



ENCORE LEARNING Newsletter

www.EncoreLearning.net

Fall 2013
Volume 10, Issue 2

Fall 2013 Course Preview

An enthusiastic and expectant group of Encore Learning members, potential members, staff and speakers filled 176 seats in the auditorium of George Mason University's Founders Hall on Saturday, September 7. President John Sprott welcomed the crowd and promptly introduced Information Technology (IT) Committee Chairman, Steve Spangler, who offered a quick and easy tutorial on how to navigate Encore Learning's handsome new website. The IT Committee had promised to improve the website and they more than met that goal. Members seemed particularly appreciative when Spangler pointed out that they no longer needed a password to register for courses. Spangler thanked his team and modestly downplayed his own efforts, which actually were essential to the new website's success.

Academic Programs Committee Co-chair Lee Nash then took the podium to introduce twenty-one of the fall semester's instructors. Nash's fast-paced comments between presenters reinforced his admonition to them to "keep it short", and each instructor seemed to take him seriously. Put another way, no hook materialized to yank anyone off the stage.

Nash commented later that from his committee's point of view, the semi-annual course preview is very helpful. "It helps the membership realize how good our instructors are, and conversely, the instructors come to realize that we are a very good audience, to the benefit of both. It makes our recruiting much simpler."

Course registration day on Monday, September 9th confirmed the high interest in Encore Learning's courses and validated the registration function of the new website, which worked smoothly. Ultimately 783 Encore Learning "students" registered for the fall 2013 courses, an increase of 66 from the fall 2012 semester.

— Mildred Patterson





President's Note

Following the well-attended annual meeting and election of your new Board of Directors, the summer has been a busy one for many volunteers, board members and staff. Perhaps the most notable fruits of their labors are the new website, improvements in the membership and registration processes, and the production of another fine catalog. Kudos to all involved! Also of note is our renewed affiliation agreement with George Mason University.

Work continues on making the website more interesting and useful. If you have experience in web maintenance or design, your assistance will be appreciated. We want to keep the website accessible, timely and informative.

By the end of September, we had 815 members enrolled. This fall, course registrations reached their highest levels to date and participation in special events and clubs continues to remain robust and active. It is worth noting that this only happens as a result of the efforts of many volunteers working in tandem with our part-time staff. So if you like what Encore Learning is offering you and have the time and a willingness to work with others to maintain a strong organization, there are many volunteer opportunities, most of which require little time on a continuing basis. Contact our office today to join the ranks!

—John Sprott



Annual Meeting Recap

Encore Learning's June 7th Annual Meeting was the members' 11th annual meeting but the first under the new name. President John Sprott applauded the rollout of the name change and noted that there will be an effort to publicize it by membership advocacy and through the publications, the media and the major revisions to the website, www.encorelearning.net. In his state-of-the-organization comments, he confirmed that Encore Learning is in good shape and expressed the goal of making it stronger with an increased community presence.

Membership growth in the organization remains steady with 798 members in 2013, up from 747 last year, and it has a 74 percent renewal rate, which is high compared to similar organizations. The outgoing treasurer, Henry Brown, reported a balance of \$275,000, an increase over 2012's \$257,370. He announced that the majority of payments received for courses registration and membership are made online. This is preferred as members enter online payments directly into a secure credit card processor and get immediate confirmation. Paper registrations are more exposed to fraud as they go through the postal system and any errors they may contain (incorrect credit card info or unsigned check or incorrect check amount) delay processing by the staff.

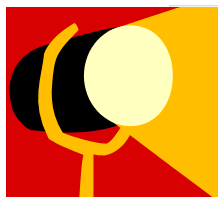
The Nominating Committee reported that, beyond the incumbents, the election slate included committee co-chairs for Class Aides (Stephen Hopper) and Member-

ship (Paula Kaufman), plus Registrar and Treasurer (Mary and Don Schlichtmann, respectively). The members approved the nominees and also agreed to a by-laws change allowing Nominating Committee members to be eligible for nomination. Additionally, the Board of Directors will develop a plan to stagger their terms which will protect the organization from losing several executive committee members or both of a committee's co-chairs at the same time.

