication of the Emeritus Students College of Marin, is published on alternate months online at www.marin.edu/escom. A limited number of printed copies are available in the ESCOM offices on the College of Marin Kentfield and Indian Valley campuses. ESCOM members are invited to submit news items, or creative works, such as original art, photography, poetry, memoir and fiction (please consult the submission specifications on this page before submitting. The deadline for each issue is the 15th of the prior month. Please send submissions or questions to denizespringer@gmail.com

ESCOM Council

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www.marin.edu/escom

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