



ALRI Newsletter

Arlington Learning in Retirement Institute

Connecting....
People, Community,
and Knowledge

Winter 2005
Volume 2, Issue 1

. . . N E W S A L E R T . . .

- Plan to attend the ALRI Members' Open House on February 11 at the George Mason University's Arlington Campus beginning at 9:00 a.m. This opportunity introduces instructors and highlights Spring Semester Courses and Special Events
- The ALRI Spring Catalog has been mailed to members. Check out exciting new courses, favorite courses that will be continued, and Special Events.
- Classes begin the first week in March. Register early for a better chance to get the courses you want.
- Author Amy Schapiro, will initiate ALRI's spring literary events with a discussion of **Millicent Fenwick: Her Way**, February 7, at 3:00 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library. Ms. Fenwick was the feisty Congresswoman from New Jersey who served as the model for Garry Trudeau's "Doonesbury" character Lacey Davenport.
- Go behind the scenes at Signature Theatre, February 15 at 5:00 p.m., and learn about the process of mounting the upcoming production, **Ten Unknowns**: selecting the play, the script, casting, design meetings and technical rehearsals. On March 13, 7:00 p.m.: invitation to final dress rehearsal. On March 29, 7:00 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library: Rick DesRochers, Signature Theatre Artistic Director, introduces playwright Jon Robin Baitz's **Ten Unknowns**, a powerfully intense play that presents the challenge of bringing the art world and the canvases of abstract expressionism to the stage. March 30, 7:30 p.m., attend final performance followed by discussion with the cast (discounted ticket price \$29).
- Attend a National Symphony Open Rehearsal, February 27 at 9:30 a.m.
- Martin Ogle, Chief Naturalist for the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority examines the intersections of biology and geology and the Gaia Theory, which proposes that the earth is an alive, interrelated, self-regulating system, March 16, 7:00 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library.
- Join us for the tour of the National Museum of Women In The Arts, March 25, 2:00 p.m.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

George Mason University has notified ALRI that its ID card server had a security breach. Your information may have been compromised. ALRI is suspending the processing of new GMU ID cards. If you have any questions, please call the ALRI Office at 703-228-2144.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Meet the Author Series

February 7, 3:00 p.m., Arl. Central Library
Millicent Fenwick: Her Way, by Amy Schapiro

Signature Theatre Play

Ten Unknowns

February 15, 5:00 p.m. at Signature Theatre
Introduction to Signature Theatre and **Ten Unknowns**. Director Rick DesRochers and his design team present their approach to the production from page-to-stage. No charge, but reservations needed. Call ALRI 703-228-2144.

March 13, 7:00 p.m. **Final Dress Rehearsal**
Reservations needed. Call ALRI 703-228-2144.

March 29, 7:00 p.m. at the Arl. Central Library
Director Rick DesRochers discusses playwright Jon Robin Baitz. All are welcome to this event.

March 30, 7:30 p.m. **Attend Performance of *Ten Unknowns***, followed by discussion with director and cast. For Reservations, call ALRI 703-228-2144. Discounted tickets are \$29.00.

Members' Open House

February 11, 9:00 a.m., GMU Arlington Campus
ALRI Members meet instructors

Other Special Events

February 27, 9:30 a.m., **Open Rehearsal National Symphony Orchestra. Reservations call ALRI 703-228-2144**

March 16, 7:00, p.m., Arl. Central Library
Martin Ogle discusses the Gaia Theory (Multi-media presentation)

March 25, 2:00 p.m., **Tour the National Museum of Women in the Arts. Reservations ALRI 703-228-2144**. Discounted tickets \$10.00.

April 19, 1:00 p.m., **Tour Supreme Court**. Reservations needed.

April 27, 9:00 a.m., **Spring Birding Field Trip** at Fort C S Smith, Reservations needed.

From the President

Once again, I want to recognize all the volunteers who made 2004 such a great success and who are continuing to make ALRI the place to look for meaningful intellectual engagement. To everyone involved in course and special events development; to the many producers of the catalog and newsletter (writers, editors, proof readers and mailers); class aides and the office support and hospitality volunteers, many thanks.