Members at the Annual Meeting also heard updates reviewing the website development, outlining the continuing success of the special events, noting the decision to hold the fall course number to 30, and summarizing the strategic planning meeting held in January 2013. The scholarship report noted that the fourth \$1,000 Encore Learning-sponsored scholarship administered by the Arlington Community Foundation was awarded in 2013 to an Arlington student attending Marymount University (see related article); the McCracken fund administered by the George Mason University Foundation will begin awarding scholarships once it reaches full endowment.

The meeting concluded with an open discussion of a range of issues focusing on Encore Learning's image in the community and ways to enhance it. Suggestions for publicizing the organization through the website and local media generated multiple resources to be explored.

—Mary Crosby



SPOTLIGHT ON INSTRUCTORS

A. Scott Wood: Music in Good Hands

A. Scott Wood's connection with Encore Learning began when board members went to an Arlington Philharmonic concert and heard him tell the audience about the music. The board members liked his comments so much they asked him to give a lecture and then to teach a class.

Wood's connection with music began in childhood. "I have memories of recordings of *Nutcracker*, show tunes and Brubeck's *Time Out*," he said. "My mom had studied piano so she took me to piano lessons. I wanted to play drums, but my dad said that would be too loud so I took the next loudest instrument, the trumpet." His father's Army career took the family to Germany where the school music programs weren't the same as stateside. Band didn't start until high school, so Wood was the only third grader in the high school band. After school, he joined the local German brass bands, sometimes as the only kid, usually as the only American.



Wood's father's assignments in Carlisle, PA, and the Pentagon brought many musical opportunities -- youth orchestra, brass ensemble, marching band and jazz. This led to the University of Illinois for his bachelor's and master's degrees. "Some music schools train you for a particular job," he commented, "at Illinois, I could dabble. They even had a mariachi band and a Russian folk orchestra. When I was studying for my master's, I got to run a jazz band. I was also able to take conducting courses."

This interest in all aspects of music is reflected in Wood's resume -- trumpeter, conductor, lecturer, composer. "You create your own opportunities," he said, "then, over the years, you get to the point where people know you well enough and you start getting calls." Of course, one call came from Encore Learning. His first class was "The Conductor's Perspective." This fall, he is teaching "Elements of Music," in which he explains musical building blocks such as timing and pitch and then plays examples of each.

Wood says his classes are for all students, regardless of musical knowledge. "The best music, done right, hits you at different levels," he said, "and anyone who has ever played or sung in a group will project themselves into the music." Wood notes that he has received enough good questions to fill many class sessions. — Laura Paul

Dave Keegan: Deep Immersion Perspective on Asia

Relatively new to Encore Learning, Dave Keegan is undertaking his second teaching assignment this fall. "China and Our Future – Competitor or Partner or Both?" will be his first full course after delivering one of the "Global Hot Spots" lectures in the spring of 2013. With his experience as a Foreign Service Officer in several Asian countries, he is particularly well suited for teaching these classes.



Keegan developed an interest in China in high school when he attended a government-sponsored forum on Asian history and became fascinated with the country and its 3,000 year history. Some years later, while finishing his doctorate in Chinese history and after acquiring Chinese language skills, he decided to do something "operational" with his expertise. This led him to the Foreign Service. There, Keegan was a political officer specializing in bilateral political relations and, secondarily, in military issues. During the last three years of his career, he served at State Department headquarters specializing in South and Central Asian Affairs along with military issues. He observes that one key to

(Keegan continued on page 4)

(Keegan continued from page 3)

his career success was figuring out where and from whom to seek information. In this way, he established valuable contacts that served him well over the years.

For Keegan, the best part of being in the Foreign Service was the chance to “operate in the language and culture” of the countries in which he served. This made it easier for him to understand how each country’s citizens experienced life. The frequent moves and long distances from other family members were a challenge for him and his wife and children. Nevertheless, the experience was “enriching.”

Since retiring a year ago, Keegan has worked part time at the State Department as part of a staff that reviews documents slated for possible release to ensure that sensitive information is protected. He has also taught the China Seminar at the Foreign Service Institute. This is a two-week class for government employees whose jobs require a working knowledge of various aspects of Chinese life. The course covers such topics as Chinese history, culture, economics, trade, etc. and provides participants with a better understanding of the context in which they will be working.

