



LIRA NEWSLETTER

LEARNING IN RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION
Office of Community Service – UMass Lowell
Member of Elderhostel Institute Network
Tel.: (978) 934-3135 Web: uml.edu/community/LIRA

March 2009

Vol. 16 No. 1

Looking forward to SPRING and The New Spring Session!

Join us for the Town Meeting
Wednesday, March 18, 2009, 10 AM to Noon



MIL Conference Center
Suffolk Street
Wannalancit Building

Come and hear about
our new Spring Schedule,
have a cup of coffee
and sign up for classes!



Holiday Party 2008

As always, the Holiday party held at Wannalancit Mills was well attended. President Don Pattershall called the meeting to order at 10 AM and announced that we still didn't have a meeting place for the Winter Intersession. Later in the program, Paul Marion talked to us and said he had a meeting with the coordinator for the Wannalancit building. He returned minutes later to tell us that they agreed to let us use a room for classes. We finally have a new home!

Curriculum Chairman Toby Hodes awarded certificates of appreciation to facilitators who conducted the year's programs. Facilitators for the Winter Intersession were asked to give a brief outline of their programs.

Thank you to all the members who contributed so generously for the hats, mittens and so many great books. Your generosity is much appreciated by Community Teamwork. Their thank you note is printed in this newsletter.

Carol Cannistraro, Pat Dion and Shirley Mitchell did a great job in organizing the Consumable Auction. It is always a fun part of the Holiday Party and for some reason, there always seems to be one table that wins more than their share! The auction made \$581.00 for the Scholarship Fund. Thanks to all who participated.

Betty Jack, chairman of the Scholarship Committee, awarded the two \$1000 scholarships to UMass Lowell students Abbey Denaro and Sopheavy Seng. The two young people were sincerely appreciative and their thank you notes are also in this newsletter.

Thanks to Kay Dunfey who graciously agreed to organize the potluck luncheon even though she had resigned as Hospitality Chairman! It was a delicious smorgasbord – we have some great cooks in this group!

Jeri Durant



Our 2008 Scholarship Recipients

Thanks to the generosity of the LIRA members, we were able to award two \$1000 scholarships to two senior women at our annual holiday party. Abbey Denaro is from North Reading. An honor student at UMass Lowell, she is majoring in Exercise Physiology with a minor in Nutrition Psychology and has plans to attend chiropractic school after graduation. She has been President and Fund Raising Chairman of the local chapter of the National Leadership Honor Society, Omicron Delta Kappa. As a chiropractor, her goals are to work with the military. She says, "Once I obtain my chiropractic degree, I plan on working in a military treatment facility to provide care for those who care for all of us." She obtained a license as a personal trainer, working with autistic and post operative clients, helping them to better health.



L to R: Abbey Denaro, Betty Jack, Sopheavy Seng

Our other recipient, Sopheavy Seng from Lowell, is a native of Cambodia who has managed to become an honor student

although English is her second language. She says, "As a non-native English speaking student and immigrant from Cambodia, I never imagined that I would start a senior year of college as a member of the Honors Program, an honoree on the National Deans List for three semesters, speaking a new language." Her life goal is to become an oncologist. Among her community service activities, she serves as program organizer with the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association as a medical interpreter and creating multi-lingual promotional materials.

It has been a pleasure to work with these fine young students as well as our previous recipients. LIRA members can be very proud of the help they provide and the University can also be proud of the educational program that allows them to learn and grow and become outstanding leaders.

*Betty Jack, Outgoing Chairperson
Barbara Arnold ~ Kay Carroll
Mary Jane Myers ~ Mary Welch*

Refreshment Duties – Fall and Spring Semester Coordinated by the Curriculum Committee

*(8 weeks, Monday - Friday morning and/or afternoon)
8 sessions/week (+/- 60 sessions/semester)*

With a potential of 60+ sessions per semester, it is fair and reasonable to ask LIRA members to help with the refreshment duties. The Curriculum Committee has graciously agreed to coordinate refreshment duties for **Fall and Spring Semesters** as follows:

The Program Coordinator, or designated person, for each program, will arrange to have the refreshment duties covered for the first session. Then, at the first session, the Program Coordinator, or designated person, will circulate a sign-up sheet for volunteers to sign-up for the remaining weeks of that program. *[No volunteers = no refreshments.]*

Refreshment duties consist of (1) making the coffee, (2) providing refreshments (homemade or store-bought), and (2) cleaning up after the program. One, two or three persons can share the duties.

