Bio: Rosemary Kelleher is 82. She’ll be 83 in March. Which is neither good nor bad, according to Rosemary. It just is.

Rosemary was born in Culver City, California and grew up mostly in San Jose. She moved to Portland to go to college at PSU. She was a full-time student and worked in the evenings in the PSU cafeteria. After graduating, she started working full time and going to school in the evenings to get her Masters in Education in School Library Science and Reading. She’s worked as a teacher, at a bank, as a “Kelly Girl” and in the Veterans Administration.

Rosemary has tried every sport, most successfully swimming. After a broken wrist from playing tennis and other injuries, her family doctor questioned her decision to try rock climbing. She still walks and hikes when she can. She also likes bowling and golf and gardening.

ElderPlace Irvington Village

What was it like to be in the Write Around Portland workshop?

It was very nostalgic. I wrote a lot about memories. I liked writing about the future, too, because I felt like the future would bring good memories. There was a lot of hope in my writing.

What did you like about the workshop?

I really enjoyed the group. I enjoyed talking to people very much. I learned so much. I learned a lot as a person. I liked hearing other people’s stories, too.

What did you learn about yourself or other people?

Well, I learned about writing. I didn’t have too much confidence in myself. As I listened to the facilitator and the group every week, I learned to have confidence in my writing. Luna (the facilitator) was encouraging. She made you feel like you could do it. That’s a wonderful feeling.
I found out that a lot of people had a lot of talent. It’s nice to know that people around me are really good writers. We all live together here and I never knew how talented so many of these people are.

**You shared your story at the reading. How was that for you?**

I was a little nervous at the reading, but I thought I could do as well as everyone else. Everyone else was willing to try, so I thought I should try too.

When I was a child, we used to have speech classes. We had to learn to speak and read a poem and other things so I figured I could do it.

The experiences that people shared at the reading were extremely interesting. I learned so much from hearing about people’s experiences.

**I was that at the reading and was one of the 180 people clapping for you. What was that like?**

I felt very pleased. I’m glad that you and everyone else enjoyed it. It made me very happy. It’s very nice when people clap for you.

**Have you ever written before?**

No. I guess I wasn’t encouraged before. There was nobody to encourage me before. That’s true for a lot people.

Brenda (staff person at Providence) encouraged us to join the group to write. I think that helped a lot.

**Would you recommend this workshop to someone else? What would you tell them about it?**

I would recommend the group to someone else. To anybody else.

I would say, “everyone is very encouraging and very helpful and they always make you feel like you can do it. Everyone was pulling for everyone to do well. We were all always doing that together.”