Dear LLI Members,

How quickly things change! In my last letter to you I wrote about the upcoming Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, our first ever, and other exciting events to come. We were in the midst of another stimulating session. With the outbreak of the Corona Virus, we had to make changes to ensure your safety and well-being: the spring courses were terminated or cancelled and the Spring Luncheon/Annual Business Meeting was also cancelled.

As you know, the Board voted to change the summer program to enforce the state mandates, implementing our first application of distance learning. The Curriculum Council has selected a few courses suitable to this format which will be offered to our membership via Zoom. We will continue to monitor the “state of affairs” and make decisions in the best interest of our members.

As I end my presidency, I would like to thank each of you sincerely for your love of lifelong learning and support of our organization. I am proud of our many accomplishments this year which would not have been possible without you. Your encouragement and friendships have meant so much. My wish for each of you is that you never give up hope. We will survive and grow through these experiences.

“Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all.”
By Emily Dickinson

Until we meet again…

Mary Maiers
President
We in LLI are on a decidedly different course of learning than we anticipated in January. What are we learning—probably lots. Big things, little things, funny things, touching things—we are moving on and we can tell our stories.

Save the Dates—TBD!

“I wanted a perfect ending. Now I've learned, the hard way, that some poems don't rhyme, and some stories don't have a clear beginning, middle, and end. Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it, without knowing what's going to happen next. Delicious Ambiguity.”

—Gilda Radner
We Still Find Our Life In The Details

This is what the last week of April and start of May 2020 have looked like ...  
Zoom meetings: from Waubonsee Community College with Dr. Michael Maniacci and his wife Laurie on “Surviving and Thriving in Challenging Times.” Take aways include: listen to less news (most respected and reliable outlets are BBC and New York Time) keep sense of useful control (you can’t help everyone so think locally and help someone), keep connected, try not to become helpless by keeping going.  
More Zoom with Geneva learners … We were to discuss positives that we might see from this negative time; we did not do well staying on topic.  
With the Conversation Salon … We normally meet several times a year at the home of a couple of senior hippies. Their home is decorated in complete randomness. The conversation occasionally gets slightly heated, but no fists have been thrown yet. They pick a topic and do some research before we meet. It is a unique evening, I like it a lot.  
Shopping: went to Costco to buy prepared casseroles (ravioli lasagna with beef) and salad for our homeless shelter Lazarus House.  
Friend Judy made some masks and gave me one with little bug creatures on the fabric.  
Notified the Memoir Writing Group that we cannot meet for May or June at the Batavia Library. Hope this group survives as we have met for several years and I love the stories they share.  
Phone visit with youngest son Geoff in North Carolina where we discussed film favorites. We agreed on “Knives Out“ and I promised to send some titles he might like. We also agreed that any movie with Judy Dench is probably worth viewing.  
Read on my deck on good days—not too many this week.  
“Atlantic Magazine” … David Brooks wrote on the history of the American family and how things have changed over time. My take away … if you don’t have biological family nearby, look for family locally. For me, I find that at my church plus connections made over the years in other organizations.  
Slept in … one morning until 10:45 a.m.—haven’t done that since the 1960s!  
Noticed that some friends are not doing so well during this time, especially the ones who wish they could travel and can not. Illinois and number of virus cases are not going down!!!  
Missing lost ones: George, my sisters Kitty and Helen, friends Carolyn from Yardley, PA, Mary Ann from Acworth, GA and Mary Ann from my hometown.  
Wondering what is next??

