

Lifelong Learning Institute

at

Waubonsee Community College

President's Corner

Dear LLI Members,

I hope you all had a pleasant summer. I know for me it went by so quickly! But...with the coming fall begins another LLI Membership Year, and we are excited for you to experience all that your membership provides.

Our first Special Interest Group, the Coffee House Crawl, is underway! This is a “test group,” if you will, meeting over three months (July—September) to see if we have the right “formula” for getting more groups started. We know there is tremendous interest in various types of social groups, so please stay tuned for further developments!

By now most of you will have registered for the wonderful variety of fall courses that will begin in a matter of days. And remember that if there are openings, you can continue to register up until the day before a class begins!

In July, Mary Maiers, Vice President Dr. Melinda Tejada and I attended the Southern Regional Conference for Learning in Retirement, sponsored by Road Scholar. This conference brought together staff and volunteer members of LLI organizations from across the country to network and share best practices in curriculum development, including planning for trips and outings, member communication and marketing, volunteer engagement, the use of technology, and opportunities for social interaction. In short – we were kept very busy learning and networking!

One thing that was noticeably clear from the outset is that there are as many ways to organize an LLI as there are LLIs! Each one is a little (or a lot) different: in size, from several hundred to several thousand members; in structure, from a large number of paid staff to all-volunteer; from owning their own facilities to using rented/donated classrooms, and more.

What binds us all together, though, is the dedication to enhancing the well-being of older adults through providing enriching opportunities for learning and social interaction. We have returned from the conference with renewed enthusiasm and many new ideas that we are eager to explore. In the end, we hope it brings additional ways for all of us to engage in lifelong learning.

Sincerely,
Andi Danis, LLI Board President



Save the Date!

December 5: Holiday Luncheon to be held at the Stonebridge Country Club in Aurora. Detailed information, including registration instructions, will be emailed to all members in early October. Guests are welcome!

Curriculum Council Corner

For many years, LLI members always received an evaluation form in the last session of their course. This year, the evaluation form became optional with some facilitators designing their own forms to make them more meaningful while others dispensed of it altogether.

To ensure that all members have the opportunity to provide feedback, we now offer a “Virtual LLI Course Suggestion Box” where you can submit your thoughts to improve our courses! This method encourages objectivity and openness, as your ideas can be submitted anonymously if you choose. Your submission will go to the chairperson of the Curriculum Council who may share it with the entire Curriculum Council if deemed appropriate.

The form is simple to use and only takes minutes. It can easily be found on the Lifelong Learning Institute website (waubonsee.edu/lli) by scrolling to the bottom of the page. There you’ll see:

We'd love to hear from you



Virtual LLI Course Suggestion Box

Simply click on the link and add your comments in the “Suggestions for Improvements” Box. Possible examples of “Suggestions for Improvements” are:

The facilitator was excellent because

I would have enjoyed additional sessions on this topic...

The class was full and I couldn't register. Can you offer it again?

The temperature of the room was a bit cold...

The Course Suggestion Box is not intended to replace the evaluation form you may receive from your facilitator. That form is only for the facilitator to learn how to improve his/her courses. The Curriculum Council does not view that form.

Your feedback—both positive and negative—is enormously important in determining and guiding the planning of future courses. We welcome and encourage your submissions and look forward to hearing from you!

Partnered Events With Waubonsee Community College

We are thrilled to announce the partnering between LLI and Waubonsee Community College to offer **free** events to our members! Emily Rollins and colleagues of WCC and Karen Christensen of the Curriculum Council have been working diligently together to create a wide range of programs we hope will be of interest to you. Below is a listing of upcoming events.

Please register online at waubonsee.edu/lli

Crafting Conversations on September 18, 3-4:45 p.m. in the Student Center Café



This event is open to LLI members and WCC students, staff and faculty. It is an opportunity to have a conversation about civic engagement and community building. Participants will be able to make a wreath craft to take home and visit with Hope the comfort dog. Complimentary refreshments will be served.

