



ALRI NEWSLETTER

FALL 2008

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3

WWW.ARLINGTONLRI.ORG

Growing ALRI, One Member at a Time

When Jim Donahue went online to explore courses he could take in retirement, he discovered ALRI. The seed was planted, but he didn't join ALRI right away. A friend told Marti Conlon about ALRI, but it wasn't until the friend asked her to sit in on an opera class that Conlon got hooked on ALRI.

Many roads lead to ALRI, and the 20 members of the membership committee, co-chaired by Donahue and Conlon, pave the way for many to discover it. While more than 70 percent of the 650 members renew their membership each year, an exceptional rate for this type of organization, approximately 150 join each year.

Donahue leads the efforts to recruit members. His committee manned an exhibit at the Arlington County Fair and provided information for seniors.

More than 100 seniors asked to be added to the mailing list. It also distributed materials at community and senior centers. Another 50 seniors expressed interest at the Arlington Farmers' Market ALRI booth. In addition, the committee offers membership information at ALRI special events at the library.

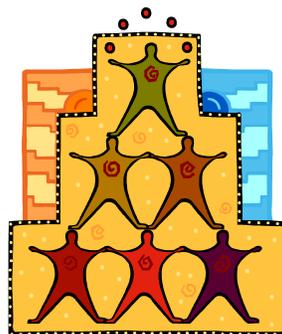
Conlon coordinates the social activities that help members learn more about ALRI and meet other members. Saturday, December 6, is the fall semester social for members joining since the spring social. More than 80 invitations have been sent. New members will have a chance to chat with committee chairs and find out more about opportunities within the organization. In November the committee hosted an ALRI vol-

unteers' wine and cheese party, at which the board recognized the efforts of the 260 volunteers and instructors who contribute to the organization's success.

Snaring baby boomers

As the baby boomers hit 50, the age at which one may join ALRI, opportunities for ALRI growth increase, and challenges arise. "Because they are a younger generation, they have a different outlook, listen to different things, use the computer more, and are more apt to visualize differently," said President John Sprott.

As a result, the website is being upgraded, publications modernized and more colorful materials produced. "In addition," Sprott said, "plans are underway for focus groups to help home in on the interests of this group and how ALRI might connect with



them."

"We look at ourselves as the niche between Arlington County's programs (in adult education and parks and recreation/senior programs) and the courses you will find at local colleges and universities," said Sprott. "We don't do computer programs, exercise or language programs done by other groups. If you look at the matrix of opportunities, we have a part not dealt with directly by others. Hopefully, that's appealing to current and future members."

Help Promote ALRI

If you've been challenged by an ALRI course, attended a thought-provoking special event, or

(Growing ALRI continued on page 2)



President's Report

In July we hired Lisa Culp-Neikirk as the new ALRI administrator and Marjorie Varner became executive director. Both are part-time, but together they will give our offices at GMU and CEC weekly coverage of 32 hours. Lisa is already fitting very nicely into our operation in everything from the CEC office maintenance to working the information system. She is a real find for ALRI, and I am delighted she has joined the Institute. Welcome Lisa!

The fall term saw the greatest number of course registrations, 614 to date, and membership numbers hovering around 650. Membership renewals continue at a rate of 71 percent or better, which is considered excellent for our type organization. We also gained nearly 150 new members over the course of the year. Special Events continue to have a very high participation and ALRI's participation at the Arlington County Fair and Farmers' Market has been very well received and has given us an excellent community presence.

In early December the formation of next year's Nominating Committee will begin. Work by the committee will not have to start before late January, with completion by early May. If you have an interest in serving on this important committee, simply email the executive director at ALRI@ArlingtonLRI.org. Now is also the time for you to give thought to volunteering for a Board position.

—John Sprott

Nominating Committee Needs Volunteers

The Nominating Committee is open for volunteers. The committee will develop the slate of nominees for the ALRI Board of Directors on which the ALRI membership will vote in June 2009.

The committee is composed of a chair plus four others drawn from the current membership. Work begins in late January and must be completed by early May.

Volunteer for this important committee by emailing the executive director at ALRI@ArlingtonLRI.org. —Jeanne Sprott



(Growing ALRI continued from page 1)

enjoyed the company of ALRI members through one of the clubs, you've got what it takes to promote ALRI. Here are some ways you can help:

- ◆ Tell friends what ALRI offers and why they should become a member.
- ◆ Offer to have their names added to the ALRI mailing list for a year. Go to www.arlingtonlri.org, click on membership, then "Get on the Mailing List"; call 703-228-2144; or email ALRI@ArlingtonLRI.org. In each instance provide mailing information.
- ◆ Bring friends to the spring open house so that can see the variety of courses and caliber of instructors.
- ◆ Share ALRI information with organizations and clubs to which you belong.
- ◆ Take a friend to a Special Event lecture at the library. These events are free and open to the public. They are a terrific way to meet other ALRI members and get the flavor of our organization.

