We Celebrate 20 Years of Lifelong Learning

This was not the regular annual meeting. This was not business as usual. This was proclamations and memories of classmates past and present, facilitators and courses we’ve enjoyed over twenty years.

We marked our 20th anniversary at Washington University’s Knight Center with camaraderie and a festive lunch. Chancellor Mark Wrighton and Dean Robert Wiltenburg received personal proclamations, and LLI founders and 20-year members were given special Cross pens.

Of course, business could not be neglected. Curriculum Chair Tom Mitchell reported that the LLI curriculum has grown from three courses in 1995 to 134 courses this year. He congratulated and thanked this year’s 79 facilitators.

Nominating Chair Nancy McKee announced that Bettye Dew and Don Cohn were rotating off the Executive Committee. Tom Craddock and Dan Sexton were nominated and elected by acclamation to replace them.

LLI director Katie Compton complimented Chair Karen Sterbenz for the excellent job she is doing and she thanked The Gatesworth for its generous contribution and for sponsoring the 20th Anniversary celebration. She welcomed former director Rich Diemer and Gatesworth director Martha Kessel and other guests. She gave an abbreviated annual report and reminded us that we are never too old to learn something new, make new friends and have fun! We’ve had a great year and a great 20 years!

Then it was adjournment, and after a break for socializing, the luncheon began, complete with entertainment by a jazz combo.
Here we are at the beginning of another academic year, alive and strong, thanks to the caring and capable guidance of our director Katie Compton and her able assistant Kathy Piry, the dedicated facilitators of classes and the faithful participants of those classes, one and all!

Entering the second half of my tenure as Chair of the Executive Committee, I have good news, bad news and good news to report. The first piece of good news is the glorious success of our 20th Anniversary Celebration held on the Danforth Campus at the Knight Center. We reached capacity long before the event on Wednesday, May 27. One hundred and sixty-three people were in attendance, including four who represented our generous sponsors at #1 McKnight Place.

The whole event was led by committee members who served under the leadership of Patricia Barrett, then the Vice Chair of the Executive Committee. Thanks to all who worked to make our celebration so wonderful. That day included a continuous loop of slides of our twenty years of LLI activities. That DVD will be shown in room A or B from 9:00 to 9:45 a.m. and noon to 12:45 p.m. on Monday through Friday the week of the celebration, or were too busy talking to friends at the celebration, to see the wonderful show assembled by Anna Amelung and Rob Greitens.

On a sadder note, Patricia Barrett died on June 11, 2015. Pat was a private woman. She hid her illness well and was able to attend the event she had so competently chaired. I believe it was her promise to herself that she would attend the last event she planned.

As surely as Pat will be greatly missed, our institutional life must go on. I am therefore pleased to report that Don Cohn has accepted appointment as Vice Chair of the Executive Committee, and will serve until he succeeds me as Chair in June 2016. A retired biology teacher at Kirkwood High School, Don is well qualified for this new position. He has just completed a two-year term as member-at-large on the Executive Committee and has been an active LLI member. Thank you so much, Don, for stepping up.

I look forward to seeing each of you this fall, beginning yet another academic year at LLI.

–Karen Sterbenz
We have found over the course of years and the ten Show Me LLI events we have hosted that this is the best format for us to “show” perspective students what it is we do at LLI. Three mini-courses (Neuroscience, Reading The Wall Street Journal and Eight Great Plays) were presented to about thirty potential students on May 15. Nearly 25% of those people signed up for a summer term course! Our next Show Me LLI event will be on Friday, November 13, 2015. Please start thinking now of friends who might be interested in attending.

Our LLI writers presented a showcase of their talents at an event hosted by The Gatesworth on May 1. Helen Schrader did a great job of heading up the planning committee for this annual event. Leonard Adreon was the M.C. and twenty-one writers read their essays, fiction and poetry. There was even a play (written by Gil Nussbaum) and singing!

