Changes Come to LLI

Last year, to celebrate LLI’s 20th anniversary, we threw a party at annual meeting time. We all sat down to a multi-course luncheon at the beautiful Knight Center with live jazz playing in the background. It was a day colored by nostalgia as we lauded two decades of LLI success.

This year, though, for our 21st annual meeting, we came back to earth. Led by Karen Sterbenz, chair of the Executive Committee, the meeting featured the usual West Campus setting, a sandwich lunch and many references to the future.

The day’s inherent theme was that change is inevitable in a vital institution like LLI. That idea gained force when Director Katie Compton presented her report. After listing the year’s statistics, she announced a dramatic innovation in services. Soon, she said, online registration would be coming to LLI, most likely for the winter term, although details had yet to be worked out. The day also brought changes in leadership. When the new dean of University College, Mark Rollins, was introduced, he emphasized his commitment to LLI. He explained that University College is at a turning point, with all programs being reviewed as work toward the development of a five-year strategic plan gets underway. Our suggestions and thoughts about the future of LLI and its programs would be welcomed, he said.

When Interim Dean Steve Ehrlich bade us farewell, he commended the diversity in our courses, collaboration and community. He said he had observed first-hand the enthusiasm of facilitators and students, manifested by their challenging ideas, questions and willingness to share with others. He recognized Katie for her creative leadership and her assistant, Kathy Piry, for her dedication, pausing to wish the latter a happy retirement.

After committee reports, the final item was the election of officers. With Karen’s tenure ending, the position of chair passed automatically to Don Cohn, formerly the vice chair. Joan McDonald, formerly secretary, was elected as vice chair and Julian Worland and Charlotte Manges were elected as at-large members.
I am thrilled to be taking over as chair of the Executive Committee of LLI. My predecessor, Karen Sterbenz, has left everything in such excellent shape that all I have to do is follow the course she has set and work with her as she, as past chair, becomes my advisor. I also look forward to working with the new vice-chair of the Executive Committee, Joan McDonald. Joan has served for years as secretary of the Executive Committee and, as a result, has a tremendous store of experience to draw on. She will be heading up the Marketing Committee the next two years.

We also have a new leader of the all-important Curriculum Committee, as Tom Mitchell is retiring from his post as chair. The Curriculum Committee is the real workhorse of LLI, since it is the great diversity of course offerings that makes LLI so attractive to so many people. Tom leaves the committee in great shape with group leaders in all nine of the curriculum interest groups. Our incoming chair of the Curriculum Committee is Dan Ellis. Dan has been a stalwart member of LLI for years and has served on the Executive Committee for the past two years. Dan and the nine interest-group leaders are always looking for facilitators who are willing to organize a course.

Of course, great course offerings only make a difference if we have a great community of learners eager to participate in these courses . . . and we do. My experience in LLI courses has been that the classes are immeasurably enriched by the wealth of knowledge and experience, as well as by the great diversity of viewpoints, that class members bring with them and by their willingness to share these with the rest of the community.

Our director, Katie Compton, manages to keep all the balls in the air with grace and good humor. As you all may know, Kathy Piry, Katie’s assistant in the front office, retired in June. We will miss her efficiency and her cheerful willingness to help get done whatever needs doing, but will be glad to greet her as a fellow peer learner at LLI.

As you may have heard, LLI is going 21st century and we will be registering for classes electronically this winter. As with any new system, there will likely be glitches and a learning period, so please be patient and forgiving as we adapt to this new system. Help in using the new system will be available.

I look forward to working with and for all of you. See you in the fall.

—Don Cohn
Notes from the Director’s Desk

Change is inevitable. We have had our share of transitions this year. We have a new dean at University College, Mark Rollins, and a new administrative assistant at LLI, Denise Zona. We have a new chair of the Executive Committee, Don Cohn, and a new chair of the Curriculum Committee, Dan Ellis. These are all positive examples of change and we welcome these “new” people into our LLI community heartily.

Nevertheless, it was sad to say goodbye this summer to Kathy Piry, who retired, having worked so diligently and good-heartedly for eight years here at LLI. We will all miss her.

We will also miss Barbara Ritchey, who died in June. Barb became the editor of the LLI newsletter in the fall of 2007 and we worked on it together for eight years. Always outspoken and full of fun, Barb exemplified what it means to be a lifelong learner.

