

Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubonsee Community College

President's Corner

Greetings LLI Members,

Welcome to another exciting year of Lifelong Learning!

Thank you to the Social-Community Outreach Committee and all volunteers for starting the 2025-2026 year with the Kickoff Open House held on August 4. Those in attendance, members and non-members, were enthusiastic about continuing learning and sharing LLI information. Everyone was looking forward to participating in the varied curriculum courses planned for this fall. Activities such as the Open House encourage participation and membership growth.

As our organization continues to grow, additional help is always needed. The Lifelong Learning Institute would not exist without the members who are willing to volunteer. Facilitators, organizers, committee members, and those in elected positions are all vital to making LLI thrive. I encourage everyone, when the opportunity arises, to consider becoming more involved. Volunteering in LLI is rewarding. It allows for decision making, serving others, and of course, socializing.

One of the important decisions made by the Lifelong Learning Institute Board was to fully fund a \$25,000 endowment to the Waubonsee Community College Foundation. The Lifelong Learning Institute Scholarship will provide two \$1500 scholarships for returning Waubonsee Community College students each year. This will be a lasting legacy for our organization.

As we move into fall, let us enjoy the cooler weather and the stimulating courses. I wish everyone an enjoyable and enriching LLI experience.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann White

LLI President



Save the Date!



December 2: Holiday Luncheon to be held at the Stonebridge Country Club in Aurora. Detailed information, including registration instructions, will be emailed to all members in early October. Guests are welcome!

Curriculum Council Corner



Learning Knows No Bounds

The Lifelong Learning Institute Curriculum Council has been planning with and training facilitators over the years. The collaboration has paid off in a variety of courses that embrace and challenge our higher-level thinking skills.

Facilitating members have brought many innovative types of courses to our organization. They are thinking “outside the box” to provide exciting and high interest topics. Guest presenters and outside speakers bring experiences new to many of us. Recent speakers have included first responders, scientists, artists, musicians, volunteers and historians. We are fortunate to be able to hear from and learn from these experts. Fall 2025 courses look to continue this trend.

As a council, we take careful consideration to the balance of the focus of courses presented. We include offerings from art and music, current events, history and geography, literature and philosophy, natural sciences, personal development, social sciences, technology, and travel. Often a course offering will fall within more than one of these listed above.

Overall, we feel these presentations have enriched our lives and challenged our thoughts about the world around us. We continue to encourage our members to become facilitators in topics and areas of interest to share with your fellow Lifelong Learning Community.

The Curriculum Council meets on the first Friday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in Collins Hall. Any LLI member can attend the Curriculum Council meetings.



Upcoming Community Engagement Events

- ♦ *100 Days at Ground Zero*: Thursday, September 11, 1-2:30 p.m., Academic and Professional Center (APC), Room 110.
- ♦ *Banned Book to Movie Club—Captain Underpants*: Wednesday, October 8, 5:30-8 p.m., Sugar Grove Campus, Auditorium. Bring your grandchildren!
- ♦ *Understanding the Higher Education Landscape—A Conversation with Dr. Brian Knetl*: Friday, October 10, 9:30-11 a.m., APC, Room 120.
- ♦ *Crafting Conversations—Kindness Rocks*: Thursday, November 13, 3-4:30 p.m., Sugar Grove Campus Field House.

For more information and to register, go to our LLI website:

www.waubonsee.edu/lli



Someone You Should Know

Written by Diana Fischer-Woods

As lifelong learners, each of us has experienced the joy of learning without the pressure of studying for exams or writing papers. For **Gary Krueger**, he knew he wanted to take some classes when he retired from his dental practice. It was that aspect of LLI that appealed to him and led him to join. As a member, he was impressed with the quality of the classes offered and the amount of work that facilitators put into their presentations. Gary's education had been primarily science-oriented, so he loved that LLI provided an opportunity to learn about other subjects.

After being a member for two years, Gary joined the Social-Community Outreach Committee. As a committee member and Community Outreach Co-chair, he has represented LLI at several community events and made presentations to a diverse range of community organizations. Gary's smile has become the trademark of LLI!

