



Brad Heinke The Clackamas Print

John Francis, the Planetwalker, strums away on his banjo at one of the Sustainability Week festivities to create happy rambling melodies. Francis was silent for years before he began speaking again on the 20th anniversary of Earth Day.

PLANETWALKER: Struts and strums

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Francis seemed thrilled to be back in Oregon. Aside from his many memories walking, meeting people and camping throughout the state, he was drawn here in the '70s when he heard Southern Oregon University in Ashland had a new course in environmental studies, where he received his first degree.

He then continued onward north until he came to Port Orford, Wash. where he stayed through a winter to work as a boat builder. When he heard there was a program in science and environmental studies in Missoula, Mont., he continued his journey and there completed his master's.

He was required to first get permission from all involved professors to accept his silent ways. For many more years, Francis contin-

ued, through the heat of deserts, over mountain ranges, through national parks.

He became one with his environment. On foot and in silence, he found rhythms in nature and became in synch with them. He saw our county and he heard our country. When he made it to the University of Wisconsin-Madison he completed a PhD in land resources. He had earned his doctorate book by book and his wisdom step by step.

When Francis reached Washington, D.C., in 1989, he was greeted with an offer to work for the United States Coast Guard writing pollution regulations for our inland waterways, following the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska. He was also appointed Environmental Ambassador for the United Nations.

With his new responsibilities, schedule and after 21 years, it was time he needed to commute. He decided to utilize transportation for six months of the year and only walk the other six. He didn't want to lose touch with that part of his relationship with the environment. He didn't want to just talk the talk — he wanted to walk the walk.

He has since spent two years walking through the jungles and cities of South America. Francis is author of the books: "Planetwalker: How to Change Your World One Step at a Time" and "The Ragged Edge of Silence: Finding Peace in a Noisy World."

Along his journey to change the world by changing himself, Francis being a man of convictions, also had some simpler commitments. He decided to do a painting every day and always played his banjo.

Not surprisingly, he is quite accomplished at both. He shared inspiring music, playing his banjo, several times during his presentation here at CCC.

His music had happy rambling melodies, often slowing and quieting to a Zen-like silence. He played again at his workshop which was also in the Gregory Forum, along with showing examples of the progression of his nature and landscape painting from his journey. Sha Spady attended both the keynote lecture and the workshop and took a lot from his messages and journey.

"I love the way John has gone through life with purpose and cause, but often went forward without concern about the destination, similar to how he painted simply to paint," said Spady. "What I bring from this, and believe, is that we

need to listen and care for each other, and need to listen to nature and the environment and care for it."

CCC's Sustainability Week is an annual event held the week of Earth Day. It has been coordinated by the college's Environmental Learning instructor Allison Heimowitz and her assistants. Heimowitz is also on the board of the Earth and Spirit Council which had many members very active in this year's events.

"We are very pleased to have John Francis as a guest at this event. I feel a connection in our passion about connecting people back to the Earth," stated Heimowitz. "We are fortunate to have him as our keynote speaker."

Possibly not by coincidence, the day Francis began speaking again was the 20th anniversary of Earth Day.

Glorify golden years with new fangled know-how

David Beasley
General Associate Editor

There's no such thing as a person that is too young or even too old to go to school; the learning experience never has to stop. Even the most experienced of the community can benefit from continued education and social interaction. Each school term, county elders are invited to take part in an engaging variety of classes and presentations, provided by local aficionados.

Reasons people continue their education:

- Develop new skills
- Exercise their minds and bodies
- Pursue a special interest
- Make new friends
- Experience new things
- Be a part of the community and interact with it

According to the press release by public affairs specialist Janet Paulson, the Seasoned Adult Enrichment Program (SAEP) provides seniors in Clackamas County with an educational experience which is designed and administered

by "seasoned adults" (seniors/retirees). SAEP's website states that last year, the program provided nearly 40 sessions and served more than 100 people.

Instructors include SAEP members, community leaders, college faculty and guests from the community. Most of the instructors volunteer their time and actively participate in all aspects of the program: student, discussion leader, committee planner or host. All presenters have the expertise in the subjects they teach with a willingness and ability to share with others.

Classes are held at the Harmony Campus on Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. The class can be found in room 191 of the Oregon Institute of Technology building, unless otherwise indicated. A single session is \$3. The cost for a 7 session term is \$15 or an entire year for \$30.

For those using public transportation, TriMet buses routes 28, 29, 31 and 79 stop one to two blocks from the Harmony/OIT campus. For more information about the Seasoned Adult Enrichment Program, please visit <http://depts.clackamas.edu/saep/> or call 503-594-0620.

Upcoming classes:
May 8 - "Up the Capitol Steps: A Woman's March to the Governorship" presented by Barbara Roberts

The former Oregon Governor Barbara Roberts will talk about her most recent book, "Up the Capitol Steps: A Woman's March to the Governorship," a highly readable account of Roberts' path to becoming Oregon's first female governor.

May 15 - Field Trip to Schreiner's Iris Gardens, Silverton.

In business since 1925, Schreiner's is the nation's largest retail grower of iris, with 10 acres of fabulous display gardens with 500 named Iris varieties. Travel by CCC vans to the beautiful gardens to enjoy the flowers at the peak of their season.

May 22 - "Un-Dam It" presented by Mark Gamba & Greg Baartz-Bowman

Greg and Mark hope their film "Un-Dam It!" will spur action on the long-standing project to remove Kellogg Dam and restore Kellogg Creek as a passage for salmon. Join them when they share and discuss their 30 minute documentary film.

CCC Spring Theatre Production - "Schemes of Scapino"

There will be two Sunday shows, May 23 and June 2.

In Naples, Italy, leading character, Scapino, a fast-talking, quick-thinking scamp cleverly manipulates and cajoles everyone into doing what he wants. He plots to

help two pairs of lovers against parental opposition that, it turns out, does not exist.

Osterman Theatre in the Neimeyer Center; 2:30 p.m. curtain. For ticket pricing and reservation information visit the Theater Department website at: www.TheatreCCC.org.

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