Banned Book to Movie Club on September 24, 3:45-6 p.m. in WCC College Auditorium



Bless Me Ultima is a profound book made into a movie. Participants will view the movie and discuss how the book and movie have impacted their lives and culture. You will want to read the book in advance. This event is open to in-district community members 16 years of age and older. Snacks will be served.

History of American Pies on November 19, noon-1 p.m. at the Academic and Professional Center, Room 110



Pies are as American as pizza! Our ancestors used what they had available locally and made the most of it. Pies are not just for dessert; for our ancestors they were often considered survival food. Bring your lunch and enjoy the fascinating presentation by speaker Catherine Lambrecht. Complimentary pie and beverages will be served. This event is open to in-district community members 16 years of age and older.

Celebrating National Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics Week on November 6, afternoon (time TBD), Sugar Grove Campus



The presenter is Kihana Wilson, an Astrophysicist and Science Communicator at Argonne National Laboratory, who will share her passion about using her voice, experience and talent for writing to make science more accessible and to reach marginalized groups typically excluded from STEM pipelines. Open to all. More details to follow.

Let's Head East Trip *Lifelong Learning at Its Best*



Take a thirst for knowledge and add some committed organizers and classroom learning opportunities for like-minded adults of a certain age—you get LLI. When you mix them up with experiential learning in the field, you offer an extraordinary and memorable experience and the basis of the success of the “Let’s Head East” motor-coach trip this past spring.

In the years prior to COVID, Llona Steele developed a trip that would allow participants to experience the places covered in a number of LLI class offerings on topics such as *The Pilgrims*, *The Erie Canal*, *FDR*, *The Women’s Hall of Fame*, *The Transcendentalists*, *Salem Witch Trials*, *History of Candy Making*, and many more!

Sadly, COVID sidelined Llona’s trip. Repeated pleas and nudges from Ellen Neupert to try that trip again led Llona to brainstorm with Kim Carew who pitched the trip to Mayflower Cruises and Tours. Mayflower contracted LLI member and past WCC/LLI liaison Barb Jachna as our tour manager and she requested the most congenial motorcoach driver for our tour. Mayflower does what they do best—scheduling, housing arrangements, meals, tickets, etc., along with input from Barb, Llona and Kim.

Does it sound like a lot of work? For the planners and facilitators, it was joyful hard work. The planners and participants alike are deeply satisfied with the results, an enriching blend of learning, “great people, fun and fellowship.”

What a very special and inspirational organization is the Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubensee Community College. Long may LLI continue its marvelous work through the continued commitment of its members.



LLI Scholarships



Did you know...



- ⇒ LLI awards scholarships each year to Waubensee Community College students.
- ⇒ These scholarships are funded by our Operating Fund and generous donations from you!
- ⇒ We donated \$2000 for this academic year: one \$1000 Founders Scholarship and two \$500 LLI Scholarships. The Board has voted to increase the scholarship total to \$5000 for the 2025-2026 year!

This Year's Scholarship Recipients

Founder's Scholarship—Antonio Ruiz

I am working on an Associate in Engineering Science degree with the hope of achieving a bachelor's degree in the field. I have a younger brother and live with my mother. My father has lived in Mexico for the last eight years. I want to contribute to supporting my family and motivating my brother to continue his education. I have been on both the President's List and Dean's List here at WCC. I had dropped out of high school because I didn't believe I could get the support to continue my education. This scholarship allows me to do that and to make my parents and brother proud.

LLI Scholarship—Ayako Butolph

I am a 50-year old mother from Tokyo, Japan and am studying to become a nurse. I am working on completing my prerequisites in anatomy and physiology. Receiving this scholarship has boosted my confidence and reaffirmed my belief I can accomplish my goal. I took time from work and school to raise my children and transitioned into caregiving. I have achieved a personal milestone by taking a communications course, which helped me to overcome my fear of public speaking.

