



# LIRA NEWSLETTER

LEARNING IN RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION  
Office of Community and Cultural Affairs – UMass Lowell  
Member of Road Scholar Institute Network  
Tel.: (978) 934-3135 Web: [uml.edu/community/LIRA](http://uml.edu/community/LIRA)



December 2017

Vol. 24 No. 4

*Please join us for  
LIRA's Annual Holiday Party  
and Town Meeting*

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

*10 A.M until Noon*

*Cumnock Hall, 31 University Avenue, Lowell, MA  
Shuttle bus from Tsongas Parking Lot*

*Four Scholarship Awards will be given.  
Participate in the Consumable Auction.  
Enjoy the snacks and meeting with friends.*

## Holiday Party Details

Because of the difficulties of transporting the food on the shuttle bus, we are keeping the food simple at the Holiday Party. If you would like to volunteer to bring some kind of finger food (fruit, cheese and crackers, cookies, etc.), it would be appreciated. Contact Debby Sebelius if you have any questions.



In lieu of exchanging gifts, LIRA members have donated many new books in past years for distribution by Community Teamwork, Inc. of Lowell, the agency which serves families in shelters and oversees many child care programs in the city. They need warm clothing such as hats, mittens and gloves, for children of all ages. Children's books would also be appreciated.

The following is an email from CTI, giving a more detailed description of what they need.

CTI can always use hats, mittens and books for clients we serve in such programs as our family shelters, Head Start, Women, Infant and Children (WIC) and clients who come in for services. For more information on CTI's mission, programs, and services, please check out our new web site at [www.commteam.org](http://www.commteam.org). We continue to need children's books especially board books for the very young and picture books for pre-k to grade 2. Big Brothers Big Sisters is also part of CTI and children's age range is 7 through 15. Mittens and gloves are especially needed along with hats. We also distribute hats and mittens/gloves to veterans in need.

**Please bring a new book and/or hat and mittens, unwrapped, to the Holiday party.** Thank you for your participation. For more information, please contact Terri Munson at [terri\\_munson100@yahoo.com](mailto:terri_munson100@yahoo.com).

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## Location of the Holiday Party and Parking Lot

The Holiday Party will be held on Wednesday, December 6 in Cumnock Hall on 31 University Avenue, Lowell from 10 a.m. to noon. A shuttle bus will be taking us from the Tsongas parking lot to Cumnock Hall, leaving us off in the front of the building. The first shuttle will leave at 9:00 am **sharp** and the second trip will leave at 9:30 am. The return trip will start about noon.

**Parking is in the Tsongas Parking Lot.** This is the lot where we normally park when we attend classes at the Tsongas Center, 300 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Lowell, MA. Please use your hangtags in the parking lot.

## LIRA'S Scholarship Fund Annual Auction

We will hold our annual auction at the LIRA Holiday Party on December 6. We have decided that the auction will be a "Consumable Auction" once again. The Auction is a major fundraiser for the Scholarship Fund. This year LIRA will be giving \$1500.00 scholarships to four UMass Lowell students.

What is a Consumable Auction? It is an auction where all donated items can be consumed, i.e., you eat it, drink it, do it or use it up. The Committee sells tickets: \$1 per ticket, \$5 for 6 tickets or \$10 for 15 tickets. You decide what item(s) you want and put your ticket(s) in the appropriate container(s). All donations must be brought directly to Cumnock Hall on the day of the party.

Some things you might donate:

Baked Goods; Candy; Wine; Gift Certificates, i.e., restaurant, movie, theater, grocery store, and bookstore

Suggestions for Baskets you can make:

Book – put a gently used book in a basket with a bookmark, book light, china teacup, box of tea, etc.  
Food – Italian or Mexican  
Soup Lovers Basket

I think you get the idea. It will all be wonderful and we have a great time deciding just what we want to win. Thank you to everyone who has donated in the past. Let's make a difference in someone's life and have a great auction this year.

*Sheila Pariseau*

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## List of What to Bring to the Holiday Party

I love lists! I thought it would be helpful to have a reminder of what to bring to the Holiday Party in one place.

Donation of warm clothing for any size child (hat, gloves, mittens, scarf)  
New book for a child of any age  
Donation to the Consumable Auction  
Finger food for our enjoyment

*Jeri Durant*



## Shaking the Rafters

A delightful pink-haired young woman jammed with a group of LIRA folks on various hand drums and percussion instruments at a LIRA class on October 25th. What started out quietly was soon shaking the rafters so much that people at the Rec Center peeked in to see what the heck was going on. Now that's something you don't see every day!

Our energetic leader, Savannah Marshall, is an UMass Lowell Adjunct Professor in the Music Department who teaches Progressive Performance and Production Pedagogy. Quite a mouthful but I'm sure Savannah could make a lively percussion piece out of it. She is a graduate of UMass Lowell, lives here in the city, and is a member of many bands in and around Boston. Her Lowell band is called "The Party Band." That's exactly how the LIRA members who participated felt—like they were at a party.

