

Lifelong Learning Institute

at

Waubonsee Community College

President's Corner

Dear LLI Members,

Well, here we are again, in the midst of the holidays! This fall semester has flown by, and I have thoroughly enjoyed many of the classes and social events that were offered. I hope that you were able to join in as well. And I look forward to seeing all of you at the Holiday Luncheon, which is always a great way to join with LLI friends and new members to share a great meal together.

You may have noticed that you are receiving a greater number of e-blasts, and that is a good thing! We are happy to be offering you, our members, more opportunities for learning and socializing. LLI is pleased to be collaborating with Waubonsee Community College on many great presentations and interactive activities, such as Crafting Conversations, Banned Book Club, and the History of American Pies. We also want to make you aware of other great WCC offerings that we feel would be of interest. But we also know that emails can become overwhelming, so we are making more use of our LLI webpage. This is the perfect platform to present information on our collaborative projects plus other WCC offerings. Many ask for an RSVP in order to plan for refreshments and seating, and you can do that right from our webpage. You might now be only checking the website at class registration times, but we want to encourage you to check it more often because new opportunities will be posted there as they arise. Bookmark our page so you have easy access to check-in often: www.waubonsee.edu/lli

Have you seen our Spirit Wear displays? We are so excited to offer another way to connect with our LLI membership. There are great options in sizes and styles to wear to classes or on outings. When wearing them elsewhere, they can be great conversation-starters when people want to know: What is LLI? We will have a display at the Holiday Luncheon where you can easily browse and try on the items that appeal to you. I'm looking forward to seeing them "in action" by spring semester!

Finally, I cannot forget to add, as I always do, how much joy I find in being a member of LLI. I so look forward to each thoughtfully presented class and each enthusiastically organized social event. I look forward to seeing friends I have made through LLI and greeting new members who will become friends. And I don't believe that I am the only one...do you feel that joy too?

Gratefully,

Andi Danis, LLI Board President



Curriculum Council Corner

The Lifelong Learning Curriculum Council consists of nine elected members. The main purpose of the Curriculum Council is to manage all aspects of providing enriching and dynamic educational experiences for Lifelong Learning members. Offering a variety of courses would not be possible without the creativity and dedication of the facilitators. In addition, the Curriculum Council is consistently looking for new facilitators and innovative ideas for courses. Any LLI member can suggest an idea for a course offering. Contact any Curriculum Council member, who can assist you in pursuing your idea.

As many of you know courses are frequently filled quickly. To help with this situation the Curriculum Council utilizes the following steps:

- Asking the facilitator of the filled course to offer a second session
- Increase the class size to accommodate more learners
- Ask the facilitator if they will repeat the course during the next semester
- Maintaining a waitlist when necessary

All three hundred plus Lifelong Learning members can help with this situation by considering the number of courses they register for on the first day. We know everyone is enthusiastic and eager to participate in their desired courses; however, this enthusiasm sometimes prevents others from having the opportunity to participate. We encourage everyone whenever possible to think of others as they register for courses. Also, if you know you will be unable to attend a course for which you have registered, please call registration at (630) 466-2593 to inform them of your inability to attend. This will allow someone who is on the waitlist the opportunity to participate in the course.

If you are still searching for learning experiences beyond the LLI catalog, Lifelong Learning collaborates with Waubensee Community College to provide additional events. These activities are open to LLI members and the community. To learn about these opportunities, check out the WCC website: www.waubensee.edu/lli

Information can also be found on the LLI Facebook page: www.facebook.com/LLIWCC



Learning Knows No Bounds

Partnered Events With Waubonsee Community College

We are thrilled to report on two of our recent events in partnership with Waubonsee Community College. Emily Rollins, Community Engagement Outreach Coordinator and LLI Liaison, has been instrumental in creating and coordinating them. Continue to monitor our website: www.waubonsee.edu/lli for upcoming activities!

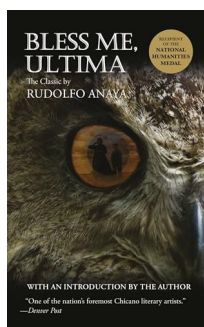
Crafting Conversations

The first in this series was held on September 18, the focus on engaging youth and adults in meaningful conversation. Working on a craft together provides a fun and relaxed atmosphere for conversation. LLI and community members were joined by the WCC Men's Basketball team for lively discussion and creation of fabric wreaths made from colorful strips of fabric.