Another big transition this year will be the introduction of online registration. The long lines that stretched around the hallway on the first day of registration were not a good thing, so, in an effort to simplify registration, we are finally going online. Yes, this means you will soon be able to enroll from the comfort of your own home and receive immediate confirmation of your classes! If you have ever bought anything online, “shopping” for courses with LLI will be a similar experience. This new system will hopefully be ready to go in time for our Winter Term registration.

In the meantime, please bear with us as we transition to a new system. In an effort to be as fair as possible and to make long registration lines unnecessary, this fall we will have a lottery system for our most popular courses, i.e. The History of France, sections 1 and 2, Politics, Detective Fiction and The Medici. Please read the insert in this mailing carefully!

A special thank you to Rita Eiseman, Nina and Arnie Kaplan, and everyone who has donated books to the “take one” book basket. We love to recycle books! In fact, we love to recycle—so much so that the Lifelong Learning Institute office has been certified a “Silver” office by the Green Offices Program at Washington University in St. Louis. We even have a plaque!

Hats off to … LLI facilitators Marilyn Lipman, who was awarded the Lift for Life Academy’s John Mann Presidential Award for her volunteer work at a ceremony on May 1, 2016, and Rudy Yanuck, who has received recognition for his motivational speaking from Toastmasters International.

—Katie Compton

Photo: Rudy Yanuck with his trophy from Toastmasters International

Now’s Your Chance!

Would you like to see a certain favorite subject listed as a forthcoming course in the LLI syllabus? If so, now’s your chance. The Curriculum Committee is welcoming course topic suggestions. Even better, if you would like to co-facilitate this course, the committee will work to find you a partner with interest/expertise in that area.

As you probably know, the majority of courses offered at LLI are provided by member facilitators who come forward and offer to conduct subjects in which they have background and interest. Occasionally—and only occasionally—I have heard members complain that they have had difficulty in finding a course to take at a given session. Well, now is your chance to come up with alternate course suggestions. All you have to do is notify either Katie Compton (ccompton@wustl.edu) or Dan Ellis, the current chair of the Curriculum Committee (ellis@wulaw.wustl.edu), and they will try to find co-facilitators to help implement your suggested course. Do remember, however, that unlike Oasis and other programs for seniors, LLI does not offer “how to” courses.

—Nancy McKee
IN MEMORIAM
Ruth Donahay
Jo Schnellmann
Edith Binder
Florence Hoey
David Felt
Richard Thomas
Marvin Levin
J. Edmund White
Sandra Esrock
Ben Milder
Jane Weinhaus
Barbara Ritchey
Shirley Basset
Laura Blumenfeld

IN MEMORY OF:
Marvin Levin
  Gladys Barker
Henrietta Freedman
Leatrice Furfine
  Henrietta Freedman
  Larry & Jane Kahn
  Don & Caryl Godiner
  Frieda Kusher
Richard Thomas
  Rick & Terry Bernstein
  Bill Cooper
  Rochelle Popkin
  Fran Gould
  Butch & Karen Sterbenz
Jo Schnellman
  Butch & Karen Sterbenz
  Leonard Adreon
Neil Bernstein
  Marcia Bernstein
Dorcas Case
  Myra Sue Rosenthal
  Butch & Karen Sterbenz
Marilyn Essman
  Marilyn Lipman
Dave Felt
  Butch & Karen Sterbenz
Ruth Donahay
  Butch & Karen Sterbenz
Jed White
  Karen & Butch Sterbenz

Ben Milder
  Gladys Barker
Thelma Edelstein
  Jerry Kottler
Barbara Ritchey
  Joan McDonald
  Peggy Gibstine
  Rae Ellen Tash
  Bob Streett
  George & Dolores Friesen
  Norman Solomon
  Irene Cortinovis
  Dick Hyde
Frieda Goldenhearsch
  Irene Fox

IN HONOR OF:
Phyllis Hyken’s birthday
  Richard & Janet Aach
Karen Sterbenz’s birthday
  Dan & Sondra Ellis
Gladys Barker’s 99th birthday
  Henrietta Freedman
Vivian Zwick’s 99th birthday
  Henrietta Freedman
Sue Wohl’s birthday
  Henrietta Freedman
  Don & Caryl Godiner
  Frieda Kusher
Jim Poag, Anna Amelung and
  Kathy Piry
  Anonymous

ENDOWMENT FUND
  Richard & Margaret Diemer
  Ed Fullerton

SCHOLARSHIP FUND
  Anne Storer Korr
  Marlene Hunter

LAWRENCE JASPER FUND
  Elizabeth Jasper Stewart
  David Jasper
  Kathleen Jasper Cameron

Barbara Ritchey, Longtime Newsletter Editor
For eight years, Barbara Ritchey donated her time, energy and journalistic skills to help make this newsletter a reality. At three issues per year, she spent many hours planning, interviewing, writing, editing and proofing. She said that others could serve as facilitators; she would contribute through her lifelong interest in writing.