By now you should have received your Spring Catalog for 2005. Remember to attend the February 11, 2005 Members' Open House to meet the spring course instructors. See you then and in class.

John Sprott



*You see things; and you say, "Why?"
But I dream things that never were;
and I say, "Why not?"*

George Bernard Shaw

"Back to Methuselah"

(1921), Part 1, Act 1

New Web Site

by Ken McLean

ALRI has revamped its web site! You can reach it at www.ArlingtonLRI.org. Please change your web browser settings to this new address.

The new site is designed to provide you with better service. It is now connected to our database so you can get the latest information on courses. It is also interactive so you can now send information to us, as well as get information from us.

Here are some of the new features:

- **Course Schedule:** You can view the latest information on our courses for the Spring term, including a brief description of the course and instructor.
- **Course Availability:** You can find out how many seats are currently available in each course. These numbers will be updated automatically as members register for courses.
- **On-line Volunteer Application:** You can volunteer for ALRI activities on-line by clicking the appropriate buttons. You don't have to fill out a paper form and mail it to us (unless you want to).
- **Improved Navigation:** You can now get to any page on our web site from any other page with just a single mouse-click. You will always know exactly where you are at all times.

Our future plans for the web site include paying the membership, registration and course fees on-line.

Please let our **WebMaster, Vivian Webb**, know what you think of our new site. She can be e-mailed at vwebbb@comcast.net. Please include any suggestions for additional features you would like to see.

From the Administrator's Desk

The ALRI Administrator's job newly established last year is developing rapidly to satisfy the needs which led to the creation of the position. Here is the overview of the activities which keep me involved in the management of the institution: review and respond to all e-mail received by ALRI (currently running at an average of 30 overnight and another 15-20 during working hours); field questions from volunteers, board members and outside contacts; schedule rooms for meetings and classes; research and purchase office equipment and supplies; maintain administrative and archival records; process bills and reimbursement requests; write and review procedures for administrative duties ranging from running the postal meter to processing course evaluations.

During the "catalog" season, the Administrator aids in class scheduling, writing of non-course material, proofreading and maintaining the online files. During the semester, the Administrator manages changes in class rosters, schedules, and room assignments while juggling equipment needs and classroom issues.

With three valued volunteers (Carolyn Gosling, Ann Kelleran and Jack Royer) who devote a morning or afternoon each week at the ALRI cubicle, we are well on the way to maintaining a first-class office. Call us with your questions or to volunteer from noon to 3 p.m. on Monday through Friday except Wednesday at 703-228-2144 or e-mail at alri@arlingtonlri.org.