All in attendance were seated at tables with a mix of students and LLI/community members. Several discussion questions were introduced, all relating to community and civic engagement. Examples are: *Can you share a memorable experience where you felt you made a difference in the community? Can you recall the first political event or issue that truly captured your attention? How did it shape your view of civic participation?*

The response was overwhelming: everyone had fun, especially meeting this incredible group of young men who were so enthusiastically engaged in conversation and crafting!



Banned Book to Movie Club

This event was appropriately kicked off during Banned Books Week on September 24 to an eager audience. The chosen book *Bless Me, Ultima* has seen continual successful efforts to ban it from library shelves and school curriculum since its release in 1972. The story centers on Antonio, a young boy of Mexican heritage, as he grapples with coming of age amidst conflicts between the old traditional ways and a new way of life in rural New Mexico.

Spirituality conflicting with Catholicism, individuality conflicting with role expectations for Antonio and his parents, and evil conflicting with good, all played a role in the banning of the book. However, it is considered a classic in Chicano literature and likely will be for years to come.

Participants viewed the movie, which was followed by an in-depth discussion led by John McCormack, Associate Professor of Religion and History at Aurora University, and Dan Brooks of the Aurora Film Society (pictured at right).





Fall Kickoff Open House

Held on August 12, 2024 in APC 110 on Sugar Grove Campus

This was our first Fall Kickoff, open to members and non-members, with the goal of recruiting new members and providing information to existing members. With the help of Emily Rollins and the Social-Community Outreach Committee, much advertising was conducted throughout the various cities represented by our membership.

A total of 102 people attended this fun event; 28 new members registered while at the Open House and 16 additional when returning home and reviewing the various offered courses! Now that is a success story, only possible through the many volunteers who worked on the various facets of planning and implementing this gala!



Our volunteers “at your service:” (L-R) Marguerita Johnston and Carol Putnam at sign-in, Donna Wawrzyniakowski and Jean Langlais at refreshments (of which there many) and Nancy Modery assisting members and guests in registration.



Members and guests were welcomed upon entering and given the opportunity to sit at tables with experienced LLI members who shared a wealth of information. A wide variety of literature was available, including LLI brochures, Fall Class Lists and Volunteer Opportunities. A slide show was in the background highlighting “All About LLI.”

Some of the information tables shown above (L-R): *Who We Are*, *Our Curriculum*, *Social Encounters* and *Class Sampler*.

LLI Election



LLI is an all-volunteer organization and we count on our members to help us thrive! Each year, the Nominating and Recruiting Committee (N&RC) reviews Board and Curriculum Council open positions and actively works to recruit candidates. A slate of candidates is presented to the Board in April for approval. If multiple candidates are presented for one or more positions, we have an election by the members.

The following positions are open for the 2025-2027 term (July through June):

- President—one-year term
- Vice President—one-year term
- Secretary—two-year term
- Technology Manager—two-year term
- Social-Community Outreach Manager—two-year term
- Four Curriculum Council Members—two-year terms

Those serving on the N&RC are: Ruth Harmon, Kent Hayward (non-voting), Jerre Henriksen, Jean Langlais and Mary Ann White (chair). **If you are interested in being considered for any of the above positions or have further questions regarding the associated duties and responsibilities, please contact Mary Ann White at mawhite466@aol.com or (630) 466-4206.**

Thank you to all who have returned the Volunteer Survey. We are excited to see so many of our new members step forward with interest in contributing their time and talents to LLI! Committee Chairs will be contacting you in the near future to “get you onboard” and answer any questions you might have.

Welcome to our team!!



*Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless,
but because they're priceless!*

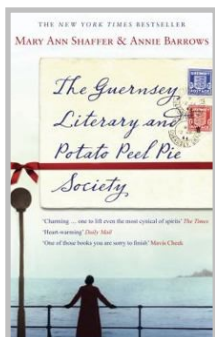
Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/LLIWCC



Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubonsee Community College

LLI Reads—Its Evolution

Written by Sue Foody



As a lifelong book lover, in 2010 Kim Carew felt such inspiration from the book, *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, that she launched her first LLI class, *Share Your Favorite Read*. Since then, Kim has facilitated many classes, including *LLI Reads*. Little did she know how popular both classes would still be in 2024.

