

Learning in Retirement



University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
Office of Continuing Education & Extension

Fall 2011 Newsletter



STEERING COMMITTEE

 <p>Mary Bayorgeon President mbayorgeon@msn.com 920/739-4591</p>	 <p>Bill Mattes Past President wmattes@new.rr.com 920/725-5759</p>	<p>PHOTOGRAPH UNAVAILABLE</p> <p>Dr. William Weber Vice President email address unavailable 920/231-9125</p>
 <p>Kathy Mahoney Secretary pmahoney@new.rr.com 920/470-6250</p>	 <p>Eileen Leinweber Treasurer eleinweb@centurytel.net 920/589-3731</p>	<p>PHOTOGRAPH UNAVAILABLE</p> <p>Paul Janty Curriculum email address unavailable 920/426-0245</p>
 <p>Doug Jirovetz Membership/Promotion mjirovetz@new.rr.com 920/231-0932</p>	 <p>Kathi Sawall Administration/Finance katcall@charter.net 920/231-4153</p>	<p>Contact us by e-mail at LIR@uwosh.edu</p>
 <p>Brianna Obright University Liaison obrightb@uwosh.edu 920/424-1129</p>	 <p>Judy Lloyd University Liaison lloydju@uwosh.edu 920/424-1129</p>	<p>Visit our website at www.uwosh.edu/lir</p>

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Greetings, fellow lovers of lifelong learning!

As I assume the position as your president for the coming year, I would like to acknowledge all past presidents who have provided the leadership to keep LIR such a dynamic, stimulating organization for the past 13 years.

Thanks to Burns Apfeld, Pat Koll, Tim Moe, Bill Mattes, Noreen Johnson and Doug Jirovetz for guiding LIR and setting high standards for senior continuing education. Burns and Bill even served as president twice! With the help of our talented Steering Committee, I hope to carry on the tradition.

As you can see, the newsletter has been redesigned. When our beloved Dick Branigan was unable to continue as course catalogue and newsletter editor, the Steering Committee asked me to chair a committee to evaluate the purpose, frequency and content of these publications. Dick provided advice and counsel, as he was able. The result is several new features in the newsletter, as well as continuation of an old favorite.

We have discontinued the regular columns by committee chairs. The columns became very repetitive and a challenge for committee chairs to write from a fresh viewpoint. You will, however, continue to see the popular "Member Profile" by Marlene Herzing.

New features in this issue include informative articles like the ones regarding the Titan card and the new on-campus parking program.

Also in this issue, you will find contributions from some of our creative members. In the future, we hope to publish more original poetry, short prose pieces and artwork by LIR members. If you are a writer or artist and would like to see your work in print, please send your submissions to the LIR office for consideration.

Look for more smiling faces of your LIR friends, as we plan to include more photos of members at LIR programs and events. Members are invited to write brief reviews of tours or programs they attended. Forms for this purpose will be available from tour and program coordinators.

Our LIR group will be hosting the statewide WALL (Wisconsin Association of Lifelong Learning) Conference in the fall of 2012. This will be a chance for us to showcase not only our organization, but also other interesting unique attractions in the Oshkosh area. Newsletter articles will keep you up-to-date on plans for this special event.

Finally, a special thank you to Jane Cryan, who served as interim editor of the fall course catalogue and this newsletter, for the attractive new looks she has given to both publications. Jane is unable to continue as editor due to other community commitments. We will use a "publication team" to produce the course catalogue, but need someone to take over as editor of the newsletter, beginning with the spring issue. If you are interested, please contact me.

Let's all work together to make the 2011/12 program year a fun and fulfilling year of lifelong learning!

Mary Bayorgeon



THANK YOU!

by Miriam Hasse

LIR is a wonderful organization, and I have enjoyed and appreciated its opportunities since shortly after its inception. Countless hours have been given by volunteers as they have met, planned and carried out a curriculum involving excellent, challenging talks and tours.

I couldn't have been more surprised and honored when I received the volunteer honor award last June. My invested time is minimal compared to so many others, and with the cooperation of Nathalie Moore it's been a pleasure to produce newspaper releases supporting this unique group.