Savannah invited everyone to choose from among djembes, bongos, buffalo drums and other hit-able instruments. Once equipped, our introduction to the drum circle began. After trying out our instruments, we took turns saying our names to the beat plus a word or two that described how we were feeling at the moment—*groovy, energetic, mellow.....* Together we created a storm that started with gentle rain and a soft wind and ended with crashing thunder, a torrential downpour and even a clever lightning effect. Many of us were unconsciously reaching for our umbrellas.

Together we created a Thanksgiving dinner made up of turkey, French Canadian pork stuffing, GRAVYYYYY, and other holiday goodies; and ending with pumpkin pie/apple pie/pecan pie/all the pie. This musical feast was made with input from everyone in the drum circle. Lastly, we added the beat to a short animated video. The two hour class flew and everyone came away with a smile on their face and a spring in their step.

I googled up "drum circle" and learned that they are happening all over the world every day. Who knew? The term "Drum Circle" originated in the United States during the late 1960's and is a term used to describe any group of people who gather (informally) to play music together. Settings include beaches, parks, concert parking lots, festivals, and retreats—and LIRA classrooms. Drum circles can be looked up by state with more than a dozen in Massachusetts every week.

In 1991, during testimony before the [United States Senate Special Committee on Aging](#), [Grateful Dead](#) drummer [Mickey Hart](#) stated: *Typically, people gather to drum in drum "circles" with others from the surrounding community. The drum circle offers equality because there is no head or tail. It includes people of all ages. The main objective is to share rhythm and get in tune with each other and themselves. To form a group consciousness. To entrain and resonate. By entrainment, I mean that a new voice, a collective voice, emerges from the group as they drum together.*

Thank you to all the LIRA folks who came and entrained together!

**Savannah recommended this web site which shows a calendar of UMass Lowell music concerts that are available free to the public.**

<https://www.uml.edu/FAHSS/music/Performance-Calendar.aspx>

Terri Munson

LIRA Drum Circle





## Currier Museum Visit

The exhibits we toured were:

- 1) Monet's pathways to Impressionism
- 2) The Paris of Toulouse - Lautrec Prints and posters from the Museum of Modern Art NYC

### Exhibit One

At the same time that many works by Toulouse Lautrec were on exhibit recently at the Currier museum, there were also 4 paintings there done by Monet. One of them, *The Bridge at Bougival* (1869) is one of the very few of his works done before the beginning of the Impressionist movement in France. Another of his works on exhibit was *La Pointe de la Héve*. This was the painting that launched his career at the Salon in 1865. How nice to be able to enjoy these beautiful paintings!

### Exhibit Two

After Toulouse Lautrec, no one saw Paris in the same way. In this exhibit, shown exclusively in New England, were more than 100 original posters, prints and illustrated books by Lautrec that explore the magic of Paris, at that time referred to as the *Belle Époque* period.

*Jean Schott*

## Emergencies (Cancellations of Classes/University Closing)

If it becomes necessary to cancel a LIRA program for any reason, i.e. snowstorm, hazardous road conditions, or UMass Lowell campus closure we attempt to notify all members. UMass Lowell closures and delayed openings are announced on local TV news programs and on the internet [www.uml.edu/storm](http://www.uml.edu/storm). We may also cancel programs when UMass Lowell is open if we think conditions are too hazardous for our members. We make a decision about next day storm cancellations by 6:00 PM, so check your email or the LIRA Facebook page in the morning to see if classes that day are cancelled. We have three ways to notify members:

Email to **all members** for **all class cancellations**

Posting on the LIRA Facebook page LIRAatUML

Telephone calls to those members who signed up for a call

Telephone calls for cancellation of Wednesday programs (Winter and Summer Intersessions, Arts & Music) are done by the LIRA telephone tree. Telephone calls for other classes are the responsibility of the class coordinator. Judy Miller and Carol McCarthy are coordinators for the telephone tree and a number of volunteers help them call members. You can sign up for telephone notification when you renew your membership or by notifying Judy Miller (978-256-8466 or [gmilller29@verizon.net](mailto:gmilller29@verizon.net)) or Carol McCarthy (978-256-5904 or [jfmccart@aol.com](mailto:jfmccart@aol.com)).

## Leadership Changes

The Curriculum Committee is vital to achieving LIRA's purpose of offering high-quality college level learning opportunities to its members. As Toby Hodes frequently reminds us, LIRA is the "**Learning In Retirement Association**". For the past three years Nancy Pitkin has done an outstanding job as chairperson of the Curriculum Committee. We have had excellent courses appealing to a wide variety of interests. Nancy decided this fall it was time for someone else to chair the committee and she recommended Suzanne Gamache. Suzanne has been a member of the Curriculum Committee and she organized the curriculum for the Winter Intersession. After Shirley Mitchell's retirement LIRA needed a new Secretary and Nancy Pitkin agreed to become LIRA Secretary. We are thankful for all that Nancy has done as Curriculum chair and her willingness to take on this new position. We wish Nancy Pitkin and Suzanne Gamache great success in their important new roles in LIRA.

*Richard Grove*



The Town Meeting will be held on March 7, 2018. Classes begin on Monday, March 12, 2018



## Remembering Bill Terris

LIRA member Bill Terris passed away Saturday November 18<sup>th</sup>. Bill was passionate about education and he served as chair of the Scholarship Committee for several years. He joined LIRA in 2010.

