

TALLWOOD TIMES



Published quarterly by the Learning in Retirement Institute
at George Mason University
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(703) 503-3384

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APRIL 1998

DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL

Wed., Apr. 1, 1:30, History Club
Fri., Apr. 3, 8:00, Gettysburg Tour*
Fri., Apr. 3, 10:00, Program Committee
Wed., Apr. 8, 1:30, Book Club
Wed., Apr. 15, 2:00, Israel Past & Present*
Fri., Apr. 17, 10:00, Board of Directors
Wed., Apr. 22, 1:00, New-Member Dessert
Wed., Apr. 22, 2:00, Special Events Com.
Fri., Apr. 24, 9:00, Navy Yard Tour*
Wed., Apr. 29, 2:00, Cryptography*

MAY

Fri., May 1, Meet the Nominees Party
Fri., May 1, 10:00, Program Committee
Wed., May 6, 1:30, History Club
Fri., May 8, 8:30, Richmond Tour *
Wed., May 13, 10:00, Book Club
Fri., May 15, 10:00, Board of Directors
Fri., May 15, SPRING TERM ENDS
Mon., May 18, 10:00, ANNUAL MEETING
Wed., May 20, 2:00, Special Events Com.
Fri., May 29, 10:00, Board of Directors
(Election of officers)

JUNE

Mon., Jun. 1, SUMMER TERM STARTS
Wed., Jun. 3, 10:00, History Club
Wed., Jun. 10, 10:00, Book Club
Fri., Jun. 5, 10:00, Program Committee
Fri., Jun. 19, 10:00, Board of Directors
Fri., Jun. 26, SUMMER TERM ENDS

* Special Event. Check your spring course catalog for additional information.

*Catalogs for the summer term will
be mailed the first week in May.
Registration deadline is May 18.*

From Our President

I've been giving thought to my two terms as president of LRI, and I find that all the pieces seem to have fit together and that indeed the last two years have melted away. We are 425 members of the Learning in Retirement Institute at George Mason tucked into a wonderful location. This paragraph would have been all that I needed to say, but.....

Several months ago some of our Reston members came to the Board and asked to have an LRI location in Reston. The Reston membership has done much of the ground work and will continue to be involved in all the plans for a successful new site. Like other LRIs across the country, we need more space and more parking and have had to cap the number of members we can accept, so this opportunity to expand to a new location seems like perfect timing.

The Board is now examining the many details involved in getting a new site established and is also exploring the possibilities of using space in the Reston Community Center. This location is very attractive and has a pool for those of you who are part of the ever-growing community of seniors interested in water aerobics.

Our Program Committee will expand to include LRI members who have a window into the Reston community and can help find teachers for the new site. Much more information will be forthcoming as the plans develop. If you want to help in any way, please contact me.

My term as president is up in May. I want to thank you one and all for your support. I had no reservations in asking for help, and many members had no reservations in giving their time and efforts. As we grow, it becomes more and more important that everyone pitch in. Eight of us just attended a Mid-Atlantic Conference of retirement institutes, and if you don't think that is an active group of volunteers, then you ought to go next year and see for yourself.

Please be sure to mark your calendars for the May 18 annual meeting. This is an important meeting at which we will elect six members to the Board of Directors who will help guide our LRI in the coming years. You will soon receive in the mail the names of nominees and the voting procedures. You'll also get information about a social function on May 1 to meet the nominees. I urge you to attend both this and the annual meeting.

Janice Dewire



LRI —Broadening Horizons Together

EIN Conference in Williamsburg
Our LRI was well represented at the Third Mid-Atlantic Conference of the Elderhostel Institute Network, held from March 15 to 17 in Williamsburg, Va.

Those who appeared on panel discussions were Richard Derringer (Looking After Social Needs), Carol Ferrara (Computer Support: Registration, Database Management, Administration), Beverly George (Encouraging New Leaders), Murray Minster (Developing Good Courses), and Chester Myslicki (Four Faces of Elderhostel). Others who attended were Janice and George Dewire, Jackie Bivens and Kay Mauer.

Everyone thought the conference was an excellent opportunity to network with other LRIs and pick up new ideas to try. Some universal themes were the importance of having a strong bond with our university, space and

parking needs, problems associated with growth, and the search for creative programming.

Two Research Studies at GMU
Those who are taking the spring course "Memory and Cognitive Skills" have learned about two interesting research studies on the effects of aging on cognition and memory that the GMU Psychology Department will conduct. Input from seniors is a vital part of these studies. If you want to learn more about participating in these studies, call the office of Dr. Ralph Barocas (993-1348).

Other Volunteer Opportunities
In the box below is information about volunteering at The Writing Center. LRI members have been volunteering for two other GMU projects. Some helped the Admissions office interview prospective freshmen, an activity that

will continue through April. Other LRI members report they are thoroughly enjoying helping international students develop English conversation capabilities in a program run by the GMU English Language Institute. Each volunteer meets once a week with five or six students for informal conversation. If you are interested in this program, call Kathy Trump's office, 993-3660.

The help that LRI members are giving GMU is much appreciated and provides a worthwhile way to give our support to the university.

