

Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubonsee Community College

President's Corner

Dear LLI Members,

Welcome to a new calendar year and to another full slate of offerings for LLI's Spring Semester. Registration began on January 15 and within hours a few of them were already filled to capacity! We also continue to attract new members who have heard about the great things that are happening in LLI.

There seems to be positive energy "in the air" at LLI! We moved our January Board meeting to Zoom, but in spite of the tough winter weather we were experiencing, everyone came to the meeting with new ideas, excitement for the spring courses and events, and a readiness to work together to create an even better LLI for our members. The Curriculum Council is taking a look at new types of offerings and discussing ways to enhance the member experience.

We are also seeing new volunteers step up to help with the work of LLI, and that is especially good news. When you have a nice mix of loyal, long-time volunteers and newer members, we get the best of both historical perspective and traditions, and new talent with "fresh eyes." I believe that is why we are finding unique courses that are somewhat "outside the box" as well as our tried-and-true favorites, in the online catalog. I am excited about the variety of course offerings this spring and I hope you are excited (and registered!) as well.

Nevertheless, we always have room for more: more new ideas, more unique offerings, more members, AND.... more volunteers! Yes, here I go again – appealing to that person out there who truly enjoys LLI and can offer a bit of time and talent to keep the excitement humming. Spring is when we plan for another great LLI year, and we need to find all kinds of people to fill all kinds of positions. Come join us – we promise – you will feel welcomed and appreciated!

Sincerely,
Andi Danis
LLI Board President



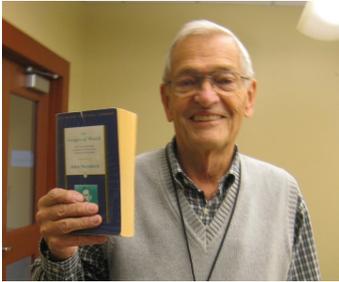
Save the Date!

May 30: LLI Spring Luncheon & Annual Business Meeting to be held at the Stonebridge Country Club in Aurora. Detailed information, including registration instructions, will be emailed to all members in early April. Guests are welcome!

Curriculum Council Corner

Honoring Our Facilitators

We are proud of the members who volunteer to facilitate the varied and interesting courses provided to our membership. Facilitators are the heart of Lifelong Learning! Last year at the Spring Luncheon/Annual Business Meeting, five facilitators were presented “The Master Facilitator Award” in appreciation for twenty or more years of inspiring others. Those recognized were Ellen Neupert, Adam Holtz, Carl Hays, Tryna Zeedyk and Pauline Berberian. Sadly, two of these treasured facilitators have passed.



Adam Holtz's high school English teaching career spanned 38 years. He coached football and wrestling and organized extra-curricular activities for the students. Adam's creative teaching techniques and love of literature inspired his students, many who developed a lifelong love of literature and were motivated to seek teaching as their vocation.

Between 1997 and 2023 Adam facilitated 56 courses for LLI. His courses were always a joy due to his dry humor and tongue-in-cheek comments meant to encourage the course participants to think and learn from the literature he was presenting. Often, he asked students to bring in artifacts which would coincide with the lesson. Besides facilitating, Adam served on the Curriculum Council for several years as well as many other committees. Adam will forever be known for his positive spirit and humility!

Tryna Zeedyk was a respected English educator at Waubensee Community College for 34 years and had degrees in British literature and American history. Between 2003 and 2023 Tryna facilitated 105 courses for LLI. These included Charles Dickens, Shakespeare, Jane Austen, reincarnation, poetry and many other authors.



Tryna taught about the unchanging human spirit from the 1700's to modern day in the literature she shared with her students. Her courses were always interactive and provided current day comparisons. One of her popular series was “Singing Along with History.” Tryna served on the LLI Board as president and assisted the Curriculum Council with proofing proposals for many years. We will remember Tryna for her dry sense of humor and “twinkle in her eye!”



Welcome New Members!

We would like to send a very sincere welcome to our new members who joined LLI during the 2023-2024 membership year! We hope you are enjoying the classes and meeting new friends. We look forward to meeting you!

