

# This Week at LRI

Fall 2003, Issue 1

Editor: Michael Coyne

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## Events This Week

### Special Events

- **Special Event B, *Be a Mason Mentor***, Wednesday, September 24, 2:00-3:30, Tallwood. Coordinator: Michael Styles.

### Meetings

- Program Committee, Friday, September 26, 10:00, Tallwood.

### Ongoing Events

- Philosophy Book Club, Wednesday, September 24, 2:00, Reston Regional Library. Book: *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge* by Edward O. Wilson.
- Bridge Club, Wednesday, September 24, 1:30, Tallwood.
- New Member Coffee, Friday, September 26, 10:30, Tallwood.
- Classic Fiction Book Club, Friday, September 26, 10:00, Reston Regional Library. Book: Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*.
- LRI Lunch Bunch, Thursday, September 25, 1:30, Jasmine Cafe, Lake Anne, Reston.

## Greetings from LRI's President Bob Bohall

Welcome new and returning members to LRI. On September 22, we proudly start our 13<sup>th</sup> fall term with 57 interesting courses, ten special events and eight ongoing activities. A special hello to 75 new members, those with red dots on their name tags. Join all of us in getting acquainted, meeting great people and making new friends. Members of LRI's Board of Directors wear green tags. They have a special interest in helping with any problems, getting your ideas and suggestions and just learning about your experiences as you settle in for a fun time. Have a great fall term, and enjoy what promises to be a challenging and rewarding semester.

## Events Next Week

### Special Events

- **Special Event C, *Waterford Homes Tour and Crafts Exhibit***, Friday, October 3, 9:00-5:00, Bus pick up at parking lot 8, Fair Oaks Shopping Center.

### Meetings

- Special Events Committee, Wednesday, October 1, 1:30, Tallwood.

### Ongoing Events

- Bridge Club, Wednesday, October 1, 1:30, Tallwood.
- Fiction Writers Group, Wednesday, October 1, 1:30, Tallwood.
- History Club, Wednesday, October 1, 1:30, Tallwood. Topic: *Andrew and Rachel Jackson and the Petticoat Affair*.

## Mason Mentor Special Event

Special Event B this Wednesday, September 24, 2:00-3:30, is designed to introduce LRI members to the new LRI-GMU partnership, *Be a Mason Mentor*. The event is open to all LRI members, whether formally registered or not. This is your opportunity to offer your years of talent and wisdom to aspiring GMU students in need of help and support. See page 20 in the fall catalog for skills you might contribute to GMU students.

## LRI Mentor

Membership Committee member Mary Underwood tells us that there is another mentor program starting in LRI. She says that to encourage active participation by new members, the Committee would like to partner a current member with each new member for their first year. The mentor would help by answering questions about courses and activities and advising on how to get the most out of the LRI experience. If you would like to be this kind of mentor, call Mary at 703-329-8391 or Susanne Zumbro at 703-569-2750.

## Fall for the Book at Tallwood



*LRI member Bob Webb talks with Professor Paul M. Gaston at one of the Fall for the Book events at Tallwood last week.*

This was the first year that LRI was a venue on the Festival's circuit. Professor Gaston discussed his landmark book, *The New South Creed: a Study in Southern Mythmaking*. At the other Tallwood event, GMU faculty members Eric Pankey and Jennifer Atkinson discussed various ways to approach poetry reading.

### Where We Were Then

The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the March on Washington was celebrated on August 28. Your editor thought it might be interesting to see if any LRI members participated in that event. Here are three recollections.

**Lilyan Spero** was a young mother of two daughters. "We were living in Virginia about where we are now—Lilyan said. Abe and I and our two children. Abe called me that morning and said he didn't think I would be able to manage going to the March with two children. I ended up taking both of them and my nephew too. They were all between seven and nine years old.

"I don't remember where we parked. But we did join the March and ended up at the Lincoln Memorial and heard Martin Luther King's speech. Some pictures you see of that speech show a young black child sitting in a tree. We were at the base of that tree. When we were marching, there was a rabbi from Temple Beth El in Alexandria next to us. I thought my family wouldn't worry if they knew we were marching with a rabbi. We were a little worried. Remember all the

rumors that circulated at the time? The bad things people said might happen?

"All the children still remember that day. Not the speech but the people and the walking. My nephew has very conservative parents. But he is more liberal than they are. I like to think my taking him to the March had something to do with that. I knew when I heard Martin Luther King's speech that it would be remembered for a long time."

**Bob Bohall** was also in D.C. that day. Like thousands of other area residents he had to go to work. "I worked at the Department of Agriculture. I came to Washington in '57 as a summer intern. There were still segregated theaters in the District and of course Virginia was still a bastion of segregation at that time.

"I noticed driving to work that day that people seemed more uptight than usual. There were Virginia troopers with rifles on every overpass. But it was the easiest commute I had all summer—20 minutes to drive from Virginia into D.C. as opposed to 45 minutes. But once in D.C., the traffic was like a snow day, with all the parked buses from out of town. Jan was at home with the kids, including a baby less than a month old. I was 28 at the time.

"I went outside at noon to eat my lunch and watch people on Constitution Avenue. The crowds were pretty orderly but I could tell immediately 'This is something special. This is a major deal.' There was no sign of any disorder though. I didn't join the March because I had to go back to work, though I did take a two-hour lunch break that day."

**Your editor**, who was 30 then and still in school, was also there. "I drove into D.C. from Greenbelt, MD, parked the VW bug on Capitol Hill, and walked west to look for the march. Eventually, I noticed a group of people walking down the middle of the street; I stepped off the curb and joined them. We walked for perhaps an hour. Then the crowd broke up and people began to cross the Mall toward a speakers' stand. In a long-regretted misjudgment of the occasion, I decided I didn't want to stick around for a whole afternoon of speeches and went home.

Please tell *This Week* if you have a story to share of those tumultuous years.