Some years ago, I was setting up a college scholarship for my chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma and turned to Bill for information LIRA's Scholarship Committee had in place. Quickly he provided all that was essential. He must have been a reliable and appreciated Lexington, MA school principal judging from my experience.

*Connie Lanseigne-Case*

After his retirement from a lifelong career as an educator Bill sought a way to apply his knowledge and experience to the wide field of community service. He accepted and provided selfless dedication to the volunteer mentoring of an Iraqi family that had resettled in the Lowell area. As a member of LIRA's GREAT DECISIONS group he gave many interesting accounts to our classes of his involvement with "the clash of civilizations". We even had an opportunity to meet and talk with members of "his family". It brought the world news closer to our doorsteps. As a member of the Scholarship Committee I attended many meetings at Bill's home. I remember him, also, as a gracious host with a wonderful sense of humor.

*Dotty Morris*

We are saddened to hear of Bill's passing. For many years Bill was the Chairman of the LIRA Scholarship Committee, taking the position seriously and very detailed in the review and acceptance of student applications. He was a passionate supporter of UML and the students were very special to him. Bill welcomed us to his house for meetings and was a great host. Dee and Janet appreciate all the help and support from Bill when they became co-chairs of the committee. It was a privilege to have known him and he will be missed.

*The Scholarship Committee.*

A portion of his obituary follows:

William C. Terris, 82, of Bedford, formerly of Acton, retired Principal at Estabrook Elementary School in Lexington, died at home on Saturday, November 18, 2017. He was the husband for 45 years of the late Patricia A. (Leclair) Terris who died in 2009.

He was born on June 16, 1935 and raised in Billerica as the son of the late John and Ruth (Carlson) Terris. A proud alumnus of Lowell State Teachers College, he furthered his education with a master's degree from Northeastern University, and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study from Boston University.

A devoted educator with a career spanning over thirty years, Mr. Terris most recently served as a Teacher and Principal for the Lexington Public School system.

Mr. Terris enjoyed being active in his community and as a communicant at Holy Family Parish in Concord. He especially loved traveling over the years to Bermuda, Hawaii, Europe, and the Caribbean. However, his true passion and source of joy was spending time with his beloved family.

He is survived by one son, Jay Terris and his wife Maria of Lynnfield, his daughter, Lisa Cournoyer and her husband Jeff of Pepperell, three grandchildren, Samuel and Daphne Terris and Caroline Cournoyer, his nieces, Margaret Diman and Mary Smith, and one nephew, Robert McGarvey. He was the father of the late Anne Terris and brother to the late John Terris.

## Law and Civil Liberties

Professor Frank Talty returned this fall with a course on our Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to our US Constitution. The course covered these amendments by giving us the seminal Supreme Court cases regarding each amendment. Professor Talty was able to show us how each amendment was interpreted by the court through time.

We covered the Freedom of Expression, whether speech or press; the Freedom of Religion; the Rights of the Accused; and Privacy Rights. The cases included “Shenck v. US (1919) which involved printing leaflets against the draft of WWI.

Shenck’s conviction by the State court was upheld by the Supreme Court with Justice Holmes citing, “a clear and present danger”. Other cases included ones of conviction for burning a draft card or another, Texas v. Johnson (1989) when Texas convicted Johnson of burning the US flag. This conviction was reversed by the Supreme Court citing freedom of speech; that one can’t be convicted because what one is saying is disagreeable or offensive. Other cases involved buffer zones at abortion clinics. Cases about police procedure in criminal cases established rules about search and seizure, “Miranda rights” and rights to a speedy and “impartial” jury, and right to a competent attorney, as well as various “privacy rights”. It was fascinating to see how principals were established and how, in some cases, Supreme Court decisions were overturned by a later court.

As a special treat, his wife Professor Patty Talty, gave us the cases that the Supreme Court is hearing this session that began in October. These deal with gerrymandering; police procedures in the digital age; a case pitting anti-discrimination against First Amendment rights of free expression; and a case involving the ability of unions to require non-members to contribute an “agency fee” for the benefits accrued by bargaining. This class gave us lots of food for thought about what the current and subsequent Supreme Courts might decide.

*Sally Coulter*



## Moses Greeley Parker Lectures

The following is a calendar of events for the 2017-2018 Parker lecture series held on the day, time and place noted. The lectures are free and open to the public. Descriptions are not included this time because of its length. Full descriptions can be found at the Pollard Library, Lowell, on the website [www.parkerlectures.com](http://www.parkerlectures.com) or the file can be emailed to you by contacting Jeri Durant: [jeridurant@gmail.com](mailto:jeridurant@gmail.com)

Sunday, March 4, 2:00 p.m. – Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center

Penny Colman – “Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: A Friendship That Changed the World”

Tuesday, March 6, 6:30 p.m. – Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center

Marcia Estabrook – “Three Mill Girls”

Tuesday, March 20, 7:00 p.m. – Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center

Dr. Gray Fitzsimons, Dr. Patricia Fontaine, and Kristin Gallas – “Immigrants, Refugees, and the Quest for Equality of Education: Lowell’s Separate Irish School System and Its Legacy”

Tuesday, March 27, 11:45 a.m. – O’Leary Library  
Gururaj” Desh” Deshpande – “The Power of Entrepreneurship in the 21st Century”

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## Politics of the Veil

On Monday afternoons this fall, LIRA members participated in another fascinating lecture series by Dr. Patricia Fontaine, Graduates School of Education. The Story of the Veil is about the history of France and its colonial rule of Algeria. We learned about the 1956 war in Algeria and spent another lecture on the French education system. She spent time explaining the cultural differences and the United States that marked a significant difference from American values of personal freedom. The French values when applied to French education disallow religious symbolism (the veil) in national schools and this conflicts with French law that separates religion from civic life.

