



LLL NEWS

A member-run newsletter from Lifelong Learning at Wofford



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Lifelong Learners Explore the Night Sky

It was a chilly, fall evening in Oregon in 1981 when Dr. Greg Boeshaar received the phone call that changed everything. “Do you want to work on Hubble?” proposed the caller. It took Dr. Boeshaar exactly “2.5 seconds” to respond in the affirmative, taking him on an exhilarating eight-year journey with NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope project. That experience was “more fun than I thought I should have been paid for. And almost 30 years after Hubble’s launch, it’s still changing everything we know about the universe,” he noted. Currently an Adjunct Instructor in Wofford College’s Physics Department, Dr. Boeshaar teaches astronomy and physics. He also contributes to Wofford’s Lifelong Learning program, instructing in courses as diverse as astronomy and the nature of dogs. “Wofford is a class college with a faculty clearly focused on teaching, and high quality students who are eager to learn,” he notes. “Lifelong Learners are similarly a motivated and intelligent group who want to keep their minds engaged. Through the program, Wofford reaches out and touches the community directly. And the interdisciplinary facet at the College really opens up ideas. Everybody talks to each other.

For my part, Lifelong Learning has a service element – things you need to do to have a fulfilling retirement.” And so the young boy’s wonder as he gazed out of his bedroom window into the night skies has evolved into an enduring passion to fathom the cosmos. Dr. Boeshaar is currently researching his upcoming book on cosmic evolution. “The main point in writing a book is to learn something,” he explains. “And it dovetails nicely with what I’m teaching. The universe is not just place, it’s a process.”



Morgan Jordan

Note from the Director

This autumn, I had the pleasure of attending a number of events—each unique and interesting. One of those events was the Lifelong Learning Stargazing Party, which was held outside at Glendale Shoals, beneath a cold, clear sky. Sitting on the grass, looking up at the sky through a set of binoculars, I could see the light of Jupiter and Saturn and countless stars. Moments of laughter, wonder, and silence seemed to run on a continuous loop throughout the evening, as members of Dr. Greg Boeshaar’s Backyard Astronomy class ate brownies, drank hot apple cider, and identified constellations, planets and stars in the night sky.

It is moments like these that have made the semester special to me. Autumn is a time of transition, when everything changes from its sun-saturated state to turn inward and nourish roots, awaiting the arrival of a new spring. Thanks to fantastic instructors like Dr. Boeshaar, Lifelong Learning continues to offer classes and events that give members a chance to nourish their roots and cultivate new growth.

As we approach a season focused on gratitude, I would like to say a heartfelt “Thank you” to all of our instructors and members for what you have helped Lifelong Learning become in just 5 short years.

Member Spotlight: John Akers

Dr. John Akers, retired Wofford language professor, recently opened The Chapman Center’s Espresso Series playing a classical guitar piece composed in 1923 by Pedro Sanjuán for Andrés Segovia. This was the one piece Sanjuán composed for guitar, idiomatically very Spanish but strangely never performed in public by Segovia. Carl Sandburg was a defining influence for John Akers. An American poet, biographer, journalist and editor, Sandburg won three Pulitzer prizes and inspired Akers’ hour-long presentation on Sandburg, “...playing the pieces Sandburg loved, dramatizing his writings about the guitar and narrating Sandburg’s meeting with Segovia that affected him for life.” Sandburg’s home is a national historic site in nearby Flat Rock, N.C. and John has played there, as well as twice at the annual Sandburg Days Festival in Galesburg, Il., and at numerous libraries, churches, schools, and community organizations over the past 20 years. During his tenure at Wofford, Dr. Akers hosted the Troubadour Series. “Over 15 years, I hosted more than 80 artists from all over the world -- several who came in the wake of winning the Guitar Foundation of America’s annual Classical Guitar International competition.” Dr. Akers continues to support Wofford through participation in the Lifelong Learning program. “I am so appreciative that I was able to transition from teaching at Wofford to contributing in different capacities to the college’s Lifelong Learning program - teaching, taking classes and sharing my performance of ‘Sandburg and the Classical Guitar’.” “Solo guitar is for me a vehicle to express myself. I have loved guitar from the time I began studying at Middlebury under Philip Rhineland, a graduate of the London Royal Academy of Music. He instilled in us the love he had for the instrument. When I see someone who loves something with their whole heart, I’m drawn in. My criterion for whether or not I’ve experienced a successful recital is, ‘does that person make me want to practice?’” Even having attained his current level of virtuosity, Dr. Akers continues to be “tantalized with my lack of perfection.”





