



# The Happening

Learning in Retirement at Iona College  
(914) 633-2675

[www.iona.edu/liric](http://www.iona.edu/liric)

Fall/Winter 2016

## LIRIC Executive Board

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Director:	Suzanne Page, Ph.D

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I write as we complete our first 4 weeks of the Fall program of classes, and find myself pleased with LIRIC's presentation of classes and meetings under our life long learning commitment.

During our first week we had our New Member Breakfast. Lorraine Rosano, our Membership Chair, advised that we have 42 new members...20, of which, accepted her invitation and attended the event. Besides word of mouth, many new members found LIRIC through the Internet - with "Google". Lastly, there was great interest in the Iona audit program. LIRIC has 24 members enrolled in the Fall program. Iona audit registration will take place January 11<sup>th</sup>. Pick up the *Perks and Privileges* handout for more information.

In general, thanks to Linda Whetzel and her Curriculum Committee, I find the Fall class programs strong and having high attendance. I would at this time also like to thank the LIRIC voluntary presenters for all the work that they have done in arranging their programs for us. It shows very high quality, and we all thank you all for that!

## LIRIC GOES TO CUBA

At the Davenport luncheon last spring, a group of LIRIC trip enthusiasts asked us if LIRIC could arrange a trip to CUBA, and so we called Road Scholar and set it up! The trip is scheduled to take place May 25 to June 1, 2017, and includes 7 nights of accommodations, round trip air from New York to Cuba, 18 meals, lectures, field trips, and other exciting and informative experiences. If

you're interested, type <http://www.road scholar.org/ia-liric-22928> into your browser, or call Road Scholar at 800-322-5315, reference program #22928, "Cuba Today: People and Society from New York," which begins May 25, 2017 and say that you are a LIRIC member. A deposit of \$500 is due upon enrollment. The program price is \$4,695 double occupancy, \$5,983 single occupancy. Brochures are available at GOC.

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LLI RESOURCE NETWORK

## Mother Nature Smiles On LIRIC

**Ed. Note:** On October 21, 2016, LIRIC's latest trip was on the "Essex Steam Train and Riverboat Cruise" in Connecticut. Gail reports for *The Happening*.

We arrived at the Essex Depot a little early, and had some time to browse the gift shop before boarding our beautifully restored 1920s Pullman car for lunch. We had our own dining car, complete with bar, kitchen, and of course "private necessary room". Our conductor came around to punch our tickets, and the servers offered beverages as the train pulled out of the station. Our three course lunches were served as we made our way to the Deep River Landing for our cruise aboard the **Becky Thatcher** riverboat along the Connecticut River.

The trip, a 2 ½ hour journey began at the Essex Station and traveled through the countryside aboard vintage rail cars pulled by an authentic steam locomotive. On the river portion of the trip, we saw wildlife, lush scenery, and historic sites such as the Gillette Castle. The castle acquired by the state in 1943 hosts over 100,000 visitors annually.

Our turning point for the return portion of the trip was the East Haddam Swing Bridge. The entire bridge swings out 90 degrees to allow passage of very tall vessels. We passed the restored Goodspeed Opera House which now features a theater as well as an elegant restaurant. The Connecticut River is considered clean enough for swimming and boating, and is under the control of a Gateway Commission since 1972. The return part of the cruise was in the hands of a computer, a very 21<sup>st</sup> century innovation.

The train club car was waiting for us as we disembarked the **Becky Thatcher** for our return to the Essex Depot and our bus ride back to Iona.

It was a beautiful day. Thank you Florence Wagner, trip planner extraordinaire, for a day well planned and carried out.

Gail Apfel

## A Transition

by Bradley Hochberg (aka. son of William Hochberg)

This past spring I, and my daughter's cat Cashew, began a transition from Western Pennsylvania to New Rochelle. A transition that is still ongoing but is stabilizing. A transition that has brought me home, for now. A transition that has brought me to my father as a roommate and an elder caregiver. A transition that has seen my daughter recently make it through graduate school at Carnegie Mellon University. A transition that now sees great frailty in my father's physical capacities to carry out his mental instructions. A transition driven by love and respect and honor. Finally, a transition that puts me at the Corner (or is it Crossroads) from where I was... to where I am... to where I am going.

I take my role as full-time caregiver quite seriously. For instance, I am mindful of maintaining my father's independence. The more I do the more, potentially and subconsciously, he comes to expect. The more I cook and clean the less he cooks and cleans, perhaps. The more I bring things to him the less he gets off the couch to fend for himself, perhaps. The more I remind him of his next doctor's

appointment the less he has to recall it himself, perhaps. It is important, to me, for my father to retain and know that he retains much of his independence. Moreover, I want to participate in maintaining, possibly improving, a quality of life and not preside over an accelerating decrease.

