



Lifelong Learners

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

Newsletter

Summer 2014

“Lifelong Learning for Age 50 and Over”

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

Rallah Madison

First of all, I wish to thank all of you that helped organize and implement a couple of special fund raising events and those of you that attended. These events did bring in some much needed cash, but most of all were of great value in that they made Lifelong Learners much more visible to the community at large. Yes, there are people living among us that do not know who we are and what wonderful opportunities for learning we make available.

This prompts me to revisit a topic from last month, the opportunity to make contributions to Lifelong Learners using the Minnesota State University Mankato Foundation. Mankato Area Lifelong Learners is a charitable organization and has an account number under the Extended Learning section of the Foundation. Donors can make gifts by using that account number and designating “Lifelong Learners (MALL)” as the recipient of that gift. This makes the gift a tax free opportunity to transfer funds to a 501 c 3 organization such as MALL directly from a tax

deferred (IRA) retirement account and now need to start making the required withdrawals. That option is still available this year, but is under threat of changing. Of course, other contributions to MALL would also be deductible from your taxes if made through the Foundation.

One last point I would make, I think you can trust Lifelong Learners to be Frugal with your gift. I have never known them to be otherwise. There is, however, a difference between being Frugal and having the reputation of being cheap. I can take pride in being part of a frugal group getting a lot out of each and every dollar, but do not get much excitement from being cheap. What does that have to do with MALL? We could better accomplish our stated task of providing learning opportunities for those 50 years of age and over if we were not constantly in the position of having to do things on the cheap.

Thank You.

EPICUREAN EXPERIENCE LOCAVORE FOOD TASTING

Irene Manke

I hope you are enjoying the start of summer and anticipating all the wonderful fruits and vegetables that will be available soon. To sample them, register for the final Epicurean Experience class at the St. Peter Food Co-op on Tuesday, August 5 at 6:30 p.m. Learn more about locavore foods and how to prepare them. (Recipes will be available.) The chef will prepare some of the local specialty foods, and we will experience a few simple vegetarian dishes

and explore some meat/dairy substitutes. You can also come earlier in the evening and dine from the Co-op’s wonderful selection of hot and cold foods, but save some room for the locavore samples. In addition to class registration, the cost of the locavore tasting experience is \$7 to be paid in advance at the Lifelong Learners’ office. A minimum of 12 prepaid participants is needed, with a maximum of 25. See you at the Co-op.

NEW MEMBERS

Mankato Area Lifelong Learners extends a warm welcome to the following new members:

Carl & Dorla Wachter
Allan Loney
Catherine McCartney
Dave Johnson

We look forward to meeting you at our events and we welcome your input and suggestions.

GREAT DECISIONS UPDATE

Jack Kent Elizabeth Peters

The second and third Great Decisions meetings of this season were held on May 14 and June 11 in the President's Room at Bethany College.

The May topic, Islamic Awakening, was presented by Bill Davine, retired State Department diplomat. He spent considerable time explaining the worldwide distribution of the Islamic population. Bill has given several Great Decisions presentations in prior years.

The June presentation, Energy Independence: Inflated Expectations or New Opportunities?, was presented by Paul Brandon. Paul is a MALL member and retired professor from Minnesota State Mankato, M.

Dwain Peterson will speak on Turkey's Challenges, July 19, at 2:30 at the same location. Dwain is a member of MALL and is a retired professor from Minnesota State University, Mankato. He has visited Turkey and spoke on this subject at a Great Decisions group in Tucson, Arizona..

MEMBERSHIP

Elizabeth Peters



Yearly membership is due for many Mankato Area Lifelong Learners during July. Please note the dues date on the address label of the next mailing you receive. Help office staff save time and postage by renewing without additional reminders.