Joel Albizo
 Lynn Anderson
 Shireen Bacchetti
 Meridith Bergesen
 Shelley Brennan
 Colleen Brummel
 Addam Brummel
 Sarah Burgess
 Ann Butcher
 Steve Butcher
 Diane Chesko
 Linda Corken
 Donna Cwiak
 Brigitte Daly
 Kathy Dameron
 Sharon Deuchler
 Lynn Diviak
 Jeffrey Dooley
 Lisa Durando
 Barbara Dvorak
 Joseph Dvorak
 Mary Collette Easley
 Martha Egeland
 John Etheredge
 Barbara Feltes
 Coleen Frauenhoff

Phil Freiny
 Peggy Glotzbach
 Rita Gould
 Susan Hallsby
 Kristin Hardin
 Sue Hedke
 Gloria Hill
 Pamela Holguin
 Rick Holinger
 Jodi Holleran
 Carolyn Hopkins
 Sherman Jenkins
 DJ Jensen
 Lori Johnson
 Randy Johnson
 Ann Johnson
 Diane Joyce
 Barbara Kraus
 Sue Lane
 Cathy Leone
 Eleanor Logman
 Debra Lojewski
 Kristen Lundell
 Janice Martens
 Jim Martens
 Mary Moulton

Kathy Navota
 Deborah Nerad
 Becky Nerad Pearce
 Anita North Hamill
 Kathleen O'Brien
 Robert Olson
 Sandy Overdorf
 Peggy Peabody
 Beth Plankenhorn
 Bob Pokorny
 Lawrence Rakunas
 Mary Rakunas
 Robert Romine
 Maryellen Romine
 Barbara Schaefer
 Karen Schneider
 Debbie Schwartz
 Ray Smith
 Tim St. Clair
 Donna Thibault
 Paul Thorson
 Teresa Thorson
 Timothy Tower
 Lyn Turnbull
 Robert Turnbull
 Susan Vincent
 Kristin Vivoli
 Shirley Watters
 Helen Wilbur
 Susan Wiles
 Bob Willing
 Victor Yarba
 Janet Yarger



New members, joined by Donna Wawrzyniakowski in center, at our 2023 Holiday Luncheon

LLI's Spring Offerings 19c Thinkers and Doers

Co-facilitated by Llona and Lynn Steele



What inspires a facilitator to create an LLI course? In creating Nineteenth Century Thinkers and Doers, Llona and Lynn were inspired by so many factors: “By our beloved facilitators Adam Holtz and Tryna Zeedyk and their many deep dives into classic American writers, the vast majority from New England; trip-minded facilitators, such as Ellen Neupert, who believes that if we study it, why not see it up-close and personal; our own readings about travel to New England and interest in developing a trip to visit sites already explored in LLI courses.” The Let’s Head East Coach Tour from May 17-23 will take us to places that will be discussed in the 19C Thinkers and Doers course!

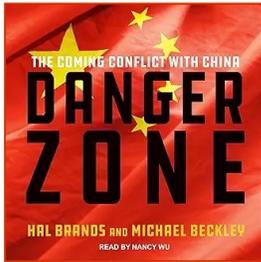
“Inspired by our second First Lady Abigail Adams who asked her husband to please ‘remember the ladies,’ we decided to focus on our national pledge of life, liberty, justice and equality for all by highlighting women and men who improved our nation by standing up for rights for all, for public education for children, those institutionalized and incarcerated, for abolition, for workplace reforms and for building thriving communities.”



One of those thriving communities is the small town of Concord, Mass., which produced an astonishing number of philosophers, essayists, novelists, poets, environmentalists, painters, sculptors, abolitions and lecturers. And is a memorable stop on the trip!

U.S. China Relations, Part II

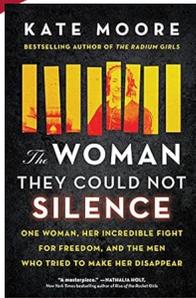
Co-facilitated by Peter Ginter and Ellen Neupert



In the LLI China Part I class offered last fall, Peter Ginter and Ellen Neupert co-facilitated an outstanding class for those interested in learning more about China-U.S. relations over the last 50 or so years. With rapidly changing world events, they decided to offer China Part II, which will share more extensive background focusing on current events.

Is war with China inevitable or avoidable? That is the focus of the China II class, which will use the book *Danger Zone*, by Hal Brands and Michael Beckley, experts on the U.S. China situation. Xi Jinping, having cemented his position as dictator for life as head of the Chinese Communist Party, is an empire builder. His words and actions have revealed that engagement with the U.S. has now become aggressive competition leading to possible conflict.

America and China are entering a period of sharp tension and high danger. Discussion topics in this class will include diplomacy, economics, military tactics, the race for technological primacy, as well as exploration of China's problems. Peter and Ellen believe that this class is truly a "current affairs" class, seeing it as their "job" to bring clarity and understanding to all this.



The Prices of Their Silence

Facilitated by Cynthia Wade

Cynthia Wade graced us with not one, but three fascinating courses this spring semester. Her variety of topic choices stems from her strong sense of curiosity and desire to know more. One of her goals is to enable people to make choices based on knowledge and free will as opposed to tradition and expectation.

