

Lonnie Cline named honorary Estonian

Joel P. Shempert
Staff Writer

Music Instructor Lonnie Cline was named an honorary Estonian by the Portland-Tallinn Friendship City Association on Feb. 24.

The event was held at the Latvian Center in Burton, Ore.

While to know his love for Estonia's people and music, many do not know the full story of the artistic adventure of Cline and his choir.

Last summer, the Clackamas Chamber Singers took, as they say, a fateful trip to Estonia, where they, among other things, sang in the Estonian World Song and Dance Festival in the capital of Tallinn. This is an honor bestowed upon no other non-Estonian choir in history.

The choir, however, does not begin there but four years ago, when Cline first encountered the music of this one-of-a-kind culture. During his sabbatical, Cline attended the World Choral Symposium in Vancouver, B.C. where he heard the Estonian Philharmonic National Chamber Choir, directed by Tonu Kaljuste, singing the music of their country, particularly the works of composers Arvo Part and

Veljo Tormis. Cline, who had previously heard the American group Choral Crossties singing Estonian pieces, was impressed by what he heard at the Symposium.

"It was their music that suggested to me that this was a country of warm, gentle, steadfast [people]," Cline said.

When he returned from sabbatical, he eagerly obtained some Estonian music for his students. He was able to determine a lot about the Estonians themselves through their music.

"I could tell that they were into art

and culture versus money and war," Cline explained. "And when I learned that they stopped a takeover by the Russians by singing, I was even more impressed," said Cline.

The ball truly got rolling when the choir sang their Estonian repertoire and the local Estonian community



Photo by Joel P. Shempert

"With sincere appreciation, the Portland-Tallinn Friendship City Association recognizes Lonnie Cline as an honorary Estonian."

showed up to listen and were touched. The Chamber Singers, from that small gesture, gained opportunity after opportunity. First, they sang in the Estonian West Coast Song and Dance Festival, held in Portland that year. Then they sang for the local celebration of Estonia's first Independence Day-Feb. 24- from Germany. And finally, they participated in the aforementioned World Festival in Tallinn.

This was the thrilling culmination of the choir's previous experiences.

"When I got there, I found that all I had dreamt of was true

and then some," affirmed Cline, "including hospitality above anyone I'd ever met."

Kalle and Helle Merilo, a husband and wife who are very involved in the local Estonian community, were instrumental in bringing all this about. Since the advent of Cline's and his choir's musical Estonian journey, the choir has sung in each of these events on three different years.

Cline views this entire Estonian phenomenon as more than a musical opportunity.

"Basically, I've chosen to bathe my students in the culture of another country that regards art as its top priority, so that they forever will regard art and music as their top priority and pass that on to their children and grandchildren," stated Cline.

With this understanding of all that has gone before, it is now possible to get a feel for the power of the events of that recent Sunday night. The Independence Day festival consisted of four main events: An Estonian folk orchestra concert, a concert by the Clackamas Cham-

ber Singers who were joined by the Estonian Mass Choir, a show of Estonian folk dancers and, finally, a keynote speaker, none

other than Cline himself. After the Chamber Singers finished singing, Cline, who was already a member of the Estonian League of the West Coast, was presented with the plaque naming him an Honorary Estonian—an event which he had been looking forward to keenly for months. Already on an emotional high, it was truly touching for him when the choir, led by Student Director Chris Chan, surprised him with the song "Koit" which describes the dawning of a new day—a song which the choir had prepared, as Chan said, "behind his back." On the verge of tears, Cline was in the grip of a real and sincere joy.

Cline has difficulty describing the experience.

"It's hard to put into words," he explained. "It's more of a feeling of unique privilege. I understand that with privilege comes responsibility and, therefore, am prepared to do everything, with all the scope of my being, to honor Estonia and its people every chance I get."

“When I got there, I found that all I had dreamt of was true and then some.”
— Lonnie Cline
Music Instructor

Bernie Nolan to retire in June after 26 years at Clackamas

Karin Redston
Co-Feature Editor

Counselor Bernie Nolan started as a student at Clackamas in 1969 and now, 26 years later, she is retiring.

Throughout the years Nolan has watched Clackamas grow from a small college with few facilities to a large campus.

"We had trailers and no buildings. Now we have buildings and trailers again," said Nolan. "When I first came here, I had a class over on Warner Milne Road in a church, and I had a class here on campus. And we went over for jogging to one of the junior highs, or we had classes in a trailer. The first solid building here on campus was Clairmont."

She has taught a variety of classes including math, psychology and reading. She helped develop Psychology 142, which is Personal Development and College Success. Teaching, for her, was the most fun part about being at Clackamas.

Nolan looks forward to having time for herself when she retires this June. One of the projects Nolan is working on is her family genealogy. She has developed her research into an exhibit at the Trail's End Gallery featuring the Wright Family. This family includes her great grandparents on Nolan's mother's side, who came here on the Oregon Trail. The exhibit will run through March.

"It's my current passion, genealogy," said Nolan. "It's something I've been interested in for a long time."

She has also written a chapter on her family in the book *Our Proud Past*. That book is currently available at the campus library.

Nolan has put together a family tree so her grandchildren could feel connected to their ancestors. She also found out that the

Molalla Historical Society had her great-grandmother's quilt. The quilt is on display at the exhibit at the Trail's End Gallery.

Nolan is also going to be more involved with her grandchildren's schools and plans to reactivate her massage therapist license.

"I'd like to be able to go to the beach in the middle of the week," said Nolan.

She and her husband also plan to travel.

"I like to do traveling," said Nolan. "We've done a lot of overseas traveling, but I would just like to be able to get into the car and go across country and stop and see friends."

Nolan feels one of her biggest accomplishments was her work on the Title III Grant. She spent five years on the grant, which was to develop student retention. The grant made many other projects possible.

Nolan plans to stay active with the Focus On Women program. She had been involved with the program since its creation.

"That's another thing I'm proud of," said Nolan, "is to have been one of the pioneers of Focus on Women."

"The program was created when former counselor Buzz Evans had gone to a conference on women and was really im-



Photo by Joel Coreson

Bernie Nolan's family heritage is on display at the Trail's End Gallery.

pressed by that," said Nolan. "She came back to Clackamas and decided we could have special programs on women. So Buzz Evans, Mary Oldford and myself brainstormed and came up with Focus On Women."

Nolan said she would miss

the people on campus the most, especially the students.

"I really like having that kind of pipeline into another generation," said Nolan. "I always feel very connected to all ages because I've been connected to all ages through a community college."