Gail Tattersfield
We Still Love To Read
With A Nod To Puzzles

The LLI Literary and Treats Society

2020 Book Recommendations

The Uncommon Reader: A Novella by Alan Bennett (Linnea Root)
The Woman in the Photo: A Novel by Mary Hogan (Kathy Wass)
The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and the Horse by Charlie Mackesy (Bobbie Brown)
The Giver of Stars: A Novel by Jojo Moyes (Rosemary Henders)
Where The Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens (Vicki Lettow)
American Dirt: A Novel by Jeanine Cummins (Marilyn Danielson)
Tony Hillerman Series by Tony Hillerman (Karin Gissel)
Dreamers of the Day: A Novel by Mary Doria Russell (Mary Ellen Heidgen)
Time is a River by Mary Alice Monroe (Jeneva Becket)
West With the Night by Beryl Markham (Margaret Ritchie)
Becoming Superman: My Journey from Poverty to Hollywood by J. Michael Straczynski (Kathy Leahy)
The Other Einstein: A Novel by Marie Benedict (Darlene Davis)
A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy who Helped Win World War II by Sonia Purnell (Carla Goetz)
The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire that Saved America by Timothy Egan (Beth Johnson)
999: The Extraordinary Young Women of the First Official Jewish Transport to Auschwitz by Heather Dune Macadam (Nancy Modery)
Olive, Again: A Novel by Elizabeth Strout (Heidi Adams)
The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek: A Novel by Kim Michele Richardson (Kim Carew)

Submitted by Mary Hauge
We Still Laugh

COVID LAUGH OF THE DAY …….. As Received Through An Email

Half of us are going to come out of this quarantine as amazing cooks. The other half will come out with a drinking problem.

I used to spin that toilet paper like I was on Wheel of Fortune. Now I turn it like I’m cracking a safe.

I need to practice social-distancing from the refrigerator.

Still haven’t decided where to go for Easter ----- The Living Room or The Bedroom

PSA: every few days try your jeans on just to make sure they fit. Pajamas will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.

Homeschooling is going well. 2 students suspended for fighting and 1 teacher fired for drinking on the job.

I don’t think anyone expected that when we changed the clocks we’d go from Standard Time to the Twilight Zone

This morning I saw a neighbor talking to her cat. It was obvious she thought her cat understood her. I came into my house, told my dog….. we laughed a lot.

Quarantine Day 5: Went to this restaurant called THE KITCHEN. You have to gather all the ingredients and make your own meal. I have no clue how this place is still in business.

Now that gas prices have tanked,, I have no where to go.

Day 5 of Homeschooling: One of these little monsters called in a bomb threat.

I’m so excited --- it’s time to take out the garbage. What should I wear?

I hope the weather is good tomorrow for my trip to Puerto Backyarda. I’m getting tired of Los Livingroom.

Classified Ad: Single man with toilet paper seeks woman with hand sanitizer for good clean fun.

Day 6 of Homeschooling: My child just said “I hope I don’t have the same teacher next year”.... I’m offended.

Better 6 feet apart than 6 feet under
We Still Each Have Our Own Brand of Humor


Not sure how to self-distance/isolate/quarantine for an extended period of time? Here’s a proven procedure used for many years, entitled: Simulate Being in the Navy Submariners (SBIN).

SBIN for Submariners:

1. Renovate your bathroom. Build a wall across the middle of the bathtub and move the shower head to chest level. When you take showers, make sure you turn off the water while you soap down.
2. Put lube oil in your humidifier and set it on high speed.
3. Once a week, blow air up your chimney with a leaf blower and let the wind carry the soot onto your neighbor's house. Ignore his complaints.
4. Raise the thresholds and lower the headers of your front and back doors so that you either trip or bang your head every time you pass through them.
5. Raise your bed to within six inches of the ceiling, so you can't turn over without getting out.
6. Sleep on the shelf in your closet. Replace the closet door with a curtain. Have your spouse whip open the curtain about three hours after you go to sleep, shine a flashlight in your eyes, and say, "Sorry, wrong rack."
7. Have your neighbor come over each day at 0500, blow a whistle so loud a bagpiper would envy, and shout, "Reveille, reveille, all hands heave out and trice up."
8. Have your neighbor collect all your mail for a month, read your magazines, and randomly lose every fifth item before delivering the rest. Allow him to send a 20 word email each month indicating what bills are overdue. Optional: could extend to 90 days to make more realistic.
9. Watch no TV except for movies played in the middle of the night.
10. Every week or so, throw your cat or dog into the pool and shout, "Man overboard, port side!"
11. Make your family turn out all the lights and go to bed at 10 p.m. "Lights out! Rig for Silent Running!"
12. Build a fire in a trash can in your garage. Loudly announce to your family, "Fire! Fire! This is no drill! Fire in the Auxiliary Machinery Room!"
13. Make coffee using eighteen scoops of budget-priced coffee grounds per pot and let the pot simmer for five hours before drinking.
14. Have someone under the age of 10 give the entire family a haircut with sheep shears.
15. Take hourly readings on your electric and water meters. Log them into a log.
16. Lock yourself and your family in the house for sixty to ninety days. Tell them that at the end of the period you'll take them to Disney World for liberty. At the end of the prescribed period, inform them the trip to Disney World has been cancelled.