—Jody Goulden

Reminder on Course Attendance Policy

Last year the Board formalized ALRI policy regarding students attending ALRI courses. The only persons who may attend a course are members who are registered and are included on the official course roster.

There is one exception: If a course has available slots (i.e., additional students could register), a person interested in joining ALRI may submit a request in advance to the executive director to attend a single course session as a guest. ALRI staff consults class aides and instructors but has final authority on allowing a guest to attend. ALRI staff may be reached at alri@arlingtonlri.org or 703-228-2144.

In fairness to all our members, this option is not possible for courses which are fully subscribed nor is guest status available to current or past members.

—*Marjorie Varner*



How Safe Are ALRI Funds?

In anticipation of the current economic turmoil, ALRI moved some funds from Wachovia into an account at Bank of America. All of the funds are now in accounts within the original FDIC insurance limits of \$100K.

ALRI is not invested in any stocks or bonds, but is reviewing and clarifying monetary guidelines, limits and policies covering all potential investments. This information will be made available to the membership upon board approval.

The IRS has accepted the annual Form 990 Federal Tax submission and has received data covering our operations over the past five years.

Acceptance of this data, which sustains our non-profit status, is expected within three months.

Should you have any questions regarding our finances, please contact the treasurer, Henry Brown, through Marjorie Varner, ALRI executive director.

—*Henry Brown*

ALRI Friend Retires — Will Join ALRI Ranks

For the past eight years Mike Morton has directed Career, Technical and Adult Education (CTAE) of Arlington Public Schools (APS). For the past six-and-a-half years, he has been instrumental in making ALRI a part of CTAE.

From the outset of ALRI, Morton saw the need and relevance of an organization in Arlington County that addressed the intellectual needs of the community's growing 50- and-older population. He saw this need as complimentary to the interests of Arlington Public Schools. With both Dr. Robert G. Smith, superintendent of schools, and the School Board's support, he adopted ALRI as



Mike Morton and John Sprott

a partner with CTAE giving greater emphasis to ALRI's mission.

But now he has retired. "To say that Mike's leadership and support will be missed is an understatement," said John Sprott, ALRI president. "We are sorry to see him leave. At the same time, we wish him the very best in his retirement."

To ensure he keeps in touch with ALRI and satisfies his intellectual curiosity, the ALRI Board presented him with a certificate for a year's honorary membership. John Sprott presented the certificate to Morton at his retirement reception September 30.

—*John Sprott*

ALRI at a Glance

GENERAL INTEREST

Saturday, December 6 – Reception for new members. 2 p.m.-4:30 p.m., Monticello Room, The Jefferson.

Monday, December 22, through Friday, January 2, 2009 – ALRI offices closed.

January, third week – Spring course catalogue mailed.

Saturday, February 7 – Open house for spring semester classes. See details on website or in catalog.

Monday, February 9 – Online class registration. Begins at 9 a.m.

Monday, March 9 – First class in spring semester begins, with most spring classes ending May 8 and final class ending May 22.

SPECIAL EVENTS

How to Register?
See box page 2.

Wednesday, December 10 – Botanic Christmas, tour of holiday-decorated U.S. Botanic Garden, 10:30 a.m. Registration required, limited to 15 members.

Monday, December 15 – Meet the Speaker: Green Transportation: New Energy for Today's Cars Arlington Central Library, 3 p.m. All are welcome.

Monday, December 15 – Sing We Now of Christmas. Concert with the Encore Chorale, soloists and Polyhymnia Bells, 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington. No registration required. Free.

Friday, January 9 – Tour of the National Archives and Records Administration: Treaty of Paris. 9:45-11:15 a.m. Registration required, limited to 15 members.

Monday, January 12 – Meet the Speaker: Gerald Hanweck on Subprime Mortgages. Arlington Central Library, 3 p.m. All are welcome.

Wednesday, January 14 – Tour of the Kennedy Center. 11 a.m. Registration required. Limited to 20 ALRI members.

Thursday, January 15 – Tour of National Shrine. Registration required. Limited to 20 members.

Friday, January 23 – Mary Cassatt: American Impressionist. 11 a.m. tour. National Museum of Women in the Arts. Registration required. Limited to 20 members. \$10 fee at museum.