Marjorie Varner
ALRI Administrator

Know your limits, but never stop trying to exceed them.

~~~~Author Unknown~~~~

ALRI Newsletter
a quarterly publication of the
Arlington Learning
in Retirement Institute

ALRI
2801 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 306
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E-mail: alri@arlingtonlri.org
New Web site, www.ArlingtonLRI.org

We welcome your articles , questions and suggestions

Editors:
Ann Holmes, Joann Levine, Leanne Peters,
Carol Mason Downs

Welcome New Members

William H. Allen
 Gail N. Beaumont
 Hanne L. Berg
 Lawrence H. Berlin
 Ronald E. Bobel
 Ellen M. Bozman
 Patricia Carlson
 Emily L. Carnes
 Sally Ann Carr
 Eric W. Carroll
 Dianne L. Carroll
 Rene Costales
 Bonnie Gay
 Susan J. Graham
 Gay M. Hammerman
 Richard Hauke
 Edward Hilz
 Barbara Jeanblanc
 James K. Jeanblanc
 Johanna A. Klous
 S. Lillian Kremer
 Donna J. Krupa
 Norhay Kusse
 Ezedine H. Mabrouk
 William K. MacReynolds

Jill E. Majors
 Margaret Menos
 Louise Marlowe
 D. Ann Martine
 Sarah A. McGunnigle
 Jim W. McGunnigle
 Mary P. Morrison
 James D. Munson
 Jill Neuville
 Y. Okuda
 Florence Otstot
 Ruth H. Page
 Patricia J. Parson
 Elmer R. Premo
 Margel S. Prince
 Stephen Ruth
 Bruch B. Sever
 Catherine C. Showalter
 Rosalind D. Singer
 Robert Stone
 Warren E. Thompson
 Philip C. Wilcox
 Philip Yaney

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

We had a successful social for new members in July, and our intention is to hold additional gatherings. Over a hundred new members joined in July, August, September and early October so we held another social on October 15. It was great fun and we are delighted that we are attracting such interesting and enthusiastic members. We plan another newcomers' occasion early in the new year.



to relax and socialize outside of our usual committee meetings. It was an enjoyable start to the holiday season.

The Recruitment subgroup (Pat Chatten, Sonya Elmer, Arlene Kigin, Mary Schroeder, as well as the Co-Chairs) had several planning sessions during the fall to develop material for a recruitment drive in January. Letters with ALRI information material will be sent out to civic and

community associations. The cover letter includes an offer to give a brief ALRI presentation to small groups. We are interested in contacting any organization that may have an interest in having a representative from the Membership Committee give a short presentation on ALRI. If you know of such an organization, please let us know. We can be contacted through the ALRI e-mail alri@arlingtonlri.org or the ALRI office 703-228-2144.

Clubs

Two ALRI Clubs have started—the Travel Club and a Current Issues Discussion Club. To join the Travel Club, or if you are interested in starting a club, please contact our Club Liaisons: Gary Lee and Bernice Foster. They can be reached through the ALRI e-mail alri@arlingtonlri.org or 703-228-2144. You will be hearing more from us on this subject in the upcoming months.

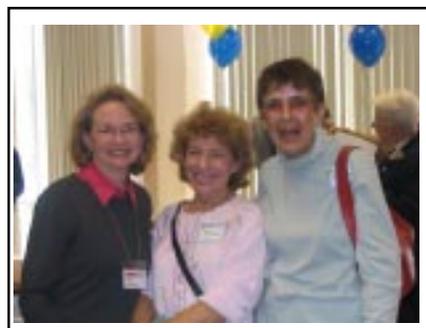
Sharon Bisdee and Jeannie Sprott

Current Issues Discussion Club

Are you interested in getting together with several other ALRI members to discuss current issues such as Iraq, the environment, Virginia's financial problems, Arlington schools or other topics of interest? Several members have already indicated an interest in joining. The club will meet once or twice a month at a location TBD. If interested, please contact Doug First at dfirst@gmu.edu or 703-528-8359.

New Member Socials

will be held through the year



The Co-Chairs hosted a holiday party on December 3 for Membership Committee volunteers. We had a full house and everyone enjoyed the opportunity



Photographs courtesy of Joe Furgal

Academic Programs Committee

May We Introduce Constance McAdam New Academic Programs Chair

The Academic Programs Committee has just finished a year of notable success in organizing challenging course offerings in several broad areas of concentration. The upcoming spring semester offers a strong curriculum of interesting courses. Considering the fact that we are one of the youngest Learning in Retirement Institutes in the country, this is a remarkable achievement.

There are seven major areas of concentration: Fine Arts, Theater and Music; History; Law, Politics, and Political Affairs; Literature and Writing; Science and Technology; Health and Wellness; and Social Science.

There are great courses in each of these areas. For example:

- John Edward Niles is once again offering his popular course on opera. Every semester is different, and this time he will concentrate on the great opera singers of the 20th Century.
- In History, we will learn about Rasputin and the closing days of the Romanoff Dynasty, Medieval Rome from the ever-popular Tom Wukitsch, and yet another chapter in the history of Arlington as well as a study of the Gettysburg campaign.
- The political waterfront will be covered with courses such as the role of the United States in the Middle East from the collapse of the Ottoman Empire to the beginning of the 21st Century.
