

12/5/08

**Five College Learning in Retirement  
Minutes of the Council Meeting  
November 13, 2008**

**Next meeting on December 11, 2008**

The Council of Five College Learning in Retirement met on Thursday afternoon, November 13, 2008, at the Five Colleges office in Amherst on Spring Street.

*Present:* Lise Armstrong, Jeff Caplan, Kathy Coulombe, Roger Coulombe, Hy Edelstein, Peter Ferber, Gail Gaustad, Wil Hastings, Carol Jolly, Sheila Klem, Charlie Klem, Joan Laird, Philippe Meyer, Pete Reitt, Leo Sartori, Jim Scott, Eleanor Shattuck, Bev von Kries, Bill Williams, Sara Wright, Katharine Hazen. *The Past President and the Office Manager were unable to attend.*

President Leo Sartori called the meeting to order at 2:30. The October minutes were accepted as disseminated (and already corrected.)

President's Report: Leo announced that Serene Rubin will be going home from the rehabilitation center on Saturday. Serene has made progress but requires 24 hour aid. She will welcome visitors, and contributions of food (note that Serene keeps a kosher home; most of the local markets stock kosher (pareve) foodstuff.)

The Moderators Reception on October 30 at the Smith Field House was well attended. The food was delicious and the small group discussions valuable. The Curriculum Committee is in good shape. Joan Laird circulated a list of seminars for the spring session. As for the Aging Wisely Conference on November 15, more than a hundred people have signed up to attend, and Wil Hastings announced that 'the people in this room' can sign up at the last minute as there is still some space. Leo reminds us that the Preview is coming up on Sunday, November 23.

Vice President's Report: Sara Wright noted that the Preview is 'all set.' The traffic flow in the Amherst Alumni House is being planned to accommodate the many seminars--more than were expected. Sara would like to know if there is a bigger space in the Amherst area that could accommodate us for a gathering on this side of the river. Sara also asked if more money could be provided for the refreshments at the Preview (\$200 - \$300) as the Curriculum Committee voted last Thursday to change/upgrade the food that will be offered to our guests. An extensive discussion followed, with the Meetings/Membership Committee explaining that they met on October 23, and bearing in mind the Preview Committee's recommendation to "pare back budget-wise" planned simple refreshments. (See the Preview Committee written report below.)

Leo ruled that it is Out of Order for other committees to make motions here as the Preview Committee is in charge of the Preview.

Jeff Caplan recommended that we see this action by the Curriculum Committee as an expression of the Curriculum Committee's feelings regarding future Preview refreshments. Another problem is that the timing is off.

**Committee Reports:** Leo asks if the Chairs have anything to add to their written reports:

Curriculum Committee Sara Wright and Joan Laird, co-chairs, sent in the following report: *The Moderators' Reception, held on Thurs. Oct. 30 at the Smith Field House was very well attended, lively, and convivial. Announcements and introductions were followed by small group discussions and reporting back, using a series of questions developed by the CC. A summary of group discussions and suggestions will be assembled.*

*The CC met on Nov. 6 to consider a large number of proposals for Spring 2009 term. We are delighted to report that we had 27 proposals submitted, 4 of which have been voluntarily postponed to the Fall term, since we believe we only need 22 or 23. There is a wide range of proposals from several fields, everything from *The Age of Enlightenment; Bloomsbury; Three Irish Playwrights; Time, Clocks, and Calendars; to Portrait Drawing, and The Bicycle. We believe that we have an exciting and diverse roster of Spring seminars, as well as a good start for Fall planning.**

Finance Committee: Treasurer Charlie Klem announced that year-to-date membership revenues are approximately \$6,000 less than the entire year budget. (Approximately 30 full time members; Leo noted that we usually get 20 new members in the spring). Net income for programs may be less than budgeted as Summer/Winter programs stated that there are no income-producing events currently scheduled. The Gala's finances were in a break-even area; precise figures are not yet available as all transactions had not been processed as of October 31<sup>st</sup>. Sheila remarked that we currently have about 275 members, and Wil added that membership material will be included in the Aging Conference packets.)

Public Relations: Chair Jeff Caplan's written report follows: *Meeting focused primarily on cooperation with the Great Decisions Program which is required to mount a serious PR and advertising effort under the terms of its grant.*

*Discussed a Video project to promote LIR and reported on steps taken so far.*

*The Smith Social Work project is up and running.*

*Discussed further outreach to retirement and senior center communities*

Chair Jeff Caplan adds that when they reached out to Rockridge (retirement community) LIR got two new members. Laminated packets of LIR information are being prepared for libraries, etc. WHMP sales folks have reached out to us. They are willing to talk up

events, interview members. Jeff referred them to Joan Hastings for the Aging Conference, but Wil says this will be better for LIR than for the conference.

Summer/Winter Programs:

Carol Jolly noted that the brochure for the Preview is complete. The January calendar includes the Memorial Service, the Rare Book Room at Smith, and a skiing outing (which is the only trip planned due to the uncertainties of the weather.)