In the fall term The Gatesworth will be the location for a third section of our popular Memoir Writing course. It is open to all—not just residents of The Gatesworth. Anyone can sign up for this section. Ruby Lapin and JoAnne Leach will co-facilitate on Monday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

Thank you to:

–Dick Hyde who donated a large portion of his vast WWII collection of DVD’s and VHS tapes to LLI. If you are interested in borrowing any of them, please come and see what we have in the LLI Library “Annex”.

–Margaret Johnson who donated a Teaching Company DVD on “Meteorology: An Introduction to the Wonders of Weather”. Let me know if you are interested in this DVD—it could be the basis of a great course!

–Everyone who has donated books to the “take one” basket on the hall table.

–Everyone who gave to the Endowment, General and Scholarship Funds in honor of the 20th Anniversary of LLI.

A hat tip to: Francis Oates whose piece, “Growing Space,” was the First Place prize winner in the WUSTL Summer in St. Louis Writing Contest!

Enjoy the rest of your summer and I hope to see you back at LLI in the fall!

–Katie Compton
LLL Director
In Memoriam

Ed Schapiro
Jack Fivel
Lansden McCandless
Bud Kohm
Cordelia Holmes
Patricia Huber
George Stericker
Ingomar Kern
Jeanne Becker
Jeanne Stolar
Bobbye Shifrin
Elaine Gollub
Patricia Barrett

In Memory Of:

Roy Haynes
Hazel and Richard Sohn

George Stericker
Bob Streett

Tom O’Gorman
Allen Furline

Jackie Ess
Marita Stueck

Ray Morganstern
Norman Solomon

Ann Cook’s mom
Hazel and Richard Sohn

Patricia Huber
Bob and Millie Kaufman
Bob Streett

Bud Kohm
The Reading WSJ Class
The Reading The Economist Class
Allen Sherman
Judy Milton
Barbara and Michael Newmark
Bob and Millie Kaufman
Sally and Charles Kopman

Mary Jo and Jerry Liberstein
Anne Hetlage
Bob Rubin
Eugene Kornblum
Dick Koblitz, Jr.
Peggy Gibstone
Gene and Harriet Spilker

Bob Cortinovis
Ken Streett

In Honor Of:

Butch and Karen Sterbenz’s
50th wedding anniversary

Allen and Lee Furline
Sondra and Dan Ellis

Nancy Harvey
Mary Ellen Brucker

Karen Sterbenz for her dedication and enthusiasm for LLI
Susie Philpott

Louise Lonsbury
Virginia McCann

Henrietta Freedman
Elizabeth Cohen

Anna Amelung
Gladys Cramer

Karen Sterbenz and Jerry Kottler
Joe Glik

Lawrence Kahn
David Geller

Katie Compton and Kathy Piry
Jane Smith

A Loss for St. Louis and LLI

Patricia Barrett, longtime member of LLI and Vice Chair of the Executive Committee, died on June 11, after a brief illness. Patricia was an enthusiast for LLI and Washington University, and a committed civic leader. The first woman executive at Union Electric (Ameren) in the 1990’s, Patricia’s list of friends, both professional and personal, reads in part like a Who’s Who in St. Louis.

An annual member of LLI, Patricia regularly enrolled in two classes per session for nearly 15 years. A dear, loyal friend of many of us, she will be missed for her active participation in class and remembered for having chaired the LLI 20th Anniversary celebration this spring. May she rest in peace.

–Nancy McKee
GIFTS IN HONOR OF THE LLI 20TH ANNIVERSARY

ENDOWMENT FUND
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Irene Cortinovis
Walter and Joan Bartlow
Shirley Bassett
Elizabeth Cohen
Judith M.A. Schwartz
Ann Lux

Hovey Burgess of Circus Flora visited LLI in June to talk about the history of the circus in the U.S.

Krim Williams and Rudy Yanuck at the Writers Showcase at The Gatesworth.
Who Can It Be?

