

 *Five College*  
*Learning in Retirement*



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2017-2018**

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## President's Report, 2018

Michael Brooks

It has been yet another good year for Learning in Retirement--excellent seminars, compelling special programs, and good work by our highly engaged and productive committees. Membership has grown slightly, currently standing at just over 300.

Major activities during the year have included: (1) a special program in October celebrating the successful conclusion of our Campaign for the Future, and featuring an outside speaker on the issue of gerrymandering; (2) the conclusion of our Emeritus experiment, leading to Council's decision to allow Auditors in seminars (under carefully prescribed conditions and subject to the concurrence of seminar moderators); (3) the Curriculum Committee's design and introduction of short seminars during the summer months; and (4) cooperative work (still ongoing) with Five Colleges Inc. staff to better define the circumstances under which LIR events may be held in private homes.

As always, our committees continue to drive the organization. Space does not allow a full description of all the work done by our Curriculum, Finance, Great Decisions, Member Events, Publicity, Special Programs, and Summer/Winter Programs Committees, as well as ad hoc committees dealing with nominations, Operations Manual updates, and other special assignments. Also noteworthy is the energy that has been devoted to our Encore series, numerous special events and field trips, and special interest groups. Suffice it to say that all the above activities comprise the core of LIR's existence. I am continuously amazed by the dedication and creativity of our members. To keep all of this in motion, however, requires a continuous infusion of new committee members and program volunteers. You will hear more about this at the Annual Meeting.

Tisha Ferguson, our part-time Administrator, continues to contribute significantly to our operations, and made improvements this year in our data systems, communications with members, our promotional materials (including new brochures), and our accounting procedures. Particularly helpful was a session she held for our officers and committee chairs regarding the planning and conduct of special events.

Finally, a personal note. Ann and I will be leaving the Pioneer Valley in June, so our experiences with LIR are coming to an end. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity I've had to work in a leadership capacity with LIR, for the interaction I've so greatly enjoyed with other Council members, for the intellectual stimulation that has characterized our years with the organization, and for the wonderful friendships LIR has afforded us. While we're excited about our upcoming move, we know we will miss the contributions that LIR has made to our lives. I take comfort, however, in knowing that the organization's future rests in highly capable hands!

## **Finance Committee Report, 2018**

**Kathy Campbell, Treasurer and Chair ex officio**

The Finance Committee met four times during the past twelve months. In May 2017, we approved some changes to the LIR Operations Manual, including designating the LIR Fiscal Year to coincide with that of Five Colleges, Inc., specifically July 1 through June 30, instead of May 1 through April 30, even though the latter corresponds more closely to the annual cycle of income and expenses for LIR. These changes were formally approved by Council with other revisions to the Operations Manual.

At the October meeting we began work on budget revisions and reviewed other matters in our portfolio, including taking over the work of the Development Committee. In December we met with the Five College, Inc., treasurer and bookkeeper to explore questions raised in October concerning the management of our investment account, as well as policies needed for the proposed LIR credit card. At our February meeting we finalized the budget proposal for FY19, which was adopted by Council at its March meeting.

## **Office Manager's Report, 2018**

**Tisha Ferguson**

In June- July of 2017, the 5CLIR office relocated from Neilson Library to 18 Henshaw Avenue, C2, on the Smith College campus. The new offices are freshly renovated, larger and easier to access (though a bit hard to find, at first)!

A newly designed brochure was produced and distributed to local libraries, schools, senior centers and other 5CLIR venues. Copies are available at the office.

The website, 5CLIR's most public face, has attracted over 250 new newsletter subscribers this year. In addition, website blog posts and tweets reach a wide local audience. Online forms and payment processing is an increasingly popular the way for members and others make inquiries, join and register for programs.

The newsletter is published monthly, sent electronically, and posted on the website. In addition to articles of interest, it contains the 5CLIR calendar, event announcements, and program schedules.

Working closely with the Curriculum Committee co-chairs, the seminar proposal – to--catalog process has been refined, and class registration has been updated to reflect options of co-registration and auditor status. Our list of seminar venues has expanded to include local businesses and additional university locations, and we are very grateful for the support we receive from our community partners.

