



Photos by VIVIAN JOHNSON for The Columbian

Dorothy Dee Workman, left, and Glynda Hamilton read over stories written by other students in their creative writing class. The class, part of Clark College's Mature Learning Program, is for adults age 55 and older.

# PROUDLY PUBLISHED

Clark College Mature Learning program's creative writing class produces large batch of new authors

By MARY ANN ALBRIGHT  
Columbian staff writer

Connie Icenogle was so pleased to be making her debut as a published author that she couldn't wait to pick up the phone and call her mom.

"She was so excited," Icenogle said.

There are 27 other local authors with similar good news to share. The Clark College Mature Learning Program recently released a new anthology, "Elderberry Wine, Vintage 2010." It combines the poems, short stories and essays of 28 writers in the Mature Learning Program.

It's been a decade since the Clark College Mature Learning Program released its last "Elderberry Wine" anthology. Though the new book has 2010 in the title, it came out about a month ago. The authors thought the anthology would be out last year, but editing took longer than expected. There will be a book launch and reading on June 24 to celebrate its release.

Mature Learning Program classes are for those ages 55 and older. For many of the writers who contributed to "Elderberry Wine, Vintage 2010," creative writing is a departure from their previous careers.

That was the case for Doug Hicks, a retired computer programmer. Hicks, a former Vancouver resident now living in Portland, had experience with technical writing but decided he wanted to try his hand at fiction.

He has taken creative writing through the Mature Learning



Bonnie Long critiques a peer's story as part of the Clark College Mature Learning Program's creative writing class.

## TWO-DAY WORKSHOP

The next Clark College Mature Learning Program creative writing offering is a two-day workshop. It meets from 10 a.m. to 1:50 p.m. July 22 and July 29. The cost is \$45. For more information about creative writing and other Mature Learning Program classes, go to <http://www.clark.edu/mycpe> and select "Mature Learning." Mature Learning classes are for those ages 55 and older.

Program for two years. During that time, he's seen his character development skills improve. He

has also worked on being more descriptive in his writing.

Discussing the craft in class, responding to writing prompts from the instructor and getting constructive feedback from classmates have helped Hicks along on his journey as a writer.

"I think it's imperative for a writer to be in a community of writers in order to advance their craft," he said. "It's really a powerful springboard for the imagination, and it's a community of support."

Hicks has two pieces in "Elderberry Wine, Vintage 2010." One is a poem called "A Programmer's Meditation." The other, "My Last 50 Years," is about the latter half of his father's life. It's written in the first person, as if it were his father's memoir.

Hicks is among the authors set to read at the book launch. The readings will be recorded, and people can watch the videos on the book's website (<http://bit.ly/m07931>).

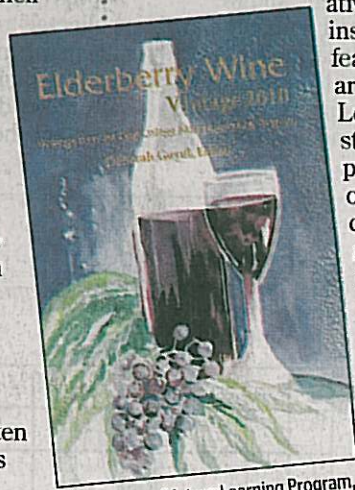
Already, videos of a few writers reading their contributions to "Elderberry Wine, Vintage 2010" can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/user/ClarkCollegeCCE>.

Hicks is not alone in tackling new challenges in the Mature Learning Program's creative writing classes. The discipline was also uncharted territory for Robert Roy.

Roy is a Battle Ground resident

## Compilation revived after a decade

"Elderberry Wine, Vintage 2010" was published by Trafford Publishing and edited by Deborah Guyol, one of two Mature Learning Program creative writing instructors. It features cover art by Becky Leventis, a student in the program and one of the contributing authors of the 435-page book.



Clark College Mature Learning Program,

Program creative writing compilation. The first came out in 2000, and the second in 2001.