Don Pattershall

Donations

The Executive Council has agreed to make a donation to the Assistive Technology Program of UMass Lowell in appreciation of Alan Rux coming to speak to us about the program. He gave a fascinating talk about the products they develop to help people with disabilities at no cost to the individual. Mr. Rux is near retirement and would like to establish a volunteer group of retired engineers that would help the students accomplish their projects. If anyone is interested, you may contact him at 978-934-3330 or email alan_rux@uml.edu.

The Executive Council has also agreed to donate to the Center for the Study of Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations at Merrimack College in appreciation of Dr. Padraic O'Hare coming to lead a discussion on the film *Constantine's Sword* that we saw previous to his visit.

Member News

Leonard McDermott, an early member of LIRA, passed away recently. Lenny was a true gentle man and a tireless contributor to LIRA programs. In recent years he resided with his son Joseph in Manassas, VA.

We wish a speedy recovery to Kay Collins who is recovering from a back injury.

Kay Carroll

LIRA Publicity

Article in "UMass Lowell Magazine"

If you are a graduate of UMass Lowell, you have probably seen the full page article about LIRA that appeared in the fall 2008 issue of the MAGAZINE. A picture of members of LIRA who are graduates of UMass Lowell accompanies the article. You may remember that the picture was taken about 1 year ago when Jack Craig, a pianist and singer, who is also a graduate, presented a popular musical program of the vaudeville era.

The beginnings of LIRA 20 years ago with Prof. Mark Levine are described. The article notes that the program, to quote Toby Hodes, is "a social outlet – we make new friends, and learn to enjoy each other. And it keeps our minds busy." It highlights recent courses and in general the range that these courses cover in the sciences and the humanities. It also describes our semester format.

University Honored

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has recognized the university's Assistive Technology program as reported in the "Boston Sunday Globe" in its "Northeast Section" on February 15, 2009. On Wednesday, February 4, Alan Rux of this program treated us to a very interesting and informative presentation of how UMass students design and create projects that aid disabled people.

General Publicity

I think the strategy of members introducing prospective members has proved to be a good way to offer the program to other retired people. Keep up the good work — a personal introduction proves to be the most successful way of gaining new members.

Pretty soon we should have a new brochure that we can scatter around the towns in the Merrimack Valley so that prospective members can learn how to become acquainted with the program. At the Town Meeting I will be asking for the names of members who would be interested in being hosts and hostesses to prospective members by bringing them to a meeting after a prospective member has contacted us by phone or through the web site.

Jeanne Gunion

Want a Carousel?

Jean Dettman most generously gave me Kodak Transvue 80 slide trays for the Carousel projector. If you can use some, please telephone or e-mail, scraggly@earthlink.net. I too wish to share them with members.

Connie Lanseigne-Case

Visit to Buddhist Temple

On January 21 over 30 LIRA members visited the Great Wisdom Center (Wat Buddhavhavana of Massachusetts) in Westford at 25 Milot Rd. We were hosted by Venerable David Chutiko the Vice Abbot. The visit was very informative and fascinating. David Chutiko described the precepts of Buddhism and their love of nature and concepts of humanity and self enrichment. He explained the meaning of the Buddha statues in the temple and pointed out the significance of the hand palm outstretched upwardly,



signaling one to halt and enrich oneself and find happiness within. The congregation is primarily Laotian.

