Let’s say you’re at a dinner party when you get the urge to start a conversation about your favorite poet, Seamus Heaney. Or perhaps, having just read up on Henry VIII, you’re bursting to discuss sixteenth-century machinations. Or maybe something has stirred your interest in the English language and its origins, and you’re bent on sharing your new enthusiasm. Chances are, though, unless you’re dining with poets, Tudor historians, or linguists, your efforts to elevate the conversation will fall flat. Luckily, that doesn’t happen at the Lifelong Learning Institute.

For some 20 years, LLI has provided senior adults of the St. Louis area a forum for just such discussions. In fact, all of the above topics, along with 32 others, were covered in courses offered during the winter session. Added to those are the varied courses that make up the other two eight-week terms and the four-week summer term.

Twenty years of sponsoring courses built on peer learning and class participation is quite an achievement. In fact, it is a milestone that calls for party, a means of celebrating the remarkable leadership and participation that have spelled two decades of success for LLI.

Plan now to be present on May 27 at the Knight Center on Washington University’s Danforth campus to share in the 20th anniversary festivities. After check-in, which opens at 10:30 a.m., and the Annual Meeting at 11:00 a.m., you’ll enjoy a celebratory luncheon and program. You’ll view a loop of storytelling photographs starring two decades of classmates, facilitators and leaders, and you’ll applaud the honorees of the day, LLI’s twenty-year members. For your entertainment, the music of a jazz combo will set your toes tapping!

Come prepared with reminiscences of your own, or maybe an idea or two gleaned from past classes, to share with your tablemates. Perhaps some of your courses have gotten you interested in subjects you didn’t know you cared about. You can label that just one of the beautiful things about LLI, where you are learning for learning’s sake!

–Bettye Dew
Message from the Chair

We are finishing our winter term at LLI with the highest winter enrollment ever! A hearty pat on the back to each of us. First off, surely Katie Compton and Kathy Piry deserve kudos for their tireless efforts and patience in accommodating our many foibles and keeping things running smoothly.

Our increasing numbers reflect our best member recruitment tool: word of mouth. We talk up LLI everywhere we go. We plan ahead to bring interested people to the fall or spring “Show Me LLI,” our two-hour mini-version of how LLI works. About 20% of the people who attend this event enroll in one or more classes the next term. Additionally, Kathy Piry is happy to add any name and address to our request list, which automatically means a person will receive a few terms of newsletters and course brochures. Let’s keep talking up LLI and keep those enrollments coming in!

We also thank our facilitators, those marvelous people who are inspired to put together a syllabus and lead a group in acquiring a body of knowledge. Some facilitators are experts in a field, others are people with a passion for a specific subject. Either kind is great and both provide classes that are stimulating, informative and exciting.

Then there is the last, largest and most important group of people deserving our praise: LLI participants, who are typically friendly, ready to engage in discussion, offer a helping hand, make a pot of coffee, bring a snack, deliver a report, ask or answer a question.

I love the buzz of energy and enthusiasm that abounds at LLI. It is unusual for people in our age group to be making new friends, to be vitally interested in new endeavors. Yet here at LLI for three school-year terms and one summer term, that is just what happens. For that, each of us deserves a pat on the back and an opportunity to celebrate together.

We have just such an opportunity this spring: our Twentieth Anniversary Celebration! A committee, ably led by Patricia Barrett, has been planning this event on Wednesday, May 27, beginning at 10:30 a.m. Look for more information in this newsletter and when you get your invitation (to be mailed in mid-April), R.S.V.P. quickly. I look forward to seeing you in the halls of LLI and at our party at Knight Center as well.

–Karen Sterbenz
We are well into our winter term as I write this, with over 600 members (including 43 new members) taking classes. This is the highest number of registrants ever in a winter term!