When Barbara died on June 5, just short of her 80th birthday, it was a sad loss for LLI. Director Katie Compton commented, “We’ll remember Barb not only for her long, admirable service as newsletter editor, but also for her effervescent personality and willingness to pitch in to help anytime.”

Dolores Friesen, who writes our “Who Can It Be?” feature, shared a close, 60-year friendship with Barbara. Life “bumped” them in the same direction, she said, and in later years that included LLI and working on the newsletter together. “Barb and I took a class on ‘The Universe’ from Bob Cortinovis. We were both comforted to know that all the atoms that make up our bodies came from the stars and that when we go, we return to stardust.”
Kathy Piry Retires in June

During her eight years as assistant to the director, Kathy Piry bustled about the LLI office and halls, cheerfully tackling whatever task came her way. She answered telephone calls and fielded streams of questions. She made copies, ordered supplies, entered data and handled registration and money. More mundanely, she brewed coffee, cleaned up spills and rearranged classroom furniture.

One of Kathy’s distinguishing work traits was the speedy way she moved. Although she did not realize it at the time, her previous job as a Curves exercise coach offered an ideal physical build-up for the myriad steps she would take as she scurried up and down our halls.

But when Kathy retired from LLI in June, she was ready for a change of pace. Her husband, Russell, was already retired. She was looking forward to chucking the alarm clock and enjoying a morning sleep-in. She wanted time to pamper her five-year-old twin grandchildren, to have the pleasure of picking them up after school.

Kathy has not completely abandoned us, however. “The students at LLI set a good retirement example for me,” she stated. And so, shortly before leaving her post, she signed up for a summer course and became an LLI student herself.

Denise Zona Joins the LLI Staff

Denise Zona, the new assistant to the director, came to LLI backed by decades of administrative work. The major chunk of that time was spent at AT&T, from which she retired after almost 30 years. In 2012 she decided to give the academic world a go when she accepted a job in Washington University’s Engineering Department at an institute then known as CAIT. Now called the Technology and Leadership Center, it offers courses for working adult professionals.

Some four years later, Denise has joined the LLI staff and is again working with adult students, only this time they are older and mostly retired. “Kathy Piry’s shoes are big ones to fill,” she said as she began her new duties. But, given time to learn the routine, she’ll soon be as savvy about the LLI scene as was her predecessor.

In her family life, Denise, the mother of two grown sons, became a grandmother in January. It’s a boy, and she would be delighted to tell you about him.

Charles Manley Self-publishes Book of Poetry and Essays

Dear LLI members and friends,

Charles Manley has self-published a book of poetry and essays titled Dogged Doggerel. Many of the poems were written in LLI writing classes. We will give any LLI member or friend a copy in exchange for a minimum $20 donation to LLI. Please contact us if you are interested.

Sincerely,
Charles Manley
Kimberly Perry
314-863-0113
Who Can It Be?

Picture this: It is 1935 and St. Louis finds itself in the depths of the Great Depression. Men with college degrees, even Ph.D.’s, are looking for work. Any work, even back-breaking, 12-dollar-a-week labor loading trucks, is pounced on like a prize. It is a bad time. But here comes our boy, nine years old, two dimes in his pocket for a streetcar ride to a place where he believes he will find a job! You might not perceive his optimistic determination from his baby picture, but it seems to have been written on his face on the day of our story.

Once off the streetcar, our future LLI member marched up the stairs to the second floor of a building on the corner of Grand and Dodier, entering a small reception area. The first thing he spied was the famous logo of a bat with a red bird at each end: he was in heaven, thrilled to be standing in the office of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team. He gathered his resolve. Hadn’t his father told him he had to get a paying summer job to help out the family? Well, what could be more exciting than working for the Cardinals? The unlikelihood of any nine-year-old landing such an enviable a job seems not to have occurred to him, or maybe his determination pushed all doubt aside.

