

6/9/09

**Five College Learning in Retirement  
Minutes of the Council Meeting**

**May 14, 2009**

**Next Council Meeting on June 11, 2009, at 2:30**

The Council of 5CLIR met on Thursday, May 14, at the Five College offices on Spring Street in Amherst.

Present: Larry Ambs, Lise Armstrong, Jeff Caplan, Roger Coulombe, Peter Ferber, Mary Franks, Gail Gaustad, Wil Hastings, Kathy Hazen, Sheila Klem, Charlie Klem, Joan Laird, Anne Lombard, Philippe Meyer, Callie Orszak, Pete Reitt, Leo Sartori, Jim Scott, Eleanor Shattuck, Sara Wright

President Leo Sartori called the meeting to order at 2:30. The April minutes were accepted with the inclusion of an explanation of the term 'catalogs' in the second paragraph on the second page.

**President's Report:** Leo noted that the LIR family has lost two valuable members, Connie Anderson and Sue Case, and the Council observed a moment of reflection in their honor. Jim Scott added that another former longtime member, Ben Bowditch, also died about a month ago, and Leo added that member Leslie Nyman, a courageous person, is hospitalized in Boston.

On a happier note, the number of registrations (209) that Callie reports is normal for this date, including several new members, and approximately twenty-five people have made voluntary contributions.

The Annual Meeting on April 19 went well except for the incident of the attempted nomination from the floor, to add a member to the Council ballot. Leo feels that people should have the right to make such nominations, and this will be discussed. The Preview went well and the food was complimented. The issue of the new format for the catalogs (Seminars, Summer Programs, Special Programs) will be discussed per the agenda.

The April 25 Anniversary brunches were successful. The Sartoris did double duty, as Eva was finally able to persuade the Nymans to let the Sartoris take over their group due to Leslie's illness.

Great Decisions was also successful. Leo was able to attend four of them and found them excellent. He felt that our speakers were better than those in the videos provided by the Foreign Policy Association.

The Members-Helping-Members program is under way, and thirty-one people have signed up to participate.

Elderhostel is hosting a conference in June 2010 in New Paltz, New York. Last time Leo and several others participated and found it marginally useful. He asked if we wanted to

send a delegation, and said that anyone is free to attend. Sheila Klem added that several years ago a group went to an Elderhostel conference in Asheville, North Carolina, stayed in a dorm, and enjoyed it very much. Mary Franks suggested we find out the theme of the upcoming conference.

### **Vice-President's Report:**

Sara Wright reviewed the reactions to the change in publishing procedures, (to limiting printing and greater reliance on e-mailing,) and said that we need to inform the membership about the Office Manager's responsibilities as Callie should not be 'under fire' for anything that somebody else has done. Sara will put an article on the Preview into the next Newsletter. She noted that we have offered the membership 28 seminars, more than ever before, as well as more Special Programs and Summer Programs. Sara has some recommendations to the committees in this regard.

Sara has also sent out the basic Curriculum Committee Calendar, to which other events can be added. The calendar has been checked for all the religious holidays.

### **Committee Reports:**

Curriculum Committee: Co-chair Joan Laird had sent in the following written report:

*The Curriculum Committee met on May 7. There were four items on the agenda:*

- 1) Discussion of the Preview and fall 2009 catalog;*
- 2) The liaison function;*
- 3) The seminar feedback process and form; and*
- 4) The fall-winter calendar.*

*Many members of the CC, as well as many moderators and other LIR members, were confused, angered, and disappointed at the format of the fall-winter catalog. We discussed the process of decision-making, the relation of the CC Committee with the Council, and the place of the seminars in LIR's overall mission. Major comments will be distributed and a proposal made to Council.*

*Liaison responsibilities were discussed and it was agreed that several changes need to be made. These were agreed upon; the new structure will be written up, distributed, and included in the Moderator's Manual. The processes of seminar feedback were debated, a new form discussed, and it was agreed that moderators should have considerable flexibility in terms of how they seek feedback.*

*A draft of the fall-winter catalog was approved.*

*Retiring members Bert Bandman, Roger Coulombe, Pat Goldsher, and Michael Wolff were recognized and thanked for their service. Carol Lee was appointed to fill in for Gerald Goldman during his absence fall 2009-spring 2010.*

*Joan Laird, Co-Chair*

Joan added that the co-chairs can take more responsibility to function during the proposal process.