In addition to a wonderful lineup of courses, we have some wonderful events planned that you won’t want to miss this spring. Our annual Lawrence Jasper Lecture will be held on Thursday, March 5, featuring Prof. Henry “Roddy” Roediger III, the James S. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor of Psychology. He will speak about “Cognitive Illusions: Errors in Perceiving, Remembering and Thinking.”

In May we’ll once again showcase our talented LLI writers at our 5th annual special event on Friday, May 1. This year we’ll gather at the Gatesworth, because we outgrew our space at LLI for this popular event! Don’t miss this chance to hear our wonderful LLI writers read their own works.

Later in May, we’ll celebrate the 20th Anniversary of LLI with a special luncheon following our Annual Meeting at the Knight Center. A committee headed by Patricia Barrett has been busily planning this special event since last year. Indeed, it is a good and worthy thing to acknowledge this milestone in our history! We have come a long way since a small group of dedicated learners, who were passionately committed to intellectual exchange and “lifelong learning,” offered the first three classes in 1995. Some of those same people still attend (and facilitate) classes at LLI and we will recognize them.

Another person we will be sure to recognize at our anniversary celebration is Robert E. Wiltenburg, Ph.D, Dean of University College in Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis, who has announced that he will step down as dean at the end of the academic year, June 30, 2015. Always supportive and an enthusiastic cheerleader for LLI, Bob has been with us for almost all of our 20-year history. We will miss him a lot.

Once again we have a terrific line-up of courses for spring: twenty-nine 8-week and eleven 4-week courses.

These represent the work of 53 facilitators. Registration opens on Monday, March 2. Register early—don’t be left out! If you are concerned about getting into a class, be sure to bring your registration in to the office early on March 2.

—Katie Compton
LLI Director

Many thanks to Jane Elswick, who has donated some great travel books to start a travel section in the LLI library. What a great idea! Do you have any books to donate? Thanks also to Anna Amelung, who has donated the entire Time-Life “What Life Was Like” series to our library. These books would make interesting material for any number of LLI courses. So take a look, won’t you?

Thank you to everyone who brought in calendars to donate for Krim Williams who has been collecting them for the DAR who will use them to make placemats for the St. Louis Veterans Home.

Many thanks to Helen Schrader who generously contributed all the money she collected selling her self-published book of short stories Dancing In the Rain to the LLI Scholarship Fund!

Please complete the LLI survey included in this mailing. The results will be very useful to us in planning for the future. Thank you!

Mark Your Calendars

Lawrence Jasper Lecture:
Prof. Henry L. Roediger
Thursday, March 5, 1:00–3:00 p.m.

LLI Writers Showcase at the Gatesworth
Friday, May 1 at 1:00 p.m.

Show Me LLI
Friday, May 15, 2:00–4:00 p.m.
**TRIBUTES SPRING 2015**

**IN MEMORIAM**

Gerald Little
Tom O’Gorman
Corinne Richardson
Mitzi Sisson
Sarene DeWoskin
LaVerne Schmittlings, mother of Kathy Piry

**IN MEMORY OF:**

David Gee
Kim, Alan, Kristin and Allison Gibson

Bert Talcoff
Hazel Sohn
Dick Hyde
Ruth Sanofsky
Shonny Joseph
Norman Solomon
Henrietta & Rudy Freedman
Dolly Arnstein
Gene & Harriet Spilker

Tom O’Gorman
Jerry Kottler
Karen & Butch Sterbenz

Emily Burke’s grandfather
Jackie Kasnetz

Jackie Ess
Allen & Lee Furfine
Anne Storer Korr
Myra Sue Rosenthal
Diane & Bob Newett

