

Lifelong Learning Institute
At
Waubonsee Community College

Annual Report
to the
LLI Membership
July 2024 – June 2025

May 26, 2025

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Report of the President

I am pleased to present this summary of the 2024-25 LLI Year and want to thank our leadership team and many additional volunteers for giving their time and talents in service to this organization. Your energy and creativity are what made for another exciting and successful year!

We were able to increase the amount of our scholarship donation this upcoming academic year, awarding three scholarships totaling \$5000. In addition, I am very excited to announce that in May of this year the Board voted to endow LLI scholarships with a \$25,000 investment to be made in the 2025-2026 budget year. Within a year, this endowment will begin to fund two Lifelong Learning Institute Endowed Scholarships at \$1500 each, awarded annually to deserving WCC students who meet our criteria. Until the interest fully funds these scholarships, we will continue to supplement from the general budget. Since our reserves have remained stable for a number of years we felt this was a good time to invest in the future of WCC Foundation's mission to provide meaningful assistance to qualified students. And we now know, that whatever the future holds for our LLI, our impact will live on with these scholarships. I want to thank all of our members who have supported the scholarship fund with direct donations; I would urge you to continue to "fill the jar" at our luncheons and events so that we can continue to grow our support.

In the Fall of 2024 we held our first Fall Kickoff/Open House in APC. Our goal was to attract more members by showcasing our courses and social events. Attendance was excellent and we welcomed 44 new members into our community! We are hoping to make this a yearly event.

Our other yearly events – the Volunteer Brunch, Holiday Luncheon, and Spring Luncheon/Annual Business meeting continue to be very well-attended; we enjoy these opportunities to socialize with each other and honor our members who give of their time and talents to this valuable all-volunteer organization.

The Curriculum Council continues to find ways to enhance our learning opportunities by working closely with our excellent facilitators, reaching out to guest presenters and outside speakers, and working in collaboration with WCC to bring unique partnered events to our members. Crafting Conversations, the Banned Book to Movie discussions, and other events have been wonderful additions to our course offerings.

Our Social and Community Outreach Committee continues to spread the word about LLI throughout our communities, implementing a marketing strategy that was created in partnership with WCC personnel. Our Facebook presence is growing and we are reaching more of the public through targeted advertising. Another new venture: a subcommittee was formed to launch a trial special interest group late last summer – the Coffee Crawl – to see if members would appreciate a way to meet up with other members who have similar interests, such as dining out,

playing games, sharing travel tips, etc. It turns out that members very much like a way to meet in various interest groups and we now have 12 groups that are up and running!

Our Member Communications Committee stayed in touch with our members through engaging newsletters and informative Eblasts. Plans are being made to further enhance outreach to new members and to help all members find value in LLI.

Our Technology Committee continues to configure our online registration system, CourseStorm, to meet our needs. Most members are finding online registration to be easy and convenient and are taking advantage of the “opening bell”! The Committee continues to support those members who do experience problems to make sure everyone has access to registration. This Committee also provides great data analysis that informs our decisions at the Board level and in the Curriculum Council to ensure that we deliver programs and events that are valuable to our members.

It has been my pleasure and honor to have served as your President this past year. It has been an exciting time to volunteer: helping to ensure LLI’s future; finding new ways to gather; developing new learning opportunities... I can’t wait to see what comes next!

Respectfully,
Andi Danis
President

Report of the Vice-President

The largest project for me during this past year was being a member of the Nominating and Recruiting Committee which is a requirement for the VP. This committee's assignment is to recruit and nominate candidates to fill the vacated offices by departing members on both the Board and the Curriculum Council whose term has ended.

This year four members of both the Board and CC were to be replaced by new members for the term to begin July 1st, 2025. The objective of this committee then was to find 8 members to fill those positions.

All of the eight offices are for two years with the exception of the President and the Vice-President which is one year. The committee meets four times beginning in November and ends in April but under certain circumstances may need to meet two more times.

My role as VP on this committee is to contact all eight members retiring and ask if they wish to continue for another term. I choose to do this by meeting with each one rather than a phone call or email. The bulk of the committee's work is to recruit candidates when any incumbent chooses not to run again. Although recruitment sounds like an easy task with our current membership running at about 340 members, it is not.