Even more sinister than generating dependence is co-dependence. How do I observe myself and test a growing co-dependence in this caregiver role? Articles I have read suggests there are four common warning signs: a) knowing what's best for our loved one and insisting on making that happen; b) pleasing everyone, but not yourself; c) reading your loved one's mind; and d) being pleased that the ill person depends on you. These might suggest the caregiver is benefiting more than the loved one. This sliding along the continuum from independence to co-dependence requires attention and vigilance. A caregiver is not a spectator but a participant in the loved one's condition.

This transition continues ...

## SPOTLIGHT ON Irene Schindler

There is a twinkle in her eye when Irene Schindler, teacher of LIRIC's Writing Workshop, talks about the art of writing. A good writer has a "wonderful command of language, is able to get a reader's attention, knows how to build a story, and how to let it go."

Irene is retiring from teaching the writing course at the end of Spring, 2017, because she feels that it's time. Irene has spent countless hours preparing for the course, writing comments on students' work, and gathering and sorting items to be incorporated into the LIRICAL MUSINGS, an end-of-year compilation of students' writings. She's proud of the fact that students come back to her course year after year. She's particularly proud of the way "new ones come and fit in with the group." She happily talks about the quality of the stories her students produce, and how it improves over time.

Irene joined LIRIC in the mid

90's and starting teaching the course the next year, ...and 20 years later, it's still going strong. Irene's bedrock belief is "when an old person dies, an entire library is lost." Each and every person has a story to tell, and in her course, students are encouraged to write about aspects of their lives.

For 43 years, Irene worked as a teacher and school administrator, and retired, in 1993, from Mount Vernon High School after 34 years, 20 years as department head of the business department. Irene knew that she wanted to be a teacher from her earliest years as a young child "playing school" in her playhouse. She worked with students "who sometimes had a poor opinion of themselves, to build confidence, and provide opportunities to excel." She was active in the school and, as an example, attended all home basketball games. She still

manages to attend a few each year.

In the long gone era, when businesses conducted contests involving submissions of 25 words or less for products, Irene was a whiz capturing more than 75 prizes including winning a 1955 two-tone Chevrolet sedan. She wrote a highly successful textbook about speedwriting, a form of shorthand which uses the alphabet rather than symbols. She was sent all over the United States by the publisher to train teachers missing only Hawaii, Alaska, and Mississippi.

Irene, mother of 3, grandmother of 6, great-grandmother of 3, plans to remain active in LIRIC, and might even attend a writing course.

Her words of advice to all LIRIC writers and wannabees: it's hard to start; we all need a push; prompts help; most importantly, we all have a story to tell.

### STORMY WEATHER

In the event of bad weather, LIRIC closings will be announced in the following places:

**Listen to:** WCBS 880 AM; WVOX 1460 AM; WHUD 101.7 FM

**Watch:** The bottom bar on Optimum Channel 12 or Verizon FIOS 1 OR

**Log on to:** [Westchester.news12.com/weather/school closings](http://Westchester.news12.com/weather/school_closings) or [fios1news.com/LowerHudson Valley/weather/view school closings](http://fios1news.com/LowerHudsonValley/weather/view_school_closings)

### President's Message

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LIRIC's long-time secretary, Eileen Potash, has resigned for health reasons. The secretary is an officer of LIRIC whose job is to take and distribute the minutes of meetings of the executive board and general membership meetings, as outlined in our bylaws. If you are interested taking this position on an interim basis, please contact Chris McCormick, LIRIC President.



## MEMBER NEWS UPDATE

Fran Conrath, long-time LIRIC member, passed away recently. We send our sincere sympathy to Fran's family for their loss.

Norma & Paul Warner prove that the couple who "play" together also "heal" together. Norma & Paul are each recovering from recent health issues. Good for them!

Eileen Potash, former Board Secretary and frequent contributor to the LIRIC Letter, has suffered a heart-wrenching loss. Eileen's son Tom, who always ferried her back & forth to her numerous medical appointments, passed away suddenly from a heart attack. It is heart-wrenching to lose a loved one - but to part with one's child is not the most natural thing. Our hearts go out to Eileen. We know that her strong faith will help her bear this tragic loss.

Jerry Millman, who, along with wife Cheryl, head the Hospitality Committee, has had some serious surgery. We look forward to seeing Jerry doing "cookie duty" real soon and are keeping him in our thoughts and prayers for a complete and speedy recovery.

On a happier note: Barbara Nissim is eagerly awaiting the birth of her first great-grandchild in December. What a nice way to end the year!

Robert Tritsch, LIRIC member since 2008, has recently passed away. A sympathy card was sent to the family.

### **Ed. Note:**

*Contact Barbara Mohalley at [Mohalleys@optonline.net](mailto:Mohalleys@optonline.net) or call (914) 576-2311 with news, good or sad, involving a LIRIC member.*

## New Members Welcomed At Breakfast, October 13<sup>th</sup>

About two dozen new members were hosted by the LIRIC Board at a breakfast held in their honor at GOC on Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. Chris McCormick, LIRIC's President, and various LIRIC board members, along with Suzanne Page, LIRIC's Director, began by speaking about their experiences with LIRIC, along with some of the advantages provided to LIRIC

members due to LIRIC's association with Iona College. The new LIRIC members were urged to participate and get involved. As an organization mainly run by volunteers, all were urged to step up and join committees, and consider teaching a lesson, or a course. Each of the attendees then introduced themselves, and spoke of their backgrounds, and

how they learned about LIRIC, and reasons for coming. The common theme was "love of learning." and the need to stay mentally and physically active in retirement.