To all of you I send best wishes and a huge thank you!



MEMBER PROFILE

by Marlene Herzing



Marge Leffin

Love of books and love of learning are a natural fit, so it is not surprising that the planning committee for Learning in Retirement included several librarians. Marge Leffin was one of those librarians who put in long hours to create the structure and set up the by-laws. Then, when the organization was up and running, she served on the membership committee for a number of years.

Marge has always been an active gal. Growing up in the western part of the state, she had many opportunities for skiing, hiking, and tobogganing in the scenic bluffs area. Summers were spent on her grandparent's fruit farm where she and her brother picked strawberries and raspberries to earn spending money. "We were probably paid no more than five cents a box," she recalls, but that was the going rate. She also notes that her grandmother trusted them to do the job thoroughly so no berries were left unpicked even though she and her brother were very young.

The family's move to Madison when Marge was a high school sophomore required a bit of an adjustment. Madison East high school was almost as large as the entire village of La Crescent, Minnesota where her family had been living. After high school, Marge enrolled at Whitewater State College where she graduated with a degree in elementary education in 1956. Her first teaching job was in Racine, but she also taught in Brown Deer, Janesville, and Madison.

Marge met her husband Bill while at Whitewater, and they married in 1957. Eventually they had two children, but early married life was spent as graduate students when Bill changed his major to art and they decided to stay in Wisconsin while he finished his Ph.D. Marge did substitute teaching in Madison during that time. In 1966 they made Oshkosh their home when Bill joined the Art Department faculty at UW-O.

Early on, Marge and Bill decided not to put off travel until retirement. Bill often led student trips to Europe, and Marge and the children were able to go along for a reasonable fee. When son John was in high school and Lisa in grade school, the family packed up and made their first jaunt to Europe to join Bill on the student tour. Sixteen days in Scandinavia was an adventurous undertaking for the family whose biggest trip prior to that time had been to Wisconsin Dells.

Shepherding college students through Europe presented real challenges such as making sure they were all on the right train at the right time, dealing with the occasional lost passport, and making sure luggage travelled along (this was the era before wheeled suitcases). But the travel had its own rewards in adventures, such as celebrating New Year's Eve in Trafalgar Square.

Not all travel involved shepherding students. There were car trips to Yellowstone and negotiating the back roads of Montana to visit friends who had moved there. Bill and Marge celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary with a trip to Hawaii. Marge has continued to travel since Bill's death, traveling to Northern Italy, Austria, and Switzerland. She has also tried ocean cruises, but has a preference for river boats. A proud grandmother, Marge is kept busy keeping track of her four grandchildren who range in age from college graduate to elementary school.

Not one to sit still for long, volunteer work keeps Marge busy when she is not traveling. Among other work, she has spent time as a hospice volunteer because she felt the need to give back the comforting care extended to her and the family during Bill's last illness.

Marge worked as a school media specialist in the Oshkosh Public schools for 20 years, and she keeps up her interest in the field by running her church library and volunteering at the hospital library. Marge felt her retirement in 1995 came at a good time as the world of libraries was becoming more and more technical. While seeing e-books as filling a niche, Marge admits she does not want to see traditional books disappear.

Stretching through all her experiences is Marge Leffin's love of learning and people. Like so many in LIR, Marge has bent her energy and time toward creating a culture in which sharing experiences and discovering new things keep her youthful and involved.

Plan Ahead for The 2012 WALL Conference

by Eileen Leinweber
Chairperson WALL Conference Committee

The 2012 WALL (Wisconsin Association of Lifelong Learning), to be held in October, will be hosted by the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's Learning in Retirement.

The conference includes two half day Friday afternoon and Saturday morning sessions. These meetings include breakouts and presentations on various subjects related to running a successful LIR organization. There will be two guest speakers: Vice Chancellor Karen Heikle will speak at the Friday luncheon on the current and future trends of continuing education for older adults and Dr. Steven Kircher, professor of History and American Studies, will deliver a talk on Saturday morning entitled "The Sixties, History & Memories."