Lake Jocassee with Lifelong Learning

The first day of November dawned cold and clear --- a practically perfect day for a Lifelong Learners' trip to Lake Jocassee. There, we learned why National Geographic recognized the area as "one of 50 of the world's Last Great Places," as we explored the lake on a pontoon boat, lunched by a waterfall, and enjoyed the incredibly beautiful scenery.

Course Highlight: iPhones for Tech-Savvy Seniors

The iPhone classes were in such high demand that LLL asked instructor Bill Vicary, of Vicary Management Group/Just Call Bill based in Greenville, to add an additional class to the fall semester. "Seniors are an under-served community, especially with technology," notes Bill. "And seniors are a prime target for phone and email scams." Cell phone companies sell phones but do not teach customers how to use them. The online iPhone manual is an overwhelming 640+ pages. And referencing the manual is not an effective way for seniors to learn. Seniors learn differently. They like to "see it, hear it, write it," explains Bill. "In my class, seniors learn how to use their phone more effectively. It's very hands-on, covering 3-4 topics per session." The interactive class is intended to address the technological tug-of-war between seniors and their children and grandchildren. The objective is for seniors to be better connected with family and friends.





Patsy Simmons with her creations

Member Spotlight: Patsy Simmons

"Potters are wonderful people who share their secret tips, glazes, ideas, and become dear friends," Patsy Simmons believes. After 15 years of "playing with clay and meditating on the pottery wheel," Patsy gives credit to her gardening husband, John Simmons: "Some of my favorite and most creative challenges come from his cabbage patch: a source of leaves used in unique one-of-a-kind bowls and trays."



Course Highlight: Fly-Fishing Class Catches Attention!

Fly-Fishing 101 was led by Brandon Barber (center back), from Riverblade Knife and Fly Shop in Spartanburg. He gave the class hands-on casting instruction and fly-fishing lessons as well as taking them through rigging techniques and essential terminal tackle. "I also covered the specific water types and techniques unique to each," said Brandon. "The Lifelong Learning students were highly enthusiastic and great fun to work with." Dr. Joe Kavanagh, ret. (right back), said his motivation to join the class was being "keen to learn the specifics of casting, rigging and choice of flies." His wife Julie Kavanagh (center back) added, "I signed up for the fly-fishing class since we are retired and we want to spend more time together in nature. Brandon has been an excellent teacher."

www.riverbladeknifeandfly.com



Member Spotlight: Simon Cairns

An acupuncturist and practitioner of the ancient art of Qi Gong, Simon begins a series of slow, coordinated movements. These, meditation and controlled breathing are the staples of every Qi Gong session. Studies have shown that “Qi,” which means energy, and “Gong,” which loosely means practice, can reduce stress, fatigue and depression, while improving mental and motor function. This gentle exercise, involving breathing techniques, postures, and mental imagery, is believed to improve our health, happiness, and longevity.



Roundtable Discussion: Sue Perrin

In 2000-2001, Sue Perrin’s work with the Episcopal Church took her to South Dakota to the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation. The area shown, roughly the size of Connecticut, is barren and the chapels serving the roughly 5,700 souls living there do so without running water and electricity. She spoke about her experiences there in one of this fall’s Roundtable Discussions.

To register for a Lifelong Learning at Wofford course or event, visit wofford.edu/lifelonglearning or call 864-597-4415.



Making a Difference: New LLL Committees

With the goal of building on the success of these past few years, there are three new opportunities – committees might be a better word -- to assist Wofford's Lifelong Learning program.