Meetings/Membership: Co-chair Sheila Klem wrote the following report:

*The committee met on October 23 and welcomed new member Leslie Nyman to our ranks. We addressed several issues:*

*Preferred refreshments for the Preview on November 23 at the Amherst College Alumni House are (mulled) cider & Atkin's special donut holes, with red grapes and cheddar. The committee will take responsibility for this.*

*A new members' reception/coffee hour will be scheduled before the spring seminars begin; we have tentatively reserved Tuesday Feb 3 or Thursday Feb 5, 10 a.m., at Sheila's home. Our intent is to avoid conflict with January Programs plans. Invitations will be extended to all new members for 2008—2009.*

*We now have 17 hostesses (Leslie Nyman has volunteered) lined up for the April 25<sup>th</sup> concurrent brunches. The committee went through the membership/telephone list and divided the members into groups of 12 – 15 each. We plan, again tentatively, to meet with the hosts on Wednesday, February 4 for an informational session; the hosts will be given their list of potential guests to contact.*

*To acknowledge current new members, the seminar enrollment lists will be published with new members asterisked in the upcoming newsletter. We are seeking appropriate brunch recipes for subsequent newsletters!*

Sheila repeats that we want recipes for the April brunches, to go in the newsletter. Also, the New Members Reception will take place at her house on Tuesday, February 3, in consideration of the LIR schedule for that week.

Tech Committee: Chair Philippe Meyer submitted the following report:

*Two short meetings have taken place to allow the members of the committee to instruct their "leader" on what he is supposed to do. Meetings will now be scheduled regularly for the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at Florence Savings Bank unless otherwise determined.*

*We are on a bad start as 12/23 might be cutting too close to Christmas and because on 1/27 the leader will be in San Diego. Replacement dates will be set.*

*Jim Harvey has volunteered to lead an education workshop in the second week of January. Details on the program (Introduction to Windows and using Internet to prepare seminar presentations) will be communicated shortly to the membership.*

*Most importantly an anonymous but very auspicious "Help Wanted" ad in the Reporter has allowed a great talent to be discovered within the membership. You can find more about Janet Price at <http://www.amherst.edu/~jkprice> . If she accepts to join the committee she will be greatly qualified to assist and back up Hy Edelstein. We owe a great lot to Hy for the tremendous work he has done to create and manage our website. It is great time that more of us commit ourselves in maintaining and improving the website while making it ever more a communication tool between the council, the committees and the membership.*

*Chuck Gillies and Hy Edelstein have volunteered to continue gathering data (the purple sheet to be improved/completed after review by the council), to go back to the membership to update and/or actualize these data as required and authorized by the council and to continue to provide statistical data and graphics on the life of the organization. Hy will briefly present suggested plans of actions to the council.*

Philippe added that the committee is going to upgrade membership information. Hy Edelstein showed the current survey form to the Council. He added that a data base of the seminars is maintained; when Five Colleges asked how many of our members have connections with the colleges, that information was in the data base. Hy asked what does the Council think—should they go ahead with the survey and refresh the data base? To give an idea of what's on the survey, he read some of the questions, such as interests and education, noting that "one in four has a terminal degree," which brought down the house. Lise Armstrong asked what information would be useful to the Council. The group's feeling was that a survey is a good idea, but that it is not necessary to create another committee for this purpose. Each standing committee should submit to the Tech committee a list of what questions would be useful to them.

Leo said we should ask the membership at large too. Leo said that we agree that we want to go ahead with this. Peter Ferber recommended that each committee formulate what it is that they need to know.

Philippe also announced that there will again be a three day computer workshop in January, first come first serve. Carol Jolly noted that the registration form will be with the January programs materials at the Preview.

**Preview Committee:** Preview Chair (Vice President) Sara Wright sent in the following report: *VP's Report on Preview: The Curriculum Committee voted unanimously to express a strong concern about the refreshment plans for the November 23, 2008 event, now called the Preview. The Curriculum Committee mentioned that this gathering has traditionally been a celebration of the seminar experience for all LIR members. The committee strongly recommends that the refreshments provided be in keeping with the*

*excellence of previous functions; especially since this is one of the few times that we invite the general public. If the Meetings Committee does not have enough money in their budget, it was strongly recommended that a request be made to increase their budget.*

See also the "Vice President's Report" above.

Special Programs: Chair Gail Gaustad reported:

*The Special Programs Committee met Oct. 10 and will meet again Nov. 14. A possible new Special Program is a discussion & knitting group which would meet in the Amherst area. We have plans for a trip to Plimouth Plantation and the Mayflower in early May.*

*We have been pleased with the new Friday Morning Presentations which Larry Ambs has been coordinating. The presentations have been lectures on Medical history given by Paul Berman and two fine Encores given by Larry Ambs and Nancy Frazier. Ray Moore will give the first of two lectures on Japan on Nov. 14*

*The Aging Wisely conference will be on November 15. Joan Hastings is the coordinator of this conference.*

*The Committee is preparing the schedule of Special Programs- Spring 2009 to be distributed at the Preview.*

Gail added that her committee is going to meet tomorrow.

