

MANKATO AREA LIFELONG LEARNERS

 MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MANKATO

Spring 2017

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Sue Howard

I am writing this while sitting in the sunshine on a 60 degree day in late February. What a unique winter we have had; an 'unexpected treat'. We have enjoyed a great year for Mankato Area Lifelong members, too. This, to me, is not an 'unexpected treat'.

Since joining Lifelong Learners I have found 'expected treats' each quarter. The lunch and dinner groups offer connection with others, laughs, and discussion. Our Great Decisions offerings provide timely information about our world, and expose us to experienced presenters. Tom Hanson's presentation at Minnesota State Mankato doubled in attendance this year and brought in new members. Special events include 'expected treats': plays, art showings, and more. The 12-17 presentations offered each quarter

never disappoint, in my mind, with topics from Sharks to Bubonic plague to Poetry to Art to name a few.

From an article by Jeremy Olson, Star Tribune: "Prolonged isolation can be as big a health risk as smoking 15 cigarettes per day, according to the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging." Lifelong learning enhances social inclusion. Social connections tend to improve an individual's health, said Julianne Holt-Lunstad, a BYU researcher. "When someone is connected to a group and feels responsibility for other people, that sense of purpose and meaning translates to taking better care of themselves and taking fewer risks."

Lifelong Learners offers our members chances to connect with others and to benefit from 'expected treats'.

LIFELONG LEARNING ON THE INTERNET

Dave Janovy

The Internet lays the world at our doorstep (er, fingers). Exploring "the Web" provides endless opportunities for lifelong learning and the best way to discover them is to dive right in. Here are a few routes into the online world that offer us challenging ideas, practical tips and much more. Some suggestions (with opinion) follow.

Perhaps one of the very best compilations of learning sites is: diygenius.com/100-self-education-resources-for-lifelong-learners/

Here is a huge listing in many categories. A good place to start. 5 stars from me.

Don't overlook: ideasTED.com Outstanding. Constantly adding short, powerful talks on a wide-range of topics and issues. Also 5 stars.

A wild, sometimes wacky and often rewarding site is: youtube.com A collection of, usually short, videos. Just about anything you might want to see you can find on youtube.

The granddaddy, so to speak, of info sites is Wikipedia and its related sites. wikipedia.com

A couple of sites which offer a wide range of free college-level courses are: Coursera.org and edx.org/course Again, both 5 stars.

A few other suggestions: Fact-checking-if not sure something we read on internet is true, we can go to snopes.com or politifact.com. Most any paper publication (newspaper, magazine) has an online version and much content is free. Art/Culture—many museums have sites that allow you to browse their collections online.

The High School debaters from the February 8 presentation shared one of their top sources for information and research www.procon.org which summaries the arguments on both sides of current issues.

Note: if the underlined names above do not take you to the site, you will need to copy and paste or type in the underlined into your browser search engine. Also, remember to "bookmark" the ones you like.

Next Newsletter: Sites for Seniors.

SPRING SOCIAL WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

A WELCOME for new members, friends, and curious adults will take place on Saturday, April 29, 9:00-10:30 at the Children's Museum. A short program will describe the activities offered by Mankato Area Lifelong Learners. Meet Council members and committee chairs. Bring a neighbor, friend, or relative who might be interested in knowing about the mission of Mankato Area Lifelong Learners ... *to promote vitality in later life.*

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

LAURA BEALEY	GARY BORGMEIER
WALTER & LOIS CHEEVER	CAROLE GEALOW
JIM HANSON	DALE & MARILYN HEDLUND
JOSEPH KUNKEL	MARY BETH NYGAARD
LARRY SCHMIDT	JIM & KATHRYN VONDERHARR

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

Welcome

A BRIEF LOOK AT ANITA DITTRICH

When Trish Nienow asked me to write something about myself, I wondered how I could possibly keep it within the designated length. Many things have happened during my 80 plus years! I was born in Riga, Latvia, but political conditions during WWII made my family move to Germany, where we lived in Displaced Persons Camp for five years. We emigrated to the United States in 1949 when I was 15 and have lived in Mankato since age 17.

MSU -- either as Mankato State Teachers College, Mankato State College, Mankato State University, or Minnesota State University, Mankato -- has played a large part in my life in Mankato. I enjoyed four years of synchronized swimming (at West High School pool!), dancing in Orchestis, and some studying, then meeting my future husband, and eventually graduating with a double major in business ed. and physical ed. Instead of teaching, I opted to use my business major and do office work at Minnesota State Mankato, which I enjoyed doing on and off for over 25 years in several

different offices, including two years for President C. L. Crawford.

Somewhere during those 25 years I got married, had four children, taught typing for a couple years at West High School, took time out for some graduate work, went back to office work at Minnesota State Mankato, lost my husband in a car accident at age 44, watched the kids grow up, and continued working at Minnesota State Mankato, finishing by working part-time for MSU for Seniors/Lifelong Learners.

After I retired from office work in Minnesota State Mankato in late 1996, Eddice Barber invited me to try some MSU for Seniors classes, which in turn led to my part-time employment in their office for over 10 years, where I had to live through another name change, as MSU for Seniors turned into Mankato Area Lifelong Learners / MALL. Being part of this organization has been -- and continues to be -- the nicest and most enjoyable part of retirement!

DINING GROUPS

The restaurant groups are a vital part of Lifelong Learners. There are two lunch groups, along with the dinner groups. Call Harriet at 387-3990 for details.