Volunteer Committee

Some of you have already participated in the Volunteer Committee, chaired by Judi White. Their focus is on the logistics side of things, including manning the registration desk, serving as class liaisons, and coordinating the Back to School event.



Communications Committee

The Communications Committee, led by Lee Winfield, will develop a regular newsletter and a Lifelong Learning Facebook Page, as well as expand awareness of LLL in the community and establish partnerships with other local programs.



Curriculum Committee

The third new dimension, chaired by Lynda Hurteau, is the Curriculum Committee whose focus is assisting the director in developing new courses, recruiting new instructors and coordinating course evaluations.

You Can Support Wofford's Lifelong Learning

We are pleased to report that the College Development office has created a new fund in support of Lifelong Learning to which groups and individuals may contribute one-time, regular or sustained tax deductible gifts. Visit advance.wofford.edu/register/lifelonglearningfund or make out your check to Wofford College. In the memo line, write "Lifelong Learning Fund". Thank you!

Wofford College Advancement Office
429 North Church Street
CPO J
Spartanburg, S.C. 29303

Important Dates

March 3, 2020: Spring Class Liaison Orientation
March 9 - May 1, 2020: Spring 2020 Semester

Course: Sex, Money, Power and Sometimes Politics Natasha Cimoszewics

Over the years I have enjoyed participating in a number of Lifelong Learning classes in religion, politics, technology and the arts. I credit leadership in securing knowledgeable instructors who share their passions with us and am thankful for the many friends I have made attending these classes.

Trish Tolstedt

I have taken a number of classes with Natasha as part of the Lifelong Learning at Wofford program. Natasha's classes are current and always of interest on a variety of subjects. She is well informed on the subject matter at hand. And she most certainly brings an engaging perspective and personality to her classes as well.

Bill Tolstedt



Trish and Bill Tolstedt

Course: U.S. Diplomatic and Military History 1960-2000: Bob Perrin

I've taken Bob Perrin's history class every term for over three years. Bob is a consummate teacher who guided us through a global 20th century history of war and peace, politics and diplomacy, personalities and ideologies. He always presented the material within the context of the "big picture" and - importantly - always "connected the dots" and showed us the relevance of historical events to today's world. Each term he presented the subject matter from a new perspective, the cumulative result being a new understanding of the world that's both broad and deep. It's been a fascinating journey. Bob's style of presentation is fresh and always filled with interesting anecdotes. His preparation for every class has always been meticulous - and it shows....

Norman Williamson, Ph.D.



Norman with his Bouvier des Flandres, Mikka — a name that's a nod to his Norwegian ancestry.

Special Spotlight: Tracey Southers



Tracey Southers, Administrative Assistant with Lifelong Learning at Wofford College

I love talking with our Lifelong Learning (LLL) members and prospective members on the phone and assisting them in any way I can. I really enjoy registration time, when my workload is maxed out – but, this is when I have the most contact with members. I also especially cherish the times I attend events, workshops and classes. This way I can put a face with the name and interact more with LLL.

What is a memorable moment you have had while working in the LLL program?

There have been so many, becoming so connected with certain people that you rejoice with them and sometimes cry with them, realizing that you made someone's day a little brighter, learning more about my hometown of Spartanburg and beyond through the roundtable discussions, various workshops, classes and events.

I took meditation! That was awesome and things that I felt, were totally unexpected. That was definitely out of my comfort zone, but one session, in particular, will be remembered for a long time.

What do you do for fun during your free time?

If you had asked that a few years ago, it would have been dance. My daughter was a competitive dancer and it was our life. She was on 5 different teams plus 5 elite teams! Nothing I love more than seeing her (who is so hard on herself – never thinking she is good enough, a shy little thing) hit the stage. She owned the stage – and blew me away every time. I would scream so loud (and cry – I always cry) that I had trouble speaking on Monday after competitions!

Then it was over. For two years I wondered what I could do with my free time...then came my first grandchild! My, oh my! What a blessing he is. He makes me smile every day. My family means everything to me – a day with them beats anything!