Wednesday, January 28. Tour of Art in Reagan National Airport. Time to be announced. Registration required. Limited to 20 members.

Sunday, February 15 – Eclipse Chamber Orchestra. George Washington National Memorial, 3 p.m. Registration required. Limited to 20. \$13, payable at concert.

Monday, February 23 – Meet the Speaker: Frank Manheim on Renewable Energy Sources. Arlington Central Library, 3 p.m.

CLUBS

A New Language Lunch Group? Are you interested in practicing a foreign language over a brown-bag lunch? If so, what language? Email Lois Chadbourne at lois-chadbourne@verizon.net.

Book Club Alternating months. Arlington Central Library, 1:30-3:30 p.m. For information contact Marge Alia (noting ALRI Book Club in subject line) at Malia04@comcast.net.

Bridge Club Monthly on irregular schedule in members' homes. Contact Bernice Foster at fosterbf@aol.com.

Cinema Club Contact Leanne Peters at peterslp@aol.com or Janice Yeadon at jnyeadon@hotmail.com for meeting date and details.

Current Issues Club Third Tuesday. 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run Community Center. Contact James Walsh at 703-920-1709 or walsh22204@aol.com.

Ethnic Lunch Club Usually the fourth Thursday. Call ALRI, 703-228-2144, and leave message for coordinator Arlene Kigin.

Travel Club First Wednesday. 2:30 p.m., Langston Senior Center. For information contact Sharon Schoumacher at 703-522-9014 or Sharon@earthwave.net

Teaching for Love, Not Money

With this issue, we continue focusing on the men and women who volunteer to teach courses for ALRI. The topics that they teach vary from ancient Rome to the more recent history of the Civil War and Arlington to Shakespearean sonnets and radio/TV comedy to America as seen through the eye of its films. But the high quality of ALRI's instructors and the breadth of knowledge they bring to the classroom remain consistent.

Tom Dunlap: Two in Same Semester

A veteran ALRI instructor (10 courses in five years), Tom Dunlap is currently enjoying a new challenge, teaching two ALRI courses at the same time. One course covers sonnets from Shakespeare to Edna St. Vincent Millay, and the other (co-taught with Jim Mayer) covers radio and TV comedians from Will Rogers to Garrison Keillor.

Leading "a bohemian life" in his 20s, Dunlap came to Washington with an M.A. in English after two years as a teaching fellow at the University of Michigan to pursue his love of theatre. His theatrical activities at the Folger, Arena Stage and smaller theatres in the area ranged from conducting playwrights' workshops and writing plays to building sets. He also taught at Benjamin Franklin and Washington International universities. He received a Master of Library and Information Science degree from Catholic University, and was a librarian at Georgetown University and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Dunlap finds teaching ALRI courses fun because the students really want to learn (something he did not always find to be the case with college students). He enjoys the exchange of ideas in class discussions and finds ALRI students, with their diverse backgrounds and experiences, very interesting. His teaching secrets are to be a good listener and enjoy what he's teaching. He believes a teacher can't have too much enthusiasm for his subject.

Dunlap's academic areas are Shakespeare and Romantic poetry. While he has taught sonnets many times, this course is his first time teaching the sonnets of Edna St. Vincent Millay.

In each comedy class, Dunlap and Mayer compare the styles of different comedians, such as Will Rogers and Jon Stewart. The class explores the social context of each comedian, the different kinds of comedy, its structure and other areas of the comedian's art.

Dunlap knows ALRI both as a student and a teacher, having taken about half a dozen courses. He is currently taking Tom Wukitsch's course, "Ancient Rome."

—John Heyer

Lee Lederer: Films' View of America

Lee Lederer, instructor of the ALRI course "America on Film," has enjoyed a life-long fascination with film. He grew up going to the movies and considers film to be the quintessential art form, combining all the other arts, photography, music, acting and dance.

(Instructors continued on page 6)



(Instructors continued from page 5)



Although he describes himself as a movie buff rather than a film scholar, he has studied film at the American University, the University of Southern California and the American Film Institute. He has also taught courses on American film at learning-in-retirement programs at George Mason University and Johns Hopkins University. In addition he continues to read reviews and articles about film and sees many movies, often along with his friends who are also avid film goers. As a member of the D.C. Film Society he has had the opportunity to interview well-known directors, such as Werner Herzog and Neil Burger, about their films.