— Peggy Higgins

Staff Corner

Working with our Information Technology committee, we have taken advantage of our new website’s nimble response to changing news. Under the News heading shown to the right of each webpage, we keep an array of items which we think you might find helpful and timely. Messages sent to the membership are reflected here as are upcoming open lectures from the Special Events offerings. We also continue to tweak the Quick Links and appreciate your feedback on the usefulness of the various “widgets” utilized. One item we are all awaiting is the return of the calendar feature. Please bear with us as we implement the one best suited to our needs.



Another change coming is the increased security of our payment process. We will continue to accept Visa and MasterCard payments through our online PayPal portal as it provides the most secure payment processing available in our industry. Members may continue to pay with personal checks when submitting paper membership/course registration forms, but we will no longer be accepting credit card information on our paper forms as of January 2014.

Submitting theft-prone credit card information on paper (mailed or hand carried to the office) could expose our members to fraud and subsequently exposes any staff involved to accusations of fraud. Some members are under the impression that they somehow avoid sending their credit card information over the Internet when they mail it on a paper form to the office. Today, every credit card payment is processed over the



Internet. However, we do not expect this change to be of great impact to our membership as currently only 5% of those paying by credit card use paper payment forms.

You may reach our staff by phone at 703-228-2144 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Thursday or by email at info@EncoreLearning.net. Please call for an appointment if you need to meet with us in person. Administrator Donna Banks works from our space at the Syphax Education Center (SEC) in Arlington. Executive Director Marjorie Varner works from Founders Hall on GMU’s Arlington campus. Check our website for specific holiday closures of the office but please follow the online course schedule for your actual class session dates.

— Marjorie Varner

From Paper to Webpage



As interesting and challenging as it is to create a newsletter twice a year, the lack of timeliness, burden of production and expense of mailing have prompted the Encore Learning Board of Directors to request the switch from paper to online news. Currently, the new website shows a list of recent items affecting members under the News column on the right side. After this final issue of a paper newsletter, the News will carry many of the items you are now reading. Be sure to bookmark www.EncoreLearning.net to quickly access the latest that is happening at Encore Learning. When we begin publishing more frequently by using the website, we will need an abundance of articles. If you have writing muscles that you would like to exercise, please contact us!

— Marjorie Varner

Welcome to the newcomers below, who joined Encore Learning in the six months between March 8, 2013 and October 15, 2013.

Betts Abel
Paul Bellaire
Sheryl Billups
Rob Bobowski
Dianne Bobowski
Sandra Borden
Wells Burgess
Daniel Burkitt
Susan Butler
Pat Campiglia
Angela Cannon
Susan Cavanaugh
Olguita Convers
Lisa Cosgrove-Davies
Elizabeth Cotsworth
Adriana Daulong
Dennis DeRiggi
Mary Eileen Dixon
Lynne Fallon
Irene Firsow
Rosalie Gershon
Elizabeth Gibbon
MaryAnn Godfrey

Barbara Jones
Charlene Kane
Fran Kearney
Judy Keating
Ann Kelly
Erna Kerst
Michael Kerst
Charlene Kiefer
Brenda King
Nybia Laguarda
Terri Lynch
Marsha Mack
Carol Mackela
Ammar Malik
Joel Mandelman
Julie Mangis
Carol Morland
Wayne Muhlstein
Dorothy Mulligan
Melinda Nahmias
George O'Brien
Andy Paterson
Mary Peters

Susan Peters
John Poff
Terry Pottinger
Barbara Quirk
Bob Ragan
Pat Ragan
Anne Rensberger
Molly Ross
Sandra Rowland
Cora Rubenstein
Ali Saleem
Barbara Schrader
Sheryl Scull
Moira Shannon
Barbara Spangler
Ed Stolark
Mary Strauss
Marty Suydam
David Tate
Alice Tetelman
Marlena Thompson
Jane Trainor
Pat Walsh
Jona Wheeler
David Whitten
Janet Widmer
Christine Winter
Kay Wood
Greg Woodhead
Linda Woodrow
Charles Woodrow
Jim Woolwine
Mary Wuest

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Barbara Schnorrenberg – In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of Barbara Schnorrenberg, a long-time instructor for Encore Learning, on October 10, 2013. Barbara enlightened and engaged everyone fortunate enough to take her classes. Beginning in fall 2003, Barbara offered eleven history courses to members, most recently teaching "England Under the Plantagenets" in fall 2012. Her confident though unassuming presentations complemented the deep and broad knowledge she brought to her subject area. Barbara and her husband, John Schnorrenberg, were last profiled in our newsletter in the summer of 2008. Please take the time to read that article again on our website.