He provided us a short history of his coming to Buddhism, from being born in Melrose and educated in Catholic School in Melrose to a tour of duty in the US Air Force, to a career in Chinese Garden Design and then becoming a Buddhist, ordained in Thailand. Giving away all of his belongings and living in a shack in the forest in California for 7 years until coming forth to help organize Temples in various cities in the US.

There was an excellent interchange of member questions and informative responses. All members found the visit extremely interesting and rewarding.

There was a brief demonstration of meditation noting that it has many health benefits.

Venerable David teaches meditation (in English) on Wed Evenings 7-9 PM. It is open to the public.

Jerry Gilmore



Volunteers Needed

CTI's Senior Corps is looking for English-as-a Second Language (ESL) volunteers to tutor English at Lowell High School, one day a week helping in small groups. Join our new RSVP volunteer, a retired ESL Teacher from Lowell High, in giving students the skills, self-confidence, and motivation they need to realize and achieve their full potential. You will also help clarify American cultures and traditions for them and learn about other cultures yourself. Training is available. To learn more, contact Joan Aseltine, Senior Corps Program Specialist at 978-654-5080 ext. 14 or jaseltine@comteam.org.

Documentary Film Schedule

Films will be shown Thursday (except 4/15) 12:30 – 2:30 PM

March 26

GHOSTS OF RWANDA (2004). A decade after Hutu extremists killed 800,000 Rwandans, PBS Frontline takes a hard look at how such an atrocity could have occurred.

April 2

CORAL REEF ADVENTURE (2003). Jean-Michel Cousteau and other deep sea divers explore a reef in the South Pacific.

April 9

SECRETS OF THE DEAD: ESCAPE FROM AUSCHWITZ (2008). Two young Slovak Jews manage to escape and wake up the world to what went on in the death camps.

April 15 – Please note this is a Wednesday

AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: ALEXANDER HAMILTON (2006). The young Hamilton was America's first Treasury Secretary and, among other things, saved the new republic from bankruptcy.

April 23

SHACKLETON'S ANTARCTIC ADVENTURE (2001). The extraordinary story of the 1914-1916 polar expedition and how all 28 men survived.

April 30

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC: EYE OF THE LEOPARD (2006). The fascinating life of a young leopard captured in childhood focuses on learned behaviors that prepare her for life on her own.

May 7

BLINDSIGHT (2006). Considered cursed in Tibet, blind children are often hidden away to live as pariahs. To challenge that perception, 6 blind teenagers attempt to climb the north side of Mt. Everest.

May 14

AFRICA: THE SERENGETI (1994). This stunning film shows the migration of 2 million wildebeests, zebras and antelopes that travel 500 miles from the southern plains to the Masai Mara.

Thank you.....

The following thank you notes were sent to LIRA during the last few months.

Dear Members of LIRA,

Many thanks to all for your generous donation to Lowell General Hospital Cancer Center in David's memory. He was a wonderful man and will be sorely missed.

Our hope is with continued effort medicine will some day be able to cure this horrific disease.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Alan & Monica Kent

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Lowell General Hospital, please accept my sincere appreciation for your group's generous and thoughtful donation of \$100.00 in memory of David O. Kent. We thank you for your gift that will help support the Cancer Center and the many patients and their families who look to us during their time of need.

Sincerely,

Ellen M Kallman
Director of Development

Dear Mr. Pattershall,

We want to thank you, and all the LIRA members who contributed to the book and mitten drive that benefits Community Teamwork Inc. The donations are always much appreciated, but this year more than ever, as the economy is driving increased demand and a larger number of low income families. In fact, I was asked on Monday by the director of the WIC program, which provides

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Nominating Committee for 2009

Members of this year's Nominating Committee are Dorothy Bromage, Shirley McCaffrey and Al Sidel. The positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are open for reelection. If you wish to nominate a candidate for any of these positions, please let the nominating committee know as soon as possible.

From the Nominating Committee

Don Pattershall will be retiring as President in May. As LIRA President, his duties have been varied, with the recent emerging job requirement to work with Wannalancit Mills people who keep the schedules for various rooms. And the President, of course, presides over meetings of the Executive Committee. Don is also seen making sure that E.C. decisions are carried out.