The Prices of Their Silence focuses on women using their voices and the consequences of doing so. Empowering women to know they have a voice and how to use it is of particular importance to Cynthia. Having been raised by a empowered mother, Cynthia gained a strong sense of self and level of confidence that made her an independent, creative thinker and self-advocate. She believes that by sharing her knowledge, others can learn things they didn't know, which subsequently enables them to make decisions that are good for themselves. They can make intentional choices rather than those dictated by gender expectation or tradition.

Cynthia's extreme interest in people and ideas is evident in her courses. While she expresses her ideas with a sense of absoluteness, she actually wants her participants to challenge those ideas. She hopes that class members will bring forth ideas and opinions contrary to hers and articulate their reasons for holding them. By doing so, the whole class gains knowledge to which it would otherwise not be privy. She welcomes and encourages civil discourse in all her classes.

Exploring Features of the Smart Watch

Facilitated by Sue Foody



Has this happened to you? You are gifted with a smart watch. You stare at it in bewilderment because you have no idea how it works or how it can enhance your life. This is what happened to LLI Facilitator Sue Foody. In Sue's case, she returned it. However, after having second thoughts and realizing how beneficial it could be to her life, she bought another!

In her course Exploring the Features of a Smart Watch participants learned about the health, fitness, safety and security features that are so important to seniors that are "aging in place" (still living in their home) or assuming the role of a caretaker. The overview covered smart watch features including tracking health and fitness including sleep patterns, steps, calories, heart monitoring, and safety and security notifications such as fall detection, location, crash detection, or sedentary warning. Attendees were asked to bring their own watch and cell phone so they could learn how, and then practice, using their own devices.

Sue encouraged the class to continue to learn about the basic and enhanced features of their watch and to set personal goals and settings to meet individual needs and interests. To dispel the mystique of the smart watch, she shares its "just a computer that looks like a watch."



Eagle Watch and Brunch Trip

Organized by Kim Carew & Betty Williams

Not even the dense fog which settled upon our route could dampen the spirited camaraderie of 43 LLI members traveling to view *Haliaeetus Leucocephalus*, more commonly known as the American Bald Eagle. Our destination was the Northern Illinois University Lorado Taft Field Campus, adjacent to Lowden State Park in Oregon, Ill.



The Park is known for its picturesque sites along the Rock River, favorable nesting environment for eagles and water fowl, and the iconic 50 foot American Indian, commonly associated as Chief Black Hawk, gazing over the Rock River Valley. Initially, it was a privately-owned artist's colony called Eagle's Nest for nearly 50 years. One of the residents, sculptor Lorado Taft, designed the monolithic statue as a tribute to all Native Americans, now on the National Register of Historic Places. The State later purchased the land and designated the 273-acre site as Lowden State Park. Eventually 66 acres of the Eagles Nest was transferred to Northern Illinois University for use as an outdoor teacher education program.

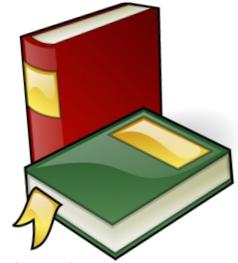


Upon arrival, we walked down a wooded path to the dining hall which is perched on a bluff overlooking the Rock River. One side of the hall is flanked by a bank of windows overlooking the Rock River and a favored eagle nesting tree; on the other side, an all-you-can-eat brunch buffet!



Two Naturalists conducted interactive presentations on bald eagle factoids followed up by a friendly competition between tables to test our listening and retention. During our time there, we had two eagle sightings and the opportunity for a telescopic view of nests.

LLI Scholarships



Did you know...

- ⇒ LLI awards scholarships each year to Waubensee Community College students.
- ⇒ These scholarships are funded by our Operating Fund and generous donations from you!
- ⇒ We donated \$2000 for this academic year: one \$1000 Founders Scholarship and two \$500 LLI Scholarships.



This Year's Scholarship Recipients

Founder's Scholarship—Olu Adedeji

I am a first-year Nursing student from Aurora and consider myself a non-traditional student. This scholarship has brought me incredible joy and pleasure since it is directed at people pursuing lifelong learning. I migrated to America as a teenager from Nigeria and am working as a Certified Nursing Assistant and caregiver. I work mostly with the senior population. One of the complaints I receive the most is the lack of regard and advocacy that Healthcare providers show when treating seniors, which is why I would like to become a geriatric nurse practitioner and teacher.

LLI Scholarship—Allison Schneider

I would like to extend my most sincere gratitude for your kind donation. I am beyond elated! I am a 35-year-old single mother and recently decided I wanted to return and complete my academic journey. My hope is that by furthering my education, I will acquire the knowledge and expertise necessary to advance in my career field. I aspire to pursue a career in social work and to help others and make a difference in people's lives.