Sol Linder
Allen & Lee Furfine

Herbie Rosenbaum
Morton & Norma Baron

Corinne Richardson
Rae Ellen Tash

Mitzi Sisson
Diane and Bob Newett
Ruby Quarterman

**IN HONOR OF:**

Dr. Mike Gavin
Edith Tashma

Thelma Edelstein
Nancy Sachar

Elizabeth Cohen
Nancy Sachar

Gene Spilker’s Birthday
Bunny Gerstenfeld

The wonderful LLI staff and leaders
Nancy Sachar

Milica & Stanko Banjanin
Patricia Barrett

Bob Wiltenburg
Marie Oetting

Anna Amelung
Myra & Steve Radinsky

Ellen Harris
Peggy Gibstine

Karen Sterbenz
Leonard Adreon

Sue Wohl
Gloria Goldblatt

**END-OF-YEAR GIFTS**

**GENERAL FUND**

Patricia Battram
Beverly Price
Bill Cooper
Marion Little

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Arnie & Nina Kaplan
Gale Grantee
Ben & Radine Borowsky
Robert & Susan Levin
John Rorris
Michael E. Nolan
Laurence & Silvia Madeo
Audrey Johnson
Bernie Schrautemeyer
Larry Schechter
Helen Schrader
Dr & Mrs Stanley Wald
Esther Smoller
Francis Oates
Kathy Piry
Harry Estill
Ruby Lapin
Margaret Johnson
Marty Lowe
Katie Compton
Joan McDonald

Howard Hearsh
Vivian Zwick
Gene & Harriet Spilker
Richard & Molly Strassner
Bud Kohm
Jim Voelker
John Rorris
Bob Little
Allen Sherman
Anne Heltlage
Francis Oates
Emmanuel & Marian Paxhia
Edward Koch
Dolores Grollman
Terry Culver
Susan Busch
Dan & Sondra Ellis
Bob & Millie Kaufman
Elizabeth Chopin
Geraldine Schiller
We Miss You, Bert

When I asked you if you would consider serving as Vice Chair of the LLI Executive Committee, you said your one reservation was that maybe you were too old for taking on a six-year commitment (Vice Chair, then Chair, then immediate past Chair, with two years each.) At that point you were the picture of health, and you almost made it through your term as Chair before succumbing to the disease that would take your life in October, 2014.

We miss your presence in the halls...your gentlemanly manners...that tell-tale Massachusetts accent which just wouldn’t go away in spite of many years spent in the Midwest...your preppy button-down shirts...your strong leadership of marketing and initiation of the Show Me LLI programs...your summer tan from vacations in Cape Cod...your delight in playing tennis into your eighties...and most of all, your unflagging enthusiasm for lifelong learning as embodied in the Lifelong Learning Institute at Washington University. We miss you and think of you often. You were indeed a peer among peers!

—Nancy McKee
Past Chair, LLI Executive Committee

Jackie Ess: Volunteer Extraordinaire

From the beginning of LLI Jackie Ess brought experience and energy to planning and implementing effective office systems and procedures that helped everyone “behind the scenes” to function. For years she handled mailings, trained new volunteers and volunteered in the office when needed. Her years of above-and-beyond volunteer service contributed so much to making our first 20 years a success.

Jackie Ess (r) directs Ruby Quarterman at a LLI mailing.
The kid you see in the picture wanted to be a cowboy and a soldier, and actually did just that for part of his young life. Early in his life he lived in Los Alamos because his father worked on the Manhattan Project, our government’s top secret project that developed the atomic bomb that ended World War II in the Pacific.

A few years ago he saw a documentary called “The Day After Trinity” and was amazed to see his mother in the production, dancing with a most unlikely partner, Robert Oppenheimer himself. This was the mother who hated everything about Los Alamos and said so right up to the day she died at the age of 83.

After his family left Los Alamos they moved to Webster Groves where he was allowed to go to public schools after having been an altar boy for seven years in grade school. He and his dad had a singular agreement on this decision, which he took as a stroke of good luck, since they did have some disagreements from time to time.