Thank you Dr. Fontaine for an interesting and enlightening program.

*Nancy Pitkin*

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## Young at Heart

The D’Youville Life and Wellness Community sponsored a program called “For the Young at Heart” that was produced by Dracut Public Access Television. LIRA was asked to participate in the program and Nancy Pitkin agreed to be on the panel. Nancy Clark from COOL represented Northern Essex Community College. The show was filmed on August 30, 2017 and is still available for viewing on the Dracut Public Access Television web site:

<http://dracut.vod.castus.tv/vod/?video=39981c69-c887-4910-b0ce-8490213577ce&nav=recent>

# Global Africa at FAM

On Wednesday, Nov. 8th, LIRA took a field trip to the Fitchburg Art Museum to experience *Global Africa: Creativity, Continuity and Change in African Art*. The exhibit included art objects from the African diaspora. Traditional pieces were nicely complemented by art of contemporary artists. Pieces included masks, masquerades with videos, carved sculptures, photographs, carved portraits, textiles and metal arts.

Our docents, Carol and Jean Borgatti, the museum's Curator of African, Oceanic, and Native American Art, reminded us that Africa consists of 54 countries with over 1400 languages. They presented the notion that Africa is so large that the U.S. can fit comfortably three times within the continent of Africa! (I learned further that the U.K. can fit into Africa over 120 times! Here's a link to an article in Scientific American that shows a great visual: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/africa-dwarfs-china-europe-and-the-u-s/>

The first part of the exhibit, *Music, Masks, Masquerades*, showed a variety of masks and costumes (or masquerades). Masks were mostly worn by men, on top of their heads, in celebrations and rituals. Millions of Africans, beginning in the 15<sup>th</sup> century with slavery, brought their cultures to other countries. Like spiritual objects in many cultures, African masks and musical instruments are believed to still have a spirit or an energy within them long after they have been worn or used for ceremonies.

The *Global Africa* exhibit, as its name implies, displays pieces from the African diaspora, both past and present. For example, alongside a wall of antelope masks (called "Chi wara") stands a sculpture by modern-day artist Willie Cole of his ingenious representation of the African antelope mask made with discarded bicycle parts. Many African masks are given animalistic qualities, and the antelope mask represents the deity of agriculture who taught people how to farm. The mask was worn during ceremonies to call the spirit of the antelope to help with the planting and growing of crops.

The *Beyond Indigo* section celebrates the inventiveness of African artists working in wood, metal, and cloth. There were many beautiful designs and colors of cloth. Artists often look to the past for inspiration to make new art; one example was the replica of a slave cabin covered in indigo cloth from the "Indigo Project" by contemporary artist Ife Franklin. Jean, the curator, expressed regret that she couldn't make it to the opening of the project at Franklin Park in Boston, but I found a video on YouTube with some images you can see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fnOvh9feTI>

While we admired the Kente cloth, our docent related a story about how the intricate designs of the colorful Kente cloth were supposedly inspired by spiders' webs. Certainly spiders are important in the folklore and origin stories of many west African groups, I thought, and so when I returned home I Googled "Spider and Kente cloth" and came across a beautiful children's book on the topic, "The Spider Weaver: A Legend of Kente Cloth" by Margaret Musgrove (illustrated by Julia Cairns).

*Life/Afterlife* focuses on the interrelationship of the natural and supernatural worlds. Many African traditions believe in an after-life, like many western religions, and in the concept better known as "The Circle of Life." Some of the objects displayed in this part of the exhibit included more traditional urns and containers used as coffins.

I think I speak for all of us who went to the Fitchburg Art Museum that our visit today was a wonderful introduction to this jewel of a museum. There is so much more to see! We had only a few minutes left to peek in at the Egyptian gallery on the main level. This exhibit was separate from *Global Africa* upstairs. It includes an interesting exhibit on the mummification process, a colorful replica of King Tut's chair among other objects.

In another section of the museum is an entire exhibit devoted to the founder of the Fitchburg Art Museum, Eleanor Norcross. Her story inspires and gives goosebumps! Fitchburg's own Isabella Stewart Gardner! You can read about her at <http://fitchburgartmuseum.org/eleanor-norcross.php>

Two other exhibits that we didn't have time to see: "People Watching Then and Now" explores the way that observation and representation of the human subject has shifted over time, and "Mr. Reinford's World," a solo exhibit of works by Lionel Reinford. Born in Honduras and educated at Harvard University, Reinford moved to Leominster in 1973, to teach in elementary school.