Our intern Sabrina Ko, a graduating Smith College senior, has been an invaluable assistant, and will be a hard act to follow! However, the job will be posted for another Smith undergraduate next year.

5CLIR continues to grow and thrive, attracting new members, and the office continues to develop tools and process improvements to support its 300+ members and their wide variety of activities.

## **Curriculum Committee Report, 2018**

### **Miriam Whitney and Jim Harvey, Co-Chairs**

(Ellen Kosmer joins in this report as she was a Curriculum Committee Co-chair during the first portion of 2017-18 before she moved on to the Vice-President position; Jim Harvey currently is the Co-chair with Miriam Whitney)

#### **Activities**

##### **Seminars and Workshops:**

- Maintained a system for the submission, review, and approval of proposed seminars/workshops; reviewed and approved 24 seminars for spring, 3 for summer, and 26 seminars and workshops for fall 2018.
- Developed a new and improved proposal form for seminars/workshops.
- Provided liaisons to communicate with moderators.
- Planned and offered a Moderator's Meeting (February 23) that about 40 people attended.
- Worked with the Office Manager to develop a descriptive seminar/workshop catalog for spring 2018 and fall/summer 2018 Previews and assisted with the Previews.
- Notified moderators of those Previews and encouraged them to attend.
- Approved and submitted a 2018-19 academic year calendar to Council.
- Audited the implementation of the spring 2018 lottery for oversubscribed seminars/workshops (and will audit the fall 2018 lottery in May).
- Maintained and updated the Moderator's Handbook and Participant's Handbook and encouraged their use.

**Policy Adoptions and Recommendations:** approved, or suggested to Council, policy changes to improve the seminar/workshop program, as follows:

- Emeritus/a-auditor experiment (2 years): approved the evaluation survey of the Emeritus/a-auditor trial for spring 2018 seminars, and the final evaluation report prepared by Neil Novik. Recommended that Council adopt the auditor policy permanently; that the meaning of "audit" be defined; and that one's auditor status can be changed in future semesters. (Council adopted a permanent auditor policy, with clarifications.)
- Summer short-term seminar/workshop trial (2 years): based on the 1st year's success, approved short term summer seminars/workshops for the 2nd summer; proposed that Council remove the limit of 3 seminars per summer. (Council approved.)
- Seminar participant standards: developed, approved, and proposed that Council adopt "Guidelines for Constructive Participation in Seminars/Workshops" to include in the Participant's Handbook and share with moderators and participants. (Council approved.)
- Moderator copying charge: recommended to Council that the fee moderators may charge to participants for copying be increased from \$2.00 to \$5.00. (Council approved.)
- Writing to Remember seminars: adopted policy that LIR members may enroll in only one Writing to Remember seminar per semester; adopted policy that Writing to Remember seminars will remain as is (subject to the lottery), with the possibility that participants also may start a Special Programs Special Interest group. Operating Manual updates: worked with Council subcommittee to update and revise Appendices F, G, and H of the Operations Manual. (On-going.)

	FALL 2016	SPRING 2017	FALL 2017	SPRING 2018
Total Number LIR Members (varies throughout the year)	267	297	306	308
Number of Associate Members	9 For The Year		6	1
Number of New Members	27	36	32	24
Number of Discounted Members	n/a	13	5	9
# Offered Seminars/ Workshops	25 offered 24 ran	25 offered 24 ran	26 offered 24 ran	25 offered 23 ran
# Members Registering for Seminars/Workshops	235	235	234	213
# Individual Registrations (includes multiple seminar/workshop registrations)	330	326	328	289
# Members Who Dropped Seminar/Workshop After Enrollment	n/a	15	32	37
# Emeritus/ae Members Who Audited a Seminar	6 (4 seminars)	4 (2 seminars)	5	2
Total Seminars/Workshops That Met With Fewer Than 8 Members Enrolled	2	0	2	0
# Seminars Cancelled Due to Low Enrollment	1	1	2	2
Lottery Results: # Waitlisted or Completely Full Seminars/Workshops	(est. 18)	19	10 WL	10 WL 3 Full
# Members Who Did Not Get First Choice and Will Receive Priority Next Semester	5	4	9	12
# Short-term Summer Seminar/ Workshop Proposals Approved	n/a	3	n/a	3