Friday evening the group will enjoy a fish fry seafood buffet with a cash bar at the Oshkosh Country Club.

Saturday afternoon after the conference ends there will be an optional guided group tour to be determined with lunch at Bevenitos.

Hotel accommodations with a group rate are available for out of town members at Hawthorne Suites for \$70 per night. Due to campus and highway construction, bus transportation will be provided from the hotel parking lot to and from the conference site, dinner Friday night and the Saturday lunch and tour.

Brochures describing the event will be included in member's July 2012 renewal packages. Committee members as well as prospective committee members would find the conference informative.



PROGRAM & TOUR REVIEW

May 25, 2011 Madison Tour
of Lake Monona & the Chazen Museum

Submitted by Pat Worden:

- ✓ The weather did not cooperate and it did not seem to matter one bit. Great congenial crowd willing to make the best of whatever happens. Ready to try again another day.

Submitted by Marion Chadbourne

- ✓ Everyone was enthused and enjoyed the day. It should be repeated.

Submitted by Nathalie Moore:

- ✓ The tour to Madison for the Lake Monona Boat Cruise, Lunch and Chazen Museum was another feather in the LIR cap. Even though the weather didn't cooperate, as a group we decided to do the boat cruise another time and go directly to Mariner's Inn for lunch. We were a bit early but what a great opportunity it was to relax and just sit and visit with a table of friends and acquaintances. The reception by the staff was so warm and inviting one couldn't help but enjoy. A delightful added attraction was the unexpected noontime display of the geese and their goslings, also having their lunch. Then on to the Chazen where we had a most knowledgeable guide. For one like me who has little knowledge or appreciation of art, she was most informative and entertaining. Learning can be so much fun! What a wonderful way to spend a rainy day!

Good News for LIR Parking on Campus

by Doug Jirovetz

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Parking Office and Learning in Retirement have agreed to a two year contract for LIR parking on campus. With one exception - LIR members will not pay for parking permits but there is a trade off: Some LIR members will receive more than one permit and must use the correct permit for parking when on campus.

Four types of permits are available and three of them are free to members. They are as follows:

One. Former employees of the University may receive an emeritus parking permit when they retire. This permit will continue to be used for campus parking.

Two. Members of LIR committees meeting on campus will receive a parking permit for the committee meetings each semester. All meeting dates will be listed on the parking permit which will be distributed on a timely basis.

Three. LIR members who register for courses on campus will receive a parking permit for each course. Program dates will be listed on the parking permits which will be distributed on a timely basis.

Four. LIR members may choose to purchase the full year parking permit currently in use at a cost of \$15. This is the one exception when the parking permit must be purchased. Members may purchase this permit directly from the Parking Office using their LIR name tag as proof of membership. After purchasing the permit, members should notify the LIR Office that they have done so.



GET THE NEW TITANCARD

by Bill Bollom

At the LIR picnic, I misspoke on the use of the NEW TITANCARD for parking on campus. LIR registrants for each campus course will receive, in the mail, a parking permit for that course from Judy Lloyd's office.

LIR members who possess the NEW TITANCARD may ride Oshkosh Transit System's (OTS) buses at no charge. This includes free rides on route #10 service to Neenah. OTS route #6 travels through the UW-O campus on Algoma Boulevard and High Avenue every 30 minutes. On High Avenue the route links campus with our downtown transfer center within minutes, which enables access to all other areas of the city accessible by bus route: shopping centers, grocery stores, community parks, medical facilities, etc.

LIR members who possess a NEW TITANCARD have library privileges at no charge. You can check out up to 20 books and have in library use of videotapes and periodicals. Also, you can use the four computers on the second floor of Polk Library.

If you currently have an old TITANCARD, you need to get a NEW one. Call Titan Central at Reeve Union -- (920) 424-1234 -- to make an appointment for your picture. Tell them you are a LIR member. There is no charge.