As a retired Submarine Officer, Kathy and I have been using a self-quarantine procedure adapted from my experiences on long, submerged special operation patrols.

Leonard R. Wass
Captain, USN (Ret.)
Nature Still Heals Us

Forest bathing is the intentional practice of connecting with nature and surrounding yourself with the energy of the natural.

“I have been hiking almost every day in our county forest preserves. Hopefully, they will continue to stay open for those of us who need a breath of fresh air. “

Beth Johnson
We Still Seek Self-Expression

Coronavirus Message from the Creator

The Creator announces it is time for a lesson:
you’ve ignored all the warnings and admonitions
you are trashing your home, your brains and your bodies
time for Me to respond, bringing all to a halt

Not floods, not hail, not locusts nor frogs
the plague worked well, so I’ll bring it back
if you ever doubted My Power and Strength,
seriousness of purpose

You are in for a shock
I spent eons spinning your world into being
you have disrespected My beauty and gifts
so, live with the consequence

As always, My heart will respond and forgive
but not before you have time to consider
how you might change, revisit your values:
make all of us whole and joyful again

Karen Christensen

A Robin’s Work

Robin perched outside my window
Is she mocking me? I’m the one in the cage
She dances and preens, shaking her body, testing her wings
Then off she flies
While I watch the clock to see if it’s time
For seniors to shop at the grocery store
And then return to our gilded cages

Imprisoned by demons invisible
Tinier than the eye can see
Such irony warrants our hearty laughter instead of cries of wistful despair
We occupy spots in the universe, so unremarkable
We need to be slapped upside our heads
On a regular basis
And, this is the job of that robin, today.

Karen Christensen
We Are Still Learning And Striving

Every day I bike ride either stationary or on the trails, after which I work on my fossil collection. Last November, I discovered a site in Oswego and hauled as much of the material that I could to my back yard; needless to say, my wife wasn't happy! I go through the material daily to find what needs to be prepped and cataloged. I donated a specimen to the town of Oswego . . . Tentaculites Oswegonsis. I also found one of the best specimens I have ever found of a Crinoid Calyx & Crown. It will take months to properly prep that specimen.—Tom Cesario

Just published in November, Nursery Rhymes Your Mother Never Taught You. At this time of somber news at every turn, the book of parodies on 24 well-known nursery rhymes may be a welcome relief. There are clever or funny verses to bring a smile. Also, there are conversation starters at the end of each of four sections. Part Two has the original rhymes with a little history included. As for keeping busy, I’m grateful for my weedy garden.—Marilyn Huntman Giese

The class I wanted to take – Quick Books – is not taught this term. I decided to take Intro to Animation even though I can’t draw a straight line without the help of a ruler. Wow, I was over my head in the first five minutes. I was tempted to withdraw; but I decided to stick with it.
For our first assignment, I was to create a cartoon character. I spent hours poring over the class materials and researched every part of the human body as I drew him. He actually turned out pretty darn good. At the online lecture this week, the instructor showed and critiqued each submission. Mine wasn’t the best but, I’m happy to report, it wasn’t the worst either.—Suzan Spitzberg

I have not adjusted. Nobody said I had to adjust; I just have to stay here. I have found plenty of things to do. I finished up working on my The Chicago Botanic Garden: Beauty by Design course; I enjoyed working on it and learned a lot.
Spring is breaking so I ordered 50 bags of manure/humus to condition the soil. It was either old or wet because it came out of the bag as a slab. I got 80 bags of mulch on a pallet with them and it’s in the garage. That’ll keep me busy this afternoon any how.—Helen Snyder

