



# Lifelong Learners

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

*“Lifelong Learning for Age 55 and Over”*

# Newsletter

Summer 2012

## FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK . . . .

A number of changes have been approved by the MALL Council. Not all will be well received by our membership but all have been passed with the goal of maintaining the viability of the organization. Each of the changes is explained in separate articles in this newsletter. The changes deal with our annual dues structure, the “bundling” of an annual membership fee and class tuitions, the expansion of the MALL Council membership to get better member representation and the establishment of a new Corporate membership program to both broaden our financial support and our event and class participation. All of these changes came after considerable discussion.

Our membership numbers are almost at a historical low, about 200. This literally affects us in everything we do...our finances, class participation, and special event participation. Our new membership chair, Elizabeth Peters, has a new committee helping to address this issue. They are Harlan Vee and Lynn Russ. One of their undertakings is a mailing to Minnesota State Mankato alumni who are over age 55 and live in the Mankato/North Mankato area. There are 2200 of them. But our best recruiting tool remains word of mouth. Please tell your friends about MALL. If you have someone to give information to regarding MALL, please pass their name and address on to Patrice in the office and she will send them a personal letter with current schedules and organizational information.

Joe Hogan’s Publicity Committee is now

operational with two volunteers – Charlie Hurd and Carlienne Frisch. They are off to a good start in getting the MALL name out to the public.

Bad news – the Bridge group under the leadership of Marion Woie has been an important part of the MALL organization for many years. They have made the decision to break off from MALL and form an independent group. They will be the “Sweet Sixteen.” We are sorry to see them leave, but we wish them continued good cards in future games! The Council will address the issue of starting a new group in the near future.

Hope you have a good summer...and find some upcoming MALL activities of interest.

Jack Kent

## **MALL MEMBERSHIP FEE STRUCTURE HAS CHANGED—**

As a result of our financial position, the Council has passed a new membership fee structure effective immediately for renewals and new members. We are also changing the membership period from June 30 for 12 months to a 12 month period as of the date that dues are paid. Thus if you pay your dues on September 1, they will maintain your membership until September 1 of the following year.

The fees are increasing to \$25 for a single membership or \$45 for a couple. You might ask, “Why the price break for couples?” Answer: Mailing and printing costs are reduced when we

have two members at the same address. The office will be sending out a reminder notice this summer which is our traditional renewal date. You can pay your dues on line with a credit card at the MALL web site.

Another option that is being offered starting with the summer quarter (July-September) is the bundling of membership fees and class tuition charges. You will be able to pay an annual flat fee for both charges. Example: An individual bundled fee for membership and unlimited class participation would be \$130 paid in advance. The cost would be \$145 if paid by the quarter. For a couple the annual bundle charge would be \$250 compared to \$285 if paid by quarter for full participation. Sound complicated? Yes it does, but anyone on the Council or Patrice in the office can answer your questions. These fees too can be paid on line.

## **NEW COUNCIL POSITIONS APPROVED**

At the March Council meeting, the topic of improving communications with all of our committees—Potluck, Bridge, and Great Decisions—with the Council was discussed. It was agreed that we could make better decisions with better information and input from these groups. A motion was made and passed that these three groups be asked to have one of their committee members serve on the council. They have been invited to participate at the May 21 Council meeting.

It was further moved and passed that we develop a "Council Member at Large" position to represent the membership as a whole. This position will be filled as soon as possible with a candidate who volunteers to participate. We hope someone steps forward and says, "I'll serve." If interested, please call the office or one of the Council members to express your interest. If no one steps forward, we will be knocking on doors!

## **CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP**

We've been talking about the possibility of establishing a MALL Corporate Membership program for some time. Why the change? There are a couple of reasons. The first is financial and the second is to broaden our membership base and get more people in the community involved in our programs. Here is how it will work. Any Mankato area business is eligible for membership at an annual fee of \$250. What will they get for this fee? Their name will be published in this newsletter on a regular basis as a sponsoring/supporting organization. In addition, their employees and retirees age 50 and above will be eligible to participate in any of our special events or classes. Each participant will have to pay event related costs and class costs but no membership fee. We recognize that their current employees probably will not be free to attend classes at 2 p.m. in the afternoon. Depending on the interest we may have to add additional class times (e.g., noon – 1 p.m., 6-8 p.m.). Some of the current members have expressed an interest in alternate class times.

## **COMMON READ – AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY!**

COMMON READ is a program which was started three years ago as a program for honors students and other selected groups of Minnesota State Mankato students. Now it is being offered to outside organizations, including MALL.

Participants in Common Read will be asked to read the book THE UNFORGIVING MINUTE by Craig Mullaney on their own during the summer. On September 4 Craig Mullaney will visit and speak at Minnesota State Mankato. There will be a 45-minute presentation, 15-minute Question & Answer, and book signing. Other events will take place during the Fall semester. Still in the planning stages, they could include a faculty panel from various related disciplines, a veteran's panel moderated by Tim Walz, an opportunity to reflect as the U. S. begins to withdraw from Afghanistan,

and small discussion groups involving people from all walks of life.