- In Health and Wellness, Arlington physician Tom Connally is on the faculty again with an overview of how the body works and what can go wrong.
- Literature and Writing courses will cover the heroes and villains of the Old Testament, and exploration of the self in 18th and 19th century literature.
- Science and Technology courses will give us a naturalist's tour of Arlington and a course on food science and the technology of cooking.
- Social Science courses will include exploration of the links between environmental management and sustainable development.

A significant feature of ALRI's program is a number of courses that are team taught by a group of distinguished experts. The Potomac Institute will offer a series of lectures on terrorism. GMU faculty members will discuss their analyses of pioneering plays and stage techniques, and top-level diplomats will offer lectures in critical international issues.

There are many more ALRI courses. You owe it to yourself to look at them all; it would be an unusual person who would find nothing of interest!

Richard Barton

The Board of ALRI has just appointed me Chair of the ALRI Academic Programs Committee. I know I will find it quite a challenge to follow the leadership of Richard Barton, who has given so much time, talent and effort in developing ALRI and all the wonderful courses that have occurred in the past several years. I am very excited about working with the dedicated Committee, who take on the many tasks involved in recruiting instructors and completing the follow-up details necessary to get the catalog published.

The Committee has four areas of responsibility. First, and the most challenging, is the recruitment of instructors and courses in the arts and sciences categories listed in the previous article. It is important for us to have a variety of subjects so that we can interest as many of our members as possible in taking several courses.

The second responsibility is that of editing materials received from instructors so that the course material can be formatted for the catalog. The next responsibility is that of formatting all data. Finally, evaluation of each course is handled by a subcommittee that analyzes forms completed by students at the end of the term.

All of these tasks are executed by enthusiastic members of the committee who spend many hours attending meetings, making phone calls, sending and receiving e-mails and editing materials. Those dedicated committee members are: Richard Barton, Robert Chatten, Patrice DeHaven, Frank Derby, Bonnie Finkler, Maury Flagg, Joanne Gibson, Jerry Greenwald, Don Igo, Lee Nash, Joan Reed, Jack Royer, Sharon Schoumacher and Thurlow Wilson. Leanne Peters assists us as liaison from the ALRI web page and the newsletter.

We owe many thanks of appreciation for the work the Academic Programs Committee does and for the successful results that occur each term.

**Constance McAdam, Chair
Academic Programs Committee**

What ALRI Needs is You!

Do you have an idea for a new course? Would you teach or coordinate a new course? Do you know someone willing to teach a course? If so, the ALRI Academic Programs Committee wants to hear from you. Please send contact information to the Academic Programs Committee at alri@arlingtonlri.org.

Voices From the Classes

Did you miss Civics in Junior High School and skip Political Science 101 in college? But you still read the Washington Post and wonder why Congress does some of the things it does?

ALRI has a course for you that I can heartily recommend. It is Richard Barton's course, *The United States Congress: How It Works--A Study of Sausage Making*. He compares Congress' operations to sausage making, but if that is true, he has the recipe. You will learn about Congress' organization, structure, where the power is, and some of the dynamics of how it all works. But that is not the good part. You could learn that from Political Science 101. Richard Barton has spent a lifetime working on Capitol Hill. He knows it backwards and forwards. He has very knowledgeable friends who will be guest instructors on specific topics. The best part, however, is that he encourages questions. He is a master raconteur, and there is where you will really learn about Congress and Congressmen. Even if you don't really care about Congress, the stories are reason enough to take the class.

Lee Nash

If one of your interests is music, then consider taking the *Opera* class.

John Edward Niles, the instructor, is charming, well informed and full of anecdotes that are informative and amusing. I've taken the *Opera* class three of the four semesters and I hope to continue.

Priscilla Becker

From Dr. Norman Nathan's class on *Shakespeare: The Play's the Thing*, enthusiastic students had this to say:

