

Secretary gains citizenship

SHELBI WESCOTT
Staff Writer

Clackamas English as a Second Language secretary Irene Carrillo admits that her children are her life.

"They are the reason I keep going," she says. And until two weeks ago they had the one thing she was longing for: US citizenship.

On January 28, 1999, Irene Carrillo took the oath to become a citizen of the United States of America.

"When she said I passed [the test] with flying colors, I felt my whole body go limp. I wanted to jump up and laugh. I was so excited," Carrillo said.

Less than three hours later she stood in a room, with 24 other immigrants, anxious to make this dream a reality. As she raised her right hand and began to repeat the oath, she felt a lump in her throat. It was finally happening. Then, after a few minutes of swearing in and a year of waiting, Irene Carrillo was a US citizen.

"My son told me that he wanted to be a citizen too. He didn't understand that he was already one," commented Carrillo. "I don't think they understand yet how special this moment is for me."

Now, Carrillo is looking forward to enjoying the benefits of her citizenship, especially voting. She

used to be embarrassed to tell people that she was not a registered voter, but now she anxiously awaits the next opportunity.

In 1980, the Carrillo family moved to the United States from their home in Mexico City, and left be-

Now, when she speaks, her English is near perfect. Her phrases and words pour forth without any effort. Learning the language was not easy, but Carrillo devoted her time to studying. She carries with her the value of education that her

father had instilled in all his children when they moved to the US.

Carrillo also possesses an incredible work ethic. Her life is in constant motion as she travels from one activity to another. She functions as a secretary (flying from one meeting to another), a student here at Clackamas, a single parent of three, and a PTA member.

When looking back on her life, Carrillo cannot believe how lucky her family has been. In a

time when Hispanics were struggling to find jobs to support their families, Carrillo's father found a job that supported all seven of his children. In a world that was not sure how to accept immigrants, Carrillo felt welcome everywhere she went.

She hopes that people will "set goals and strive to reach them at all costs. And then set new goals. Never stop setting goals and making dreams." Now that she has reached her goal of becoming a citizen, her attention will be turned toward other ambitions.

Carrillo realizes that the time has come to bridge the gap between Americans and immigrants. This country is a nation of immigrants, and we need to set differences aside and learn to love every man, woman and child that calls America their home.



SARAH WELCH / Clackamas Print
Irene Carrillo, secretary of the English as a Second Language Department, recently became a U.S. Citizen.

hind everything they had ever known.

Mr. Carrillo wanted his children to receive an education that the Mexican school system could not provide. It was important for his three sons and four daughters to learn English, immerse themselves in knowledge and attend college.

Scared and confused, the Carrillo children were thrown into the American school system without knowing a word of English. Irene was only 10 years old when her family sought a new life in the United States.

"I was scared. We didn't know any English and no one knew Spanish," Carrillo said, reminiscing about her first memories of living in America.

Miner inspires beginning writers



TIMOTHY A. BELL / Clackamas Print

Valerie Miner describes eloquently her views on the craft of writing at her fiction reading Tuesday.

JEREMY STALLWOOD
Feature Editor

"I write to discover possible answers," said fiction writer Valerie Miner in her talk on the writing craft Monday in Tim Schell's Creative Writing class.

Having taught for 25 years in the field of writing, Miner was open to young writers asking questions. She currently teaches creative writing at the University of Minnesota.

Miner related from her experience that retyping manuscripts is a way to become re-acquainted with the story. Miner takes the time to re-type her manuscripts after each editing process.

Miner, the author of *Range of Light* and *A Walking Fire*, also gave a fiction reading yesterday at noon in the Gregory Forum. *Range of Light* was a particular landmark for Miner because it is the first time she's written a full-

length novel in the first person.

"Kath and Adel demanded to speak with their own voices," Miner said of the main characters in her book.

A greater amount of intimacy can be achieved when using the character's voice in the first person, Miner continued.

Miner also conducted a reading Tuesday at noon in the Gregory Forum.

Sharing from her essay, "Writing My Way West," Miner talked about the "role of place in fiction." She described the variations on Western landscape, that practically everyone can find a niche within the green valleys and snowy hills. Oregon, Miner said, is "an urban as well as rural land."

Following the reading, Miner autographed books. *Range of Light* and *A Walking Fire* are still both available from the college bookstore.

Portland journalists reveal Oregon's History

JEREMY STALLWOOD
Feature Editor

Two authors with two differing view points on biography writing, Fred Leeson and Brent Walth, read at last Wednesday's Authors' Night.

Walth, a recipient of the Gerald Loeb Award for Distinguished Business and Financial Journalism and The Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association's top award for investigative reporting, has worked for Portland's Willamette Week and The Oregonian. *Fire At Eden's Gate: Tom McCall and the Oregon Story* is Walth's first book, the product of many years of research.

Leeson, author of *Rose City Justice: A Legal History of Portland, Oregon*, has written for *The Oregonian* for over two decades.

Both journalists had differing view points on the technique of writing biographies. Walth said he had difficulty writing the biography of a man long dead because "you can't read his mind."

Leeson disagreed. He stated that it would be easier to write about a man whose story has a beginning, middle and end. Regarding his book, *Rose City Justice*, it was difficult to make statements about law trends past the 1970's because in order to see the trends change, one needs a whole spectrum of time to draw conclusions from.

"It's easier with a retrospect," Leeson said. "When the subject is dead, there's an open and shut case we can view from a distance."

"The number one difficulty is to come to a conclusion about the subjects motivations," Walth said. "Why he or she did something is concluded from facts."

According to Walth, McCall was a very "public man." There were letters and speeches that helped him piece together decision-making processes and make conclusions on McCall's motivations. This led to a very extensive collection of notes, and not ashamed to admit it,



TIMOTHY A. BELL / Clackamas Print

Brent Walth, left, and Fred Leeson, right, answer questions after their reading last Wednesday night. The two authors are also accomplished journalists.

Walth had trouble attributing one or two minor facts.

"Wherever in a footnote it says 'Author's Files'," he confessed, "it probably means I wasn't able to pinpoint exactly

where that piece of information came from."

"I had to go back three or four times to get the goddamn footnote," Leeson said. The audience laughed.

After the reading, Leeson and Walth, both very comfortable and approachable, autographed books and answered individual questions. The next Authors' Night will be held in the Spring.