

'Enquiring minds' learn more from CCC instructor

by Jeff Kemp
Staff Writer

How many people know that an ex-tabloid writer is working as a Tri-City Alternative Program instructor here on the campus of Clackamas Community College?

If you're like me, you are probably surprised to learn of such an absurd career change. Eric Faucher, 43, is a teacher that has chosen to help high schoolers get their feet back on the ground rather than spreading around what a lot of us look at as trash.

"When your mortgage is staring you in the face, you'd be surprised at what you'd do," Faucher justified. "The pressures and stress just aren't worth the money, though."

And money is definitely what the people in the tabloid business don't seem to be very unaccustomed to. According to Faucher, beginning staff writers' salaries at the *National Enquirer* (which he refers to as the "flagship" of the tabloid business) begin at about \$45,000 a year. A starting editor can rake in about \$60,000. He also said that a writer makes about a \$1,000 for a top news story.

"I have come back making a couple of grand for just chasing around celebrities," he said.

According to Faucher, along with those high salaries there sometimes comes a price.

"I've personally handed out \$3,000 dollars in tip money

(money that is used to get information for various sources) in a four-day period," he confessed.

Faucher has worked for both the *Star* and *The Enquirer*. He has worked in the tabloid business for a total of 15 years before leaving the *Star* as a freelance writer about a year ago.

While hardly anyone seems to want to admit that they read the tabloids, about 18 million people a week indulge themselves in this form of "slanted news," Faucher explained that the



tabloids use a unique approach to persuade so many people to buy their newspaper. He said that the trick is putting some incredible headlines and photographs on the cover without adding the page number of where the story can be found. When people are waiting in line to buy their groceries, he said, they can't find the story before it is time for them to check

out, so they end up buying it.

Faucher is often quick to come to the defense of *The Enquirer* in order to explain his previous occupation.

"There is nothing made up in *The Enquirer*. Do you hear me? Nothing! Not one thing," Faucher explained.

He also said that unlike *The Enquirer*, there are some tabloids that he considers filth. He said that almost everything in the *Weekly World News* (a subsidiary of *The Enquirer*) is a complete fabrication, but admitted that the writers there really enjoy their work.

"It is a wonderful place to work," he said. "I would love to work there."

He explained how some tabloid writers use a method that he referred to as "tickle" to bend the truth a little. He also described how many of the stories in *The Enquirer* are actually some of the same stories used in the local newspapers, without the first four paragraphs. He said that all of the stories are factual because they get everything "on tape."

"The stories are true in the sense that someone (the person that gives the reporter the story) believes the information to be true. That's the catch," he said straightforwardly. "I have had John Travolta's bodyguard take a poke at me but he missed," he joked.

While Faucher presented himself as a knowledgeable figure in many

areas of the writing profession, he was quick to point out a few of his flaws.

"I'm not a journalist. From the time I started to write for the tabloids, I really learned how to write ... I would never go anywhere without this (pointing at his tape recorder). I don't trust my memory and notes that much," he admitted.

Yes, Eric Faucher has

led an interesting young life up to this point. He says that he has, among other things, even sat out by a lake in Utah waiting for a reported UFO. Now that's dedication.

"I truly believe in responsible journalism," Faucher concluded, "and I also believe in a free press."



Eric Faucher (above left), a CCC Tri-City Alternative Program instructor, was in the tabloid business for 15 years. He has worked for both the *National Enquirer* and *Star*.

'Two-Step' your way to Randall Gym

by Tina McFarland
Staff Writer

Don your cowboy attire, your flannel and your tight jeans and "Electric Slide" your way to Randall Gym for the Wednesday night country dance class.

If you don't know how to "Electric Slide," come anyway. Robin Robinson will teach you those country moves and many more in the weekly two-hour class.

Other dances being taught are the "Texas Two Step," the "Cha-Cha," the "10 Step" and many others.

Robinson said approximately 60 people show up every week, and nearly 45 of them are returning dancers. Many of the participants are college staff members.

There has always been a strong request for a country dance class here, according to Robinson

Last spring, the Physical Education Department decided to work a class into the daytime PE curriculum, which started last fall.

The class proved successful, and more requests were made by staff members to implement something during the evening so they could participate also.

"It's a nice, clean, smoke-free environment. A lot of people want to go out, but not get smoked out. They want a healthful aerobic workout," Robinson said of the class' success.

He compared country dancing to Jazzercise, saying, "You work hard and have a good time while physically exerting yourself. It is similar to Jazzercise or aerobics, but more their style."

Robinson feels the sudden interest in country dance is because, "country (music) is now more country rock. It's upbeat, good dance music. All people want to dance, and to line dance you don't need a partner."

The class will run Wednesday nights, 7 to 9 p.m. in Randall Gym through February. The cost is \$2 per person, per night. "Everyone is welcome," Robinson said.

Every week is a different lesson, so it is not necessary to attend every class.



Country dance classes are taught by Robin Robinson every Wednesday night in Randall Gym.

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