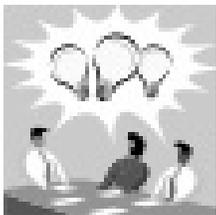
THE UNFORGIVING MINUTE chronicles Craig Mullaney's story, from West Point through Ranger School to Oxford and finally to Afghanistan. As platoon leader facing a brutal fight with Al Qaeda, he questions whether his education and experience had prepared him to make the right decisions in the upcoming unforgiving minutes? Intercultural marriage is also addressed as he tells of his marriage to a Hindi woman.

The only cost is the purchase price of the book. Books are available, both print and audio, at bookstores and Amazon.com. There is a 25% discount at Campus Bookstore in Centennial Student Union. The book will also be available for check-out from the North Mankato Library.

As of May 4, the Mankato library had not responded. The role of MALL is to provide a conduit for information and a means for members to sign up. More information will be coming and made available to persons who are interested.

## FROM OUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

-- Elizabeth Peters



I attended Mankato State, then worked in the St. Paul Public Schools as a teacher and resource specialist. During that time, I got my master's degree in Special Education, Learning Disabilities, at St. Thomas College in St. Paul. One of my favorite places to live was my first condo in a 100 year old house a few blocks off Grand Avenue and close to Frost's in St. Paul.

In the 1980's I moved to Los Angeles and taught at a private school for high potential students with learning disabilities. The school was started by the Disney family and it was challenging and exciting to be a part of the opening of the school. For most of the time I was in Los Angeles I had a private practice working one to one with learning disabled students and consulting with their teachers and parents.

In West Los Angeles, I could walk to the ocean, enjoy the beach in the winter, and attend many plays and concerts. I did a lot of sailing in the Santa Monica Bay. It is quite an ideal place to live, with lots of traffic and very expensive!

I returned to the Mankato area in 2008 and am pleased to have more family in my life, making May baskets with two and four year old nieces, following soccer games of middle and high school nieces and attending plays and concerts here in Mankato and in Minneapolis.

## MEMBERSHIP SURVEY SUMMARY

By Alfred Berner, MALL Treasurer

Thank you to all 97 who completed and returned the recent membership survey. The results of this survey indicated that the average age of our membership is 78 and comprised of two-thirds women and one-third men. We also found that our members agree with the following statements: (1) current fees and charges represent a good value (95%)\*; (2) we communicate in a timely and satisfactory fashion (97%); (3) current class/programs locations serve their needs (92%); and (4) MALL currently meets their needs and expectations (89%). We found more than 70% would be interested to very interested in receiving their MALL info via Internet/mail, and the remaining 30% were definitely not so inclined. This will mean that in the near future, we will still be using regular mail to reach some of our members, but will be shifting a significant number to Internet/email.

Two new program topics, out of the eight proposed, rose to the top: (1) classic film series with a discussion facilitator (monthly) and (2) quarterly speaker lunch series of a timely topic. The council and program chairs will be working to make these two new programs possible. All the written topic suggestions and the list of topic areas indicating membership interests have been forwarded to the chairs of the curriculum and special events committees. These will also be kept available to the council for future planning.

Present meeting places, days and times appear to be meeting the needs of most of our present MALL members. However, if we are to continue to recruit new members whose time schedules require greater flexibility, the council and committee chairs may have to look at different day/time combinations to meet these needs. Of course, this will be done without sacrificing present members' needs. Although our present membership does not have much interest in MALL having a Facebook page, younger retirees are more inclined to use this form of communication. Therefore, this form of communication, along with greater use of MALL's website, will be pursued in the future.

If you have any questions regarding the results of the survey, please do not hesitate to contact me, Al Berner. (Telephone No.: 507-278-4490; email: pvbritts@yahoo.com.

\*This percent represents those who agree, somewhat agree, or strongly agree with the statement.

## **FY 13 FINANCIAL UPDATE**

**By Alfred Berner, Treasurer**

As all of you are aware by now, we have had to increase the membership dues for our organization. Because of an aging membership (see survey results report in this newsletter) and low recruitment at this time, the \$10 increase was necessary to maintain the quality of our service to our membership, while retiring our \$1,000 to \$2,000 debt and to eventually increase the hours of our staff person from 12 to 15 per week. With this modest increase in our dues, continued saving in how we operate, and actively working to increase our membership (both personal and business), we should be able to eliminate our debt and have more staff time within the next fiscal year.

Within the minimal budget we are proposing for FY 13 (July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013) (\$14,500 income\* and \$13,500 expenses\*), we plan to produce savings by reducing copying (\$2,500/year) and postage (\$900/year) costs. We hope to accomplish these savings by shifting a significant portion of the membership to

receiving Special Event and Quarterly Program Presentation schedules via email and the website. Also, the council will be aggressively recruiting individual and business memberships and looking for corporate sponsorships. Any additional incomes from these saving and new sources of income will be used first to reduce our carry forward debt which costs us \$90/year in interest, and then to expand staff hours from the present 12 per week (\$7,800/year) to a maximum of 15 per week (\$9,750/year).

