



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



May 2025

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LIRA 2025 Annual Meeting



• **Wednesday, May 7** •

• **10:00 a.m - noon** •

• **Moloney Ballroom
(University Crossing) OR
On Zoom** •

FREE SNACKS

Elect Officers and Learn about the summer schedule
Speaker: Craig Thomas, UML Director of Urban and
Community Development

From the President: May 2025

This will be my last opportunity to write this article—we will elect a new President at the LIRA May 2025 Annual Meeting. For me, as well as for LIRA, these last 5 years have been most interesting and challenging. We suffered through the isolation and challenges of the Covid Pandemic and, I think, came out stronger and more capable as an organization than ever before. The adoption of Zoom has allowed us to expand our membership beyond the immediate region and has allowed our members to continue to participate, even if they are stuck at home or have moved out of the region. We also have been able to invite speakers from literally all over the world to address LIRA. We now record our sessions, which allows members to catch up on classes they missed. I am very pleased now to see an increasing number of members coming into University Suites to attend our classes in person each week.

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as your president and I look forward to many more years of involvement with LIRA.

LIRA has just finished one of the finest semesters of classes I can recall. I think the LIRA Curriculum Committee and all the volunteers who have contributed to a very successful spring program have done a great job and deserve our sincere appreciation.

Our Annual Meeting will be on May 7, 2025, at 10 a.m. until noon in the Jacqueline and Edward Moloney Hall, University Crossing room 260, and on Zoom. We will elect officers for the coming year at the Annual Meeting.

Our Speaker at the Annual Meeting is Craig Thomas, UML Director of Urban and Community Development, who will inform us about the Lowell Innovation Corridor.

Jim Rutter and Simon Curry (the new Curriculum Co-Chair) will introduce the Summer Intersession program.

Peter Sebelius

Scholarship Fund

Another of our LIRA Scholarship Fund winners has been making an important contribution to this community for several years. Let me tell you what it is.

At this time of year, we hear of marathons, graduations and many other special events. There are EMTs and other medical personnel and first responders who are assigned to these wonderful events to ensure our safety. One of our student scholarship award winners this year is an EMS Supervisor for UMass Lowell and a volunteer Special Operations Coordinator for large-scale events off-campus such as the Bay State Marathon and the 4th of July fireworks.

It's not too early to donate now for next fall's awards. Your donations to the LIRA Scholarship Fund make a great deal of difference to these hardworking students. Thank you so much!

Please send your checks made out to UMass Lowell to:

Debby Friedman
21 Jonathan Lane
Chelmsford, MA 01824

*Debby Friedman
Co-Chair Scholarship Fund*

In Memory

Judith Raiguel passed away January 31, 2025. Judith had been a LIRA member since before 2013. She is the mother of LIRA members Maura and Doug Snow. Here is her obituary:

[Judith B. Raiguel Obituary \(2025\) - Chelmsford, MA - Blake Chelmsford Funeral Home](#)

Burmese Community Luncheon

A huge thank you to LIRA's Diversity Committee and the Myanmar Community in Lowell for treating LIRA members to an amazing luncheon this past spring. Those who attended enjoyed learning about the culture, getting our faces painted, and participating in some fun activities. Here are a few highlights:





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Fun Spring Activities

Here are a few photos from our spring semester.

Lira Members enjoyed a Meditation class...



and a trip to the Peabody Essex Museum...



Be sure to check our summer schedule for more trips and classes!

LIRA 2025 Summer Intersession Course Descriptions

6/4/25 - 7/30/25

All programs (except trips) will be available via Zoom. For programs listed as “hybrid”, the presenter will be in person in room 106 of the University Suites building at UMass Lowell and the program will also be available via Zoom. For all programs listed as “Zoom with remote presenter”, LIRA members will have the option of viewing it from University Suites, and if University Suites is closed, the program will be listed as “Zoom only”. Please check your email for the weekly program announcement, and for any last-minute changes or additions. *denotes LIRA member.

Shorting The Grid

**Wednesday 6/4/25 10 a.m. – Noon Zoom with Remote Presenter
Presenter: Meredith Angwin
Author of the book *Shorting the Grid***

Many electric grids are becoming more unreliable. New England basically depends on natural gas, which supplies over 50% of our electricity on a yearly basis. However, on very cold days in New England, natural gas is required for home heating. Renewables are also less available on such days. In the winter, there are few hours of sunlight, and the sun is lower in the sky. On the coldest days, the wind is often still. Depending on solar and wind for electricity on extremely cold days will not keep the lights on.