<http://www.fitchburgartmuseum.org>

Kathy Cryan-Hicks

## Two Museums in One Day

On September 27, LIRA members visited the Metropolitan Waterworks Museum., Beacon Street, Boston, MA, established 2009. On our guided tour we saw the museum's collection of steam engines that pumped millions of gallons of fresh water a day into the city of Boston until 1970, when the Quabbin Reservoir came on line. The museum's exhibits preserve stories of clean water, health, brilliant engineering and magnificent architecture. On our way home, we stopped at the McMullen Museum of Art at Boston College to view the current exhibit, Belgian landscapes.

Photographs were taken by Bob Fesmire and Gerry Miller.

*Carol McCarthy*





Workout class on Halloween Day with some of our super hero instructors

## Email Problems

Over the last few months, I have had some difficulty in sending the group emails. A few emails you have not received in time and others you have not received at all. The problem seems to be with gmail – either my list is too long or gmail thinks it is spam. Now I am checking to see if my email was received. If not, Peter Sebelius will be sending out the notice. Since I had no power during the storm at the end of October, there was no way I could send you a notice that classes were cancelled. When UMass Lowell is closed, it will be posted on their website <https://www.uml.edu/> or you may call the emergency phone 978-934-2121.

*Jeri Durant*

## Spreading the Word

Peter Sebelius presented his Six Frigates talk to the Acton Senior Center on November 15<sup>th</sup>. This is the same presentation he made to LIRA during the Winter Intersession last year about the first six ships of the fledgling United States Navy. On March 10, 1794, the American Congress authorized then Secretary of War, Henry Knox, to build or buy six frigates for the colossal sum of \$688,888. The need for an American Navy was driven primarily by threats against its merchant shipping from the Barbary pirates. These ships, their Captains, crews, the famous and infamous battles they fought and the impact they had on American History is the focus of this presentation. One of the original six frigates, the USS Constitution, is still on the active duty roster of U.S. Navy and is homeported right here in Boston.

*Peter Sebelius*

## Member News

Two of our current members have been hospitalized recently. DOTTY MORRIS and RUSS MACLEOD are both recovering at home and doing well.

We have learned that PHYLLIS KALLUS, a former member, is very ill. Her address is 7 Lafayette Terrace, Chelmsford, MA 01824.

We wish them all continued good health.

We are saddened to learn that LIRA member Bill Terris passed away on November 18. We will miss him and we extend our deepest sympathy to his family.

I continue to send cards to all those that I am aware of. Please let me know of anyone you know that would like to be remembered by LIRA.

[simone32allard@gmail.com](mailto:simone32allard@gmail.com) - Tel. 603-943-7527

## Scholarship News

The Scholarship Committee is indebted to the LIRA membership for their generous donations to the 2017 Scholarship Fund. We are reviewing applications and will be presenting four \$1500 scholarships to the successful candidates at the Holiday Party in December. We also appreciate the proceeds from the auction going to the Scholarship Fund. We thank Patty Coffey and Christopher Wilkinson at University Relations, and Michelle Smith of the UML Financial Aid Office for their constant support and help. Last but not least, thank you to the Scholarship Committee members, Simone Allard, Alan Kent, John Mamalis, Alan McKersie, Dotty Morris and Barbara Murch, for their time and input during this busy process.

*Janet Redman and Dee Sferrino - Co-Chairs*

## Visiting Lucerne and London

On October 11, Peter and Debbie Sebelius shared with the group pictures and experiences from their trips to Lucerne and London. What was more interesting was their daughter Tammie's talk about what it was like to live and work in those cities. Tammie works for EF which is an international education company that focuses on language, academics and cultural experiences. They have several products including cultural exchange and educational travel. She has worked for EF for over 10 years. In 2011, Tammie moved to Lucerne where the headquarters for EF is. Peter and Debbie went to visit Tammie in Lucerne in May of 2013 with their other daughter, Mindy. They showed pictures of the transportation museum, the Thorwaldsen's Lion, The Glacier Garden, the Bourbaki Panorama, Lake Lucerne and the bridges that cross the Ruess River (the Chapel Bridge and the Spreuer Bridge), as well as pictures from their Golden Round Trip on the lake, the cog railroad to the top of Pilatus, the summit and the cable car ride down the other side of the mountain.

Instead of moving back to Medford after being in Switzerland for three years, Tammie agreed to accept her company's offer to have her manage their London office. So, in May of 2016, Peter and Debbie took Debbie's 92 year old mother to London. She had a fabulous time riding the hop on hop off bus all around the streets of London. They had pictures of Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, the Tower of London, the Tower Bridge, Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, St Paul's Cathedral, Trafalgar Square, Shakespeare's Theater, the London Eye, Madame Tousseau's Wax Museum, and other monuments and statues. Everyone enjoyed reminiscing and/or wishing they were there.

*Debbie Sebelius*



World's steepest cog railway  
Lucerne, Switzerland



Tower Bridge, London, England

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## Newsletters on Website

The newsletter comes out four times a year on the first day of the following months – March, May, September and December. Everyone can read the newsletter online if you have access to a web browser. A hard copy of the newsletter will NOT be mailed to you unless you have contacted Jeri Durant: [jeridurant@gmail.com](mailto:jeridurant@gmail.com). The hard copy list from last year is still in effect so there is no need to tell me again. Those members that do not have email will have a hard copy sent to them automatically.

