

# ClackamasReview

## Pearls of wisdom strung into book

BY ELLEN SPITALERI

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### **Karl Wieggers wants your pearls – your pearls of wisdom, that is.**

The Happy Valley author will be speaking at the Ledding Library Authors' Series Thursday night about his newest book, a memoir entitled, "Pearls from Sand – How Small Encounters Lead to Powerful Lessons."

He wrote the book because he had an urge to share his own "profound pearls of wisdom," but his hope is that "people will come to my website and share their own pearls, and contribute their own life lessons."

Wieggers will be one of three authors discussing their work at the event, and he said he will talk about how his own personal experiences and the lessons learned are applicable to others.

"We learn life lessons from very small experiences; during the course of a day, something unusual might happen, but if you pay attention, you can learn a lesson," he said.

Wieggers has written six technical books and 175 articles on computing, chemistry, war and military history, but this is his first memoir.

"I started thinking about the life lessons I'd learned, and realized that the pattern of small experiences was worth sharing. I sat down last August, and within three weeks I had 40,000 words – the book almost wrote itself," he said.

The title came about because of the "folklore that oysters grow pearls around grains of sand," and although that is not exactly accurate, it is "a metaphor that people understand."

### **Chapters**

Each chapter in his book has a specific "pearl," and there are six categories. The first is interpersonal pearls, followed by personal, motivational, practical, cautionary and finally, professional pearls.

Some of the "pearls are profound, some are amusing and some are poignant – but they are substantive, neither frivolous nor trite," Wieggers said.

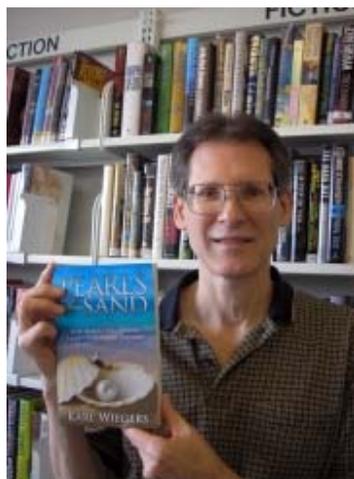
In the first chapter, entitled "Second Time's the Charm," the pearl is "Everyone deserves a second chance to make a first impression."

"Once upon a time I had a bad first date – it was my fault; I was not in a good mood. A little later I asked her out again, and without thinking she said yes. We've been married for 23 years now," he said.

That piece is amusing, but in a later chapter, Wieggers shared a much more serious incident in his life as an example of the incredible courage people can show when their children are in danger.

He, his two siblings and his parents were staying in a mobile home and woke up in the middle of the night to find the place on fire.

"My parents walked through a wall of flames and got us out," he said. That chapter is called "The



Happy Valley author Karl Wieggers with his new memoir, "Pearls From Sand." Wieggers said he wanted to compile some of the life lessons he's learned, along with those from other people.

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Bravest Thing I Ever Saw.”

## Background

Wiegers and his wife moved to Happy Valley in October 2000 from Rochester, N.Y., where he spent 18 years working at Kodak as a research scientist, software developer and manager.

In 1997 he started his own software consulting and training company, called Process Impact, which he described as a “portable kind of job.”

He likes Happy Valley, describing it as safe, quiet and accessible to most amenities.

Signed copies of “Pearls from Sand” are available on his website, he said, and other copies, including e-book readers, may be found on Amazon.com and Barnesandnoble.com. The book would lend itself well to “wonderful discussions” for book groups, as everyone has life lessons to share, Wiegers said.

He added that as he contemplated writing the book, he realized that “we learn many life lessons from mistakes, and if other people can learn less painfully than I did – it might be worth sharing.”

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