The question was raised as to the policy re cancellation of Fall seminars during the long summer break, as Callie will soon be sending out the seminar lists. Extensive discussion followed as to the pros and cons re an acceptable date. Leo recommended that Council leave the decision up to the “wisdom” of the Curriculum Committee.

**Finance Committee:**

Treasurer Charlie Klem requested that everybody get their reimbursable expenses in to the office manager. Jim Scott added that the Finance Committee has met several times to work on a grants policy. The Treasurer’s report will be sent out separately.

**Public Relations:**

Chair Jeff Caplan asked for volunteers for several slots in the WFCR fund-raiser, on 5/27 and 6/5. He noted that the ACTV camera person was at the Preview, as well as Great Decisions and some seminars, and will also come to the river cruise in July, the Tech workshop next month and the September picnic. Jeff wants people’s pertinent photographs to include in the video as a montage.

**Summer Programs:**

Co-chair Anne Lombard noted that the summer program has been established and there will be no more meetings until fall.

**Meetings/Membership:** Co-chairs Sheila Klem and Kathy Hazen:

The committee met on May 12, reviewed the April brunches in detail, pronounced them a great success and wrote hand-written thank-you notes to the 14 hosts/hostesses. 157 people participated. Although several areas that could be improved were noted, all the host/hostesses said they would do it again.

Sheila Klem has invited the Committee to meet on July 14 at the Klem’s summer cottage in Ware both for business and for a potluck picnic lunch, with swimming. We will contact new members to invite them to the September 9 potluck picnic at the Gaustads, where they will be officially welcomed by LIR. The committee reviewed plans for next year, including the two Previews on November 22 and April 25 (tentative date) and perhaps a January lunch and another welcome get-together for new members before the Spring seminars begin in February.

Nina Scott is preparing an article for the newspaper about the April brunches.

**Tech Committee:** Philippe Meyer sent in the following report:

- 1) *Philippe Meyer with the occasional assistance of Peter Reitt provided technical assistance to “Great Decisions” at Northampton Senior Center. The series was extremely successful; notwithstanding some minor hiccups with the remote mikes,*

*the equipment worked very well in a room much better fitted for that type of presentations than Union Station. It would be better if the room could be further darkened during the projection; we understand the senior center is working on it. Sign of the times: 4 out of 5 speakers used our PC to supplement their presentations, 1 was even directly connected to Internet via the senior center wireless.*

- 2) *A complete inventory of the equipment has been run. Everything is back to the office and in good working condition and at its place. One UHF transmitter has been faulty but we can operate with the remaining UHF and VHF transmitters.*
- 3) *Jim Harvey will have Margaret Manson and Sandy Sladen deliver his usual PowerPoint primer workshop in June. The workshop will be supplemented by short presentations on Blogging and elements of Web 2.0*
- 4) *The Tech Committee will make itself available to improve the delivery and education of and on using e-mail and our website for catalogue and others membership tools. Many members of the tech committee feel there is no saving and no reduction of the office manager load. The chair does not agree and thinks we have an opportunity to make a far richer medium available to committees, moderators and members.*
- 5) *The subcommittee on “questionnaire to membership” will present its conclusions to the tech committee in September and will present it for council approval in October*
- 6) *We are in the very preliminary steps of preparing a seminar in the spring for advanced PC laptop users.*
- 7) *The chair has expressed his concern that the information tools used by the organization (Data bases, website etc...) should be known, documented and supported as assets of the organization more than like individual volunteer contributions. This, like the swine flu, may be an overblown concern but, in the chair’s opinion, well worth revisiting.*

### **Special Programs:**

Gail Gaustad reported that the Plimoth excursion was a success, everybody had a good time. A clear policy is needed as to what is open to the public and what is not. For example, are Peg Bedell’s Opera Preps open to the Lathrop residents? ( LIR uses their community room.) Extensive discussion followed, which included the observation that inviting the public, where appropriate, is good public relations for LIR.