If this is your first TITANCARD, bring a valid government issued photo ID (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to receive a NEW TITANCARD. The cost is \$10. If you lose your TITANCARD, the replacement card fee is \$20.

Some LIR members have received discounts for athletic events, plays and music events in the past. Your LIR TITANCARD is a special card (ID numbers from a separate data base) and does not allow for these discounts. The young ticket sellers

perhaps thought LIR members were just a tad older regular student.



JOY OF AGING

by Bill Bollom

I look at old pictures of me and my bride at cocktail parties. It looks like I'm with a gorgeous high-priced hooker. Our pictures are very different now, but I know we are still hot. And, since I've turned grey, I've become more distinguished and my wrinkles give me facial character.

After I reached 70, I was pretty much deaf in one ear and the other was not good. But my hearing loss has not been all bad. When I go fishing and hunting with a bunch of guys and we all stay in one small cabin, I can sleep on my "good" ear and I can't hear snoring, etc. Times like those, I wish that I'd lost my sense of smell too.

Sure, I can't play most sports any longer but, with my two new hips, I'm a better golfer now than I was 50 years ago. Of course, I didn't have to improve all that much.

I no longer have random access memory. Often I have to run through the alphabet to come up with the right name. But my brain is still a steel trap. There is just so much important stuff in there. It's overflowing; there is no room for trivial baloney. Actually, I feel I'm getting better with age - like an aging Bordeaux - I'm smarter now than I ever was. And old people like me are no longer callow. We are temperate, more rational, more tolerant, more skilled at social interactions and more dignified in our demeanor. We old people have mellowed out. We do not easily get disgusted or angry. We have more important things to do.

Until I retired over ten years ago, I always was trying to catch up and never quite making it. Now I'm ahead of the curve. I get up every morning and

work on things that matter to me. If an activity doesn't fit into my dreams, my work, my body, my world, I say no. It's an easy decision for me because I have the benefit of all my experiences, bad choices, time-consuming detours, regrets, and a handful of treasured successes and joys. Sometimes my no's bother my bride, but she has her methods of retaliation.

It's strange how even the smallest things make me happy: an old movie, an oak fire in my fireplace, a dry gin martini, writing a clever essay or a Friday night fish fry. I agree with Aristotle. He believed happiness involves progress, it involves improving our skills, getting better at what we do well, learning through experience and gaining wisdom. Happiness is the primary joy of aging. I'm old and I'm a happy person. I was lucky to be conceived. I won the huge genetic lottery, and I'm still kicking.

I hope you, too, can find Aristotle's "joy of aging."



A Trio from The Pen of DON BURDICK

A few words about flash fiction: a flash fiction story is very brief and consists of 50 to 500 words. Many writers of the form view 500 words as a copout. The ending should be unexpected, a surprise. The story can be any genre: romance, mystery, occult, horror or humor. Some of O. Henry's stories are flash fiction.

The form was once known as the short-short story. The term "flash" is a bit more colorful and more descriptive of the form, a flash being very sudden, very brief with a surprise cap of "thunder" at the end.

Flash fiction is a challenge to write in which the writer attempts to combine brevity with surprise and continuity of theme which becomes akin to solving a puzzle.

I hope you enjoy reading the following three examples of flash fiction which I have written.

Walking the Dog

I am a creature of habit. I live with my Scottie, Lockie, who gets walked every evening at seven. We do the same route through the university campus which is just across the street from my house.

Lockie, when the appropriate time comes, grips his leash in his jaws and trots to my lounge chair where I have been viewing PBS-TV. I rise, clip the leash to his collar, grab my keys from a rack in the kitchen, and a blue plastic bag from a drawer. We then step onto the porch, I lock the door, and we proceed down the steps toward the campus.

Our itinerary is always the same. It provides a sense of familiarity, security and, thus, comfort. Lockie does his business at the same spot during each stroll. The people we encounter, students or professors coming from or going to a class, custodians ambling from one building to another with their pushcarts, pass us with a certain consistent ritual. My greeting is always the same, a smile followed by a hello. Theirs may vary, a nod or smile, a look away or down or at me, a "hi" or "hello" or "how goes it?"

