



# Five College Learning In Retirement

Peer-led Life Long Learning in the Pioneer Valley

Amherst College - Smith College - Hampshire College - UMASS Amherst - Mount Holyoke College

## October Newsletter

*Inside this issue: Seeking art submissions for spring catalogue cover, Outreach Committee ready with new ideas, Moderators don't have to be experts, Encore presentations start in two weeks, and President's letter.*

### Calling All LIR Artists

We are looking for submissions for the cover of the spring LIR catalog.

Please submit your creations in PDF or TIF format. Include your name, title, date, medium, and dimensions. Submissions will be accepted at [fcilir@fivecolleges.edu](mailto:fcilir@fivecolleges.edu). **Submission deadline is Friday, October 21.** LIR members Nancy Denig, Ellen Kosmer, and Betsy Siersma will select an image from submissions.

If you have questions, ask Betsy at [siersma@umass.edu](mailto:siersma@umass.edu) or 413-584-7073.

### New Outreach Committee Needs Help to Boost LIR Membership 'A Solid Membership Is Vital to our Financial Health'

We'd like to make an appeal right now to the LIR membership for volunteers to join the Outreach/Communications Committee. The purpose of this key committee is two-fold: to maintain relations with current members to keep them engaged and to recruit new members to LIR.

Our current membership is in the 230 range, which is a slight dip from last year. I'm sure you're aware that a solid membership is vital to our financial health. Over the past few years, Covid has taken a toll in maintaining a fully functioning Outreach Committee. However, right now there are several of us who are committed to turning things around by reestablishing our speaker's bureau, which means personal appearances to the retirement communities — such as Applewood, Lathrop, and Loomis — and expanding our presence in local libraries, senior centers, and other likely venues. Also, we intend to broaden our media outreach, utilizing TV, radio, and print (op ed articles) to broadcast our existence.

With a potential new name, catalog, and website, LIR is gathering momentum toward continued success. Now we could use your help by joining our Outreach/Communications Committee. We need a few more members to really get things going. It would just require a few hours a month. Please contact Kevin Foley at [Kefoley@mac.com](mailto:Kefoley@mac.com) or Dick Stonberg at [dickstonberg@gmail.com](mailto:dickstonberg@gmail.com).

Thank you,  
Dick Stonberg

### With Peer-Lead Learning, Moderators Don't Have to Be Experts

Jessie Tropp admitted during last fall's Zoom preview that she knew nothing about plastics, and

yet it was the topic of the seminar she would be moderating. “Something sparks my interest,” something she wants to learn more about, she said recently. Continuing her tradition, she is currently moderating a seminar on idioms and has submitted a proposal for the spring on all the aspects of color.

While she has to do research to come up with topics and resources, Jessie pointed out that it’s very easy on the Internet to find articles and websites. Moreover, it’s fun, she said.

Since Jessie didn’t know what was expected for her first proposal, on textiles, she submitted a pre-proposal to get guidance and “some handholding.”

The Curriculum Committee is happy to provide that help. New moderators are always needed to round out the 20-plus seminars LIR offers every spring and fall. A member of the committee serves as liaison for each moderator, offering suggestions to clarify a proposal or, for example, give it more focus.

As of mid-September, the committee has received 13 seminar proposals. Hoping to receive another 10 or more, by the deadline of October 16, Co-chairs Jake Greenburg and Tom Jones urge anyone with an idea to get in touch. It’s important for members to realize “they’re not teaching, but facilitating. So any topic is on the board,” Jake said.

It isn’t just moderators like Jessie who learn in the process. Tom said moderators all say, “I learned a lot from the participants,” even “the so-called experts.”

Several experienced moderators have teamed up with newcomers to help them learn the ropes. Jake has another suggestion to give new moderators more confidence as they embark on facilitating for the first time: pair them up with a mentor. That person wouldn’t join the weekly classes but check in with the moderator and be available to answer questions.

Jake, Tom, and the Curriculum Committee are looking forward to helping members make a good idea into a successful seminar.

Margaret Russell

## **Call for an Encore**

Members have an opportunity to hear some of the best presentations of the spring semester, recommended by the moderators and selected by the Encore Committee. The presentations will be on Zoom; an email announcing registration will be sent out before the first session. Registration will also be posted on the LIR website. All of the Encore presentations are offered on Fridays.

### **October 14**

10 am. Chuck Aulino, George Thomas — the Greatest General of the Civil War?, presented in the Civil War Revisited seminar

11 am. Sherry Wilson, Princess Alice: Guttersnipe to Living Legend, in Roosevelt’s Inner Circle

### **October 21**

10 am. Rachel Borson, Ashkenazi Jewish Cooking, Food Matters

11 am. Julie Schlack, Diane di Prima: the Invisible ‘Beat,’ in The Beat Generation

### **October 28**

10 am. Jim Lee, The US and the International Slave Trade, in Rethinking American History

11 am. Jessie Tropp, The History of Plastics, from Miracle to Menace, in Plastics

**November 4**

10 am. Nancy Eddy, Harry Hopkins: FCR's Confidant and Implementer, in Roosevelt's Inner Circle

11 am. Elisa Campbell, East Broad Top Railroad, in Museums: A World of Wonders

**November 11**

10 am. Jamie Elkin, Geometric Art in the Arab World, in Golden Age of Arabs

11 am. Diana Liebert, The Shelburne Museum, in Museums: A World of Wonders

**November 18**

10 am. Richard Nicholl, Growing Up in the UK in the 1950s and 60s, in Food Matters

11 am. Rick Parrish, Plastics: How They are Made and the Petrochemical Industry, in Plastics

**Letter from the President**

Dear Fellow Learners,

I am writing this still feeling the glow of our picnic at Look Park. How great to attach those Zoom heads to real people, see old friends, make new ones, and share good food and good conversation! We all know the importance of keeping our minds engaged, but it is equally important that we keep and make new connections with people. Can we do more of that?

We will all be getting an updated membership roster soon that will include our locations. Perhaps you will be inspired to invite a couple of neighbors for a backyard get-together while the weather is still nice. Why not include a potential LIR member as well? Still wary of in-person gatherings? You could organize a "seminar reunion" on Zoom, or a mix-and-match of people from different seminars.

Nancy Clune, Suzie Metz, and Catharine Porter of the Social Events Committee have our enthusiastic thanks for the picnic and, we hope, for future in-person all-member events. By all means, reach out to them if you have ideas about encouraging or hosting gatherings large or small.

Let's party on,  
Francie



Members of the Council enjoy the picnic at Look Park: from left, Paul Cooper, Bob Cohen, and



Catching up at the fall picnic are members, from left, Larry Ambs, Roger Webb and Kathy Campbell.

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