The new book is available in hardcover and paperback versions at the Clark College Bookstore. It's also available online through Trafford Publishing (<http://www.trafford.com>), Barnes & Noble (<http://www.barnesandnoble.com>) and Amazon (<http://www.amazon.com>).

Barnes & Noble and Amazon offer an e-book format in addition to printed books. Proceeds go to the Clark College Foundation.

— Mary Ann Albright



# Writing:

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and former chief executive officer of Trillium Family Services, an Oregon nonprofit organization that provides mental and behavioral health care for children.

Roy has been taking creative writing at Clark for about four years. In addition to short-term writing assignments, he has been working on his memoir, "As Always, Robert." A few chapters of his memoir are included in "Elderberry Wine, Vintage 2010."

Writing started as a hobby for Roy and quickly became a passion. Being a published author was never his goal, but it's exciting nonetheless.

"It was a very pleasant, rewarding surprise," he said.

Icenogle has two short stories in "Elderberry Wine, Vintage 2010." One, "My Mother's Hands," is a tribute to her mom. The other is called "The Little Brown House," and is about an abandoned house on a busy street corner.

## If you go

■ **What:** "Elderberry Wine, Vintage 2010" book launch and reading, featuring writers from Clark College's Mature Learning Program.

■ **When:** 2 to 4 p.m. June 24.

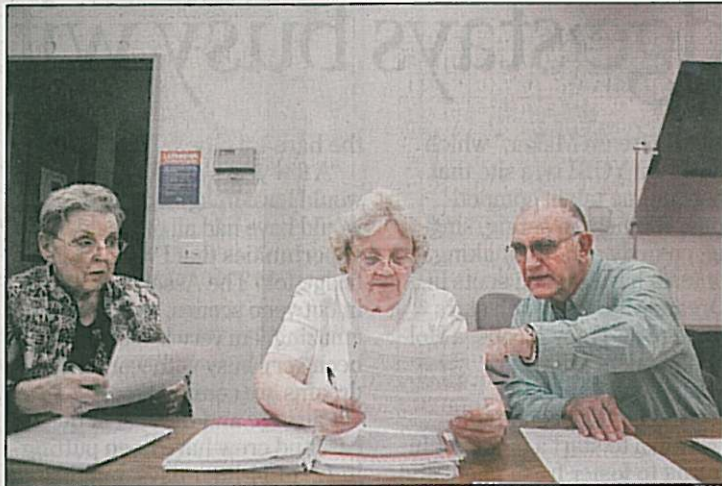
■ **Where:** Clark College's Columbia Tech Center, 18700 S.E. Mill Plain Blvd., Vancouver.

■ **Admission:** Free.

■ **Information:** [http://www.clark.edu/corporate\\_continuing\\_education/mature\\_learning/ElderberryWineProject.php](http://www.clark.edu/corporate_continuing_education/mature_learning/ElderberryWineProject.php) or call 360-992-2163.

"It's kind of my letter-to-the-editor-type story. Do you care that this house is abandoned? Do you care that there are homeless people who could use this house? I hope it raises social awareness," said Icenogle, a Vancouver resident retired from the human resources field.

If her mother is able to come to the book release, Icenogle plans to read "My Mother's



VIVIAN JOHNSON for The Columbian

Barbara Saur, from left, Jean Moultrie and Robert Roy read over stories written by classmates in their creative writing class. The class is part of the Mature Learning Program at Clark College, and 28 of the students were recently published in an anthology of short stories, essays and poems.

Hands." Otherwise, she'll read "The Little Brown House."

In addition to short stories such as these, she is writing a novel about two women who work at the same library but many decades apart.

Icenogle has been taking the Mature Learning Program's creative writing classes for two years, and she has no plans to

stop. In fact, she's already thinking ahead to the program's next anthology.

"I would be more than happy to contribute some material for the next 'Elderberry Wine' book," she said.

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