

OREGON, SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON, WASHINGTON ALUMNI GATHERINGS

By Michelle Girts (magirts@comcast.net)

Oregon and southwest Washington CH2M HILL retirees, former employees (some now Jacobs employees) and their partners totaling 67 attendees came together at Edgefield McMenamins in Troutdale, Oregon, for a most enjoyable event, swapping stories and catching up – the first time for many since before the 2020 pandemic. Before gathering in the Ballroom, people were encouraged to arrive early to experience other fun that Edgefield offers.



Welcome sign.



Edgefield McMenamins, Fairview, Oregon.

One pre-event, lightly organized by Bob Chapman, was a golf outing on Edgefield's quirky little 9-hole, par 27 course. Bill Wallace showed off his lob wedge talents, often dropping his tee shot close to the flag. Mike Doleac, ever a proud mechanical engineer, showed off his adjustable "all-in-one" club. All players provided entertaining moments, appropriately accompanied by jeers and cheers. All in all, it was great fun. The outing appropriately started and ended at an adjacent pub.

Other groups met with friends who were not seen for many years in one of the many local watering holes. Some joined a concert taking place in a pub – advantages of meeting in a location with a wide range of activity offerings onsite.

Attendees travelled from Bend, Hood River, and McMinnville Oregon. The most distant attendee of this event was Alicia Lanier from North Carolina, while Mark Lasswell and Karin Rosenberger Jennings came from Montana, the Rabys journeyed west from Minnesota, and the Storbos, Rick Luebbers, Steve Mader, and Mike Doleac came south from the Puget Sound area. All agreed that the food was delicious, plentiful, and met a wide range of tastes. With both sit-down and standing tables, people could sit in comfort as well as circulate to visit.



Rick Luebbers speaking to the CHAA crowd.



Mark Lasswell joins Rick Luebbers to welcome everyone.

Bob Chapman brought a large box full of CH2M memorabilia for perusing during the event, and available to claim. These items were part of a treasure chest of items donated to CHAA by Mary Koblitz, whose husband Gordon had squirreled away before his passing. Many of these were gifted to Gordon many years earlier by Anne Merryfield. It was a special treat to have Mary attend this gathering as well and share memories of their days with the Portland office.

A flat panel TV displayed greetings from those who couldn't attend in person. A magnificent banner, created and provided by Steve Wanders who chairs the CHAA regional networks committee, hung over the entire entry hallway to alert arrivals and the public to the event!

After people were settled with their libations and food, President Rick Luebbers greeted those gathered with an informal overview of CHAA objectives, organization, activities, and Future Focus Task Force efforts, including the Legacy Gift Fund. Handouts about the Legacy Gift Fund were made available, as were a few paper copies of the past two newsletters so that non-CHAA members could learn more about CHAA and their colleagues. Mark Lasswell, John Willis, Bob Chapman, Dick Crim, and Michelle Girts added their own words of welcome – to much laughter – and the festivities continued at least at one table later into the night (including a few people who stayed overnight at Edgefield).

Saturday, October 5, dawned dry, perfect for those attending the Oregon State University – Colorado State University football game that afternoon in Corvallis. Mark Lasswell and some Corvallis associates reserved a private room at the Benchwarmers Bar & Grill for a pre-game no-host lunch. This gathering was also well attended; rumor has it that there were more than 25 attending from the South Portland to Corvallis area. The date coincided with awards presented by the OSU College of Engineering to some former CH2M HILL employees, including Brad Hermansen, who attended the Benchwarmers gathering, along with Dale and Karen Cannon, Dave and Dotty Raby, John and Sally Willis, Mark Lasswell, Paul and Diana Fujimoto, Rick Luebbers, Rich and Michelle Frankenfeld, Mike and Jeanne Morrison, Mary Koblitz, Joe Danko, Kevin Klink, Bill Byers, Pat and Pam Klampe, and Alan and Diane Amoth.

Mark Lasswell, John Willis, Michelle Girts, and Rick Luebbers provided the initial spark suggesting

this pair of events, including discussions while attending a celebration of life for long-time PDX employee Jory Abrams (Gerry Abrams attended the gathering, staying overnight at the Edgefield Lodge). John, Michelle, and Dick provided passionate leadership during the planning activities, amazingly accomplished in just 2 months! Other active volunteers were Mark Lasswell and Bob Chapman, with special and timely help from Mike Mynhier, Scott Trusler and Steve Wanders.

Here's a [link](#) to many more photos from the event.