Fortunately for the committee this year, many of the incumbents elected to do another term. The committee assembled a slate of candidates for the 2025-2026 term and submitted it to the Board in April for their approval. The new Board and CC members will be announced at the Spring luncheon Business meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kent Hayward

Report of the Secretary

During the current LLI fiscal year, I recorded the official minutes of all LLI Board meetings held to date, and anticipate recording the minutes of the May 29, 2025, Annual Business meeting.

A copy of the official minutes with attachments will be filed in the LLI office.

An electronic copy of those same documents will be maintained in a secure manner on the X drive in the LLI office.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Carew,
Secretary

Report of the Treasurer

The fiscal year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 Budget started with \$105,621.85. As of April 30, 2025, Revenues are \$35,036.48, the majority of which is from membership fees. Expenses have totaled \$27,596.37, which creates a surplus of \$7440.11. There are anticipated expenses for the Spring Luncheon in late May. The budget is currently at \$113,061.96.

The budget has supported membership with several social gatherings during the year including an Open House for new members, facilitators roundtable, Volunteer brunch, a few joint events with WCC for the community and a Holiday Luncheon. We also supported 3 scholarships for WCC students.

The budget has provided funding for guest presenters and outside speakers. Through April there have been 9 guest presenters and outside speakers, for a total of \$1500. This has helped to provide some great resources on specific subjects to enhance our classes.

The Board has approved the motion to provide funding for a \$25,000 Endowment for student scholarships in the future. This will in time support two WCC student scholarships for \$1500 each.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Hastert
Treasurer

Report of the Curriculum Council

Council Members

Bobbie Brown – Attendance tracking
Karen Christensen - Facilitator assistance, Board member
Susan Foody - Recorder
Mary Hauge - Outings & Trip Coordinator
Carolyn Hopkins – Curriculum review, course sites
Beth Johnson - Scheduled and managed approved courses,
Jerry King - Processed course proposals
Evelyn Porter - Technology equipment support, Board member
Mary Ann White - Presiding Member, Board member

Responsibilities

- Communication with facilitators
- Mentor current and potential facilitators
- Host Roundtables
- Review proposals, interact with facilitators on any needed editing of the proposal
- Review and recommend Board approval for courses, outings, & trips
- Prepare Excel spreadsheet of courses, schedule courses, request location assignments and technology needs
- Forward necessary information to the WCC contact
- Enter approved courses into CourseStorm
- Assess outside venues
- Review course attendance
- Communicate with Technology Manager

Accomplishments

- Reviewed and recommended for Board approval course proposals
 - Fall 2024 - 25 courses and 2 outings
 - Spring 2025 - 25 courses, 6 outings, 1 trip
 - Summer 2025 - 13 courses, 4 outings
- Scheduled and entered all courses into CourseStorm
- Worked to provide balanced course offerings to appeal to a diverse membership
- Hosted a Roundtable for facilitators on October 18, 2024 at WCC
- Hosted a Roundtable for facilitators on March 21, 2025 at WCC
- Provided monthly email updates to facilitators
- Created a facilitator checklist (updated bimonthly)

- Updated the Facilitator Guide on an ongoing basis
- Communicated with WCC IT to make website changes on an ongoing basis
- Created an updated fillable form for Outings/Trips
- Prepared articles for the LLI newsletter (fall, winter, spring, summer)
- Collaborated with WCC to create offerings for LLI members

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann White
Presiding Member

Report of the Member Communications Committee

This Committee includes two standing committees: Membership Relations, chaired by Carol Putnum, and the Newsletter Committee, chaired by Mary Maiers.

The position of Manager of Member Communications has been vacant due to the election of the former Manager, Kent Hayward, to the Office of Vice-President, whose duties began in July 2024. A team effort from the Board ensured that the necessary duties of the Manager of Member Communications continued, and the Chairs of the Standing Committees continued to carry out their responsibilities as usual.

Members are receiving more Eblasts due to the increase in activities that are available to members. In addition to new activities, such as Special Interest Groups and the partnered events with WCC, we are informing our members of opportunities of interest sponsored by other community organizations. We are also making better use of our website to announce many events. The Membership Relations Committee also continues to mail Welcome packets to new members.

The Newsletter Committee produces four very informative and entertaining newsletters per year. The volunteers who work on these newsletters make sure there is a variety of interesting content as well as important information to keep our members up-to-date.

Planning is underway for the upcoming year; I will be assuming the role of Manager of Member Communications for the remainder of the term, ending in June 2026. I hope to implement additional ways to engage with new members in particular, and better ways to communicate with all members.