In these circumstances, the power grid depends on oil, imported power from Canada, and imported LNG from all over the world. The grid is often teetering on the brink of failure, but this is exactly how the power plants like the situation. Near misses and high prices increase the profits of power plants. Brinkmanship pays! And our power grids are organized for brinkmanship.

Meredith Angwin will describe how closed meetings, arcane auction rules, and five-minute planning horizons continue to cripple the reliability of our electric grid. Her book *Shorting the Grid* shines light on the ISO/NE grid vulnerability and the problems of similar grid operations around the country. It also suggests actions that can support the grid that supports all of us.

Coordinator: Peter Sebelius*

Museum of Fine Arts
Monday 6/9/25 Trip
American Art Tour 10:30 a.m. - Noon

As a class watching the videos on Masterworks of American Art this past spring semester, we would like to see in person many of the paintings that have been discussed in our class since many are at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. The group will do a tour of these paintings and then you are on your own to look at the rest of the museum.

For those who are carpooling, we will meet up at 8:45 at the side parking lot at Hannaford's in Chelmsford. Otherwise, we will meet at the Museum Entrance. The fee is \$27, though we hope to get enough people for a group discount. More information at our town meeting and as the day approaches.

Please contact beverly.rudeen@gmail.com if you would like to attend.

Coordinator: Bev Rudeen*

Geology of the Massachusetts Middlesex County Area
(and a bit beyond) - Part 2
Wednesday 6/11/25 10 a.m - Noon Hybrid
Presenter: Bill Vales

Part 2 of our presentations will continue to focus on the unique geology of eastern Massachusetts with examples of the rocks created by the immense pressure and temperature in the ground below our feet. We will also look at the folding of those rocks when they become the consistency of cookie dough under that heat and pressure. Bill Vales will also discuss the impact on the land from more than a mile of ice, which covered this area up until 11,700 years ago. He will continue the discussion of the movement of continents on the tectonic plates that continue to shape the world today, and will show how the combination of all these forces shaped the local terrain that we live in.

Bill will then discuss some of the local interesting geological features, including the failed rift system in the Connecticut River Valley, limestone quarries in Bolton and Chelmsford, Mount Monadnock, and other locations in New England. He will finish by focusing on Tophet Chasm in Littleton, where we will hike on July 16.

Coordinator: Bob Stevens*

Fire/Life Safety

Wednesday 6/18/25 10 a.m. - Noon Hybrid

Presenter: Peter Lennon

Peter Lennon currently serves as the assistant director of Life Safety at UMass Lowell, where he is responsible for all fire/life safety for the university. Prior to his work at the university, he served over 25 years as a career firefighter and retired as the city fire marshal for the City of Manchester, NH. He also serves at the NH Fire Academy where he is a senior staff instructor/program coordinator for all the NFPA 1030 programs. He has numerous fire/life safety certifications both at the state and national level and has spent the majority of his career leading community risk reduction programs.

Coordinator: Nancy Pitkin*

My Tiny Bottles

Wednesday 6/25/25 10 a.m. - Noon Hybrid

Presenter: Tammy Coxen

My Tiny Bottles is the project where Tammy Coxen explores her grandmother's legacy of miniature liquor bottles (aka "nips"), one tiny bottle at a time. Since 2011, Tammy has taught cocktail classes at her business, Tammy's Tastings. Diving into the history and stories behind spirits, liqueurs and cocktails is the heart of her business. She knew there had to be some amazing liquid time capsules in that collection! She issues reveal videos, where she selects bottles; deep dives, where she goes through the history; and tastings (yes, she drinks them!) at mytinybottles.com. Come learn about the project and family legacy.