The on-line newsletter is just like the printed one only better - it's in color! This policy will help us save substantial printing and mailing costs to the university as well as a few trees.

The website for the newsletter is [www.uml.edu/community/LIRA/newsletters.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/community/LIRA/newsletters.aspx)

## Chelmsford Library Lecture Series

The Chelmsford Library has a Lecture Series in cooperation with LIRA on the second Friday of the month. The lectures are at 1:00 PM Friday afternoon, a change from previous years. Several of the lectures are on subjects based on LIRA's Great Decisions foreign policy discussions.

### Friday December 8, 2017 1:00 PM

*Nuclear Security* presented by Keith West.

Nuclear nonproliferation was a top priority for the Obama administration. While the Iran Deal was a diplomatic victory toward this end, major threats persist from both state and non-state actors. Countries like North Korea, Russia, and India and Pakistan continue to challenge nonproliferation efforts. The possibility that terrorists will carry out an attack using a "dirty bomb," made from captured nuclear materials, looks increasingly real. In a fractious world, which way forward for U.S. nuclear security policy? Presented by expert Keith West.

### Friday February 9, 2018 1:00 PM

*Occupation of France During WWII* presented by Dr. Patrick Young, UMass Lowell. Chelmsford's One Book program will be reading *The Nightingale* about the French Resistance.

### Friday March 9, 2018 1:00 PM

*Russia's Foreign Policy* presented by Keith West.

### Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 7PM Science Café: Women in Science

Chelmsford Public Library's science program returns in February with Dr. Johanna Choo, a tropical biologist at UMass Lowell. Dr. Choo will give a short presentation on the gender gap in scientific fields and the adversity faced by women in those fields. She will add insights from her own journey. A group discussion will follow the presentation.

### Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 7PM Science Café: Tropical Biology

Dr. Johanna Choo returns to the Chelmsford Public Library to share information about her research in tropical biology. She will bring pictures and slides of the places she has traveled to study, also sharing the scientific importance of her work.

Check the library's website for more detailed information.

[www.chelmsfordlibrary.org/programs/lecture-series/](http://www.chelmsfordlibrary.org/programs/lecture-series/)

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## Great Decisions

*Great Decisions* is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. The Foreign Policy Association of America provides background information for eight of the most critical issues facing America each year. The LIRA Great Decisions group meets on Thursday mornings and devotes two two-hour classes to explore each topic in depth. In the fall 2017 semester we discussed:

*The Future of Europe* – Neal Berenson led the discussion of the European Union which has helped secure peace in Europe since World War II. Now it faces an uncertain future with Brexit, a refugee crisis, financial recession, and rising nationalism.

*Latin America's Political Pendulum* – Bob Fesmire led the discussion of changing politics in Latin America as the "pink tide" of leftist governments recedes. Meanwhile there are political crises in Venezuela and Brazil.

*Prospects for Afghanistan and Pakistan* – Carol Valcik led the discussion of America's longest war in Afghanistan and the complex relations between the US, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Does the US face a no win situation?

*Nuclear Security* – Peter Sebelius led the discussion of nuclear nonproliferation efforts, the Iran Deal, the North Korean nuclear threat, and plans for modernization of the US nuclear triad.

Here is a link with more information about Great Decisions including topics for 2018.

[http://www.fpa.org/great\\_decisions/](http://www.fpa.org/great_decisions/)

Richard Grove



## Time for a Change

The membership directory was emailed to you in October. Please make the following changes to your membership list to keep your copy current

### *New Members:*

Mary Burnell  
4 Eaton Road  
Lexington, MA 02420  
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## Iceland

Jack Holmes is a photographer who has a fine art photo studio gallery at the Western Avenue Studios in Lowell, called *Images from Near and Far*. He often presents travel programs featuring his photography, done almost around the world. He gave us a power point talk about Iceland, which he has visited three times.

Iceland is an island in the middle of the North Atlantic. At one time, it was part of Denmark, but now is an independent country. In recent years, it has become a very popular vacation spot for American travelers. The flight from Boston to Reykjavik, Iceland, its capital, takes about 5 hours. Many transatlantic flight stop there on the way to Europe. Many of them take the time to go to the now famous Blue Lagoon, an artificial lagoon, spa like and now very crowded. Most of the population lives in the southwestern part of the country. Agriculture takes place in certain parts of the island and volcanic in others. Visiting the many glaciers on the island is very popular with island visitors. It is obvious that many of them are retreating. Another appealing feature of Iceland is its many waterfalls. Throughout the island, one sees that many of the homes were built into the ground for warmth.

*Jean Schott*

## Thank You Shirley Mitchell

Shirley Mitchell retired in the year 2000 and soon she joined LIRA. Not long after that she says she “was drafted” to serve as Secretary. Over the years Shirley has been a very active member of LIRA. In addition to her position as Secretary she helped with other administrative tasks including organizing class lists and mailing the Newsletter. She also was the LIRA historian and kept files of LIRA activities and documents. For a number of years Shirley was organizer and facilitator for the Great Decisions group. After more than fifteen years of service as the LIRA Secretary, Shirley decided in September that this was a good time to retire from that role and pass on the responsibility to someone else (Nancy Pitkin). We take this opportunity to say a heartfelt “**Well Done and Thank You**” to Shirley for her many years as Secretary. We are happy that Shirley continues to be active in LIRA at a more relaxed pace.