Report on Focus Groups
LRI members selected at random took part in two focus groups on February 13 and talked about such topics as the type of courses offered, the fee structure, length of classes, the social functions and special events.

This kind of open discussion is a way for the Board of Directors and committee chairpersons to hear from members in small groups. Some of the suggestions made by the participants are already being inaugurated. The full report on the meetings is attached to the January Minutes of the Board of Directors posted in the social room.

The Board plans to have more focus group meetings in the future. Meanwhile, if you have suggestions of any kind, leave them in the suggestion box in the social room.

Thanked a Teacher Lately?
Those who teach courses or present programs at LRI often say how much they like teaching our age group because we are there to learn and because we can often contribute out of our life experiences. Teachers put in a lot of time preparing for classes but receive no compensation except the appreciation we show, so if you are especially enjoying your classes, take the time to let the teachers know now or at the end of the semester.

Volunteer Tutoring at GMU

By Renee Sagiv, The Writing Center

Are you looking for a way to combine your love of writing with a desire to become more involved in the GMU community? Tutoring at the GMU Writing Center could be the answer. The Writing Center helps students, faculty and alumni develop academic writing skills. Areas of writing include formal papers, résumés and business proposals. The tutoring sessions are 45 minutes and provide one-to-one attention.

One LRI member, Kathryn Russell, has already joined the ranks of tutors. She taught English for 21 years and says, "Tutoring is the fun part without the work, such as grading."

Prospective volunteers should enjoy working with people and have excellent verbal and writing skills. Experience with writing and/or teaching and familiarity with writing terms and conventions—such as thesis statements and MLA documentation—are also important. The ability to speak another language or experience working with non-native speakers is also valuable, though not required.

There's a training program for volunteers, after which they observe sessions conducted by current tutors, receive tutoring themselves, and finally tutor a client under another tutor's observation. They then write a brief report about the experience. Kathryn Russell says she found the training of much value.

If you're interested in volunteering at the Writing Center for a few hours a week, contact Dr. Terry Zawacki at 993-1200 or e-mail her (tzawacki@gmu.edu) to set up an interview.

Board of Directors Actions

Minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors are posted in the social room, and members are encouraged to read them, as well as invited to attend Board meetings. The meetings are usually held at 10 a.m. on the third Friday of each month.

Some highlights from recent meetings:

January:

The Board set a policy requiring teachers' expenditures for courses to have prior approval by the Program Committee chairperson to receive reimbursement.

A motion passed to allow the Poetry Workshop to print 100 copies of its next collection and place them in the social room with a sign asking for donations to offset the cost of printing. (This collection will probably be available in late May.)

February:

The Board agreed that those presenting courses or special events should be told they should not promote their products or services.

A motion passed to require those who make expenditures on behalf of LRI to get prior approval of the Administrator or the appropriate standing committee chairperson.

March:

The Board adopted papers titled "Long-Range Goals" and "Operating Plan for 1998." A highlight of the latter paper was a commitment to seek to establish an additional site at Reston beginning with the fall 1998 term and within the existing framework of the Institute. (Copies of these papers are included with this issue of *Tallwood Times* mailed to LRI members.)

Welcome, New Members!

Dorothy Bressler
Mary Bussey
Janet Carr
Susan Chadwick
Drew Clark
Michael Clifford
Arthur Cook
Shirley Demarest
John DeOrnellas
Robert Foss
Catherine Frisbee
James Galloway

Sally Goldsmith
Ruth Ingberman
Enid Liess
Jerome Liess
John McCoy
Ann Omson
Rosann Paratore
Anne Paton
Robert Senser
Roland Sullivan
Audrey VanVliet
Alice Williams

IMPORTANT REMINDER

If you decide to drop a course, please fill out a Change of Schedule Request form and turn it in at the office. If you want to add a course, check the list in the social room to see whether it still has space, then fill out the Change of Schedule Request form and get it approved by the office. Please do not attend a course or special event unless the office has approved your registration. Forms are available in the social room.

What's on Your Mind?

Share your thoughts about LRI...the courses or special events you've enjoyed, others you'd like to see offered, what you like most about LRI, your suggestions for improvements, etc. Leave items for this feature at the office, marked Tallwood Times.

As co-chairperson of the Program Committee, I want to thank all of you who have helped us with your comments on courses and your suggestions for new courses and teachers. You have made the job of those of us on the committee easier. We are always on the lookout for ways to improve all parts of the LRI program and are already working on the offerings for next fall and even winter.

We look at every idea that comes in and assign someone to pursue it, either for the upcoming terms or for sometime in the future. If you don't find your course suggestion scheduled on the calendar, it may be because we ran into problems getting a teacher who could make the commitment. Or we may have postponed it to avoid a conflict with another course or to achieve a balance of offerings. On rare occasions, we deem an idea to have limited appeal to the membership. But be assured we give all suggestions careful attention, so please keep your ideas flowing to us.

You can give your comments and suggestions to any member of the Program Committee (their names are on the second page of the Directory) or leave them in my file in the office.

Jackie Bivens, Co-Chair, Program Committee

ANNUAL LRI MEETING

Monday, May 18, 1998
10:00 a.m.