OCCASIONAL OCCASIONS

David Winslow Allan

*It was said to me quite recently
that there is something special,
something beautiful
about who we are,
about what we do in MALL.
Gatherings we do so very well.
They all reaffirm to us that "...age doesn't matter."
— so what's the chatter.
New strangers a few of us may be; so quickly we change,
forming new friendships — for sure — they may endure.
All the while, too, we gather to reaffirm the joy of
friendships past due,
for they seem to continue helping us ascend the ladder of life.
So like you and I so enjoy groups sharing,
life stories, family joys,
intellectual curiosities and new subjects of inquiry:
fresh to compare, easy to share.
The food (restaurants) selected with care continue to
serve good eats,
graciously prepared.
Partaking together help carry our conversations into the ether
as they seem to float on high, spreading ever so wide.
Humor never fails, helping each group to climb aboard
the good ship
"Laughter" — well almost — into the hereafter?
Happy faces (seem to be) illuminated with joy —
or are these contortions?
Silly giggles here.
Silly giggles there.
Bellies jiggle.
Toes wiggle.
"Is this about indigestion or gout, you say?"*

May 22, 2014

David Winslow Allan is a member of MALL. This poem was inspired by the friendships and conversations enjoyed during the many MALL eating/restaurant gatherings.

HOW NATURE GREW MINNESOTA PRIME AGRICULTURAL SOILS

Al Brener

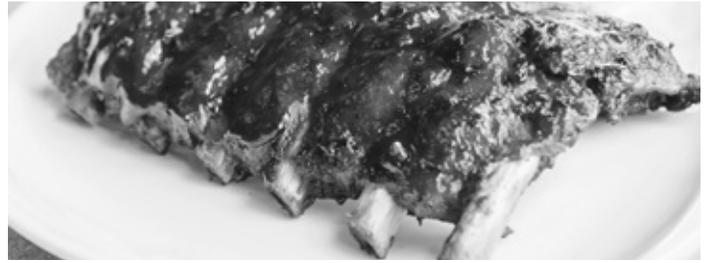
When pioneers first came to Minnesota, about half of the land (40 million acres in southern and western MN) was covered by native prairie communities. But today, fewer than 250,000 acres remain in our state, mostly in the northwestern third of the state, and fewer than 200 acres in all of Blue Earth County.

True native prairie is a complex plant community dominated by flowering plants but usually identified by the grass species. The tall grass prairie once covered an area from what is now western Indiana to central South Dakota and from Northwestern Minnesota to central Oklahoma. Although the flowering prairie plant species out-numbered grass species by 30 to 1, prairies are usually known for the dominant appearance of the tall grass species, particularly big bluestem and Indian grass. Prairie plant species are diversified so that each available sub-niche can be occupied efficiently. Also, most species are very deep rooted to more efficiently utilize ground moisture which is often in short supply on the plains of upper mid-America.

Unlike our forested areas where most of the biomass is stored above ground in the stand trees, our native prairie communities store the bulk of their biomass below the surface. Since the last ice age over 10,000 years ago, our prairie communities accumulated from six to ten feet, or more, of organic top soil which has been the base of our productive soils of today. Unfortunately, agriculture mining of this critical natural resource over the last 150 years has reduced these soils by over half throughout Minnesota.

A prairie's general structural appearance and the species that dominate change throughout the summer. Therefore, to see these seasonal transformations, one must visit a prairie at least three to four times during the summer, and before and after a fire. I invite you to join us on our four prairie tours to follow this seasonal succession of prairie plants and its rejuvenation after fire or sporadic high intensity grazing that mimics the impacts of the American bison. So, come with us to enjoy this trip back to pioneer prairie days.

Note: Check the calendar for prairie tours in July and August.



FIRST CHEF'S CHOICE LUNCH A HIT!

The Chef's Choice group's first lunch, at the Lone Star BBQ in St Peter on May 27 was declared a great success by the participants. Owner, Tom Svendsen, presented a 20 minute overview of the history of grilling foods, a tradition that had its start in the deep south. He said the best grilled ribs came from a full slab of ribs trimmed to produce what's referred to as a St Louis cut. He demonstrated how they should be trimmed. They then served our special, not on the menu, lunch consisting of BBQ ribs, collard greens, grits with smoked Gouda cheese and corn muffin. While not a grit fan, even after 25 years in the Deep South, these were great!