*Richard Grove, LIRA President*

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## The Story of the Bible

This fall, Toby Hodes led another interesting discussion on religion – “The Story of the Bible”. It is a Great Courses lecture by Timothy Johnson of Emory University, Chandler School of Theology. Each week we listened to 2 lectures and then we had lively discussions. Our new LIRA member, Jesse Heines, provided us with lecture notes each week – which makes writing this news article very easy. The first week we discussed that the Bible as a book of stories and since 1850 it has been printed an estimated 5 billion times in over 200 languages. That is not a typo – 5 billion!

We discussed differences in Bible versions, Jewish traditions, the rise of Christianity, and the Syriac and the Coptic bibles. Jesse Heines shared an article he wrote in 1996, “Is it ever right to kill?” Thank you to Toby Hodes for facilitating this program and for Jesse Heines’s notes. Plan to join us in our Spring semester for part two. If you would like to look at the notes, please visit [Jesse Heines](https://jesseheines.com) website <https://jesseheines.com> and click on the LIRA link.

*Nancy Pitkin*



The next newsletter will be out on March 1, 2018; the deadline for news items is February 15, 2018. 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*

## Member Spotlight

Former LIRA member, Jeanne Gunion, wrote many ‘Member Spotlight’ articles for the newsletter. We would like to continue to carry this feature and wondered if any of our members would be interested in taking on the task. It does not need to be in every newsletter; Jeanne typically did two a year. Picking the member would be your own choice. For examples of the articles, see the newsletters from March 2015, March 2016 and September 2016 in the newsletter archive on the website <https://www.uml.edu/Community/LIRA/Newsletters.aspx>

Please let me know if you are interested:  
[jeridurant@gmail.com](mailto:jeridurant@gmail.com) or 978-251-4107.



*I would like to wish  
you all a Joyous  
Holiday Season  
and a New Year of  
Peace, Happiness and  
Good Health.*

*Jeri Durant*



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LEARNING IN RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION  
University of Massachusetts Lowell  
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## 2018 Winter Intersession

The 2018 Winter Intersession, given between semesters, offers to retirees and those semi-retired, a sample of LIRA's almost year-round program and friendly community. The program is planned and much of it provided by the members themselves. The general public is invited to all intersession programs. All intersession programs are 10:00 am – Noon. The programs will be held in University Suites, Room #106, 327 Perkins Street, Lowell, MA. Because of construction going on in the front of the building, please enter at the side entrance on Perkins Street. Coffee will not be available at the café. Parking for on campus programs is in the garage directly across the street from the Rec Center or in the Perkins Parking lot. Your ID is needed to enter the garage or lot. **Please use your parking hangtags wherever you park.** On street parking is also available in metered spaces.

### December 15, 2017 Book Discussion 10 a.m. to Noon

*The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, fiction by Carson McCullers  
(FYI: It is considered to be one of the best books of the 20th century)

### January 3 – The Rebirth of Lowell - Craig Thomas

City rebirth is different for each and every location and Lowell is no different. The changes in Lowell since the 1970s are truly extraordinary - from a city with the highest unemployment in the country to a city thriving in the knowledge economy in the early twenty-first century. How did Lowell change during the decades since the 1970s? How did twentieth century decisions shape the community today? And how are redevelopment decisions made today? The class will start with development ideas and changes in Lowell emerging from urban renewal and bring the city planning and development timeline to focus on current issues, such as 1) how to redevelop the Hamilton Canal Innovation District; and 2) how do neighborhoods participate in development planning. Participants will debate current development proposals and walk away with a more detailed understanding of how a city rebuilds over time.  
Coordinator: Nancy Pitkin\*

### January 10 - They Arrived before Columbus - David Brody

Numerous artifacts and sites around New England offer evidence of exploration of North America long before Columbus. Specifically, the artifacts seem to confirm the legend of a group of Scottish explorers, with ties to the outlawed Knights Templar, island-hopping their way across the North Atlantic in the late 1300s. Who were they, and why did they come? Well, that's where the fun begins."

### January 17 North of the Border: Canadian Mystery and Detective Fiction - Dr. Melissa Pennell

For over a century the genre of mystery and detective fiction was dominated by British and American authors. Occasionally authors from France, and more recently those from Scandinavia, have found audiences beyond their home countries. In the last decade or so, mystery and detective fiction has surged as a genre in Canada. US readers are familiar with the work of Louise Penny, whose Inspector Gamache and the village of Three Pines have become fan favorites. But there is more to discover in terms of authors, characters, and settings. This presentation will offer a "tour of Canada" through its mystery and detective fiction, highlighting some classics as well as the diverse range of work being produced by contemporary authors.  
Coordinator: Dina Gerosideris\*

### January 17 Book Discussion 1:00-3:00pm

*A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

### January 24 Autism - Professor Ashleigh Hillier

Prof. Hillier (Department of Psychology, UMass Lowell) will speak about autism spectrum disorder (ASD), particularly in relation to adolescents and young adults. She will give some background information about ASD, how ASD presents, and some recent research in the area. She will also discuss the work of the UMass Lowell Center for Autism Research and Education (CARE).  
Coordinator: Bob Hanlon\*

### **January 31 Art and Architecture Tour of the Boston Public Library**

The Boston Public Library in Copley Square has a lot more than just books. On this tour, you will explore the architecture of its famed Central Library buildings by Charles Follen McKim and Philip Johnson as well as the art treasures within, including works by Daniel Chester French and John Singer Sargent. You will see beautifully carved bronze doors, sculptures, marble floors and walls, mural paintings by Puvis de Chavannes, Edwin Austin Abbey and John Singer Sargent, rooms modeled after those found in a Venetian palace and much more.