## **Special Programs Report, 2018**

Ilene Rosenberg, Chair

### **Summary**

During the past year, 2017-2018, there have been eight Special Programs groups meeting regularly. Hopefully, My Favorite Poems will return to the fold once the private home liability issue had been totally resolved. An Afternoon of Poetry and Prose has not had anyone willing to organize it, so was not on the schedule this past year.

Science Roundtable has been on hiatus for the spring semester, hopefully to resume in the fall. Salon Music has recently gone on hiatus to reorganize for the future. Photography Near and Far found both inclement weather and illness to be deterrents to attendance, and the group is looking for a new space to hold meetings.

Encore Presentations has been fortunate to have had two LIR members, Nancy Mihevc and Glenn Swanson, handily take on the enormous the task of facilitating the program.

Total number of members who regularly attend at least one of the groups is around 125. Average attendance for any one group is 10-15. Many more members attend irregularly or for a one-time event

The Special Programs Committee met in September 2017. The committee has dwindled to three members at this time, with each member acting as a liaison to one or more of the groups below to communicate regarding needs and problems, and to request entries for the spring and fall catalogs. This is a very undemanding committee and a great way to meet people. We would like to add four new members to this committee, beginning as soon as possible. Please consider joining us. E-mail Ilene at [ilenerosenfeld@yahoo.com](mailto:ilenerosenfeld@yahoo.com) or fill out the form in the catalog and submit to the LIR office. Terms are for three years.

### **Facilitators' Group Reports**

Book Interest Group – Naomi Yanis

This year we met at 2:00 PM, mostly in people's homes, but sometimes at the Lathrop Meeting House for members who live there. The particular Friday of the month varied. The group experimented this year with having the host decide on a limit, and once that many members responded, no more can attend that session. We have not had to turn anyone away. We decided to continue in this manner for the coming year. We usually have about 12 of our members come to any one meeting.

Encore Presentations – Nancy Mihevc and Glenn Swanson

As of March 30, 2018, 12 Encore Presentations /Lectures/ Readings, held at Applewood, have been extremely well received, with 25 to 40 people in attendance each week. The final four presentations will take place on Wednesdays, May 9 and 16. This schedule has evolved in order to leave the Friday mornings in April open for Great Decisions.

Our members have enjoyed Encore's Friday programs reprising some outstanding presentations that seminar moderators believed would be of general interest. We meet at Applewood in Amherst, from 10 AM to 12:00 PM on designated Fridays. Advance information about presentations is listed in the monthly 5CLIR Newsletter and the online 5CLIR.org calendar.

We are requesting that 2018 spring semester moderators offer recommendations of their class participants to be asked to make Encore presentations in the coming year.

#### French Conversation – Judith Pool

The Francophiles met every Friday from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM, except when Judith was away. We are between 10 and 13 in number. We usually follow a routine: members tell about their week, their lives, events, or tell a story. We listen to an audio CD with information about the latest developments in France; we listen to articles about French people past and present; we close with a song in French, popular or classic. The class is called "Tout en Français", so everyone can speak and understand French at an intermediate level.

#### Opera Prep – Peg Bedell

Each Metropolitan Opera production scheduled for live streaming in HD at the Cinemark Hadley Theater was preceded by a talk designed to introduce the opera to newcomers and even to old opera lovers who were familiar with the opera. My talks are on the Friday before the show, from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM, at my new location, The Inn at Easthampton Lathrop, Garden Room. The talks include the director's intentions, the artists' backgrounds and specialties, the staging, etc. Members attending varied from one to eight.