First the class reads and discusses a novel Kim chooses for its multiple offshoots in the story. For example, the latest novel, *West With Giraffes*, had the dust bowl, the depression, zoos, giraffes, women in non-traditional roles, and romance all to explore. Since

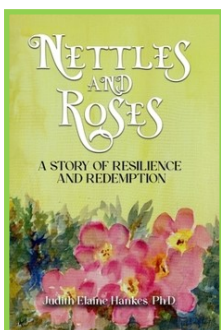
2013, the author of each book has personally visited the class via Skype or Zoom to share their own story about writing the novel. During the following weeks, class participants each share their views on a book they've read.



In 2016, the class had evolved to the point where Kim felt that *Share Your Favorite Read* no longer fit. Class members might actually have negative reviews of books, which were as valuable as good reviews. The book didn't have to be their favorite. And then there were the treats. Ah, the treats!

During the first class of the *Guernsey* book, Kim jokingly said she'd give extra credit to anyone who could bake the potato peel pie from the story. Sure enough, a class member rose to the occasion! Then a few years later, Kim treated the class to a feast of stew and injera bread written about in the novel *Cutting for Stone*. From there, class members caught the spirit and started bringing in treats that went along with their books. Hence, the name changed to *The LLI Literary and Treats Society*.

Today, class members not only share food treats with each other, but also other items that go along with their stories. Tulips, bookmarks, even hand sanitizer have made their way into the classroom. Even a garage sale! You never know what will appear. Finally, on the last day of class, members bring in their own books for a very large and generous book exchange. Kim makes sure the reading goes on and on and on.



Her *LLI Reads* class focuses on four texts that share a common theme. This fall semester the theme was "lives well lived." Virtual visits by the author are common but this year members were treated to an in-person visit by the author of *Nettles and Roses*, Dr. Judith Hankes. This visit was extra special as the story takes place right here in Oswego and the surrounding area. Participants found themselves hunting for locations named in the story which made it a very personal experience for everyone.

Thank you, Kim, for so many engaging and fascinating classes that we hope will continue for a long time!

Fall Offerings

Exploring the Cosmos

Co-facilitated by Mike Albrow & Paul Mantsch



Paul Mantsch assembled colleagues from the scientific community, along with one adventurous amateur astronomer, to present this six-part course called *Exploring the Cosmos—Windows to the Universe*. The six parts included: “Eyes on the Skies,” “Understanding Starlight,” “Mapping the Universe—Past, Present, and Future,” “Neutrinos From the Sky,” “Gravitational Waves—a New Astronomy” and “Exploring a Violent Universe With Cosmic Rays.”

If you are thinking this was quite an undertaking, you would be right. There was a lot of science presented here, shared in such a way that allowed the average LLI participant to glean as much information as possible from the presentations and to ply the presenters with questions. This class offered the curious participant an opportunity to learn about the activities and discoveries of dedicated scientists in a convivial environment.

If that was not challenge enough, this course provided simultaneous in-person sessions and Zoom participation for at-home participants. Thank you to the presenters for embracing the challenges!

Collecting United States Coins

Organized by Jennifer Beck

Guest Presenter Bob Mankisky, owner of Kane County Coins and Currency in Elburn, began the session by sharing his story of first becoming interested in coins through his grandfather. Bob’s knowledge and fascination with coins were on display as he explored the history of coins, including Colonial coins. These coins were instrumental in the birth of commerce, replacing the system of trading goods.

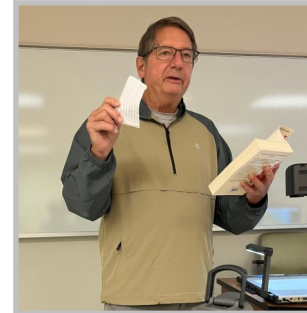


This was a very interactive session with many historic coins shared for viewing. Participants had many questions and some even brought in their own coin collections for Bob to view. Bob also highlighted the various mints in the U.S., the types of currency produced at each, and the various metals used at different points in history. Other key topics of discussion were how to collect and value coins and the best references to use.

