

Activities Committee (former Summer/Winter program)  
2018-19 Annual Report  
Karen Tatro and Mary Franks , CoChairs

Members of Activities Committee

- Bob Barker 2016-2019
- Marybeth Bridegam 2018-2021
- Honore David 2018-2021
- Faina Zilberberg 2017 -2020
- Karen Tatro, Cochair 2018-2021
- Mary Franks, Cochair 2018-2021

The entire committee met 3 times this year. At each meeting we brainstorm ideas for places to visit and have developed a long list of possibilities. Each Committee Member chooses an event to investigate and plan if it seems feasible. We like to offer local destinations . These do not usually need a bus which which keeps our costs down and more of our members can attend.

The following events were offered:

Summer 2018

- Explore the Geology of the Connecticut River Valley
- The Royal family of Broadway, a Musical World Premiere in Pittsfield
- Lyra Music Festival concert at Smith College
- Clark Museum in Williamstown
- A Visit Storm King Sculpture Park-
- Walking Tour of Historic Deerfield Slave Sites

Winter 2019

- A Visit to the Polish Center in Chicopee
- Annual Memorial Program
- Tour of the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library at Forbes Library
- Tour of the Beneski Museum of Natural History at Amherst College
- Tour of the Gazette newspapers

WE ARE ALWAYS looking for new members and new places to visit

Karen Tatro and Mary Franks, Cochairs



## Curriculum Committee Report, 2019

Jim Harvey and Betsy Siersma, Co-Chairs

### **Seminars and Workshops**

Maintained a system for the submission, review and approval of proposed seminars/workshops; reviewed and approved 26 seminars and workshops for Fall 2018, and 23 for Spring 2019.

Provided liaisons to communicate with moderators, and assisted in finding co-moderators.

Planned and offered a Moderator's Meeting, February 28, attended by about 25 people.

Worked with Office Manager to develop a descriptive seminar/workshop catalog for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 Previews, and assisted with the Previews.

Notified moderators of those Previews and encouraged them to attend.

Contributed to the making of a 2019-20 academic year calendar.

Audited the implementation of the spring 2019 lottery (Dec. 12) for oversubscribed seminars/workshops (and will audit the fall 2019 lottery on June 5).

Maintained and updated the Moderator's Handbook and Participant's Handbook and encouraged their use.

Developed an ad-hoc Seminar Development Committee charged with considering options instead of or in addition to the yearly Moderator's Meeting. This committee initiated "In the Pipeline," a monthly report in the 5CLIR Reporter that has a look at seminars/workshops being developed. They also offered monthly small group meetings at committee members' houses open to folks interested in talking through seminar/workshop ideas.

### **Policy Adoptions and Recommendations**

Evaluated and approved elimination of summer seminars/workshops, due to low interest. It was thought that there would be room for ideas that would be more flexible in form and content that could be scheduled separately from the more formal review of the Curriculum Committee. An example is Jim Harvey's proposed Power-Point workshop which will be held in early September before seminars begin. (Council approved)

The CC is in the process of addressing hearing issues and other disabilities such as vision, mobility, and memory. A subcommittee was formed to recommend next steps, including inclusion of new wording in the Moderator's and Participant's Handbooks. The recommendation and changes should be implemented by June 2019.

## Finance Committee Report, 2019

The Finance Committee met twice during the past twelve months. In September 2018, we reviewed the final reports for FY18, which ended June 30, 2018. We recommended to Council that no funds be withdrawn from our Investment Fund this year, as the Reserve Fund remains comfortably above the Council-required minimum. We reviewed the Operations Manual policy on membership refunds and recommended no change.

At our February meeting we developed the budget proposal for FY20, which was finalized by e-mail and adopted by Council at its March meeting.

## Great Decisions Committee Report, 2018-2019

### Prunella Fiddian-Green, Richard Parrish, Co-Chairs

The Great Decisions 2019 program is notable for its transition to a new era. This was initiated mid-2018 by the Northampton Mayor's changed policies regarding the use of the Northampton Senior Center for our program, ending our long tenure. In short order, the committee secured Hadley Farms Meeting House, Hadley, MA for this year's program. Their calendar made it possible for three non-consecutive programs late April into May. As of this report, there is one final program on May 10, 2019.

Using materials from the Foreign Policy Association, the Committee sponsored three morning-long sessions during spring. This year's topics and speakers were:

April 19: Global Migration and The Rise of Populism; Professor Emeritus Vincent Ferraro, Mt. Holyoke College

April 26: The Middle East: Regional Disorder; Professor Gregory White, Smith College

May 10: (still to be held) Cyber Conflict and Geopolitics; Assistant Professor Amir Houmansadr, 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. The speakers were clear and informative, stimulating spirited question and answer discussions with consistently high approval ratings. Attendance at the first two sessions averaged in around 60. We attribute the lower numbers this year due to later, non-consecutive dates and major holidays on April 19. Evaluation forms will provide valuable feedback in making improvements to the 2020 program.

Publicity for the Great Decisions program was arranged by Co-chair, Rich Parrish, for a second successful result. 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. The Great Decisions brochure, managed by Committee member, Lyn Howe, is our widest annual information resource across the Pioneer Valley.

The total cost of the operation includes purchasing materials from the Foreign Policy Association, rental of Hadley Farms Meeting House, honoraria for the speakers, publicity, and postage. We have yet to consolidate the financial results, but we anticipate a deficit due to increased costs.

Noted improvements in 2019: The new venue at Hadley Farms Meeting House elicited positive feedback across the board for location, parking, refreshments and technological advantages with back-up staff, resulting in seamless events.

Teamwork among the Committee members during this year's transition was a learning experience in itself. We were united in our hope for Great Decisions 2019 to succeed. Effective communication among members, and by liaisons and speakers, contributed to this year's success. This was in part

due to increased internet and cell phone usage. Committee members Bruce Brewer and Joan McKelvey are responsible for initiating a Council ad-hoc committee in 2019-2020 to explore a Facebook presence for wider 5CLIR publicity in the Pioneer Valley. This is a potential future benefit for Great Decisions.

Respectfully submitted,

Prunella Fiddian-Green, Chair, Richard Parrish, Co-Chair, Paul Berman, Bruce Brewer, Lyn Howe, Linda Lau, Joan McKelvey, Richard Stonberg

## PR Committee, 2018-19 Report

Nina M. Scott

I published a series of five articles in the Gazette this spring, focusing on foreign-born members of 5CLIR: Vivienne Carey and Roger Webb (UK); Eleanor Johnson (Lebanon); Jim Harvey (India); Honoré David (Mexico); and Patricia Warner (Canada). They were great fun to do, and the Gazette's photographer (Jerrey Roberts) did a fine job illustrating them.

I have one more article, on Katy van Geel's and my course on "Appalachia", scheduled to appear shortly.

Pru Fiddian-Green and Rich Parrish have handled the publicity for Great Decisions, and have done an excellent job.

Margaret Russell, who has an extensive background in journalism, has volunteered to join me on the PR Committee, which will be a huge help. We are now co-chairs.