



**Michael Shurgot:** You may have seen Michael arriving at LLC on his bicycle. He's been teaching at LLC for 3 years and is a board member as well an active member of Seattle's environmentalist community.

Michael loves the play of words in literature of all kinds, especially short stories, novels and drama. Although his principal teaching and research interest is Shakespeare, he has taught a wide variety of other literature classes including Ibsen, Hemingway, and Faulkner. Recent offerings at LLC have ranged from Frank O'Connor to Marilynne Robinson's Gilead and Sherman Alexie's The Toughest Indian in the World. During Spring Quarter he is teaching All Aunt Hagar's Children: Edward P. Jones as well as a Robin Olen Butler collection.

Michael grew up in Buffalo, NY and it was there that an influential mentor at Canisius College convinced him that teaching Shakespeare was the best life possible. This led to a PhD from the University of Wisconsin and teaching positions at the University of Texas, Seattle University, and a community college from which he retired in 2006. He has published 2 books on Shakespeare.

It was a chance meeting and conversation with our director, Roger Neale, three years ago that led Michael to join the teaching staff at LLC. He says that LLC has given him the opportunity to teach literature that not only fascinates him and but that he would not otherwise be able to teach in a normal college setting. He adds that it allows him to interact with "dedicated and talented adults who genuinely appreciate powerful literature and contribute wonderfully to discussions."

Growing up in Buffalo led Michael to an early awareness of environmental pollution and he later co-founded a branch of Friends of the Earth in 1970. He has been an award winning environmental activist ever since. His chief form of relaxation is listening to the music of the Baroque period (especially Bach) and modern jazz (especially Miles Davis.) He is a

fervid baseball fan and has published several essays on the sport.

When asked if he had any prescriptions for aging wisely, Michael said, "Buy and ride a bicycle, walk often, and read constantly. Keep the body and mind active! Aging is scary, inevitable, and challenging. But never let the process get the better of you."