Gary has shown his leadership on so many occasions. One example is purchasing our own projector and screen to be used when venues do not have the needed equipment for our PowerPoint presentations. Gary has been instrumental in other ways in helping LLI reach potential members. He helped with the redesign of the LLI brochure, business cards, and in creating newspaper ads promoting key events and upcoming registration.

In addition to his role as a true innovator in helping LLI grow, Gary has become a course organizer. This past summer he brought in a speaker for the presentation, "Do You Hear What I Hear?" Gary thoroughly enjoyed this experience and already has ideas for future classes.

Since the time Gary first became involved in volunteering, he has completely immersed himself in promoting LLI. Through his outreach work and marketing ideas, Gary undoubtedly is instrumental in recruiting new members. They quickly learn that LLI is not only about learning new ideas or gaining new skills, but also about developing new friendships. And, to Gary, those are his favorite parts of being a member of LLI.





Special Interest Groups

Social interaction is one of our guiding values. In an effort to expand social opportunities within LLI, we have introduced Special Interest Groups (SIG). Their purpose is to provide opportunities for members to get to know each other on a more personal level outside the classroom. SIGs are not courses. There are no facilitators, tuition or registration and are totally self managed.

In July 2024 we held a meeting of interested members to launch a pilot SIG—Coffee House Crawl. This effort was under the direction of the SIG committee members: Karen Christensen (chair), Bill Doeden and Donna Monti, who continue to provide guidance to anyone interested in joining or forming a SIG. Readout was provided by pilot participants and the program launched.

There are guidelines to follow:

1. Must be an LLI member to join.
2. There are no administrative rules, fees or registration required.
3. A member of each SIG must agree to take responsibility for communicating with other members regarding activities (role of organizer).
4. Each SIG determines the maximum size of its group.
5. Since the goal is one of inclusion, we encourage you to spread the word about your SIG to other members.

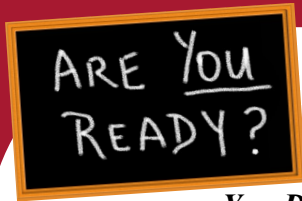


Many SIGs have been formed to date, including Board Games and Other Fun Stuff, Book Discussions, Lunch and Dinner Groups, Current Event Discussions, Eat Smart/Live Strong, Volunteer Together, and WCC Art Gallery Talks. General information, including a list of open SIGs is posted on our website: www.waubonsee.edu/lli (see Other Information/Special Interest Groups). Pictured above are participants of the Book Discussions and Eat Smart/Live Strong SIGs. You can see many happy faces!

The possibilities are endless! It all starts with members sharing a common interest and pursuing that interest.

If you have any questions or are interested in joining or forming your own SIG, please contact:

Karen Christensen: kfc16@sbcglobal.net



Coming This Fall!

Written by Roger Breisch

You Don't Know What You Don't Know...But You Will If You Hurry!

Your brain cells are anxiously awaiting much needed stimulation. There are more than 35 offerings this Fall at LLI!

The brain comes alive with ***Art and Music***. Rockford awaits with its magnificent Japanese Gardens and Frank Lloyd Wright's Laurant House. Next, Marissa Amoni will tantalize you with the depth and breadth of art, theater, music, and festivals throughout the Fox Valley. If you've never journaled, "Junk Journaling 101" just might get you interested!

I'm always in need of ***Personal Development***, but I'd better hurry because it turns out "Nobody Gets Out Alive." So I trust Richard Calabrese will help me cope with the changes I'll face. If that doesn't help I'll "Age Like a Warrior" with Mary Ann White and travel the World of Rick Steves, from Istanbul to Katmandu. Who doesn't want to explore the captivating ins-and-outs of Medicare? (Of course you don't, but it's important!) Finally, there will be no whining, but lots of "winning," as we celebrate International Cabernet Sauvignon Day!