If you have any questions regarding Mankato Area Lifelong Learners finances, please do not hesitate to call me at 278-4490.

\*These figures do not include moneys taken in or expended for the cost of Special Events, which is estimated at about \$8,500 received and \$8,500 expended.



## **CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT**

**– Carlienne Frisch, Chair**

The Curriculum Committee met in April and May to plan and arrange Summer Quarter classes. Among the offerings are two trips – to the Mankato Airport (July 10) and to the Poor Farm/Art Gallery (September 11). The latter was scheduled in response to requests from members who were unable to take the Poor Farm tour in March. Other classes will include discussion of health issues, an assessment of water quality, a tour of the Minnesota State Mankato Memorial Library, a presentation by and about local Native Americans (one of who is Minnesota State Mankato faculty), several other classes (including one about rock-n-roll), and the annual Nobel Conference Preview (Aug. 23).

### **NEXT CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETINGS:**

10 a.m. Wednesday, July 18, and  
Wednesday, August 15,  
North Mankato Taylor Library.

## UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

### Dwain Petersen, Representative

As University Relations representative, I have met with President Jack Kent and several Minnesota State Mankato faculty regarding strategic planning and improving our relationship with the University. We then participated in a Planning Retreat. I also helped arrange a meeting for Jack and President Davenport over the winter while I was enjoying southern climes. Since my return to Minnesota, Jack and I were joined by VP Karen Frydendall for a very successful meeting with the Dean's Council. We were well received as we shared history, goals, and aspirations of Mankato Area Lifelong Learners. They also offered suggestions and cooperation in the future. We will follow up with these opportunities.



## GREAT DECISIONS

### Elizabeth Peters, Program Co-Chair

GREAT DECISIONS, a part of the Foreign Policy Association, meets in Mankato on the second Wednesday of the month from 2-4 p.m. The meetings are held at the United Church of Christ on the corner of Stolzman and Stadium Roads. In April, Bruce Birkemeyer facilitated a discussion on MIDDLE EAST REALIGNMENT. In May, Luis Poster, a member of the Sociology Department at Minnesota State Mankato and a native of Honduras, presented on the topic MEXICO. In June, Bill Davnie, a former foreign service officer from Minneapolis, will facilitate the topic INDONESIA. In July, John Frey, the Director of the Center for Renewable Energy at Minnesota State Mankato, will speak about ENERGY GEOPOLITICS. In September, Gayle Anderson will address the STATE OF THE OCEANS. In October, Randy Czeswik, leader of Great Decisions groups at the U or M and Grand Marais will discuss PROMOTING DEMOCRACY.

Great Decisions discussion groups continue through November and resume again in April.

## SENIOR EXPO

Thanks to all the people who contributed time, energy, and helped with MALL's booth at the Senior Expo on May 15 at the Verizon Center. Al Wortman, Bruce Birkemeyer, Dwain Petersen, and Elizabeth Peters staffed the booth throughout the day. MALL was also represented in the Wellness Activity Room at the Expo. Patrice, office manager, supplied all the materials.

## SPECIAL EVENTS



Wednesday, July 18, 11:30 a.m. –  
Indian Island Winery:

- a) Production Tour,
- b) Wine Tasting,
- c) Vineyard Tour (involves walking).

Cost: \$8 plus \$5 for wine tasting (keep the glass) plus buy your own crackers/cheese/meats. Provide your own transportation (directions will be in the flyer).



Wednesday, August 15 –  
Old Log trip to see  
Ken Ludwig's  
"The Fox on the Fairway."

**NOTE: September – Annual Meeting**

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

**Officers:**

President: Jack Kent  
Vice President: Karen Frydendall  
Treasurer: Al Berner  
Vice Treasurer: Curt Martinson  
Secretary: Donna Hanke  
V. Secretary: Sandy Parks  
Past President: David Popowski  
Ex-officio: Patrice Hundstad,  
patrice.hundstad@mnsu.edu

**Committee Chairs:**

Admin & Finance: Al Berner  
Curriculum: Carlienne Frisch  
Membership: Elizabeth Peters  
Publicity: Anita Dittrich  
Special Events: Anita Dittrich  
Al Wortman

University Relations Coordinator: Dwain Petersen  
University Liaison/Ext. C: Jean Clarke and Becky Copper

**Pot Luck**

Co-Chairs: Harriet Plotz  
Jo Schultz  
Kay VanBuskirk

**Great Decisions Group**

Co-Chairs: Carlienne Frisch  
Elizabeth Peters

**Newsletter Editor:** Karen Sandersfeld, 387-3576, kdsand@hickorytech.com

**Email and Website Addresses:** mall@mnsu.edu , www.mnsu.edu/mall

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