Properly trained Lockie never barks.

The last consistent pattern of the evening, already growing dim in the fading light, is the appearance of a distant black dot adjacent to an oblong, black shape advancing at a set pace towards us. As these forms approach, their shape becomes more distinct.

I already know who they are as the pattern has been repeated so often for months now. A man in a black coat and a brimmed hat shadowing his gaunt face strolls closer with his black lab. Lockie's pointed ears perk up and I, as always, smile and

say hello. The gaunt faced man simply returns my greeting with a nod and keeps his eyes focused ahead while the lab struts by with his tongue lolling at the side of his muzzle.

Tonight the pattern seems about to repeat itself as Lockie and I pass. We take perhaps six to eight steps forward when we hear a soft, deep-throated menacing growl. It raises the hair on the back of my neck and I turn slowly toward two dark figures standing under a now lighted street lamp. Shadows stretch distortedly across the pavement toward us. The postures of the man and dog have not changed, but the man's eyes glisten fiercely under the shadow of his hat. Lockie, trembling, crouches down and hugs the pavement as he emits a high pitched whine.

And suddenly, with a gasp, I realize that it was not the lab who had growled!

The Redoubtable Rhinoceros

Did you know that the African white rhinoceros is the second largest mammal in the World? The elephant is at the top! No one has to prove that fact to me for I once had a direct encounter with a white rhino some years ago that nearly swept me off my feet. Yes, truly, swept me away.

The rhino I saw was a magnificent beast, overwhelming in my estimation. He stood about twenty feet from me in the hot summer sun. His gray armored body (not white) stood six feet tall and nine feet long. As he stood alone, his large hooves pawing the dust, one could feel a light tremor ripple through the earth. I stood quietly, my breath shallow so as not to disturb him. I was told rhinos have acute hearing, and the slightest annoyance will cause them to charge.

The beast bowed his long pig-like head toward the dry grass in front of him. His curved horn rose upward toward the hazy sky as his muzzle tore at the dry fodder. Occasionally his lips puffed out as he snorted with quick popping sounds. Horse flies

buzzed around him, but his small pig ears and his short thin tail had little effect on his great hulk of a body. Someone once told me the hippo was related to the horse in spite of his pig-like visage. I've also been told that rhinos were an endangered species. Where rhinos had numbered over a million on the plains of Africa and Asia, they now sadly had dwindled to the thousands.

Suddenly, the desert horse lifted his head, pawed the earth and then with his great flat hooves stomped side to side turning away, his huge rounded rump directed toward me. He trembled, the great plates of thick skin quivering against each other. My breath stopped as a deep, bass sound growled out from his rear. The force of the eruption hit the dusty earth hard even before the rumble stopped. The air began to billow upward a good ten feet, and then to slowly roll toward me and the others standing beside me.

I glanced quickly toward them, but they stood transfixed by the sight. The closer the dust approached, gaining momentum as it rolled towards us, the more helpless we became. Small children began to wail as mothers and fathers clutched them to their chests. The dust cloud strained through the cyclone fence and mingled in amongst the viewers, blowing their hair and ruffling their clothes. Eyes squinted and lips remained clamped as the wind swept swiftly past. Some of us began to cough and some of us moaned as the fetid air swept past us. We scattered every which direction we could to remove ourselves from the dust and stench.

I swore that day at Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago that every smell that had ever swept across the continent of Africa was contained within that cloud!



A Whistle in the Dark

Once in the silence of the night there was no street traffic, no wind, no sound of a refrigerator humming, no radio quietly talking.

I lay awake in the small bedroom off the kitchen. The only sound I heard was the soft release of my brother's breathing. Then from a great distance a sound stabbed through night, an arched sad whistle, a train whistle wailing as if it were a premonition of sadness. My breath caught and I felt a lump in my throat that I had felt so often in the middle of a night. My brother also held his breath, aware in the deep recesses of his mind that the sound had penetrated the silence. I released my breath, but my brother did not.