Is Tiger Woods ***Current Events***? I'm not sure, but contrasting his journey with the likes of King David and Martha Stewart sounds intriguing! Then, Richard Keifer will examine the "Age of Presidential Power." Finally, we'll "Let Freedom Ring" using the ideas in Timothy Synder's book, *On Freedom*.

We hope Aurora's doesn't have more unforgettable fires, but if you're into ***History and Geography***, you can learn about those of the past. Then there's the Underground Railroad, "Lies My Teacher Told Me," (I was a teacher...don't even get me started!), Our Potawatomi Neighbors and Aurora Homes and the Architects that Designed Them. Do you know about the relationship between Johnny Cash and Gerald Ford? Come find out more.

You'll be infinitely wiser if you consider our ***Science*** offerings. Learn how to create biodegradable plastics using common kitchen ingredients. (Darn, I've created meals that aren't even biodegradable!) Build a mini hovercraft and a pendulum, and visit the Marine Mammal Acoustics Lab. You can learn about plant intelligence. (I'll skip this one...the plants are more intelligent than I!)

Let's not forget ***Literature & Philosophy***! The inimitable (I don't know what that means, but I'm sure they are!) Donna Sue Blankenship, Karen Christensen and Evelyn Porter will explore the World's Wisdom Traditions. Then it is always worth hearing Phyllis Deerinck insights into the world of poetry. Finally, imagine the "Places You'll Go" with the books and topics from Kim Carew.

There's more, but I'm out of space! Get those brain cells in shape this fall!



Summer Offerings

Edith Farnsworth House Outing

Co-Organized by Mary Hauge and Beth Johnson

The Edith Farnsworth House, located on the banks of the Fox River in Plano, was designed and constructed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe between 1945 and 1951. It was constructed as a one-room weekend retreat for Dr. Farnsworth, noted physician and poet. Its design is international architecture and constructed with glass and steel.

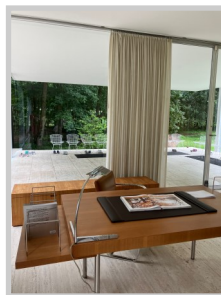
The land was owned by Robert McCormick, who used it for experimental farming, then sold to Dr. Farnsworth. In 1972 she sold her home to Peter Palumbo, British property developer and art collector, and moved to Italy where she spent the rest of her life. This home is now owned and operated as a house museum by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.



Our tour started with an informational film, beginning with the original land formation and earliest inhabitants. It continued through the Ice Age and transformation to its current geology and recent settlers.

Tour participants were divided into two groups, each led by a guide. The alternating groups covered the exterior landscape and home construction, as well as a tour of the home interior. You could not help but be struck by the minimalist design and flexible use of space. The open space allows the imagination to construct its many possibilities. To quote Beth Johnson, "Inhabiting the Edith Farnsworth House is like living in a piece of art."

The tour ended with a visit to the gift shop, housing a wide variety of memorabilia and good books. One of note is *Almost Nothing: Reclaiming Edith Farnsworth* by Nora Wendl. This book gives a revealing view of Edith through her personal correspondence, memoirs and photographs—a must read!



The Troubled History of the Viet Nam Memorial

Co-facilitated by Karen Christensen & Phyllis Deerinck



Did you know that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was controversial? “I did not. Nor did I expect this to be the very informative, emotionally moving class that it was,” according to LLI member Jean Langlais.

In 1979, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) was incorporated to establish a memorial for Vietnam War veterans. The group, led by wounded vet Jan Scruggs, raised \$8.4 million in private donations. Congress authorized a site next to the Lincoln Memorial, and a design competition began. Of the 1,421 designs submitted, Maya Lin’s design was chosen.

Yale undergraduate Maya Lin was 21 years old when she submitted her minimalist design. It was controversial because it was not a typical memorial—it was to be made of black, reflective stone slabs, was for the most part below ground level, did not incorporate statues, and was designed by a young woman of Asian descent.