As a Foreign Service information officer with the U.S. Information Agency, his main areas of expertise were in the fields of information and cultural programming. Following his retirement, he worked for the State Department as executive producer for foreign television crews invited here to tape documentaries about the U.S. The aspect of

his work he found the most rewarding was to provide a window on American life to people with varied political beliefs and those from different cultures.

While living overseas, he continued to pursue his passion for film and especially for American film. Watching American films in theaters abroad made him realize to what degree they presented a true picture and to what degree they portrayed a “Tinseltown” image of American life. In teaching about film, he tries to do what the best movies do, entertain the audience while also engaging their minds.

—Susan Lively

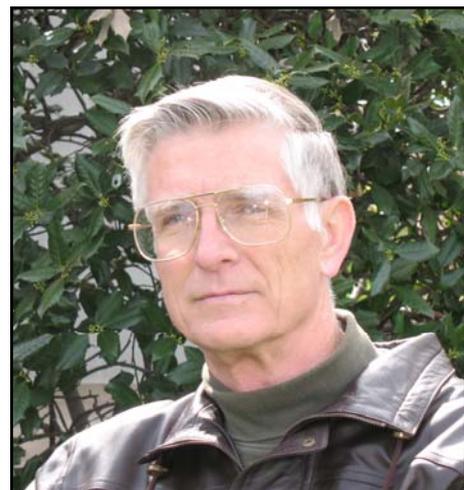
Karl VanNewkirk: Sites of County’s Past

One man’s personal interest in local history has turned out to be a boon for ALRI members.

Nothing in Karl VanNewkirk’s work life – 14 years in the U.S. Army followed by a career as a government contractor – prepared him to teach “Arlington History,” a course he’s taught since 2003 and will offer again in spring 2009.

But given his interest in history, in general, and local and Civil War history in particular, plus lots of Arlington history in his personal library, VanNewkirk prepared an outline for the course after he retired in February 2000. “Arlington History” has become a popular ALRI standard in the spring, his preferred teaching time because of fewer holiday interruptions than fall, nicer weather, and the blooming of the wisteria vine at one of the class session sites.

The course is unusual because the seven class sessions are held at different locations, to give students the flavor and a better understanding of the history of Arlington County. (Because some locations are small, VanNewkirk limits each course to 15 students.)



(Instructors continued on page 7)

(Instructors continued from page 6)

He starts with an overview at the Arlington Historical Museum, then takes the class chronologically from pre-history to the 20th century with visits to Potomac Overlook Park, the Ball-Sellers House (where the wisteria blooms), Fort C. F. Smith, Arlington House, and Carlyn Hall, concluding at the Fairlington Community Center, if that site is available.

VanNewkirk also is a volunteer ESL teacher for the Arlington Education and Employment Program and one of 42 volunteers recently awarded the Presidential Volunteer Service Award. He's also an ALRI student, having taken courses primarily in the areas of history or science.

Teaching for ALRI is a pleasure because VanNewkirk enjoys trying to pass his knowledge on, particularly to such interested students. And since he's continually getting more information about Arlington history, through the Arlington Historical Society magazine and programs and lectures, he updates his course material a little each time before he teaches it.

—Mike Leber

Thomas Wukitsch: New Tools for History

Roman history and archeology has been a lifetime interest for Tom Wukitsch, instructor for the ALRI fall course "Ancient Rome." Indeed his passion for the subject began with childhood reading of National Geographic.

A man of many interests and skills, Wukitsch served in the U.S. Navy before joining State Department as a Foreign Service officer (FSO). As chief of State's Middle East Division and then the Western Europe Division of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, he prepared and delivered analyses and briefings to high-level U.S. and foreign officials.

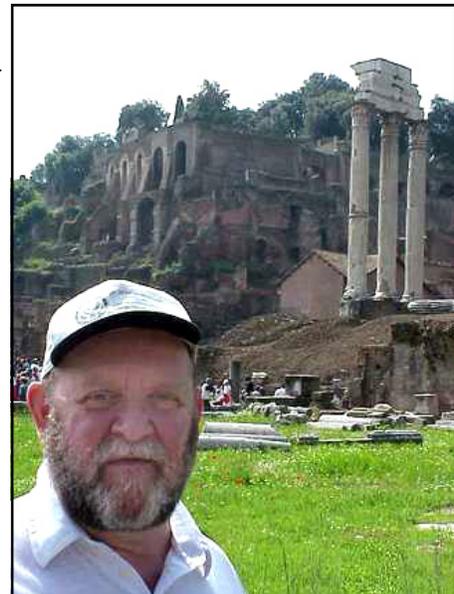
A wide-ranging curiosity led to his expertise in teaching and computer design. He combined those interests to become a leader in archaeometry, the use of computer design in enhancing archaeological discovery. Following his retirement, Tom joined his wife, also an FSO, on her four-year posting to Rome, drawing on his lifelong interest in Roman history and archeology by studying, writing and teaching about the subject.