#### Photography Near & Far – Marty Espinola

Photography Near & Far special sessions have occurred on the second Tuesday of each month at the Amherst Media Center. We typically have between 4 and 7 people attending. Each person shares up to 10 images and comments on them. Feedback from the group is provided with sensitivity. Members with special knowledge of a photographic or post-processing technique may do a demonstration. New members are always welcomed.

#### Salon Music – Chuck Aulino

About a dozen amateur musicians have participated in this group, including a banjo player, a cellist, a couple of guitarists, a harpist, a couple of pianists, a recordist, and singers. All musicians are welcome regardless of level of proficiency. Meetings were held on the third Friday of each month at The Northampton Community Music Center beginning at 10:30 AM. Each meeting began with socializing followed by informal "performances," typically solo, but members collaborated on duos from time to time. The number attending any given meeting ranged from three to 10. The participants have always been entirely supportive of each other and completely non-judgmental. All are amateurs, so lots of mistakes and start-overs were expected. A popular (involuntary) phrase seems to have been "no, wait..." The result has been increasing camaraderie and a gradual reduction in "performance anxiety." (Please see above Summary regarding this group's hiatus.)

#### Science Roundtable – John Armstrong & Larry Ambs

This year, the Science Round Table met monthly in the Community Room of the new Hitchcock Center for the Environment. The presenters at meetings are drawn from local college science faculty, from LIR members with a science background or interest, and from local retired scientists and engineers. We typically have 15 to 20 members attending the presentations. All LIR members

are welcome to attend these meetings and to participate in the lively Q&A sessions, which are part of each presentation. (Please see above Summary regarding this group's hiatus.)

#### Theater Interest Group – Kay Klausewitz

The theater group, enjoyed paying reduced prices for excellent professional plays over the year: Fiorello at The Unicorn Theater in Stockbridge, A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder, and Jersey Boys, both at the Bushnell Theater in Hartford, CT. On Saturday, October 28, we traveled to East Haddam, CT, to see the musical Rags. Before the show we had lunch at The Gelston House, next door to the theater. Our tickets included a guided tour of the theater before the curtain rose. For an additional fee, we offer transportation by bus or van for those who want it.

#### Viewpoints – Hy Edelstein

Viewpoints is a spontaneous discussion group open to all LIR members. There are no preparations and four to five topics are proposed and discussed over the hour and a half meeting. Generally, topics concern political and social issues of the day. Meetings are held at 12:30 PM. on the first Thursday of every month throughout each month of the year. Viewpoints has been running continuously for many years. Attendance averages between 10 and 15 members. The discussions are invariably well informed, civil, of good humor, and spirited!

The preceding reports are based upon information submitted by the group facilitators and compiled by the Special Programs Chair.

## **Summer/ Winter Programs Report, 2018**

### **Nancy Denig, Chair**

Five new members have joined our team during the past year. Members at present include:

Nancy Denig, Chair	term ends 2018
Bob Barker	term ends 2019
Mary Franks, Co-chair	original term ends 2020
Karen Tatro	original term ends 2020
Faina Zilberberg	term ends 2020
Marybeth Bridegam	term ends 2021
Honore David	term ends 2021
Kay Klausewitz	term ends 2021
Diane Liebert	term ends 2021

Leadership: Mary Franks and Karen Tatro have agreed to serve as co-chairs after the current chair's term expires effective June, 2018.

Meetings: As usual, the committee met all together twice this past year, in anticipation of the ensuing season. Planning work continues less formally, as individuals carry out their specific project assignments.

On file: Committee files will be updated and organized prior to transfer to the upcoming leadership team. It is especially important to capture the wide range of program possibilities that have been recommended by other LIR members and brainstormed by Committee members over the past year.

## WINTER PROGRAMS

Winter programs attracted over 84 LIR members this past season, not counting the Memorial Program and popular Legislators' Forum, which had to be cancelled due to an unusual combination of circumstances (retirements and unexpected death of Rep. Kokot). The slate of programs featured:

A Rock Voices Concert (January 13, at the Northampton Academy of Music);  
Gazette Newspaper Tour (two groups on January 16 on Conz Street, Northampton);  
A Day at the Springfield Museums (on January 18, at the Springfield Quadrangle); and  
The Flynt Center of Early New England Life (on February 1, at Historic Deerfield).