LLI Scholarship—Anonymous Recipient

I grew up in Kane County (Batavia and Aurora) and my goal is to become a Dental Hygienist. When I was five years old, my family migrated from Mexico. Thanks to your generosity, I will be the first in my entire extended family to get a college degree. I sincerely appreciate your donation and for thinking of students like me who face significant barriers to access higher education. Thank you for making my dreams a reality.

Congratulations to you all! We extend our good wishes for success in your future endeavors!!

Holiday Luncheon



How our members look forward to renewing friendships and socializing with each other! Our annual 2023 Holiday Luncheon was held on December 7 at the Aurora Country Club and was attended by 90 members and guests. The beautiful ambience and good food made this celebration one to remember!



Facilitators have the opportunity to display upcoming courses.
L-R: U.S./China Relations with Ellen Newport & Peter Ginter; Let's Head East Coach Tour courses led by Lynn and Llona Steele

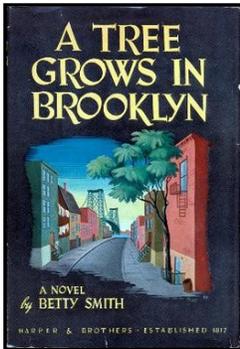


Members clearly enjoying themselves!
Center photo: Emily Rollins & Dr. Brian Knetl of Waubensee Community College & LLI President Andi Danis

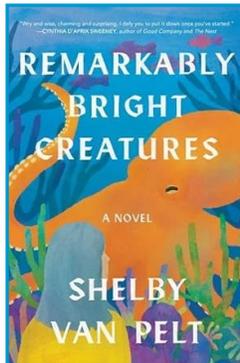


L-R: Jeneva Beckett & Kim Carew at display honoring Facilitator Tryna Zeedyk;
Entertainment performed by Fox Valley Festival Chorus with Choral Director Mary Beth McCarthy

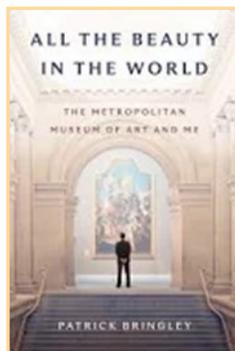
Book Nook



A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith was first published in 1943, rightly becoming an American classic. The author brilliantly captures a unique time and place - the Williamsburg slums of Brooklyn, New York, at the turn of the twentieth century - as well as deeply resonant moments of universal experience. Told through the eyes of young Francie Nolan, this poignant tale is filled with laughter and heartache, crowded with life, incident, and unforgettable characters. This novel has enchanted millions of readers over the past eighty years, sharing the characters' hopes, strengths, self-reliance, and dreams for the future.



Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt is told from the perspectives of three unusual creatures. Our main character is Tova, the 70-year-old after-hours cleaner at the Sowell Bay Aquarium; Marcellus is the resident giant Pacific octopus; and Cam soon joins the staff. Tova, grieving for her deceased husband and long-missing son Eric, enjoys her time at the aquarium where she can be an unhindered perfectionistic cleaner. It is during the quiet after-hours at the aquarium that she and Marcellus develop a means to communicate and form a warm bond. When Tova is injured in a fall from a ladder, the aquarium hires Cam to fill in for her. Cam plans to stay only until he is able to find his biological father, whom he believes is living in Sowell Bay. Through this unlikely group of friends, Van Pelt creates a sweet and whimsical story. Readers with a sense of humor, a gentle heart and a willingness to suspend disbelief will find this novel remarkably bright indeed.



All the Beauty in the World, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Me by Patrick Bringley is an autobiographical retrospect of the author's ten years as a guard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. When his brother was diagnosed with a fatal cancer, Bringley sought to escape the profound grief and din of daily life working at *The New Yorker*. He quits that job and finds solace and work in the most beautiful place he knew, the MET. The reader follows Bringley's journey as he guards and marvels at the delicate art and treasures from throughout the world. As his bond grows with colleagues and art, he begins to understand how fortunate he is to be walled off in this little world and pieces together how it resembles the best of the larger world to which he gradually returns. Through Bringley's unabashed interest in his colleagues, visitors and the love of beauty in art, he nurtures that same awareness in the reader. With simple illustrative drawings and a touching story of heart, humor and humanity, it's a must read for anyone who has ever gone to the MET or wishes they could go!