LLI Scholarship—Anabella Catania

I am working toward certification as a Registered Nurse with the hope of getting a Bachelor in Nursing degree. I am also continuing my education as a Dental Hygienist. I was born in Argentina and am a DACA resident. I am the first in my family to make it to this level of education. I am a mother of two children and an entrepreneur—I ran a small business of Argentinian empanadas. Learning English has been a struggle, but I read many books to help me. I want to get healthcare back to its roots. This scholarship will help me do that and to show my children there are always doors open.

Congratulations to you all! We extend our support in achieving your life's dreams and educational goals!



Spring Luncheon



Our **Spring Luncheon and Annual Business Meeting** was held on May 30, 2024 at the Stonebridge Country Club in Aurora with over 90 members, guests and VIPs in attendance! Everyone raved about the “gourmet” food and beautiful ambiance. Our members truly look forward to these events as a time to renew old friendships and foster new ones.

We had many energetic speakers (L-R), including President Andi Danis who highlighted the Board accomplishments for this past year, Evelyn Porter who shared her experiences as a facilitator, Gary Krueger who welcomed everyone to the luncheon and Dr. Melinda Tejada who stressed the college’s commitment to partnering with LLI!



Undeniably everyone having fun!



Thank you to our volunteers!
L-R: Nancy Modery, Ann Hastert, Mary Ann White, Gail Tattersfield



Summer Offerings

Using Artificial Intelligence Tools for Everyday Life

Organized by Karen Christensen



This summer class, presented by entrepreneurs Jim Schweizer and Mike Manzke of Global Data Sciences, was a real game changer for me (Sue Foody). From the moment I viewed their video produced by AI in just 45 seconds, I became intensely curious as to what I could do with this technology and decided to go explore.

I consulted Gemini, which is Google’s AI Program (gemini.google.com) and entered my prompt (which is just a voice command). “Help me write a paragraph that explains AI and how seniors can use it.” This is what AI produced in just a few seconds:

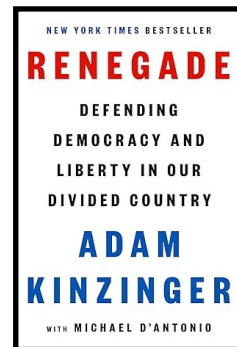
Artificial Intelligence (AI) is computer technology that can think and learn like humans. It’s revolutionizing how we live, and seniors can significantly benefit from it. From smart homes controlled by voice commands to wearable devices tracking health metrics, AI enhances independence and safety. Virtual assistants can provide companionship, while AI-powered tools can simplify tasks like shopping and scheduling. It’s a technology that can make life easier, more enjoyable, and more secure for seniors.

As the presenters indicated, we’re just in the beginning stages of AI. Expect exponential growth in the next few years. Exciting or scary? Give it a try!

Is Democracy Really at Risk in 2024?

Co-facilitated by Carl Hays & Jay Labelle

The long-standing co-facilitating team of Carl Hays and Jay Labelle hit the mark once again, presenting this timely and engaging topic for LLI members! Excerpts from Adam Kinzinger’s book *Renegade: Defending Democracy and Liberty in our Divided Country* were reviewed and provided a glimpse of the Congressman’s background and history which shaped his life.



Course attendees viewed a 2023 interview with Kinzinger accounting his tenure on the House Select Committee to investigate the January 6 Attack and his decision to vote to impeach President Trump. This interview was a candid, gripping account of the attack, the aftermath and the cost to the Congressman, personally and professionally.

Our facilitators were engaging and provided an opportunity for LLI attendees to share their thoughts and ideas: to engage in a lively discourse on the future of the election, our country and strategies to promote voting in Illinois and swing states! In fact, members were continuing their discussions as they walked out of class!

The Jigsaw Puzzle: Piecing Together a History

Facilitated by Kim Carew

Kim Carew joined LLI in 2008 and since then has facilitated over 50 popular classes. Every seat in the large classroom was filled with jigsaw puzzle enthusiasts who were eager to share their perceived benefits, working methods, resources, experiences, and joy found in this fun and challenging pursuit.