## SUMMER PROGRAMS

Summer weather allows for more extended travel, as reflected in the slate of programs planned for the upcoming season:

Geology of the Connecticut River Valley field trip;  
A Day at Hancock Shaker Village;  
The Royal Family of Broadway, A Musical World Premiere  
A Lyra Music Festival concert;  
Clark Museum trip;  
A Visit to Storm King Sculpture Park; and  
A Walking Tour of Historic Deerfield Slave sites.

These and the aforementioned Winter programs are listed in greater detail in the LIR catalogues.

It has been a pleasure, chairing 5CLIR's Summer/Winter Program Committee for the past three years.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Denig

## **Great Decisions Committee Report, 2018** **Jake Greenburg, Prunella Fiddian-Green, Co-Chairs**

Using materials from the Foreign Policy Association, the Committee sponsored four morning-long sessions during spring, 2018 at the Northampton Senior Center.

This year's topics and speakers were:

April 6: 'The Waning of Pax Americana?' Thomas Johnson, Foreign Service Officer, USAID  
April 13: Media and Foreign Policy; Assistant Professor Paul Musgrave, University of Massachusetts Amherst  
April 20: US Global Engagement and the Military; Laura Reed, Visiting Lecturer, University of Massachusetts Amherst  
April 27: Global Health: Progress and Challenges; Professor Tim Ford, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Members of the Committee met monthly throughout the academic year to secure the speakers, organize the sessions, publicize the program, and manage its financial and logistical aspects. All speakers were clear and informative, stimulating spirited question and answer discussions. Attendance at the sessions averaged in around 80. We attribute the stable numbers to a wide ranging

publicity campaign that included a brochure, information placed in LIR materials, and announcements in a number of local media sources.

Publicity for the Great Decisions program was arranged by committee member Rich Parrish in two separate initiatives. Weekly notices for the GD events were entered into the Hampshire Gazette's online Events Calendar, which automatically generated the print notice in the Hampshire Life, Amherst Bulletin and Greenfield Recorder. That same online entry generated a more extensive event notice in the Gazette and Valley Advocate's online Events Calendar. In addition, a direct request was made to the Gazette's event editor, who followed up with a print article discussing the GD series in the daily paper.

The total cost of the operation included purchasing materials from the Foreign Policy Association, rental of the Northampton Senior Center for the sessions, honoraria for the speakers, publicity, and postage. We have yet to consolidate the financial situation, but it is assured that we will have a small net surplus.

Noted improvements in 2018: This year we elected to have four vs. five sessions all in April. We had a better audio visual system using the Senior Center's equipment, and more publicity. We continued with more brochures and placing them in a number of retirement facilities, public libraries, information booths and local vendors throughout Western Massachusetts. We added two interviews on the Bill Newman radio show on WHMP arranged by Richard Stonberg in an initial interview about 5 CLIR and the Great Decisions program. This was followed by an interview with speaker, Laura Reed, Assistant Lecturer at UMass Amherst, with an additional plug for Great Decisions. We have yet to assess their effectiveness.

Committee members noted effective communication throughout the program with the speakers. This was in part due to more internet and cell phone usage between the liaisons and speakers. The questionnaires will provide valuable feedback as to how and where we can improve in 2019. This far we have had excellent reviews.

Jake Greenburg, Chair, Prunella Fiddian-Green, Co-Chair, Paul Berman, Ann Brooks, Lyn Howe, Joan McKelvey, Richard Parish and Richard Stonberg

## **Member Events Committee Report, 2018**

**Gail Gaustad and Nancy Clune, Co-chairs**

The Member Events Committee provided three opportunities during the year for members to meet one another and socialize with new and old friends alike. In September, the annual Potluck Picnic was held in Gail and John Gaustad's backyard garden in Northampton. In February, a successful New Members' Coffee took place at Lathrop in Northampton. In April, members enjoyed the Spring Social at Hadley Farms Meeting House in Hadley.