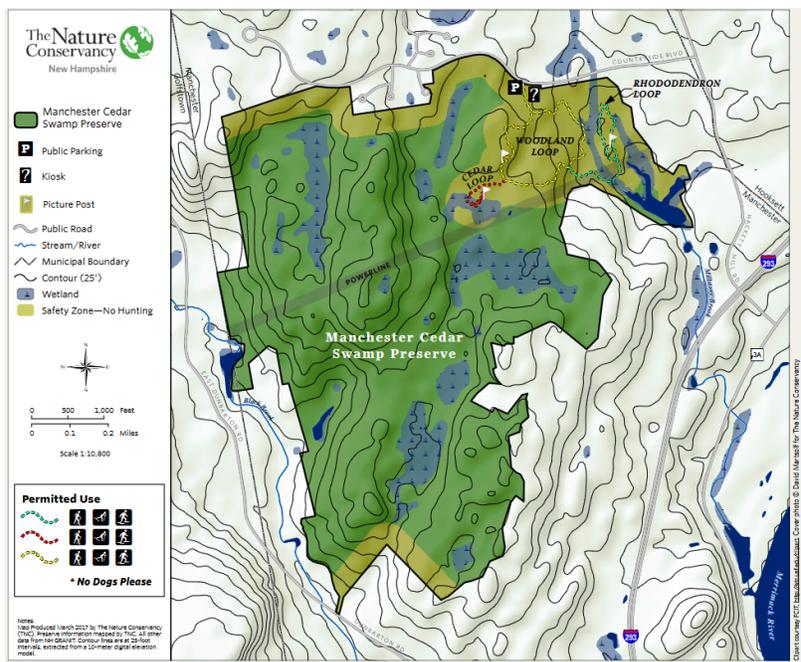
As the founder and Chief Tasting Officer of Tammy's Tastings, Tammy Coxen has been sharing her enthusiasm for food and drink for over 15 years. Since 2011, she has been teaching interactive hands-on cocktail classes to individuals, groups, and companies for events ranging from parties to corporate team building. In 2020, she took those classes online, and now continues to offer both in-person and online events. In 2023, she launched My Tiny Bottles, a project where she's exploring her grandmother's legacy of hundreds of miniature liquor bottles, one tiny bottle at a time. She is the co-author of the cocktail book *Cheers to Michigan*, was co-host of a regular cocktail segment on Michigan Radio (her local NPR affiliate), and has written for *Hour Detroit* magazine and other publications. Her favorite drink is usually the one she's never tried before.

Coordinator: Lisa Hertel*

Manchester Cedar Swamp Walk

Wednesday 7/9/25 10 a.m. - Noon Trip

New Hampshire's largest city isn't where most of us think of going to explore nature. But nature abounds here at the 640-acre Manchester Cedar Swamp Preserve, the largest conservation area in the city—providing residents and visitors alike with opportunities for a peaceful escape, outdoor recreation and nature study close to home. Curious visitors who follow the preserve's easily accessible and well-maintained 1.8-mile trail system will find shady hemlock groves, giant rhododendron patches and the globally rare Atlantic white cedar swamps that are the preserve's namesake. When you're down on the boardwalk in the cedar swamp, the stillness and sense of solitude can feel like a remote wilderness.



Information can be found here:

<https://www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/manchester-cedar-swamp-map-guide-web-version.pdf>

We will meet at the Parking area off Countryside Blvd at 10 a.m. in Manchester and decide which trails to take. Contact Peter Sebelius (sebes3@yahoo.com or 978-758-5680) to sign up and if you need a ride or are willing to carpool to the preserve. Carpoolers will assemble at Hannaford, Drum Hill in the side parking lot at 9:30 a.m.

Coordinator: Peter Sebelius*

Geology Hike in Littleton's Tophet Chasm

Wednesday 7/16/25 10 a.m. - Noon Trip

Leader: Bill Vales

Tophet Chasm in Littleton offers a unique opportunity to observe geology at its finest. Bill Vales will lead our walk, showing examples of the rocks that he presented in his presentations, including Tadmuck Brook Schist, granite and others. Bill will also discuss the glaciation that created Tophet Chasm and the impact on the rocks in the chasm, the tilting of the rocks from seismic activity, the folding of the rocks, very large glacial erratics and other geological features. If the weather is clear and we have the energy, we will get to Lookout Rock where you can see the skyline of Boston.

NOTE: We will be walking on uneven ground with exposed tree roots. There are moderate uphill and downhill sections. Our pace will be moderate, covering about 2 ½ miles over the two-hour period. However, we will have frequent stops as Bill discusses the rocks and their origins. Hiking boots are suggested and if you use them, walking sticks. Since it will be July, bring water. We will never be far from the car parking area, so if the walk becomes too much, you can be escorted back to your car.