To prepare participants for class, Karen Christiansen forwarded a course outline, discussion questions, a list of internet and video resources, and poetry about war. The class also watched an interview with Maya Lin. All together, these provided for lively, moving discussion about the monument, the war, and whitewashing history.

Guided Tour of Water Street Studios

Co-Organized by Roger Breisch & Bobbie Brown

This past summer, Bobbie Brown and Roger Breisch, who is on the Board, had the great joy of introducing members of LLI to Water Street Studios in Batavia. We enjoyed an inspiring presentation by one of the artists whose work was in the main gallery. After that we had a wonderful tour of the clay lab and visited with several of the artists who have permanent studios on the second floor.

Water Street Studios (WSS) stands as a vibrant epicenter of creative energy, innovation and community engagement. Since its inception, this nonprofit art center has played an essential role in fostering artistic expression, providing educational opportunities, and cultivating a sense of belonging among residents and visitors alike.



WSS includes more than two dozen studios available for artists working in various media, including painting, sculpture, photography, printmaking, and more. It has two main galleries that host rotating exhibitions featuring local, regional, and national artists, ensuring fresh perspectives and diverse offerings year-round. A key pillar of Water Street Studios is its commitment to education. The center offers an array of classes and workshops for children, teens, and adults.

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Organized by Gary Krueger



Dr. Paul Pessis, audiologist, lecturer, and past President of the American Academy of Audiology, brought his knowledge, experience, and buoyant energy to a class keen to better understand hearing loss, especially as it pertains to quality of life for older adults. Two thirds of adults 71 or older experience some hearing loss. By age 90, 96% have hearing loss. Hearing loss often causes feelings of isolation, which may further contribute to conditions such as dementia and depression.

Because it comes on gradually, hearing loss is often ignored or denied. If you prefer the TV volume louder than is comfortable for others, or if your loved ones seem frustrated by you constantly asking “what?” it is time to have your hearing evaluated. Dr. Pessis strongly recommends you first be evaluated by a board-certified audiologist, who is trained to diagnose and treat a wide range of auditory conditions. That specialist will know if you need a hearing device or should be further evaluated by an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) doctor.

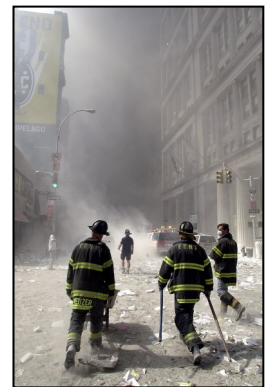
When Dr. Pessis thought a question required the expertise of an ENT, he deferred to his colleague, Dr. Alan Freint (also in the room). The class appreciated the input from both doctors and the thoroughness of their responses.

Tunnels to Towers 9/11 Institute Speaker

Co-organized by Carolyn Hopkins & Evelyn Porter

Carolyn has been planning this presentation for over a year. Her interest was sparked by a friend and her husband who gave 9/11 talks to students and various community groups. To quote Evelyn, “9/11 was a day that changed America!”

To honor the lives lost on 9/11, the Tunnel to Towers 9/11 Institute™ provides America the opportunity to engage with witnesses to our nation’s history to learn about the day through their personal stories. Speaker Bernie Ryan worked in the Pentagon and shared his personal experiences of that day. He began with outlining the timeline of the four attacks. Bernie and a colleague started a 20 mile walk home when a stranger driving a VW bus went out of his way to get them home. This is only one story of how people lifted each other up during this tragedy.



Carolyn’s friend Sgt. John Gorman, retired from the Port Authority Police and a First Responder, shared many heart-wrenching stories of heroes who gave their lives. He told us to “remember the guys in the trade, steel workers who lifted steel panels crushed in the devastation.” One member shared her story of flying into Newark to chair a conference and witnessing firsthand the impact this tragedy had on so many. This is a day we should never forget, one which showed our better angels but changed so many lives in such a profound way. May we always honor lives lost and the many who worked tirelessly to save them!