*Nothing ever becomes real until it is experienced.
Even a proverb is no proverb to you until your life illustrates it.*

John Keats

MEMBER FUNDRAISING DRIVE

Sharon Schindle – Finance Committee Chair

Thank you to all the generous members who donated a total of \$5980 to Mankato Area Lifelong Learners. The funds will be used for growing our organization and programs as well as for operational expenses. The organization would be struggling financially without these very much appreciated gifts from our members.

We also applied for two substantial grants in the late fall but were not fortunate enough to be awarded the funds requested. The committee will be working on more grants and funding sources this spring and would welcome any suggestions and contacts our members may have with foundations and organizations.

50+ LIFESTYLE EXPO

Elizabeth Peters

The VERIZON WIRELESS CENTER will host the Annual 50+ Lifestyle Expo on Tuesday, May 9, 2017 from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. The Lifelong Learners table will be in the Community Square. Can you volunteer an hour of your time to meet others and promote Mankato Area Lifelong Learners? Call the office at 507-389-2011 by May 1, and someone from the membership committee will return your call. The Expo is bustling with activity and YOU can be a part of it.

TOUR TO REFURBISHED

MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL IN MAY

Mary Bliesmer

A tour of the refurbished Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul has been scheduled for May 16, 2017. A Minnesota Historical Society guide will conduct this tour which will begin at 11 A.M. Lunch will be eaten in the Capitol Rathskeller Cafe after the tour. Please contact the Lifelong Learners Office (389-2011) by Thursday, April 14 if you would like to join this tour. The tour is limited to 35 people. Transportation by van or bus will be arranged at a cost of approximately \$70.

LIFELONG LEARNERS SALUTE NOTABLES AMONG US

- **Jack Kent**, was awarded Lifelong Learners emeritus status. As a member from the founding years of the organization, Jack has consistently shared his leadership skills and creative talents.
- **Sally Coomes**, Lifelong Learner member, received the Mankato Rotary Service Above Self Award for service to Habitat for Humanity of Central Minnesota from 2000-2012, Partners for Affordable Housing and her leadership roles at First Presbyterian Church.
- **Kaaren Grabianowski**, received the YWCA Women of Distinction Award. Although Kaaren is not a member of Lifelong Learners yet, she has been very helpful in arranging our use of the Children's Museum for many of our presentations.

GREAT DECISIONS 2017

Bruce Birkemeyer – Elizabeth Peters

Mankato Great Decisions begins its seventh year on April 12 at the Southern Minnesota Children's Museum in Mankato.

The presentations are held the second Wednesday of the month, April through November, and begin promptly at 2 P.M. The Great Decisions Essay books are available in the office and will also be brought to the first meeting.

Topics for the first three Great Decision presentations are:

APRIL 12 NUCLEAR SECURITY
MAY 10 LATIN AMERICA'S POLITICAL PENDULUM
JUNE 14 PROSPECTS FOR AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

Please call Bruce Birkemeyer 388-3510 or Elizabeth Peters 385-1685 with questions

NOTE: The Minneapolis Star Tribune has a monthly op-ed column written by John Rash. It can be found in the Saturday edition. During the year, he covers all the Great Decisions topics.

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Save the Dates

Great Decisions

April 12 – Nuclear Security

May 10 – Latin America's
Political Pendulum

June 14 – Prospects for Afghanistan
and Pakistan

Spring Social – April 29 – 9:00 A.M.

Tour of refurbished State Capitol – May 16

50+ Lifestyle Expo – May 9 – 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Check calendar for other provocative presentations

DVD'S AVAILABLE TO BORROW

The Lifelong Learners office has DVD's available for members to borrow from the office, located at 115 Wiecking Center. Park in the loading zone (15 minutes) on Ellis St., enter the door on the right, then down the hall to office at WC115. Call first (389-2011) to assure someone is in office and that DVD you want is available.

The DVD's have been shown in previous presentations. They are a great way to view those you may have missed in Great Decisions etc. or wish to view again.

THE VIKINGS
THE MEDIEVAL WORLD
GREAT DECISIONS 2015

THE BLACK PLAGUE – on loan from Jim Nagel through August, 2017
GREAT DECISIONS 2014
GREAT DECISIONS 2016 – one half hour each on eight topics in essay book

<p>OFFICERS:</p> <p><u>President</u> Sue Howard</p> <p><u>Vice President</u> David Allan</p> <p><u>Treasurer</u> Ed Wetherill</p> <p><u>Secretary</u> Jean Peterson</p>	<p><u>Past President</u> Mary Bliesmer</p> <p><u>Members At Large</u> Andy Foster David Janovy Rallah Madison Joyce Sandry</p>	<p>COMMITTEE CHAIRS:</p> <p><u>Admin & Finance</u> Sharon Schindle</p> <p><u>Presentations</u> Al Berner</p> <p><u>Great Decisions Co-Chairs</u> Bruce Birkemeyer Elizabeth Peters</p>	<p><u>Membership Chair</u> Elizabeth Peters</p> <p><u>Publicity</u> Joe Hogan</p> <p>SOCIAL GROUPS CHAIRS:</p> <p><u>Book Club</u> Jim Booker</p> <p><u>Bridge</u> Mary Bliesmer</p>	<p>DINING GROUP CHAIRS:</p> <p><u>Pot Luck</u> Jan Rozeboom</p> <p><u>Restaurant</u> Harriet Plotz</p> <p><u>Soup Supper:</u> Kathryn Hanson</p>	<p>OFFICE MANAGER Pamela Blair Phone: 507-389-2011 Email: lifelonglearners@mnsu.edu</p> <p>NEWSLETTER EDITOR Tricia Nienow, Phone: 625-5912 Email: tmienow@hickorytech.net</p>
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To remove your name from our mailing list, call 507-389-2011