If you’ve lived in St. Louis for a long time, you may remember an old guy who had a stand with a sign—I Guess Your Age or I Pay You—at the Forest Park Highlands. He was almost always right, but on the rare occasion he missed by more than a couple of years, he would pay. If that guy were still there (and of course, if “The Highlands” were still there), I would take this friendly and engaging woman to see him. He would say to her, “Give me a hint, lady, are you retired yet?” And she could say, “Retired from what? I like taking care of my own housework and lawn, and when I have leftover time, I wash my car, tend my rose garden, and take courses at the Lifelong Learning Institute, which I certainly intend to continue! I’m never retiring from that!” And if that old guy listened to her very long, he’d take a guess, give up, and pay her the guessing fee.

The mystery person this time is someone we all love, and there’s no need to guess her age, she would tell you with a proud sparkle in her eyes. She likes numbers like 88, 4, 8, and 4 again. Those are her lucky numbers, and she does consider herself lucky—lucky to have good health, good friends, intelligence and the ability to enjoy things and share them at LLI.

She has always loved learning as she demonstrated when she was a young mother with the yearning to finish the degree she began at the University of Illinois. After her marriage and the necessity of making their home in Germany interrupted her education for a few years, she determinedly eked out courses from Washington University while raising their four children until she finished her degree. Now her love of learning can be indulged here at LLI which she counts as one of the great delights of retirement.

Here at LLI, the courses a person chooses might be far from a person’s former working occupation, or can even seem so unlike their persona that our registrar could look surprised. A person who disliked math in younger days might be focusing on courses like “Probability Theory,” while our mystery person who could win “Mrs. Congeniality” (if LLI had such an award) has taken almost all the war courses offered in the past 16 years. It often happens that a nascent interest has been kindled by a new member looking at our list of classes, and by the next session, this person has become a resource for a new course in our curriculum.

Our mystery person does bubble with the enthusiasm that others show when struck for the first time by an awareness that their days of learning do not have to be over—there is no worry about grades, tests or homework (unless we choose to make it so). “It’s not like the gruelling work of earning a degree when we were young. We can choose courses that interest us, or just for the fun of it, and create new worlds for ourselves!” Our guest has made the most of many options and has shared her joyful spirit generously.

—Dolores Friesen

(The identity of our mystery person is revealed on Page 8.)
World Renowned Psychologist Presents Larry Jasper Lecture

Henry L. Roediger, III, Ph.D., the James L. McDonnell Distinguished Professor of Psychology at Washington University, presented “Cognitive Illusions: Errors in Perceiving, Remembering and Thinking” to a full house on March 5, 2015. His scientific study of mind and mental process reveals that experience dictates what we perceive. Indeed, people actively construct their world through experience and memory.

Professor Roediger, known as Roddy, received his Ph.D. at Yale University, has published over 250 articles on learning and memory, written three textbooks, edited nine other books, served as president of many professional Associations and received many awards, including the Arthur Holly Compton Faculty Achievement Award from Washington University.

Good-bye, Dean Wiltenburg

We offer our friend Robert Wiltenburg heartfelt thanks and best wishes as heretires from his position as Dean of University College. We’ll miss his friendly face, clever quips and all the help he has provided during his tenure. Former Associate University College Dean, Steve Ehrlich will serve as interim dean. We welcome him with warmth and enthusiasm.

Save the Date!
Come hear our own LLI facilitator Liz Zelman speak about her book Our Beleaguered Species: Beyond Tribalism
Wednesday, September 16
7:00 p.m. at the U. City Library
Karen Sterbenz applauds Chancellor Wrighton's unswerving loyalty.

The sell-out crowd of Lifelong Learning enthusiasts.

Jane Smith, Henrietta Freedman and Anne Hetlage 20-year members Kit Hereford and Jane Elswick

Tom Mitchell reports on curriculum.

Answer to Who Can It Be: Peggy Gibstine

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1995 2015

LLI cake

The sell-out crowd of Lifelong Learning enthusiasts.