Wooden puzzles date back to 1766 when John Spilsbury invented and sold dissected maps as educational tools for children of the wealthy. These were originally an expensive luxury. The earliest puzzles for adults weren't available until about 1900. In 1909, Parker Brothers' interlocking pieces and technology innovations brought down prices, providing a source of inexpensive entertainment and family fun. The 1930 Great Depression period saw extreme rises in popularity of jigsaw puzzles, a surge more recently repeated during COVID.

Kim shared several interesting and informative videos, including *History of Jigsaw Puzzles in American History* by Leslie Goddard. Other videos showed developments in cutting techniques, how jigsaw puzzles are made, and interviews touting the many benefits of working jigsaw puzzles. Among these are a full brain workout that slows down cognitive decline, visual space reasoning, lowering stress, and reconnecting with family and friends. A special treat at the end of class was an exchange of puzzles shared by class participants eager to begin new and exciting projects.

Madeleine Albright: First Female Secretary of State

Organized by Carl Hays



Laura Newman, City Administrator of Batavia, presented this class on Madeleine Albright. Newman said, "I admire her courage and confidence to pursue her passions." When, early in her law career, Newman found herself "navigating a male-dominated profession," she found Albright to be a role model, "and I try to honor her example by mentoring young women (and men) in pursuit of their careers in the field of civil service."

Maria Jana (Madeleine) Korbela Albright was born in Czechoslovakia in 1937 and immigrated to the United States as a refugee after the communist takeover of her home country in 1948. She worked for nonprofits, the Democratic Party, as a professor of International Affairs and Ambassador to the United Nations before being sworn in as Secretary of State in 1997. In 2012 Albright was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She was passionate about democracy, human rights and women's issues and died in 2022 at age 84.

Pictured above are Carl Hays and Guest Presenter Laura Newman. Carl recruited Newman after he heard her give a *Books Between Bites* presentation on Albright at the Batavia Public Library.

The Art of Remedios Varo

Facilitated by Judy Hunnicutt



Judy became aware of Surrealist Artist Remedios Varo (1908-1963) when she read the book *Alchemy of a Blackbird* and “became entranced with this unusual woman.” Much of her work having been destroyed, Varo is unfamiliar to many. She spent the majority of her adulthood as a political refugee, leaving her native Spain for Paris during the Spanish Civil War. Varo fled Paris after Germany’s 1940 occupation and escaped to Mexico where she lived the rest of her life.

Judy shared many of Varo’s works and interpreted them with insightful input from class participants. Varo did not like to be labeled as a Surrealist, which allows the unconscious mind to express itself with “dreamlike scenes and ideas,” but rather be known for her own art. The themes represent her life, someone raised in a strict family but didn’t like constraints. Varo was influenced by her engineer father, who taught her to draw. Her last work, *Still Life Reviving*, was painted in 1963 and purchased by the Art Institute of Chicago, where it is on display.

Judy’s love of art is obvious in all of the courses she has facilitated for LLI! She presented the life and works of an “unfamiliar” artist with such knowledge and joy—on the very day a moving van was parked in front of her house! Now that tells us something about Judy!

Does Birth Order Influence Who We Become?

Organized by Carl Hays

Dr. Michael Maniaci, Clinical Psychologist and frequent LLI Guest Presenter, shared interesting research results regarding behaviors based on birth order. He emphasized to be aware of “junk science!” Dr. Maniaci first shared his own story—the youngest of five children. Due to the large age gap with his siblings, he developed the behaviors of an only child, having four additional parents!



There are five Psychological Positions: only, oldest, second, middle and youngest. Birth order is the super factor, but others include parenting, genetics, religion and health.

How interesting to learn about the modal characteristics of these positions: an only child tends to be a perfectionist and talk the least; the oldest is a controller and often passive-aggressive; the second-born independent and a non-conformist; the middle child a pleaser and diplomat; the youngest an attention-seeker showing playfulness. Blended families can change these characteristics, and can vary based on the child’s age when blended and the level of competition within the family.