Coordinator: Bob Stevens*

Pickity Place

Wednesday 7/23/25 11:00 a.m. start Trip

If you've not yet visited the very unique Pickity Place in Mason NH for a special dining experience, this is your chance! Built in 1786, the quaint little red cottage which houses the restaurant was used by Elizabeth Orton Jones as the model for her illustrations in Little Red Riding Hood (Little Golden Books, 1948). Today it attracts both gardeners and foodies. The menus for the five-course gourmet herbal lunches are inspired by their breathtaking culinary gardens that invite visitors to wander, relax, explore, and then enjoy a delightful luncheon. On our visit to Pickity Place plan to spend some time in the gardens and sheds, gift shops, the greenhouse, and the most beautiful Little Free Library you've ever seen. The exact cost is TBD based on group size, but per person price for the 5-course lunch

not including gratuity is approximately \$35.00. Our group will be seated for the 11:30am lunch.

July 2025 Menu

Dip ~ New England vegetable
Soup ~ Chilled cantaloupe with basil
Salad ~ Red, white and blue potato
Bread ~ Ciabatta multi-grain

Entree ~ Beef chimichurri with Spanish rice
— or —
Entree ~ Three cheese garden vegetable Arancini

Dessert ~ Tres leches cake with Summer berries

Photo of Little Free Library at Pickity Place

Coordinator: Suzanne Gamache*



Concord Museum *Whose Revolution*

**Wednesday 7/30/2025 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Trip
Docent-led tour**

Whose Revolution is a special, temporary exhibition mounted to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the start of the American Revolution. It offers a fresh, inclusive perspective on the decade leading up to the outbreak of war in 1775, centering the experiences of women, Indigenous communities, and free and enslaved Black people who grappled with the meaning of revolution in their own lives. Through a rich array of objects, from paintings, prints, and political cartoons to historic clothing, textiles, furniture, and ceramics, as well as film and multimedia installations, *Whose Revolution* provides a vivid and tangible sense of what it was like to live through this dramatic period of mounting tension and crisis and the significance of this history today.

We will have a docent-led tour of *Whose Revolution* as well as selections from the permanent collection that focus on the American Revolution. After the tour ends, we will be free to explore the rest of the museum, which is open until 4:00 p.m. The cost will be \$13 per person.

The museum, which has its roots in the nineteenth century, completed a \$16 million renovation project in 2021 that has resulted in an innovative and up-to-

date experience. Parenthetically, those of us who wish will have the opportunity to have lunch together in nearby Concord Town Center.

Coordinator: Alan Friedman*

Book Discussions

5/16/25 10 a.m. - Noon Zoom Only
Finding Margaret Fuller by Allison Pataki
Discussion Leader: Steve Buccieri*

6/20/25 10 a.m. - Noon Zoom Only
Elon Musk by Walter Isaacson 2023
Discussion Leader: Bob Hanlon*

Film Discussion

5/23/25 10 a.m. - Noon Zoom Only
As Good As It Gets (1997)
Discussion Leader: Marie Tada*

LIRA 2025 Summer Intersession Calendar

Zoom Only in Red

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
May 5	May 6	May 7 10 am to Noon LIRA Annual Meeting	May 8	May 9
May 12	May 13	May 14	May 15	May 16 10 am to Noon Book Discussion <i>Finding Margaret Fuller: A Novel</i> Allison Pataki
May 19	May 20	May 21	May 22	May 23 10 am to Noon Film Discussion <i>As Good as It Gets</i>
May 26	May 27	May 28	May 29	May 30
June 2	June 3	June 4 10 am to Noon Shorting the Grid	June 5	June 6
June 9 10:30 am to Noon Museum of Fine Arts (trip)	June 10	June 11 10 am to Noon Geology of Middlesex County Part 2	June 12	June 13
June 16	June 17	June 18 10 am to Noon Fire/Life Safety	June 19	June 20 10 am to Noon Book Discussion <i>Elon Musk</i> Walter Isaacson

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
June 23	June 24	June 25 10 am to Noon My Tiny Bottles	June 26	June 27
June 30	July 1	July 2	July 3	July 4
July 7	July 8	July 9 10 am to Noon Manchester Cedar Swamp Walk Carpooling at 9:30 at Hannaford's side parking lot	July 10	July 11
July 14	July 15	July 16 10 am to Noon Geology Hike in Littleton's Tophet Chasm	July 17	July 18
July 21	July 22	July 23 11 am start Lunch at Pickity Place	July 24	July 25
July 28	July 29	July 30 10:30 to 11:30 am Tour of the Concord Museum <i>Whose Revolution</i>	July 31	August 1