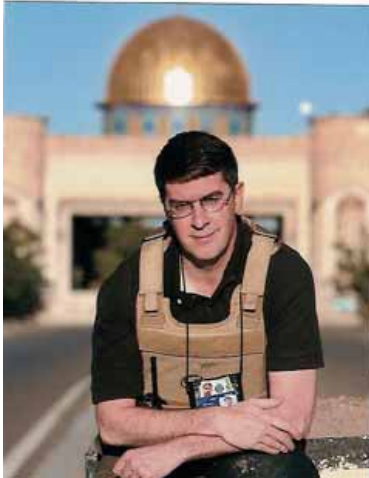
This is a big thank you to Don and also a statement of job purpose, so that LIRA members may give thought to taking the post in the coming 2009-2010 year. In Don's ten-year tenure, we have seen him demonstrate how the responsibilities are handled. A new president will have the privilege of carrying on in his/her own manner, reflecting the goals and spirit of LIRA — and also being the recipient of great gratitude for the leadership that any organization must have.

The Nominating Committee will be happy to talk with anyone who may have a suggestion.

Nominating Committee
Dorothy Bromage
Shirley McCaffrey
Al Sidel

A Presenter in Baghdad

Several times while Mehmed Ali was with the Lowell National Historical Park, he gave illustrated talks about historical places in Lowell. The past eight months he has been working for the U.S. Embassy in the Public Affairs Section, living in relative safety in the Green Zone. I thought some of his holiday correspondence would interest members.



"As part of my role in helping to rebuild the country after decades of isolation and war, I am working on projects which build capacity of Iraqis in their educational and cultural efforts. Some of the projects I am currently involved with include establishing an historic preservation district for an old section of Baghdad, helping the Iraqi Ministry of Culture improve their national literary journal, and bringing together different religious sects and ethnic groups through an event highlighting traditional Iraqi heritage - much like the Lowell Folk Festival. I am also currently advising in the development of a "war crimes" museum which will tell the story of the atrocities committed by Saddam Hussein and the leaders of the Ba'athist Party. Much like the way I have promoted for many years the preservation of people's memories through exhibits and oral history interviews, this museum will focus in a more solemn way on those who lost their lives to the policies of a failed and twisted government."

Hopefully LIRA will have the opportunity to learn more about his current, unique work when he returns.

Connie Lanseigne-Case

Directions to our New Home

To those of you that have not been to our new meeting place, Dorothy Bromage has provided us with directions once you are inside the building. LIRA's new home is in the Wannalancit Building on Suffolk Street, Lowell. Parking is available in the IPI lot on the corner of Pawtucket and Aiken Streets and in the parking garage on Pawtucket Street next to the ball field. You must have an ID card to get in.

Directions to meeting room in the Wannalancit Building:

- Enter the main entrance on Suffolk Street.
- After going through the double doors, head for the elevator (or take the stairs).
- Go to the 2nd floor.
- When you get off the elevator, turn right and head down a hall.
- After the restrooms, there is a small lobby. Bear left.
- Follow signs to the OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION.
- The LIRA meeting room is in the rear of the building near those offices.
- The room is on the right, #223 and labeled "Suffolk-Tremont Mills Room."

PLEASE NOTE:

Classes will be held in this room unless otherwise noted on the calendar. We will try to book the MIL Conference Center on the first floor for the larger classes (Professor Forrant's class and Art & Music). The first two weeks of Professor Forrant's class will meet in the Conference center. However, we are only allowed to book the room two weeks at a time, so we will try to keep you informed as best we can. We do know that room 223 will not be available to us on April 7, 8, 9 and are working on finding an alternative.

Lowell Film Festival

I wanted to alert you to the fact that the second annual Lowell Film Festival will be taking place from Friday April 3 to Sunday April 5. The theme of the festival this year is food and clothing in a global economy. We have lots of great films lined up already including one titled *The Price of Sugar* for Friday evening and one titled *The Battle in Seattle* for Saturday evening. There are also parties Friday evening and a brunch scheduled for Sunday morning. Films are free!