I don't have grandchildren so I have to borrow some. I've had a science camp in my garage for the neighborhood kids. Every time I see one of them, they ask if we're doing it again. I'm thinking maybe I'll do engineering. I can use the curriculum I wrote for the kids I worked with at Fermilab. This is mostly hands on—what we all enjoy most.
I don't know how long this quarantine will last, but I'll have time to modify my ideas, gather needed materials and make a list for what I need to purchase later for the hands-on-activities. This is the part the kids and I enjoy most.—Donna Blankenenship
We Still Use Technology

And Likely More Than Before

I was invited recently to a Zoom event with classmates from near and far. What a breath of fresh air that was to seeing their smiley faces and participate in the cheery banter we have engaged in for so many years. I have missed seeing so many of these people and celebrating each other on a regular basis.—Carol Putnam

LLU Community Liaison Committee Chair, Ceil Carey, reports: Leigh Tracy contacted me from the Batavia Rotary. They are now meeting on Zoom so my presentation could be rescheduled. Donna and I will be attending the Zoom Meeting on May 26th, 8 a.m. Life and LLI goes on.

We Are Still Connected In Our Humanity

My version of quarantine
Quality time with family
Understanding importance of connection
Appreciation of many blessings
Reaching out to others
Attention to details
Needing to pray
Taking time to create and cook
Intend to organize paper work
Now is the time to be our best
Enjoying the little things in life.
—Darlene Davis

Staying at home reminds me very much of my childhood summer days. I was an only child living on a farm with my very frugal parents. Most weeks, we were home every day except Sunday. Sunday we would go to Sunday school and church. We would go home and mom would cook Sunday dinner or we went to visit relatives, most of whom lived about 30 miles away. During my teen years, we would often eat out on Sunday. Some weeks mom would point out that the car was taken out of the garage only on Sunday. Being an only child and neighbor children over a mile away, it was a very secluded, "stay-at-home" time. I loved it, though. I got a lot of reading done. There are many things to play with on a farm, even if you are alone. Soon I will be able to work in my garden and somewhat replicate the farm memories.
—Sharon Keutzer

Hand stitching a quilt. Straightening my fabric. Trying to walk often. —Sue Herren

I'm working on a 2000 piece jigsaw puzzle and making dog treats.—Toni Smith
Elmer Frank “Bud” Hutchinson, age 99, passed away peacefully Good Friday, April 10, 2020. Bud was born September 18, 1920 in Aurora. In 1940 Bud started his career at the Chicago Burlington and Quincy Rail Road maintaining their telegraph system. At the time the Morse Code was the means of communication by railroads. His career was interrupted by World War II when he served as a communications and sonar instructor in the U.S. Navy. Following the war Bud returned to the CB&Q. Over the following years communications changed and railroads merged. After 40 years he retired from what had become the Burlington Northern Santa Fe RR as a VP and Superintendent of Communications. Bud loved to travel, especially with a caravan of Airstream trailers all over the United States and Canada. One of his favorite destinations was Alaska where he ventured with the caravan three times. He also loved sailing his boat on Lake Holiday and picnics with his friends from different church groups. His religious experiences were many over the years with the congregation of the Fourth Street United Methodist Church of Aurora. He served in many positions there and made many life-long friendships, including his second wife Marlis. Bud served as a tutor/mentor at The Saint Charles Boys Home. He was also a Crisis Line telephone operator and member of the Golden Kiwanis Organization.

In Memoriam

In solidarity with our Italian friends across the ocean, I went to our non-existent balcony (second floor of the house) and removed the windows and screens to eliminate any barrier. I stuck my head out to better see one of our last spring time snow falls and I snapped the following picture.— Jerre Henriksen

On Easter Sunday residents of the building I live in were of course asked to stay put. Our Executive Director and her limited crew prepared and delivered a sumptuous ham dinner to each apartment. In addition we were also gifted with a “bubble wand.” At the appointed time, residents stepped out to their balcony and waved their wands filling the air with bubbles. Neighbors of the building were delighted to see our efforts and residents also were glad to greet each other from a safe distance.—Carol Putnam
Lifelong Learning Institute at Waubonsee Community College

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.

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