The bus tour will depart the side parking lot at Hannaford in Chelmsford at 8 AM. Our tour starts at 10 AM and will last about an hour and fifteen minutes. We will leave the library to return home at 12:30 PM. The library has 2 cafes and there are numerous places to eat nearby around Copley Square.

Cost is \$20 for members. \$25 for non-members. Please send checks made out to LIRA, INC to Bob Hanlon, [255 North Road, Unit 37, Chelmsford MA 01824](mailto:255NorthRoad@lira.org) by Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup>.

Coordinator: Bob Hanlon\*

### **February 7 What Makes Life Significant? - Professor John Kaag**

John Kaag, a professor in philosophy, will discuss his *American Philosophy: A Love Story*, which was named an NPR Best Book of 2016 and a New York Times Editor's Choice. In the process, he will draw on the American philosophical tradition—the writings of Thoreau, Emerson, and William James—to discuss what is perhaps the hardest, but also the most vital, philosophical question: What makes life significant? This question is practically important for every human being, but its pressing nature becomes more apparent as one ages. Come see what American philosophers had to say about it; come discuss the various answers and figure it out for yourself!

Coordinator: Suzanne Gamache\*

### **February 14 Being Transgender: A talk by Kelly Jenkins**

In 2014 the government ordered the Justice Dept. to take the position that "sex" encompasses gender identity, thus extending protections to transgender people. In the fall of 2017 a two-page memo was sent to all U.S. attorneys and other top officials revoking this directive. Kelly Jenkins is a Wellesley Middle School teaching assistant, a fierce advocate for youth, a host and producer of "Kelly's Quest" on Acton TV, and has been featured on NPR. She will share her personal stories to help us toward a broader understanding of the word "transgender" and the many issues surrounding it.

Coordinator: Judith Raiguel\*

### **February 21 Mysterious Mars — in 3D! - Kelly Beatty, Senior Editor for Sky and Telescope magazine**

No planet in our solar system is more similar to Earth than the Red Planet. Thanks to spacecraft that have been circling Mars and crawling across its surface for decades, we've learned that this world is now a deeply frozen wasteland. But long ago it was much warmer, had a dense atmosphere, and had rivers of liquid water flowing across its surface. What happened to Mars? Was life ever present on its surface? What's it like today? And why is it red? Get the latest scientific details — and enjoy you-are-there 3D views of its surface — in this informative and entertaining update. (Bonus: Next summer Earth and Mars will pass closer than they have since 2003. Be ready to impress your friends with your knowledge of the Red Planet!)

Coordinator: Susan Lemire\*

### **February 21 Book Discussion 1:00-3:00pm**

*Manhattan Beach* by Jennifer Egan

# LIRA's Winter 2018 Intersession

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
December 4	December 5	December 6 10 am to Noon  Holiday Party Cumnock Hall	December 7	December 8 1:00pm Chelmsford Library Lecture Series <i>Nuclear Security</i> Keith West
December 11	December 12	December 13	December 14	December 15 10am Book Discussion <i>The Heart is a Lonely Hunter</i> by Carson McCullers
		2018		
January 1	January 2	January 3 The Rebirth of Lowell Craig Thomas	January 4	January 5
January 8	January 9	January 10 They Arrived before Columbus David Brody	January 11	January 12
January 15	January 16	January 17 North of the Border: Canadian Mystery & Detective Fiction Dr. Melissa Pennell 1:00 pm Book Discussion <i>A Gentleman in Moscow</i> by Amor Towles	January 18	January 19
January 22	January 23	January 24 Autism Ashleigh Hillier	January 25	January 26

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
January 29	January 30	January 31 Bus at 8 AM at Hannaford Art and Architecture Tour of the Boston Public Library	February 1	February 2
February 5	February 6	February 7 What Makes Life Significant? John Kaag	February 8	February 9 1:00 Chelmsford Library Lecture Series Occupation of France during WWII Dr. Patrick Young
February 12	February 13	February 14 Being Transgender: A talk by Kelly Jenkins	February 15	February 16
February 19	February 20	February 21 Mysterious Mars—in 3D! Kelly Beatty  1:00pm Book Discussion <i>Manhattan Beach</i> by Jennifer Egan	February 22	February 23
		MARCH		
March 5	March 6	March 7 Town Meeting 10 am to Noon	March 8	March 9 1:00 Chelmsford Library Lecture Series Russia's Foreign Policy Keith West
March 12 Classes begin	March 13	March 14	March 15	March 16