Standing on tiptoes at a small glass window, he rang a bell. Moments later, an adult face peered at him from the window, asking, “Yes???” When the boy stated his purpose, the astonished face replied, “A job?!” Followed by: “Do you have an appointment?” Then, perhaps sensing his seriousness, the face added, “Well, have a seat. Our office manager will be out shortly.”

Gazing at the photographs on the walls, he did sit down, but not for long because a gray-haired lady emerged. She offered her hand. “I’m Mrs. Murphy. What can I do for you?” “I want to work for the Cardinals” said the boy. The woman smiled gently and asked him to explain. He related how his father ordered him to get a paying summer job to help out the family. “I will do anything you want me to do,” he added. That must have been the right thing to say, for Mr. Breadon seemed to recognize the boy’s determination and optimism. He turned to Mrs. Murphy: “I think we can find a place in our organization for this young man.”

Wow, he liked being called “young man,” and from that time on, he thought of himself as a young man with a job. Bursting with excitement, he hurried home to tell his father the good news. But the one thing he had forgotten to ask about was the detail his father was most anxious to hear: How much would he be paid?

And so begins the story of a boy, not yet 10 years old, who landed a job with the Cardinals. His title: office boy. Later, he became an usher and, eventually, head usher. Famous ball players came to know him as the person who could help them with problems they might encounter at Sportsman’s Park. For example, where could Joe DiMaggio go to smoke, away from the impressionable eyes of the kids in the Knothole Gang? One memorable day, Cardinals pitcher Paul Dean took him aside and taught him how to throw a sharp-breaking curve ball. How thrilling it was to have contact with the Cardinal players, including the biggest baseball hero in St. Louis, Stan “The Man” Musial!

Can you guess the identity of our lucky and plucky young man pictured in the above picture?

HINT: You may have heard him read his writings about his war experiences.

–Dolores Friesen

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

At the annual LLI Writers Showcase, 16 participants—two from each writing class—read examples of their poems, essays or fiction. Held on April 29 at The Gatesworth, the event was chaired by Helen Schrader, with Leonard Adreon again serving as M. C. After the program, notable for its fascinating array of subjects and styles, writers and guests were treated to a tasty reception provided by The Gatesworth.

Helen Schrader (right) with LLI writers.

Spring Art Fair

We already knew LLI was full of creative folks, but the second LLI Art Fair offered tangible evidence. On display was an impressive diversity of art, including photographs and watercolors, turned wooden bowls, hand-smocked dresses and quilts. Even the baked goods on the reception table were arranged artistically. Eliot Katz headed the organizing committee for the May 4th event. Committee members included Sally Kopman, Julien Worland and J. C. Hoener.

Jo Ann Leach and Eliot Katz discuss the art on display.

Mark Your Calendars!

LLI Fall Address

Thursday, September 1, 2016
1:00—3:00 p.m

“The End of the Roman Republic: What Happens When Politics Fails”

Prof. Timothy J. Moore
John and Penelope Biggs Distinguished Professor of Classics
and Chair of the WUSTL Classics Department

Wanted! Knitters and Yarn

Did you know that a small group of LLI knitters meets in the West Campus cafeteria (third floor of our building) every Wednesday from noon to 2:00 p.m.? The members knit and crochet children’s scarves for the Harvey Kornblum Food Pantry. If you would like to join this group or create scarves in the comfort of your home, contact Norma Rader at 314-863-1285 for more information. The group is always on the lookout for unused yarn as well—so if you have some at home, please bring it to the LLI office. It will be rapidly reborn as colorful scarves!
NEVER A DULL MOMENT AT LLI

Three members of the New Yorker class turned 90 this year!

2016 Lawrence Jasper Lecture speaker Jim Miller, Senior V.P. for Science and Conservation at the Missouri Botanical Garden, with Charlotte Manges and Jay Cohn.

Dr. Paul A. Cibis, who spoke about medical advances in Macular Degeneration research, with Steve Radinsky.

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis educational tour actors after their performance of A Midsummer Night’s Dream.

Artist Sol Guber discusses his bowl with an admirer.

Former Dean Robert Wittenburg (far right) visited with the “The Creature and the Creator” class at LLI and spoke about Milton’s Paradise Lost.

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