Twenty members have signed up for Chef's Choice. If more are interested in participating, we can accommodate another 5 or 6 participants. The cost will be prorated based on the number of lunches remaining.

COMMUNITY ADVENTURES EXPERIENCE A NEW ROLE...WITH RSVP!

Lora Brady

RSVP (originally known as the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program) started over 40 years ago nationally, and 25 years ago in Blue Earth County as an initiative to engage retired people with projects to solve critical community needs. The now 16-county program of Catholic Charities serves Southern Minnesota in areas such as education, healthy seniors, food security, and veterans' programs. The program coordinator maintains a close communication with volunteers and partnering agencies to assure a good fit for both parties. The best way to start volunteering is to ask what you haven't done yet, but have always thought about doing. RSVP will work to find something at least similar. And the rewards will start piling up from there! To find out more, call Lora Brady, (507) 458-9687, or email lbrady@ccwinona.org

PLEASE SEE CLASS SCHEDULE FOR CLASSES AND PRESENTATIONS LOCATIONS.

JULY

July 8 • 6:00 P.M.
Minnesota River Fish

July 19 • 2:00–3:30 P.M.
Great Decisions

July 22 • 7:00 P.M.
Author Nicole Helget

July 24 • 9:00–11:00 P.M.
Prairie Tour

July 28 • 2:00 P.M.
Beowulf Perspectives

July 29 • 6:30 P.M.
Substance Abuse Panel

July 31 • 7:00 P.M.
Labyrinths

AUGUST

August 5 • 6:30 P.M.
Epicurean Experience Finale

August 7 • 6:30 P.M.
Substance Abuse Recovery

August 13 • 2:00–3:30 P.M.
Great Decisions

August 14 • 2:00 P.M.
Rock Collecting

August 21 • 9:00–11:00
Prairie Tour

SEPTEMBER

September 10 • 2:00–3:30 P.M.
Great Decisions

September 13 • 1:00 P.M.
Civil War Stories

September 18 • 7:00 P.M.
Blue Grass Music History

September 23 • 2:00 P.M.
Fruit Production Tour

PUB BUCKS AVAILABLE

There are still a few Pub Bucks available for sale in the MALL office (389-2011). Buy a Pub Buck for \$5 and it is good for \$10 worth of food, libations or pub wear at Pub 500



50+ LIFESTYLE EXPO

Elizabeth Peters

A HUGE thank you to all the members who helped to make the EXPO, and especially the Lifelong Learners booth a success. Posters were hung, materials available and volunteers talked to interested visitors about the activities of Mankato Area Lifelong Learners. Many people asked for additional information and the TRY IT, YOU'LL LIKE

IT passes were popular.

The following people helped to set up, talk to visitors and take down the booth at the end of the day: Jack Kent, Karen Frydendall, Bruce Burkemeyer, Elizabeth Peters, Jim Vickery, Marcell Elders, Paricia Jones, Joyce Sandry

Call the Mankato Area Lifelong Learners office (389-2011) if you want your name removed from our mailing list.

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President: Rallah Madison
Vice President: David Janovy
Treasurer: Rosemary Kinne
Vice Treasurer: Anita Dittrich
Secretary: Norma Thomas
V. Secretary:
Past President: Karen Frydendall
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mall@mnsu.edu

Committee Chairs:

Admin & Finance: Rosemary Kinne
Curriculum: Carlienne Frisch
Membership:
Publicity: Joe Hogan
Special Events: Kay VanBuskirk

Pot Luck

Co-Chairs:

Great Decisions Group

Co-Chairs: Elizabeth Peters
Jack Kent

Bridge:

Co-Chairs: Mary Bliesmer

Food Groups:

Chair: Jan Rozeboom

Book Club

Chair: John Gushwa

Outdoor Activities

Chair: Pru Gushwa

Classic Film Club:

Chair: Matthew Sewell

Nobel Conference

Chair: Joyce Sandry

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