Total Solar Eclipse on April 8, 2024

Written by *Jean Langlais*

Those who have witnessed a total solar eclipse say there is nothing else like it in the world. When we talk about solar eclipses, we must also talk about eye protection. Observing the Sun during partial phases of the solar eclipse requires proper eye protection to prevent permanent eye damage. Consider obtaining your ISO 12312-2 compliant solar eclipse glasses before making further plans. They are available online from a number of retailers such as American Science & Surplus, Amazon, and B&H Photo. (If you are a Sugar Grove resident, contact the SG library for a pair of eclipse glasses for in-person pick up.) While the Sun is totally blocked out by the Moon (this “totality” will last up to four minutes on April 8), all that can be seen of the Sun is its corona. Only during totality can the eclipse be safely observed without protection.

According to [NASA](#), the Moon will completely block the Sun along a path about 115 miles wide. It is called the path of totality and it will cross into the United States at about 1:27 pm Central Daylight Time, tracking northeast from Texas through northern Maine at 3:35 pm Eastern Daylight Time. Those observing outside the path of totality, but within the contiguous United States, will see a partial eclipse.



Corona of the Sun (left); Path of Totality crossing U.S. (right)

[The Eclipse Company](#) has developed a searchable, interactive map of the path of totality within the United States. This [map](#) is divided into sections by state, detailing the line of maximum totality, duration of totality, planned events, expected phenomena (if any) and recent cloud cover for various localities. You can use the map to search locations in the United States (for instance “Carbondale, Illinois”) to determine how long totality will last, what the cloud cover might be like, and if any events are planned. The Eclipse Company also provides resources for further exploration in the “[learn more](#)” section.

Since the next total eclipse in the United States is not expected until 2044, this one is likely to draw crowds. Plan ahead, expect crowded roadways and give yourself plenty of time to get where to want to be, and enjoy!

The LLI Newsletter Committee would like to thank the [Fox Valley Astronomical Society](#) for their valuable input.

In Memoriam

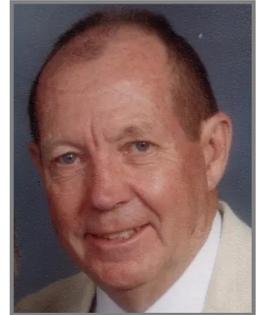
With our sincere condolences...

Ray Lidecka

May 29, 1932—December 5, 2023

Ray was a longtime LLI member, fondly remembered for his warm personality and inquisitive mind. He loved the history classes, including the “Sing-Along-to History,” and took many trips and outings offered by LLI and Waubensee Community College Community Education.

Ray lived in the Aurora area all of his life other than his military service, serving in the U.S. Army from 1952-1954. He was active with Wayside Cross Ministries and a long-time member of Union Congregational Church in North Aurora. Ray loved nothing more than spending time traveling and spending time with his children.



Jane Cornwell

April 24, 1935—January 7, 2024

We might say Jane’s love of learning brought her to LLI! Born in Natick, Mass., she spent her early years in the Boston suburbs. Jane then went on to William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Va., where she majored in English language and literature. Jane and husband Bill had four children (Gregory, Lawrence, Sarah and Martha) and loved to joke that all six family members were born in a different state or country!

Jane was a fearless traveler who continued traveling and learning as long as her health allowed. Her curiosity led the family on many adventures. In later years Jane enjoyed taking each grandchild on a special Elderhostel trip. She was indeed a fun and feisty mom and grandma!



Martha Price

August 27, 1944—January 30, 2024

Martha was a talented musician and co-facilitated a popular series, “Singing Along With History” with Tryna Zeedyk. Martha played the piano, dressed up in costume and brought props for these fun classes that spanned years 2005-2016.

Martha was born in Fairbury, Ill., and was married to husband Kyle Price for 56 years. They had children Stacey and Kevin and many grandchildren. She received her Bachelor’s degree from Illinois State University and a Ph.D. in business education from Northern Illinois University. Martha was a professor at Waubensee Community College for 30 years.



We will miss you all! You have truly enriched our lives!



Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubonsee Community College

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Our **Values** include continued learning, intellectual inquiry, social interaction, and active member participation in lifelong learning.

Our **Mission** is to provide our membership with a defined and member-generated framework for life-enriching, dynamic educational experiences through lifelong learning programs.

Our **Vision** is to be a self-sustaining and self-governing community of active mature adults offering a diverse and intellectually stimulating array of noncredit educational offerings in a wide variety of academic disciplines.

Waubonsee Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, veteran's status, marital status, disability or any other characteristic protected by law in its programs and activities. For more information on the college's nondiscrimination policies, contact the Executive Director of Human Resources at (630) 466-7900, ext. 2367; Waubonsee Community College, Route 47 at Waubonsee Dr., Sugar Grove, IL 60554-9454.

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