Spring Luncheon



Our **Spring Luncheon and Annual Business Meeting** was held on May 29, 2025 at the Stonebridge Country Club in Aurora with over 80 members, guests and VIPs in attendance! Our members truly look forward to these events as a time to renew old friendships and foster new ones. A special greeting to our new members who could join us!

We always look forward to our energetic speakers (L-R), including Gary Krueger who welcomed everyone to the luncheon and continues to emphasize the importance of recruiting friends and family to LLI; Evelyn Porter who recognized past and present facilitators; and President Andi Danis who highlighted the Board accomplishments for this past year. A major accomplishment was to endow LLI scholarships with a \$25,000 investment made in the 2025-2026 budget year. Two endowed scholarships at \$1,500 each will be awarded to returning WCC students. In addition, our membership and curriculum continue to flourish, thanks to our many committed volunteers!



Pictured above: Karen Christensen with donations to Mutual Ground, Ann Hastert & Ceil Carey at sign-in and our many members and guests enjoying the festivities.



Travel Tips from Two Amateur Travelers!

Written by Margie & Guy Groot

“When you travel everything changes. It is a humbling experience, and you see how insignificant you are and how little your world matters to the rest of the world. ... When you walk in another person’s shoes for just a minute, it’s a life changing thing.” Anthony Bourdain

Hello...It’s us again! Two Amateur Travelers, a curious and mildly adventuresome couple who strive to discover more about this wonderful world we live in! We are not travel agents or travel professionals. Just lifelong learners that recognize if you want to travel, do it while you have the time, health and mobility!

In our Summer 2025 article, we outlined “Know Thyself” questions to spark self-examination and define the scope and type of travel that works for you. This article will review personal documents that are important and necessary when you travel.

Getting Started

We generally work with travel professionals and reputable touring companies when booking international and some domestic travel. Referrals can come from word of mouth, research and reviews or past experiences. While you certainly can book travel online or via phone, we find the ease and peace of mind working with someone you know and trust, removes a lot of angst. Your travel agent is an advocate in pursuing consistent or better pricing, perks and credits and sharing formidable information about the destination. We also appreciate the cadre of knowledgeable staff available and the ancillary (concierge) services in the event of emergencies, loss or delays.

Personal Documents (make copies of these documents and secure them during travel)

Driver’s License – Beginning May 7, 2025, anyone 18 years or older flying domestically will need a Real ID or another acceptable form of TSA-approved identification (such as a passport). Learn more at tsa.gov/real-id

Government issued Passport and Visa – U.S. citizens must have a U.S. passport that’s valid for at least six months beyond your return date. Some destinations may also require a travel visa, so check with the appropriate embassy. Follow the steps on travel.state.gov

Trusted Traveler Programs – Include Global Entry, NEXUS, SENTRI, TSA-PreCheck. Determine whether you do and will travel enough to warrant the time and cost of being screened and securing the credentials for this program (streamlined entry leaving and re-entering the US). It’s a cost-benefit analysis. Learn more at ttp.dhs.gov

We also recommend enrolling in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive safety updates and enable U.S. embassies to assist you in case of emergency. You can enroll in this program at step.state.gov

Stay tuned—more to come!



Mayflower Trip Kicking Around the Keystone State

Oh, how our members love to travel. LLI continues to offer opportunities to members, family and friends. This April, with Barb Jachna as tour manager, we took a six-day Mayflower Trip to some very historic places in Pennsylvania. There were 31 travelers, 23 of whom were LLI members and friends.

Trip highlights included the Johnstown Flood Site, Flight 93 Memorial, Fort Ritchie, Gettysburg, Hershey and National Civil War Museum, First Ladies National Historic Site and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Many members shared their personal stories of these historic sites. That truly makes it impactful!

Stay tuned for news about our next trip!



Above: Flight 93 Memorial, Civil War Museum, First Ladies National Historic Site

Below: Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Group Photo, Hershey Museum




WAUBONSEE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ROAD SCHOLAR
Institute Network

Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubonsee Community College

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Collins Hall, Room 174
Sugar Grove, IL 60554

(630) 466-2593 www.waubonsee.edu/lli

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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