

'A True Friend and Mentor'

By John & Bess Billington



John and Bess Billington (above) took courses from Val Foubert in the TELOS Program at Bellevue Community College, and became close friends and collaborators.

We and the TELOS community have lost a true friend – a scholar, musician, and mentor. Val was a long-time member of the TELOS organization who had also been a Board Member.

Val's classes were always high on the 'most desired' list. He altered the way of thinking and living for many of us through his teaching of literature, philosophy, and the classics.

One of his instructive comments that remained with us was: 'Listen to what the **author** is trying to say – not how **you** would like it said.' This has remained with many of his TELOS students over the years as a very profound and meaningful statement, about how to read literature.

One time, he did an in-depth class on 'Our Town' by Wilder that was a different experience, in that he had class members reading from the play -- it was a great experience!

In addition to his many years of teaching, Val was always your friend, and would listen to what you had to say. He was a personal inspiration to many students whom he taught and coached at Mercer Island and Sammamish, even before coming to our community in Bellevue.

We think of Val often and wish he were still around to talk to -- and listen to his stories. He was truly a fine person. We also miss his classes at TELOS; we have not been able to replace him, with his knowledge and depth of understanding of literature.

We will miss Val as a personal friend, as well as a great educator. Rest in Peace, Val.