It's always a treat to take Dr. Nathan's class. He provides a novel perspective on even the most mundane issues. His Shakespeare class was no exception. His lecturing style is conversational, his presentation is sprinkled with humor, and soon Shakespeare seems like another play you'd see at your neighborhood theater.

Dawn Elvis

Professor Norman Nathan's course was thought-provoking. A class session always inspired me to read the play at home. This home time made me look forward to the next class. It is not easy to say exactly why this happened. It must have to do with Professor Nathan's wide Shakespeare experience and his way of encouraging students to have and clarify their own opinions.

Bob Schwabauer

From Tom Dunlap's class, *The Poetry of W. B. Yeats*, this student found an epiphany:

Although I am an avid reader, I found poetry to be pretty daunting. So I went to class, hoping to sit quietly and absorb some helpful hints.

Instead I found a seminar of fourteen people who sat around the table with the teacher and read and talked about the Yeats poems he recommended for each class. It was a very enjoyable and enlightening experience. Tom encouraged class participation and never disparaged our observations or questions. It was fun to listen to the reactions of others, which often brought out new insights I would not have seen. In fact, although I am encouraged now to read more poetry on my own, I will very much miss the comments of the other participants as well as of the teacher. If another poetry class is offered, I will be there.

Marcia Field

I love growing older.

Johnny Depp, Actor

Age 41 years

Class Aides

Many thanks to the members who served as Class Aides for the Fall 2004 classes. We appreciate your time, communication skills, and energy, and we hope you'll volunteer again to serve in this important capacity.

Class Aides fill a critical role in ALRI's mission by helping the instructors with administrative details such as photocopying, setting up audio-visual equipment, taking attendance, and notifying other class members of schedule changes. Aides receive free parking and a "Class Aide Information" guide describing principle duties as well as key contact names and phone numbers for ALRI members and classroom site staff.

A meeting of those members who served as Class Aides in the Fall 2004 term was held in early January 2005 to review the Fall semester and plan for the future.

John Niehaus will be taking some time off as Coordinator of the Class Aides Program. Carolyn Gosling has agreed to serve as Coordinator for the Spring 2005 term, and Cindy Hatcher will be the Associate Coordinator. Please contact Carolyn if you are interested in participating as Class Aide.

Carolyn Gosling cgosling@earthlink.net 703-532-8453

Kudos to ALRI Catalog Volunteers

Arlington Learning In Retirement Institute's Spring 2005 catalog is soon to be in ALRI members hands. It will contain thirty exciting courses. Spring catalogs represent a particular problem – timing. There is so little time to do so much.

Beginning with a massive effort by the Academic Programs Committee to pin down courses and obtain descriptions, a number of dedicated volunteers must then allocate the individual courses across the several class room locations ALRI is privileged to utilize. Among their challenges: meeting each instructor's scheduling needs; conforming to each site's time and room constraints; minimizing competing time allocations for courses of similar interest; matching AV equipment availability at each site to the courses' needs. Then, producing the catalog itself is a massive editing/copy checking, and data compilation job. With material coming from so many sources consistency and completeness are hard to come by.

So kudos to the ALRI members who provided site selection, data compilation and editorial assistance: Phyllis Bially, Cindy Hatcher, Jack Royer, Barbara Sakamoto, Sharon Schoumacher, Elaine Schwartz and Mary Kay Spink. Without them the catalog would be an untidy offering at best. Thanks also go to ALRI board members who contributed to the catalog and to Marjorie Varner, ALRI's administrator, who worked into the wee hours to keep everything on track and correct.

Bob Gibson, Vice President, Registrar

ALRI Book Reviews

Editors' note: We encourage ALRI members to submit short reviews of books that you have enjoyed reading. Send to Book Reviews Section of the ALRI Newsletter at e-mail address: alri@arlingtonlri.org or mail to ALRI Office.

Longitudes and Attitudes: The World in the Age of Terrorism by Thomas Friedman

My, how our views and attitudes on the Middle East and terrorism have changed during the last four years! Thomas Friedman's most recent book, ***Longitudes and Attitudes: The World in the Age of Terrorism*** (Anchor Books, 2003), is a collection of his articles that appeared in the New York Times from December 2000 through July 2003. Friedman, who is Jewish and also speaks fluent Arabic, has a home in Lebanon and has written about that area for the last twenty-five years. Appearing often on late-night talk shows, he demonstrates his superb insight into the Islamic culture and what we are up against. Through a chronological progression from before to after "9/11," we see how our attitudes have changed from seeing the Middle East and terrorism as something remote to a here-and-now personal confrontation.