Invite your friends from out of town to see how cool Lowell is.

If you have some time and would like to work helping us put the festival together please let me know. We need help now with marketing and organizing the three days and we will need lots of help during the festival itself.

Professor Robert Forrant
Dept. of Regional Economic and Social Development
500 O'Leary Library
University of Massachusetts Lowell
Lowell, MA 01854
978-934-2904

GREETINGS from the South Shore! From the beautiful town of Hingham, to be exact. As many of you know, this change of location was not one I made voluntarily, but one that was thrust upon me by a simple stumble in Portugal. One moment I was happily anticipating the next day's tourist adventures, and the next I heard the approaching ambulance. So it goes for us frail humans!

Anyway, now that I'm faced with the need to sell my Dracut condo with its three flights of stairs, I'm grateful to my son and his family for taking me into their home, (which most conveniently boasts an elevator) at least for the foreseeable future. I'm finding it quite a challenge to join a family unit, with an 8 year old and a 10 year old as integral parts, after years of living independently.

When I look at the LIRA Spring Schedule with its innovative courses and know that I'll be denied the chance to attend, I despair. I shall have to continue my search in this area for comparable offerings, but realistically, I have my doubts. LIRA is unique, as are its members.

And that brings me to a big **THANK YOU** to so many LIRA fiends who sent cards and notes and flowers, who brought books, and who phoned or visited me at Lowell General, at D'Youville, and at Chelmsford Crossings. And, to top it all, you even came to the last facility for a social event on Nov. 15! No wonder I can never forget all my LIRA friends.

With affection and fond memories,

Jean Dettman

LIRA Archives

Throughout the years Jean Dettman carefully saved all the committee reports, course schedules, attendance sheets, Newsletters, pictures, newspaper articles and other pertinent information about LIRA. Because of Jean's diligence we have a complete history of LIRA from its very beginning. These files will be kept in the office. From time to time on a Wednesday a few pages of history will be on display. Thank you Jean!

Shirley Mitchell

Just a reminder that Daylight Savings Time begins earlier this year. Set your clocks ahead one hour on Sunday, March 8.



Thank You *(Continued from page 5)*

nutrition for mothers and small children, whether we might have any mittens or hats, as they are seeing so many children who are underdressed for the weather. So as you can see, the contributions from LIRA could not have come at a better time!

The donation we received this week included 92 children's books, along with over 40 pairs of mittens, more than 50 hats, several scarves and 2 beautiful hand-knitted sweaters. Many families' lives will be a little better thanks to the thoughtfulness and generosity of LIRA, and we thank you again for helping us reaching CTI's neediest clients in this wonderful way.

*Sincerely,
Jane Benfey*

Director of Volunteer Programs

Don, Barbara and Learning in Retirement Group,

Thank you for the mittens! Your thoughtfulness is truly appreciated.

God Bless,

The Staff & Residents at My Fathers' House

Thank you for recognizing me at your holiday party with your generous scholarship! I hope you all have a wonderful Holiday Season!

*Best Wishes,
Abbey Denaro*

Dear LIRA Members,

Thank you so much for being so kind and thoughtful to provide me a wonderful opportunity as a scholarship recipient. Thanks once again for your kindness and generosity in a way to give me a chance to continue to graduate school. I will use this scholarship to accomplish my goal to a higher education.

*Sincerely,
Sopheavy Seng*

Newsletter on Web Page

The December newsletter was delayed because of the University's Thanksgiving vacation and the weather. This is to remind you that the newsletter is also on the web page and is usually there by the first of the month. So if it is late or you have misplaced it, you can find the newsletter at <http://uml.edu/community/lira/Newsletters.html>. All the newsletters since September 2007 may be viewed.

Jeri Durant

The next newsletter will be out on May 1, 2009; the deadline for news items is April 15, 2009. Please remember that the coordinators are now responsible for getting someone to write an article about their program, if you want something to appear in the newsletter. Articles may be given to me at any time before the deadline.