Thank you, Jennifer, for bringing this great resource to LLI!

Over...Under...Around...Through *Facilitated by Peter Ginter*

This course is based on the New York Times bestseller *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps that Explain Everything About the World* by Tim Marshall. In his introduction Marshall explains, “The land on which we live has always shaped us... and the choices of those who lead the seven billion inhabitants of this planet will to some degree always be shaped by the rivers, mountains, deserts, lakes, and seas that constrain us all – as they always have.” To quote from the course description, “geo-politics looks at the way in which international affairs can be understood through geographical features.”



In his book Marshall takes a closer look at these regions: Russia, China, United States, Western Europe, Africa, The Middle East, India and Pakistan, Korea and Japan, Latin America, and The Arctic. The course covered the geography and history of these countries or regions (with the exception of The Arctic due to time constraints) as well as current events, engendering much thought and discussion.

This course was facilitated by Peter Ginter, a retired high school Social Studies teacher who served 23 years in the United States Army Reserve. Peter coached Boys Varsity soccer at Addison Trail and Willowbrook High Schools, and coached soccer at Bartlett High School and Hinsdale Central High School. Peter and his wife are big Chicago Blackhawks fans.

Presidential Election Prediction 2024



Richard Kiefer, a Waubesa Community College professor of Political Science and History since 2000, gave a very informative and neutral presentation. The 2024 presidential election is unique in that an incumbent is not running and a past president is running for a non-consecutive term. This has not happened since Grover Cleveland in 1892.

There are 51 separate elections: each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The president is elected by an electoral vote, not the popular vote. This method has been contested over the past several years, in particular. Although there has been some congressional electoral count reform, the basic method remains unchanged.

Professor Kiefer explained how the electoral votes are derived and certified. A topic of great interest is the accuracy of polling. The validity of each is based on how the poll is conducted and its margin of error. The prediction is close, but polls can be wrong. When asked to predict the winner, Professor Kiefer replied, “I can say with certainty that the winner will be Donald Trump or Kamala Harris.” Although perhaps not what the audience wanted to hear, a truer statement could not have been made!

Hindu Temple Outing *Organized by Mary Hauge*



If you have travelled along I-88 and glanced to the south near Exit 114, it’s hard not to notice a silhouette of the graceful, glistening white towers of Sri Venkateswara Swami (Balaji) Temple located on Sullivan Road in Aurora. LLI member Mary Hauge organized this tour of the Temple as an opportunity for members to learn about this beautiful and serene place of pilgrimage and worship for Hindus. The outing was so popular, it was offered both spring and summer semesters!

As you pull onto the long, winding driveway, you are spellbound by this oasis of scenic landscape and the stunning, graceful lines of the Temple architecture. LLI visitors stepped into the intricately designed entranceway and were ushered to a small area to remove our shoes, as a part of temple etiquette. We were then greeted by our Hindu guide and oriented to the history of the Temple and given a brief explanation of Hindu religious beliefs and practices. We were also encouraged to ask any questions throughout our tour. As we walked through the Temple, it is hard not to feel calm and composed by the scent of incense and the mantras and chanting of priests. There is an array of deities that are magnificently adorned with silk clothes, fresh flowers and jewelry. As a place of worship, we saw many people throughout praying to the gods and leaving offerings. We were also invited to observe and voluntarily participate in a “blessing,” which many of us did. Afterward, we went to the cafeteria where tasty rice dishes, yogurt and cookies were available for purchase. We enjoyed our lunch in cheerful camaraderie.

Many of you that may have taken a yoga class is familiar with the Hindu word *Namaste*... a beautiful greeting done with your hands pressing together and smile which expresses politeness, courteous, honor and hospitality from one person to another! It is certainly a beautiful day!

Spirit Wear is Here!



Exciting news—we are now offering vests and pullovers for men and women with a price range of \$20-\$36 in sizes small through 4XL. These garments will be on display at our December 5 Holiday Luncheon for viewing. Since all orders are non-refundable, we strongly suggest trying them on before ordering.