The breakfast was prepared by Cheryl and Jerry Millman, and Gail Apfel, and was enjoyed by all.

## From Plan To Presentation-Part Two

**Ed. Note:** *In the last issue of The Happening, Part One appeared.*

You may have noticed that we almost always have an Autumn Mélange or a Spring Salmagundi on our schedule. This allows us to fill gaps in the program with a series of single totally unrelated lectures. Next spring, however, we don't expect to have any space; indeed we have a plethora of possible courses and may not even have room for all of them (oh, happy day!). How did we get them? In a variety of ways. In June we asked the Dean of Iona's School of Arts and Science to see if any of their departments would be interested in presenting at LIRIC – and two departments contacted us immediately to offer spring courses. A former presenter, Jean Busatti, admitted she had more to say about Egypt, and Shirley Radcliffe realized she'd only gotten up to the Renaissance in her fall Powerful Women series and needed at least four more classes to cover her subject adequately. Joyce Kent had more bioethical issues to talk about, and Bob Kent had more to say about significant Supreme Court cases. Then Professor Emeritus of English, John Mahon said he'd been thinking for some time about collaborating with Brother Morgan, a colleague in the history department, about a class on Irish History and Literature and wondered if we'd be interested.

So filling the schedule will be easy this time around – well, except for the actual scheduling. First there are the presenter problems. When does Greg Koster come back from wintering in the south? Do any other presenters have travel plans? The Speech Communications Department wants four

sessions at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

They can't take the first four dates because of Iona's spring break, so who's available for those?

We should give Jean a 12:30 time slot so she doesn't hit rush hour traffic commuting to and from Long Island, but weather is still a bit "iffy" in early March with snow still possible, so she should take the last four spring dates. Then there are the more global concerns. Which classes are more likely to pull people in at 10:30 in the morning? Will we lose people for a 2:00 class if we schedule a class with a small but loyal following at 12:30? So-o many considerations!

The people on Curriculum, bless them, do all the contacting: getting the best times and dates from the presenters in their respective fields (Joyce Kent for Science and Technology, Linda Creary and Paula Porricelli for Social Sciences, Gail Apfel for Fine & Performing Arts, Shirley Radcliffe for Humanities) and ascertaining flexibility of scheduling; soliciting course descriptions; getting biographies to use in introducing the presenters; checking out tech needs to convey to Suzanne. The entire committee (add Mary Arnone, Ernie Odierna, Lila Ogman, Jim O'Neill, Viviane Ponslet and Mel Radner to the mix) sits down to put the program together (mid-June for the fall, mid-December for the spring), I type everything up and send the catalog off for formatting, then proof it four or five times before sending the finished product to Iona for printing.

Voilà – we have gone from plan to program; now on to presentation!

*Linda Whetzel*

# ***HELP WANTED!!!!!!!***

**by Cheryl Millman**

## **COOKIE LOVERS: The HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE WANTS YOU**

**Ed.Note:** *LIRIC needs everyone to pitch in.*

The LIRIC cookie elves, (usually referred to as the Hospitality Committee) are in need of your help.

### **The following requirements are needed to qualify as a LIRIC elf:**

- \* You must be a LIRIC member who plans to attend either a **10:30** or a **12:30 class**. (You need not attend every day.) You must be of sound mind and understand that having coffee & cookies before and during class is as important as attending each class.
- \* All of the supplies are kept in the LIRIC closet in 3 separate crates. One crate contains all of the items you'll need for the day. **The purchasing of supplies will not be your responsibility.**

### **The job description is as follows:**

#### **A.M.**

- \* You should arrive approximately 15 minutes before the first class.
- \* Coffee cups, cold cups and tea should be put on the hospitality table.
- \* Cookies, napkins, stirrers and milk also are needed.
- \* Once these tasks are completed your job is done. (replenish supplies as needed)

#### **P.M.**

- \* At about **1:45** you can say "last call - for coffee" and then start putting everything back in the crate. The crate then needs to be returned to the LIRIC closet.
- \* (The only thing that remains on the table is the coffee urn, the hot water decanter and the water pitchers.)
- \*

Now that you know how simple becoming an elf is, I hope to hear from you. I can be reached at 914-413-0522.

LIRIC doesn't have cold storage or kitchen privileges, and so can't provide our members with fruit or vegetables, but sometimes people donate them. LIRIC loves healthy snacks!

Thanks to the Fredrick sisters for bringing us fresh apples!

### **REMEMBER:**

Age is a case of mind over matter. If you don't mind it, it doesn't matter!!! – *The Happening.*