Pompeii by Robert Harris

It's not often that you can read a historical novel that has an interesting and believable story, plus an accurate portrayal of historical facts. In ***Pompeii*** by Robert Harris (Random House, 2003) you have both. Through the eyes of the Roman engineer, who is responsible for the aqueducts, you witness the four days of Mt. Vesuvius' eruption in 79 A.D. While others are making sacrifices to their gods, Attilius is trying to comprehend what is really happening. Perhaps the most fascinating part of the novel is a glimpse of Roman culture and how, even then, politicians tried to put a "spin" on events. A short novel, but well worth the read.

Reviews by Doug First, Vice President



Call for Board Nominations

Tom Parker will serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee which will recommend persons for election to the ALRI Board at the June 2005 Annual Meeting. Members are invited to suggest persons for Board positions by contacting Tom Parker at tpark1@verizon.net or telephone 703 528-1193.

Income tax Deductions for 2004

ALRI is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization, and its annual membership fee is a charitable contribution. Also, deductions can be claimed in several categories: (1) mileage, commercial fares, and parking fees of persons traveling on ALRI business. (Note that federal and state deductions for mileage may differ.); (2) fair-market value of in-kind (non-cash) items such as office supplies, computer and AV equipment. (3) unreimbursed expenses, such as postage and photocopying; and (4) Cash donations in addition to the membership fee for which no specific benefit is received. Contributions are deductible from income taxes to the full extent of the law.

Public Relations/Special Events

Welcome to the New Year 2005!

To everyone who has contributed to ALRI's Public Relations and Special Events, we thank you.

Public Relations committee writers and editors respond to the challenge of preparing written articles for local publications and producing the ALRI quarterly newsletter. PR members write accurately and carefully, plan and revise with critical awareness and imagination all with a deadline— a daunting task .

Taking an idea for an event from the planning stages to reality is a complicated process, but Special Events team members take it in stride. They find that regular monthly meetings are enjoyable as they get to know each other and trade ideas for Special Events.

Our goals are twofold: to produce the ALRI newsletter, providing quality articles, notices and ads to the media; and to plan the most comprehensive Special Events enriching the ALRI Community of lifelong learners.

Thank you to ALRI Public Relations/Special Events volunteers; Joann Levine, Leanne Peters, Carol Mason Downs, Dawn Elvis, Jody Goulden, Mike Leber, Linda LeDuc, Cindy Hatcher, JoAnne Weinberg, Trudi Eblen, Bobby Gladstein, Marya Rowan, Andrea Vojtko, Helen Esserian, Nancy Palmerino, Joanne Gibson, Priscilla Becker.

The success of your efforts is due to your dedication of time and talent that you generously give to ALRI. It is my hope that you will continue to know that your work is valued and essential to the success of our Institute and that the positive response to your effort is perhaps the greatest reward of your ALRI volunteer undertaking.

Ann Holmes

INQUIRING MINDS

Q. How do I make a suggestion for an ALRI class?

A. The Academic Programs Committee plans the classes. Send your suggestions to Constance McAdam, Chair, Academic Programs Committee at ALRI, 2801 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 306, Arlington, VA 22201, or e-mail: [ALRI @ArlingtonLRI.org](mailto:ALRI@ArlingtonLRI.org).



Voices from the Classes News

Cut here



Don't delay! Deadline for the ALRI 2005 Spring Newsletter is April 1. Drop us a line at ALRI Voices From the Classes column in the newsletter. Tell us about your ALRI Class. We look forward to hearing from you.

NAME:

Send to Voices from the Classes, c/o ALRI Newsletter, 2801 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 306, Arl., VA 22201 or via e-mail ALRI@ArlingtonLRI.org.

Arlington Learning in Retirement Institute

ALRI offers short college-level non-credit daytime courses, lectures, special events, and activities to help meet the continuing educational and social needs of any interested persons over fifty years of age. ALRI is supported, governed, and financed by its members. ALRI is a non-profit, equal opportunity organization without regard to gender, race, color, religion, national origin or disability.

Affiliations: George Mason University, Arlington Public Schools Adult Education Division, Arlington County Office of Senior Adult Programs, Elderhostel

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