### **Great Decisions:**

Roger Coulombe reported that, although not all the statistics are in, we had a good program this year. Last year the average attendance was 125, and this year average attendance was 160. There was a total of 760 attendees this year. The speakers over all were well received, really terrific, very well-informed, presented well, and led good discussions. Kevin Kramer was first rate. The technology was significantly improved. The lunches, from a different venue, were first rate and approximately thirty people were served. The COA director, Pattie Shaughnessy, wants the dates for next year as soon as possible (the dates will be similar to this year.) Dave Kramer is chairing the committee next year.

Roger praised his committee: they came to meetings prepared, and they followed up, they did a lot of hard work and had a good year. The Council applauded.

Roger added that he had just met with Nancy Goff about the finances and we should be in good shape, we didn't spend all of our grant.

### **Members Helping Members:**

Peter Ferber noted that this program has been offered a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services. His written report follows:

*MHM launched its operations May, 1 2009. To date we have 31 volunteers and one request for help, from an active member, who is unable to drive, but wants transportation to two seminars. We stand ready to provide transportation if there is not an available carpool in the seminars in question.*

*There are two coordinators at any one time, beginning alternate months, each serving for two months. (e.g. May-June, and June-July). To become a volunteer, email us at [www.lotsahelpinghands.com/c/612582](http://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/c/612582), and follow the prompt. To receive a service, call 413-585-4009 and leave a message with a request and your phone number.*

*Highland Valley Elder Services has expressed an interest in giving us a grant. Applications can be submitted starting in June. We could use help from someone experienced in writing grants.*

### **Office Manager:**

Callie Orszak thanked Vice-President Sara Wright for her great help in the office. Callie sent in the following written report:

*I have been busy with all sorts of registrations, ballots, and bios. I had seven requests for full seminar catalogs. The eighth person who called already had the catalogs (she is not on email), but had been told she could get a catalog if she asked the office! Two of the people who asked had already registered using the emailed catalogs (one only asked because I had called her about something else).*

*I have constructed a new database using Access, and I hope to be working with Larry Ambs on improving it and learning some tips.*

*I am going to Kansas on May 20<sup>th</sup> and returning on June 1<sup>st</sup>.*

**Old Business:**

President Leo Sartori opened a discussion of the Catalog issue (limited printing) and asked that people wait to be recognized by the chair in order to participate in the discussion. Jim suggested that the length of the Preview be shortened by half an hour.

Joan Laird made several points for the Curriculum Committee in favor of a printed seminar catalog: the committee worked for months on the seminar descriptions, many members are not computer savvy and/or don't open their e-mails or attachments, and the committee is proud of the seminar catalog: "it's an important part of who we are."

A motion was made that a committee be appointed to further study our publications policy and report back to the Council, by December of this year. The President checked Robert's Rules and noted that the President appoints a chair for such an ad-hoc committee or task force. Extensive discussion followed. Gail asked that representatives of committees, not chairs, be included. Lise Armstrong recommended that we look at the larger question of internal communications in LIR. Philippe pointed out that we are not using our website to its best advantage.

Jim Scott thanked Sara for bringing this issue up, and noted that business expects people to use electronic communications primarily, and our population should accept that as a reality. Peter Ferber recommends more computer training for our members.

Leo noted that there have been only eight (8) requests for printed catalogs. Charlie would like the communications task-force to report to the Council in one or two months, not wait until December. The next Preview is on November 22.

Leo re-read the motion to create an ad-hoc committee, and it passed. Leo asked Larry Ambs to chair the committee and he agreed to do so.

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Katharine Hazen, Recording Secretary