Respectfully submitted,

Andi Danis, President and
Incoming Manager of Member Communications

Report of the Social and Community Outreach Manager

The members of the Social-Community Outreach Committee work as a cohesive unit. However, team focus consists of myself and Laura King working as the Social Committee Co-chairs, Gary Krueger and Ceil Carey as the Community Outreach Co-chairs with Donna Wawrzyniakowski representing LLI at community events, and Jennifer Beck focusing on marketing strategy and demographic analysis. Each committee member contributes to all areas of our responsibilities, meeting monthly to discuss our projects and vision for LLI.

Our committee has been actively working on creating and implementing a marketing strategy with the goal of growing membership. Emily Rollins, Community Engagement Manager, is invaluable in her assistance with working toward this goal. We advertise in senior center newsletters, news media and display posters in numerous local libraries, coffee shops and senior centers. Under the leadership of Susan Foody, we are pursuing Facebook campaigns to add another dimension to our presence in the community.

Following is a summary of our projects and accomplishments during this past year, all of which are possible only with the enthusiastic participation of members and volunteers. We would also like to extend a special note of gratitude to the college for their ongoing support and belief in lifelong learning.

Social Events

1. Fall Kickoff Open House held on August 12, 2024 on the WCC Sugar Grove Campus. Over 100 in attendance; recruited 44 new members. Open to both members and non-members, providing an opportunity to learn about LLI and socialize!
2. Holiday Luncheon held on December 5, 2024 at the Stonebridge Country Club in Aurora. Over 100 members and guests registered for this festive event, with entertainment provided by the Fox Valley Woodwind Quartet. Volunteers and new members were recognized.
3. Annual Volunteer Brunch was held on April 9, 2025 on the Waubensee Community College campus, Bodie Hall. Invitations were extended to 60 volunteers, a time to honor their dedication and creativity. A delicious brunch was catered by Reuland's, followed by sharing, an interactive activity and SNL skit performed by the Social-Community Outreach Committee members.
4. Spring Luncheon/Annual Business Meeting is scheduled for May 29, 2025 at the Stonebridge Country Club in Aurora. We look forward to another fun event with great participation!

Social – Special Interest Groups

A Special Interest Group (SIG) Subcommittee was formed, chaired by Karen Christensen with committee members Bill Doeden and Donna Monti. The purpose of SIGs is to offer another social opportunity to our members with a goal of getting to know each other. A Coffee House Crawl SIG was launched as a trial to evaluate pros and cons and best practice procedures. Currently, there are 12 active SIGs, seven of them open to new members. SIGs are open only to LLI members and are self-governing. Members will continue to receive communication regarding this opportunity.

Community Outreach

1. We are thrilled to partner with WCC in hosting speaker and community events, well attended by LLI members, WCC students and staff and those in the community.
 - a. Presentations: History of American Pies on November 17, 2024 and Civil Liberties on January 23, 2025
 - b. Crafting Conversations: Men's Basketball Team on September 18, 2024 and Wellness on April 30, 2025
 - c. Banned Book to Movie Club: *Bless Me, Ultima* on September 24, 2024 and *Color Purple* on May 3, 2025
2. Our Outreach team has worked hard to get the word out about LLI! We continue to pursue opportunities to speak to organizations and attend community events:
 - a. Lincoln Prairie by Del Webb presentation on June 24, 2024
 - b. Geneva Senior Center presentation on June 26, 2024
 - c. Dime Jingle at Aurora Senior Center on August 12, 2024
 - d. Aurora Women's Club presentation on October 8, 2024
 - e. Aurora Rotary Club presentation on November 13, 2024
 - f. Aurora LB PEO presentation on February 19, 2025
 - g. Annual Health Fair at Fox Valley Community Services Center, held on April 8, 2025 in Sandwich
 - h. Waubensee Community College Sugar Grove Campus Open House, held on April 26, 2025
 - i. St. Charles Kiwanis presentation on April 29, 2025
 - j. First Friday in Downtown Aurora on May 2, 2025
 - k. Batavia Chamber of Commerce Volunteer Fair on May 6, 2025
 - l. Dime Jingle at Aurora Senior Center on May 12, 2025
 - m. Fox Valley Park District Thursday Bingo on May 15, 2025
 - n. Aurora Senior Center presentation on May 21, 2025

I would like to personally thank the committee members for their amazing enthusiasm, vision and teamwork!