Office Manager: Leo read Callie's report, which follows:

*The Office Manager could not be found. It is believed she was last seen disappearing under a mountain of paperwork associated with the Aging Wisely conference and the Spring Preview, since these two major events fall within eight days of each other. A faint voice was heard to say that no more registrations would be taken for the conference, but that leads on where to send out more invitations to the Preview would be appreciated.*

Jim Scott remarked that the Council should give some thought to Callie's workload. Would volunteers help, or are we asking her to do things that she shouldn't be asked to do? Are events scheduled too close together? Wil noted that the Aging Conference is authorizing and paying for all the overtime that Callie needs. Lise Armstrong questioned the laying-out of the calendar of the year's events. Sheila Klem noted the recurring seasonal 'crunches.' Sara Wright noted that the Curriculum Committee feeds Callie the seminars for the catalog as they clear the committee; Callie stays later to do the work for the Aging Conference. Pete Reitt suggested that we discuss these issues with Callie herself.

Great Decisions: Co-Chair Roger Coulombe sent in this report:

*The GD's committee met on Oct. 31 for a brief update on the status of obtaining speakers for our Great Decisions Program. At the present time it appears that we have 4 of the required 5 speakers, but this will be discussed and hopefully affirmed at our meeting on Friday the 14th. We also began discussion of the budget for our program, and we hope to have most if not all of the details firmly established at our Nov. 14 meeting. This is the extent of our progress at this time. Once we have completed our searches for all 5 speakers, there will more and varied information to report.*

Roger added that his committee meets tomorrow, and at least three of the five speakers have been 'put to bed.' The spring programs are in good shape. We may have to rent a sound system. Roger is working on a pricing structure.

Development Committee: Chair Kathy Coulombe noted that she is still looking for ideas. See below under *Old Business*.

### **Old Business:**

- a) Aging Conference is already covered in the President's report on the first page.
- b) Guidance for the Development Committee regarding fundraising: Jim Scott noted that our last fundraising effort was insufficiently supported and the donations were returned. Leo noted that the effort failed because no rationale was given; and we need a good reason to ask for a grant.

Pete Reitt is exploring the idea of a DVD about LIR; Kathy Coulombe noted that a promotional device is not grantworthy.

Kathy Coulombe said she needs a purpose for her Development Committee to meet. Leo said that if a specific committee needs money for a specific purpose, they could go to Kathy Coulombe's committee. Wil Hastings said that if there is something that would benefit the community we could get funding, providing we can locate an appropriate funding source. Discussion of the reverberations of the current falling economy ensued. Leo suggested an appeal to the members to contribute to a scholarship fund.

### **New Business:**

1. Leo presented the new Nominating Committee, to be chaired by Wil Hastings, and to include Joan Laird, Dotty Gorra and Arnold Friedmann. Jim Scott noted that Nominating Committee members may become Nominees themselves. The Council voted unanimously to approve this slate.

2. The Ad Hoc Committee to discuss our response to medical emergencies: (Peter Ferber, Lise Armstrong, Jeff Caplan.) Jeff said it is our sense that we represent the general feeling that we may be of help to each other; Serene is a perfect example. The committee makes the following suggestions: that we convene an informal discussion group perhaps in January (notifying the membership at the Preview) to discuss how the LIR community could respond and bring a sense of that meeting to the Council. What role would LIR play? Within what scope? What other informal networks are there? Privacy is important. If this will be an organized structure, what shape will it take- (not through Callie Orszak) - it needs to be effected by the members themselves and easily sustained. How do other groups do this? See the website "Lotsahelpinghands.org" – which provides a template for a calendar. For example, X can post a need, e.g. needs a meal on Tuesday and Friday, and a volunteer can respond. Jeff will report to Council.

Joan Laird asked if this could be built into the Survey. Jeff added that it is important to make it easy to ask for help, and it "comes with the dues." Carol Jolly said maybe a person could ask for help for somebody else, for example a friend. Kathy Coulombe said that 'who to call in case of emergency' should be on the survey too.

Jeff wants an announcement of the January meeting at the Preview. Sheila noted that also there is the recurrent need for rides. Joan added that there should be a network for each function.

The Council approved the idea

3. Sheila Klem asked re the Annual Meeting, which has not yet been planned or scheduled. There will be less of a problem getting a quorum with the new Bylaws. Leo said the Executive Committee would look at this and come back to the Council. Charlie Klem said that if the Annual Meeting is in April, the budget could be ready by the Preview date in April, 2009. Jim Scott asked what needs to happen at the Annual Meeting this year.

There being no further business, the President adjourned the meeting at 4:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Hazen,  
Recording Secretary