In closing, Dr. Maniaci shared some valuable references, ranging from fun, science and scholarly. We all left with a better understanding of ourselves and family members!

Polish Pottery Outing

Organized by Ceil Carey

LLI members were recently afforded the opportunity to personally tour and learn the history of Polish pottery by visiting the aptly named “More Polish Pottery” shop located in Big Rock, Illinois. Owner Rebecca Gengler recounted her initial exposure to Polish pottery while living in Germany as a military wife. In 2011 she founded her retail outlet as a family business in their garage and in 2023 added a second shop in South Haven, Michigan.

Dedicated to preserving the Polish culture and tradition, the shop offers products directly from Poland. They work directly with the artists and factories in Poland to ensure high quality pieces. The products range from wooden Pisanki eggs to handcrafted Polish pottery. The pottery is known for its variety of patterns, durability, and excellence for baking. There was no shortage of items for LLI members to choose from based on their amount of shopping!

In addition to the retail store, the Polish Pottery Museum will open in Fall 2024. LLI members got a sneak preview and were fascinated with what they saw. A Polish teapot from the 1700s, a replica of the tea service used in the flight of Pope John Paul II to Poland, and many pieces spanning from the 1750s-1940s and 1950s-today were on display. Informative videos added to the members’ understanding and appreciation of this fine art.

Of course, after all that shopping, members needed to refuel! A wonderful lunch was enjoyed at the Burnt Barrel in Sugar Grove. LLI not only fulfills our need for learning, but also our social connections! Thanks to Ceil Carey for arranging this outing.

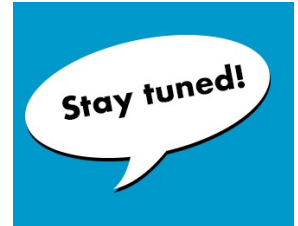


A shout out to LLI members! If you love these outings, you might think of organizing one. Our Curriculum Council members can guide you. Their contact information is listed on page 12.



Spirit Wear is Coming!

Great news for our members! We have heard your call. What is more fun than wearing a shirt or vest with our LLI logo? Well, that is exactly what we will be offering to you. We are in the process of having samples printed and will put them on display this fall for you to view. We will be offering vests and long-sleeve shirts for men and women in different colors at affordable pricing. More information to follow, including pricing and ordering instructions. Stay tuned!



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



Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubensee Community College

In Memoriam

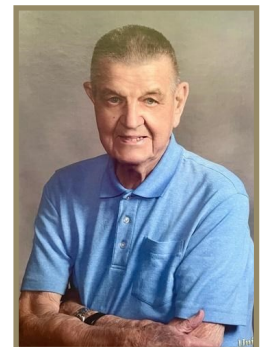
With our sincere condolences...

Harold I. Matthews

February 28, 1927—June 2, 2024

H.I. was born in Witt, Illinois where he spent the first fourteen years of his life. His family moved to LaGrange where he completed the last three years of high school. H.I. enlisted in the U.S. Navy during his senior year, then enrolled in Lyons Township Junior College where he competed in basketball and baseball. While at Milliken University in Decatur, he met Sarah Ann “Annie” Peacock, married and remained best friends for the next 62 years until her death.

H.I. spent his career in the insurance industry and had four sons with Annie while living in the suburbs of Denver, Milwaukee and Chicago. He was always active in his community and was most proud of witnessing the people his sons became. All will miss H.I.’s conversation, wit and incredible memory. For those of us who had the privilege of being in LLI classes with H.I., we will remember his love of history and current events and his engaging participation. Rest in peace.





Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubonsee Community College

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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.

Waubonsee Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, veteran's status, marital status, disability or any other characteristic protected by law in its programs and activities. For more information on the college's nondiscrimination policies, contact the Executive Director of Human Resources at (630) 466-7900, ext. 2367; Waubonsee Community College, Route 47 at Waubonsee Dr., Sugar Grove, IL 60554-9454.

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