Not having forgotten about his early dreams of becoming either a cowboy or a soldier, he did actualize the cowboy side of that early idea. His dad sent him to Montana to work on a ranch which belonged to a friend of his. The soldier part of his early dreams came only too soon after Montana. Despite letters written by his priest, his doctor and anyone he could find to write to his draft board, he was drafted for service in Vietnam, where he found himself a Medivac corpsman in the 91st Evacuation Hospital in Tuy Hoa, South Vietnam. He rescued the injured and carried them to medical care under two tents—one for Americans and the other for Vietnamese soldiers. He assisted the two MDs who worked there just like “Hawkeye.” Though they were certified in dermatology (the army did not discriminate when they needed doctors), and perhaps because they were dermatologists, their patients ended their service with finer stitchery than had they been surgically repaired by any other MDs.

When he was sent home with medals he modestly does not want published here, everyone who knew him realized he was doing more than the minimum required—he had many occasions to stop soldiers from bleeding to death or dying from their wounds. And just in case someone attending LLI would need an emergency tracheotomy or to have a gunshot wound treated, we know we have a member here capable of helping out. Though he did perform many on the spot acts of courage to be an aid to someone like “Hawkeye,” he did complain that there was no nurse there like the iconic “Hot Lips.”

After doing his stints as a cowboy and a soldier, this classmate and scholar worked in hospital administration for 30 years, but still looked for another challenge.

(continued on Page 7.)
Having survived Vietnam, he knew he could teach English in a city high school and he did so for seven years with great enjoyment.

Now with his energy still unflagging, he comes to LLI to share his enthusiasm for Shakespeare and other great English writers. He also confesses that he has written his own poetry and was tempted at one time to join the beatnik movement reading poetry to jazz, which at one time took place at the Crystal Palace in Gaslight Square.

Despite the adventures of this cowboy, medic, reluctant soldier, English teacher, and Shakespeare scholar, he has enjoyed a happy family life with four children (one daughter Rosie lives on a boat) and seven grandchildren. Perhaps one of these seven will choose to teach, rope cattle or stitch wounds of injured soldiers, but knowing that we grandparents love to impart stories with even more gusto, it is possible they have already heard some of this narrative spun in ways the bard himself could be proud of.

—Dolores Friesen

(The identity of our mystery person is revealed on Page 8.)

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Literary Highlights at LLI

Congratulations to Liz Zelman whose book Our Beleaguered Species: Beyond Tribalism has been published and will serve as the text for the class she is co-facilitating with Leon McGahee this spring term. Some of the questions she asks in her book are: Can anthropology contribute to problem-solving in today’s world? How can understanding our origins as upright apes help our species to solve its current challenges? Are there grounds for hope for ourselves and Planet Earth? As Homo sapiens, we have the cognitive and emotional capacity to understand our limitations and strengths. Can we, will we tap into our strengths to find pathways forward for our beleaguered species?

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Administrative Assistant Kathy Piry welcomed author Diane Rademacher, who spoke about and signed copies of her book Famous Firsts of St. Louis in November.

Author Helen Schrader signs her book Dancing In the Rain at the Winter Book Sale in December.
Gale Murphy (on the right), who was the driving force behind organizing all the “St. Louis at 250” courses, with guest speakers Peter Koeppel and Shay Shindlee from the East West Gateway Council of Governments, who spoke to the 250 Years of St. Louis History class.

Rev. Starsky Wilson, co-chair of the Ferguson Commission, spoke in the History of African-Americans in St. Louis class and chatted with Dolores Wolff and facilitator Ellen Harris after class.

Barb Ritchey’s grandson, Patrick Farmer, performed in the History of Jazz class.

St. Louis architect Gyo Obata visited the St. Louis Architecture class.

The STEMM Salutes St. Louis class celebrated LLI-style—with a cake.

Gale Murphy (on the right), who was the driving force behind organizing all the “St. Louis at 250” courses, with guest speakers Peter Koeppel and Shay Shindlee from the East West Gateway Council of Governments, who spoke to the 250 Years of St. Louis History class.

Answer to Who Can It Be: Mike Nolan