Please note that the orders will be processed after the December 15 deadline and will take approximately three weeks to arrive. Members will be notified when ready to be picked up at the vendor location: 769 Heartland Drive, Unit E, Sugar Grove (on Route 47 across from the college). What a great way to advertise LLI with pride!

Orders can be placed through December 15 at the SignFX website:

<https://signfxdesigns.com/pc/lli>

Fall Facilitator Round Table



The Curriculum Council (CC) hosts two Facilitator Roundtables each year. The purpose is to provide facilitators with the opportunity to share ideas and concerns and be presented with helpful information for facilitating. This fall session, held on October 18 in the Student Center, was open to all LLI members in an effort to recruit new facilitators. The theme, *Helping LLI Grow: From Seed to Bouquet*, can be summed up as, “Everything you always wanted to know but were afraid to ask.”



This informative and productive session was divided into segments, each with a topical speaker. (L-R) Evelyn Porter shared how she “discovered” topics for courses and/or speakers, Kim Carew walked members through the process of creating a proposal to facilitating a class, Ruth Harmon spoke about how to use Artificial Intelligence for course planning and Karen Christensen led the group in a Q&A discussion.



This interactive session culminated in participants breaking up into groups based on their common interests. They identified potential courses falling into these categories that would be of personal interest to facilitate. Some even decided to continue their discussions offline with the goal of bringing their seeds to bloom.

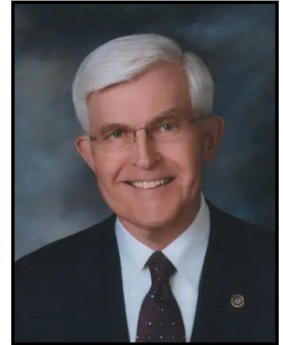
In Memoriam

Richard J. Larson

February 27, 1935—September 7, 2024

Dick was an active member of LLI, serving as a facilitator and as a member of both the Board and Curriculum Council . He was active in St. Mark’s Lutheran Church in Aurora and the Batavia Rotary Club, in addition to serving on many community boards. Dick was a great listener and committed to making a difference in his community,

Born in Earlville, Ill., Dick attended a one-room grade school for which he had many stories! He graduated from Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa and received a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Illinois. Dick was appointed as Associate Judge in 1991 and continued his career serving on the bench until his retirement in 2006. He and his wife Irma were married for 63 years and had two adoring children, Mark and Anne, and two grandsons. A life well lived!



Margaret Ritchie

August 29, 1928—October 5, 2024



Margaret was a longtime member of LLI, always recruiting new members through her joy of learning. She was a facilitator and always actively engaged in every course she took. Margaret led book clubs and exuded life and energy in everything she did.

Born and educated in St. Charles, Ill., Margaret became an X-Ray Technician at Loretto Hospital in Chicago. Her love of family sustained her and filled her heart and soul with joy through their many talents. Margaret is survived by her husband Gene of 74 years, seven children, 13 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. This is clearly what kept her young!

Gary Hauge

June 30, 1944—October 12, 2024

We will forever remember Gary’s quiet and reserved nature, someone who planned many trips and outings for LLI with his devoted wife Mary. While he often stepped into the background, Gary was always focused and engaged in whatever was happening.

Born in Morris, Ill., Gary graduated from Northern Illinois University with a business degree and spent his career as an Underwriter for Farmer’s Insurance. After his early retirement, he was committed to giving back to the community, active in the Big Rock Historical Society and establishing the Big Rock Library. During their lives together, Gary and Mary raised exotic pheasants, became amateur taxidermists and took hunting trips to Africa. Now that reveals Gary’s many dimensions behind his quiet exterior!





Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubonsee Community College

Waubonsee Community College
Lifelong Learning Institute Office
Collins Hall, Room 174
Sugar Grove, IL 60554

(630) 466-2593 www.waubonsee.edu/lli

Our **Values** include continued learning, intellectual inquiry, social interaction, and active member participation in lifelong learning.

Our **Mission** is to provide our membership with a defined and member-generated framework for life-enriching, dynamic educational experiences through lifelong learning programs.

Our **Vision** is to be a self-sustaining and self-governing community of active mature adults offering a diverse and intellectually stimulating array of noncredit educational offerings in a wide variety of academic disciplines.

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