Wukitsch has taught every semester since ALRI began. In addition to his current course, he has taught about Medieval Rome, Renaissance Rome, Ancient Egypt, Pompeii and Vesuvius and Carthage and North Africa. He has led ALRI members on tours to Rome, Florence, Venice and Egypt. He has also found great enjoyment from Tom Dunlap's courses on Shakespeare.

Wukitsch draws on his well-developed memory of details, wide knowledge of modern presentation technology and large computerized collection of images and articles on the subject. He keeps current on the field through correspondence, journals, the Internet and travels to the Mediterranean.

While he brings knowledge and expertise to his courses, he also derives a great deal of satisfaction from teaching them. "I seem to have a need to tell everything I know to everyone," Wukitsch said. "Teaching provides a captive audience."

—Susan Lively



(Instructors continued on page 8)

(Instructors continued from page 7)

Keith Young: Revisiting Civil War

Two circumstances sparked Keith Young's lifelong interest in the military: two of his great grandfathers served in the Civil War and he grew up during World War II with a daily exposure to events unfolding for a country at war.

Pursuing this interest, Young graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and embarked on a career that included serving on nuclear attack and missile submarines, becoming the commanding officer of an attack submarine and commanding a submarine tender (a repair ship for a squadron of submarines). His favorite position was commanding the attack submarine because it was challenging and afforded the opportunity for independent operations at sea.

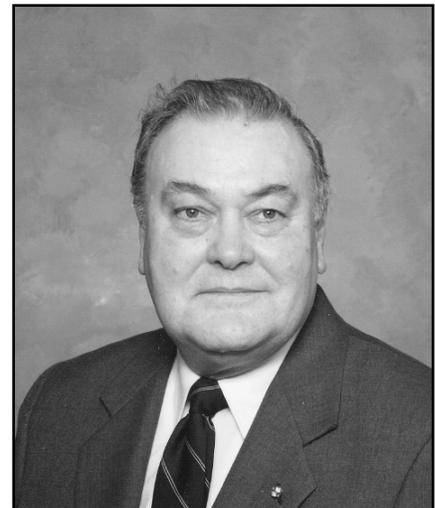
Following retirement from the Navy, Young worked as a consultant and trainer in the field of maintenance and as an adjunct professor in Averett College's Northern Virginia MBA program (now Averett University, Danville, Va.).

During all these years, he spent hours researching military history, focusing on aspects of the Civil War largely unexplored by most historians. He now has expertise in 25 such topics including prisoner-of-war camps, field fortifications, and Civil War envelopes, which were imprinted with patriotic messages. Being able to include these usually unfamiliar kinds of information in his classes helps Young make the war's history come more fully alive for his students.

Young has also taught at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in Fairfax and the Fairfax Senior Center, where he is currently teaching "WWII U-Boats – The German Experience." For Young, the best part of teaching for ALRI and other adult groups is "the attitude of the students – they are there to learn."

Always an avid student, Young enrolled this fall in ALRI's "Figures Can Lie," an examination of statistical data in the media.

—Peggy Higgins



ALRI Newsletter

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One-Stop Checking

Please check the ALRI Calendar feature on our website. All important ALRI events, including club meetings, office closures and Special Events, are listed in one convenient calendar which is updated daily.



Route to ALRI

Need to reach someone at ALRI? Email us at ALRI@ArlingtonLRI.org or call us at 703-228-2144.



Off She Goes!



Marjorie Varner, executive director, was selected to participate in General Motors Project Driveway, the largest market test of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles in the country. She

will drive the car for two months. Find out more at the library program on December 15. See page 4 for details.



*Top: Marjorie Varner behind the wheel of the Equinox Fuel Cell car.
Bottom: Marjorie Varner receives keys from Monica Murphy, GM representative.*



Special Events: Tour of the Arlington Water Treatment Plant on October 3.

Open House September 2008



Arlington Learning in Retirement Institute

ALRI offers 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 50 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 Career, Technical and Adult Education Program, Arlington County Office of Senior Adult Programs, Sunrise Senior Living at The Jefferson, Marymount University, Elderhostel Institute Network

ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY

As a learning organization, ALRI subscribes to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) principle of Academic Freedom: "All views should be respected regardless of their conformance with generally, or currently, accepted views."

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