"Ed?" I whispered. No response. The train's wail penetrated the night once again as it faded into the distance. Air rushed deeply into my brother's lungs, followed by another rapid gasp. Then blending into a natural, relaxed rhythm I, a four year-old boy, lay stiffly in a bed across from my ten year-old brother who was sleeping in a bed against the opposite wall. I listened from under the covers as his breathing continued.

Eventually I drifted into sleep; but the memory of that night remained buried within me.

When I was twenty-seven and my brother thirty-three with a wife and three small boys, I stood beside another bed, a hospital bed in which Ed lay dying from kidney failure. He breathed heavily in the middle of that night. The hospital corridor was silent. My sister-in-law sat quietly on a wooden chair, slumped in weariness from the long watch over her husband.

My brother opened his eyes, looking at me but not seeing me. "I wish God would take me," Ed whispered. My sister-in-law rose quickly and stood on the other side of the bed. Ed held his breath for a moment and then a long sigh escaped from between his dry lips and then no breath followed.

I stiffened, unexpectedly anticipating the distant wail of a train whistle. But the only sound I heard was from a deep-seated memory. The apprehension so long associated with that long-ago wail escaped from me like a deep sigh. My brother was gone.



**Ode to A Dead Crow
on Algoma Boulevard
in Oshkosh, Wisconsin**

by
Jane Cryan

I heard you outside my third floor window
one sweltery August afternoon
you handsome big black bird
cawing and swooping in the clear blue sky

I watched as up and down you went
diving and buzzing so enticingly
you were soon joined
by five curious kin

Your fellows swooped wide and big
but you preferred making tight little circles
as you pointed yourself closer and closer
to the asphalt below

I saw you make a dive to capture
whatever it was on the pavement
the soon to be fated thing of your desire
that held your attention
I saw the rolling hunk of metal pass over you
leaving your big black bird self
stone still on the mean hot ground

Suddenly the quintet of your brothers
flew high above you and
one by one they dropped to earth
and formed a circle around you

Waaa waaa waaa your friends moaned
their heads bobbed up and down
and it wasn't long before a half dozen

more big black birds joined
the swaying bobbing chanting band

Soon the feathered ring of wailing sadness
became such a force
oncoming metal had to veer off around you
as waaa waaa waaa your friends cried
until after a while one by one
seeing that your spirit had left the ground
they all flew away.

No. 199

from *The Collected Poems of Jane Cryan* ©
copyright 2010



In Memoriam

*"I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds in
circling flight. I am the soft stars that shine at
night. Do not stand at my grave and cry. I
am not there. I did not die." Anon.*

**Richard Branigan
Kate Dustrude
Kermit Johnson
Jean Nelson**

PHOTO GALLERY

Annual Meeting June 9, 2011



Eileen Leinweber receiving the "E. Burns Apfeld LIR Volunteer of the Year Award" from President Bill Mattes at the Annual Meeting



Christine Gantner accepting the "Robert L. Berner Teaching Excellence Award" on behalf of Jean Nelson.



Miriam Hasse receiving the "E. Burns Apfeld LIR Volunteer of the Year Award" from President Bill Mattes at the Annual Meeting



Left to right: Kathy Inman, Pat Worden, Elizabeth Pitz



Left to right: Connie Berner, Ardyce Zillges, Tom Leinweber & Eileen Leinweber

Lake Monona-Chazen Museum Tour
May 25, 2011



Left, front to back: Lois Hedge, Joanne Meier
& Nikki Hoerig
Right, front to back: Barbara Goldthwaite,
Jane Cryan, Jane Harmon & Sara Holm

Menominee Park Picnic
August 17, 2011



Back to front: Ardyce Zillges, Kathy Inman,
Paul Inman & Don Burdick

Timber Rattlers Game
July 14, 2011



Phyllis and Jerry Draws



Back to front: Miriam Hasse, Sally Gloyd
& Sally Tusken



Left to right: John Procknow, Noreen
Johnson, Barry Johnson & Marion
Chadbourne