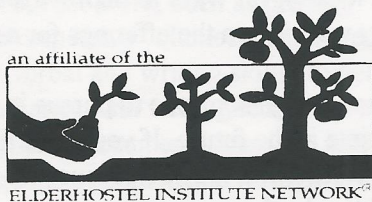
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
8922 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax
(near the fire station across from Guinea Rd.)

Election of six Board of Directors members...
Report on the past year and plans for the future...
Refreshments and entertainment

LEARNING IN RETIREMENT INSTITUTE
George Mason University
4210 Roberts Road
Fairfax, VA 22032-1028

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LEARNING IN RETIREMENT INSTITUTE LONG-RANGE GOALS

Objective

The Board of Directors believes that it should adopt long-range goals to deal with the several constraints involved in the program and operations of LRI at the Tallwood site within an environment of controlled growth. These goals are intended to provide guideposts so that the Board, its standing committees and Administration can on an annual basis develop specific actions designed to meet the purpose of the long-range goals. To this end, the Board will during the early part of each calendar year, beginning in 1998, adopt a specific operational plan, consistent with the spirit of the goals, for implementation in the upcoming academic term (fall through summer), taking into account operating experience at each prior level of growth.

Long-Range Goals

Space

1. LRI should seek GMU's approval to acquire part or all of the main building on the Tallwood site for use as office and storage space and for small classes requiring the use of specialized equipment, such as computers, sketching and painting tables.
2. The social room should then be expanded to include the existing office.
3. Courses should be scheduled, as far as possible, to avoid saturating the parking facilities. If the total number of registrants per period nevertheless exceeds the maximum parking capacity, a per-period registration limit should be imposed.
4. Bathroom facilities in the main building and annex should be improved to allow greater usage. If this is not possible or sufficient, an outdoor facility should be rented.

Membership Limitation and Program

5. Because LRI cannot accommodate more than a maximum of about 700 members at Tallwood, membership should not be allowed to grow beyond this approximate number, unless other sites or solutions to the space constraints are found, such as moving to a new site, a satellite site or sites or a different arrangement of terms throughout the year.
6. The goal is established to increase the membership limit each year and to provide the necessary number of courses and take such other steps as may be necessary to meet these levels of membership.

Administration

7. Additional paid administrative help will be required at increased levels of membership, not only to handle increased administrative tasks but also to support program development. Consideration should be given to all options, including hiring a full-time executive director (with a half-time or full-time assistant), hiring a secretary or administrative assistant, and increasing the use of trained volunteers.

Finances

8. The need for additional paid help will increase costs above projected income at current dues level. To accommodate to this factor, the Board should develop a long-term (five or six years) provisional budget that:
- a. Estimates future costs based on the need for additional paid help and other increased costs.
 - b. Provides that, as a long-term standard, projected year-end cash and near-cash reserves should equal approximately one-half of estimated annual costs.
 - c. Allows annual deficits (the excess of annual costs over current income) to be financed by a combination of reducing reserves below the above standard for a temporary period and increasing dues when necessary to maintain that standard on a long-term basis.

Planning Committee

9. A Planning Committee is hereby established, responsible for submitting proposed operating plans each to the Board and for other planning purposes. The committee will be a standing committee and will be chaired by the president.

[Approved by Board of Directors, March 20, 1998]

LEARNING IN RETIREMENT INSTITUTE OPERATING PLAN FOR 1998 ACADEMIC YEAR

Space

1. LRI will seek GMU's approval to include part or all of the Tallwood main building in its rent agreement for use as office and storage space and for small classes requiring the use of specialized equipment, such as computers, sketching and painting tables.
2. Assuming GMU allows LRI to occupy part or all of the Tallwood main building, the social room will be expanded to include the existing office, either by removing the dividing wall or, if the wall is structural, constructing a suitable inside passage between the two rooms.
3. If feasible and if at reasonable cost, bathroom facilities in the Tallwood main building and annex will be improved to allow greater usage.
4. Courses will be scheduled, as far as possible, to avoid saturating the parking facilities at Tallwood. If the total number of registrants per period nevertheless exceeds maximum parking capacity, a per-period registration limit will be imposed.
5. LRI will seek to establish an additional site at Reston, beginning fall 1998, within the existing framework of the Institute and hereby authorizes the President to negotiate the particulars of such an establishment.

Membership Limitation

6. The membership limitation will be increased to 440 for fall 1998 through summer 1999.

Program

7. The Program Committee will provide a minimum of 33 courses per week for fall 1998 and spring 1999 and 30 for winter 1999.
8. Courses and special events will not be scheduled during the first two Wednesday afternoons of each month, leaving these times free for clubs.

Administration

9. Consideration will be given to hiring additional help in light of the need to administer the additional site at Reston. A concerted effort will be made to train a cadre of volunteers to be available in the outer office in its new quarters in the Tallwood Main building during all hours that LRI is open to handle member queries, leaving the Administrator and Deputy free from such responsibilities as much as possible.

Finances

10. The dues level will remain at \$200 through summer 1999.

[Approved by Board of Directors, March 20, 1998]