Jeri Durant

Moses Greeley Parker Lectures

The following is a calendar of events for the Parker lecture series held on the day, time and place noted.
The lectures are free and open to the public.

MARCH 29, 2009 NATIONAL PARK VISITOR CENTER - 2:00PM SUNDAY

"Shoot the Sky the Easy Way"

by Imelda B. Joson & Edwin L. Aguirre

You don't need a telescope to capture wide-field shots of the moon, planets, and the stars. Imelda and Edwin will show you how you can obtain such celestial portraits using only a camera mounted on a tripod. Look UP!

APRIL 9, 2009 POLLARD LIBRARY - 7 PM THURSDAY

"Hollywood Heist: Movies and the Myths of the Brinks Job"
by Stephanie Schorow

On January 17, 1950, seven robbers in Halloween masks walked into the counting room of the Brink's armoured car garage in Boston and walked out with \$2.5 million in cash, checks, and securities. It was the largest robbery in U.S. history to date. This crime captivated a city. Come join with us as author Stephanie Schorow takes us thru this "Crime of the Century".

APRIL 30, 2009 POLLARD LIBRARY - 7:00PM THURSDAY

"In Concert" by Bob Franke

Bob Franke's career spans over 40 years. He has recorded nine albums and countless new songs on two continents with hundreds of thousands of fans around the world. When Bob takes the stage he performs concerts that are warm, thoughtful, humorous and enlightening, accompanying his rich, baritone voice on guitar and National Steel guitar.

MAY 9, 2009 POLLARD LIBRARY - 2 PM SATURDAY

"Preserving Your Family Treasures" by Donia Conn

Celebrate National Preservation Week. Learn about organizing your important family items with Donia Conn of the Northeast Document Conservation Center. Ms. Conn will discuss how to preserve papers, photos and other family treasures so future generations can appreciate your family's experiences, heritage and history.

Committee Chairs Filled

I am extremely pleased to announce that **Sally Cady** has volunteered to fill the position of Hospitality Chair and that **Mary Jane Myers** has volunteered to fill the position of Scholarship Committee Chair. Please join me in thanking Sally and Mary Jane for their willingness to take on these responsibilities. The following describes their duties.

Don Pattershall

Hospitality Committee Chair:

- Makes sure that there is an adequate supply of coffee, coffee creamer, tea, hot chocolate, sugar, assorted cookies, cups and napkins on hand for all LIRA programs held at the University.
- Arranges (with Aramark at UML) for refreshments and beverages to be delivered to the appropriate meeting area for General Meetings (Convocation, Town Meeting, Annual Meeting, Holiday Party or other meetings) as directed by the Executive Council.
- With the help of members, the Hospitality Chair coordinates refreshments for **Winter and Summer Intersessions**. (8 weeks, Wednesday mornings only)
- With the help of members, the Hospitality Chair coordinates the potluck luncheon for the Holiday Party: (sign-up sheets; follows up with members as necessary, by phone and/or email).

Scholarship Committee Chair:

At the direction of the Executive Council, the Scholarship Chair solicits contributions for the Scholarship Fund, participates in the selection of award Candidates and presents the awards.

Time for a Change



If you want to remain current with LIRA members, take pen or pencil in hand and make the following changes in your

New Members:

Donald Hanson
8 Fairview Drive
Westford, MA 01886
978-392-0223
dphanson3@verizon.net

Walter Macomber
14 Rack Road
Chelmsford, MA 01824
978-256-3230
waltvmac@comcast.net

Ann M. Rollins
262R Pond St
Tewksbury, MA 01876
978-851-6234
annrollins@ieee.org

Address changes:

Roger and Phyllis Montminy
5 Windsor Way
Westford MA 01886
978-692-1876
rogermontminy@comcast.net

Marion Richards
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marion81@netzero.net

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Marjorie Short:
giltrip202@verizon.net

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