Respectively submitted,

Mary Maiers
Social-Community Outreach Manager

Report of the Technology Committee

REGISTRATION METRICS:

<u>TERM</u>	<u>CLASSES</u>	<u>SEATS TAKEN*</u>	<u>WAITLISTED</u>	<u>OUTINGS</u>
SPRING 2024	28	632	57	3
SUMMER 2024	19	535	6	3
FALL 2024	28	788	104	2
SPRING 2025	28	811	64	5

EVENTS

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON 2023
SPRING LUNCHEON 2024
HOLIDAY LUNCHEON 2024
SPRING LUNCHEON 2025

REGISTRATIONS

95
90
94
64**

<u>MEMBERSHIP:</u>	2023-2024	301
	2024-2025	360**

**as of 5/8/25

ACTIVITIES:

CourseStorm:

- Ongoing maintenance and management of the CS site have been conducted by Bill Doeden and Kim Carew. Beth Johnson and Jerry King prepared classes for entry into the catalogs.
- Kim and Nancy Modery managed registrations and related issues, including responding to member questions and maintaining the phone log.
- Bill set up the luncheon catalogs on the site in concert with Mary Maiers.
- CourseStorm experienced an outage which shut down the site for a few hours during registration. The cause was determined to be an issue with one of their vendors.
- Bill Knudsen, Beth and Jerry evaluated the possibility of importing classes into CS. It was determined that the process would be somewhat complicated and therefore the effort was discontinued.

Fillable Forms:

- The Fillable Course Proposal Form was converted to a web-enabled form by Anders Lindel (WCC) and Bill K. This ensures that ongoing maintenance of the form will be done by WCC-IT.
- Bill K. drafted a Fillable Trip/Outing Proposal Form that includes calculation of charges that will be used to determine a breakeven attendance for entry into CS.
- A meeting is scheduled with Mary Hauge to discuss additional changes to the Fillable Trip/Outing Proposal Form.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

- A spreadsheet has been prepared to provide guidance to the Board when deciding whether to subsidize a Trip/Outing that falls short of the minimum registration number required to break even.
- Zoom licenses, N numbers and Admin lists were updated.
- An analysis was conducted to determine why a significant number of new members didn't rejoin LLI after participating in a term. No correlation was found.

- Surveys were prepared and distributed for SIG, Collette Travel and Volunteers in coordination with Andi Danis, Mary Maiers and Karen Christensen.
- Bill D. participated in the Special Interest Groups subcommittee to identify and plan opportunities to increase socialization among LLI members, jointly with Karen Christensen and Donna Monti.

NEXT STEPS and RECOMMENDATIONS:

A Fall Kickoff/Open House was held on the day that Fall registration opened in August 2024. Some prospective members who attended did not have access to some classes because they reached maximum enrollment before they were able to join LLI and complete registration. To illustrate, the following classes were already filled:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Time Class Closed</u>	<u># of New Members Able to Register</u>
Tour of the Aurora Hindu Temple	8:15 am	6 (11%)
The Traveling Teacups	8:35 am	9 (16%)
Note: a second session was eventually added		
LLI Reads	10:30 am	12 (21%)
Artificial Intelligence	11:00 am	14 (25%)
Exploring the Cosmos	12:15 pm	37 (66%)
Note: the wait-list was eventually admitted		
Johnny and Gerald	12:15 pm	37 (66%)
Eat Smart, Live Strong	12:16 pm	37 (66%)
Over, Under, Around, Through...	1:45 pm	44 (79%)

The recommendation brought to the Board is to hold the open house one day prior to course registration to allow attendees to register for membership; they then would be able to register for courses the next day at the “opening bell”.

An evaluation of AARP’s Senior Planet Licensing program was undertaken to determine if this program would be a viable approach to improving LLI members’ technical skills. While the program’s objective is sound, the time and effort needed to acquire and maintain the license would be considerable. A better option is to work with WCC’s Technology Services, directed by Mike Fier, to develop a program focused on the needs of our members, making use of some of the tools available through Senior Planet. A survey of the technical skills that are of interest to our members will be conducted to define the content of this program.

Exploring the topic: Changing the Way We Age for the Future

To date LLI has not focused on helping our members manage their future aging. Should we explore the future needs of an aging population to present to our members in the form of a program based on future aging? Should we consider establishing a committee whose responsibility is to research what is being done to help all of us better prepare for aging in the future?

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Doeden