— Marjorie Varner

Give the Gift of Encore Learning

If you know someone who would enjoy taking Encore Learning classes, why not give them a membership to Encore Learning? The membership fee is your tax deduction; the gift recipient gains entrée to one of the area's best hidden treasures. Interested? Contact staff at Info@EncoreLearning.net or call 703-228-2144.

Encore Learning Newsletter

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Encore Learning

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Perhaps that ditty was the theme song of the late spring trip that members of the

Encore Learning Travel Club took to explore the Great Rivers of Europe. We planned to cruise up the Danube from Vienna, passing through the Main-Danube Canal locks over the continental divide of Europe, leading us into the Rhine and then on to Amsterdam. However, Mother Nature planned otherwise.

The first half of the trip was rainy and the second half was sunny but flooded, finally threatening the safety of all the ships on the water. The weather was impersonal; high water challenged everyone equally: cruise lines, barges, vineyards, riverfront towns. Stranded mid-canal,



we transitioned to buses, while the poor tour guides shifted from telling us about upcoming sites to making sure that the luggage kept up with the passenger. The mechanics of the unexpected transfer of so many travelers tested everyone's good humor

and organizational skills, but we all rose to the challenge with equanimity, despite the occasional lost raincoat or misplaced umbrella.

Every town takes pride in its churches or cathedrals and the beauty, detail and wealth they display are amazing. Melk Abbey, whose original library with vast manuscript collection and medieval scriptorium inspired Umberto Eco's novel/murder mystery, *The Name of the Rose*, provided an exceptional tour. Explorations on land were tempered by pleasantly floating through wine country and miles of vineyards in the Wachau Valley, gazing at various small castles, such as Durnstein Castle, where King Richard I Lionheart of England was held captive by Duke Leopold V of Austria after their dispute during the Third Crusade. The visit to Nuremberg touched more contemporary and sobering times with a visit to the Nazi Parade ground, the site of the Nuremberg trials and the prison. Some unexpected sights were surprises, like the Benedictine recycling coffin: you get to go to your grave in style, but then the bottom of the coffin opens and you fall gracefully into your final resting place.

Due to the length of my travelogue, I have skipped some principal sites, like Heidelberg, Koln and Amsterdam, but we have more photos on our Picasa webpage. Those with a Google account may access it at this web address: https://picasaweb.google.com/mmdtkw/Encore_ViennaAmsterdam_MayJune2013.

— Margaret Dean

Editor's Note: Travel Club members are planning a June trip to Turkey's Magical Hideaways with Overseas Adventure Travel. Jean Moore is the trip coordinator. Contact the office immediately if you are interested. And yes, the photo link for the trip above is spelled Amsterdam, not Amsterdam. No typos here!

Encore Learning Awards Annual Scholarship to Arlington Youth

The Arlington Community Foundation (ACF) held its annual scholarship reception in June 2013. The event recognized the achievements of the 133 award recipients and gave them and their families the chance to meet the donors who made their scholarships possible. The ACF awarded a total of \$317,000 to Arlington students this year.

Encore Learning Vice President, Mike Morton, attended the reception on behalf of Encore Learning. The recipient of this year's Encore Learning scholarship is Allen Gibbs, who began his freshman year at Marymount University earlier this fall. Allen is a 2013 graduate of York-

town High School.

One of the highlights of the reception was a presentation by one of the prior scholarship recipients. Jon Remedios, a 2011 graduate of Wakefield High School and member of the Duke University class of 2015, shared his reflections on the meaning of scholarship and his college experience.



Mike Morton and Allen Gibbs

— Donna Banks

Encore Learning at a Glance

GENERAL INTEREST

Monday, November 25 – Encore Learning Board Meeting, Syphax Education Center, Room 237
Wednesday, November 27 – Friday, November 29 – Encore Learning office closed for the Thanksgiving holiday
Monday, December 23 – Wednesday, January 1, 2014 – Encore Learning office closed for the Christmas holiday
Saturday, February 1, 2014 – Spring 2014 Course Preview
Monday, February 3, 2014 – Registration for the spring 2014 semester begins

SPECIAL EVENTS

To register for special events, go to EncoreLearning.net or call 703-228-2144 or email Info@EncoreLearning.net

For more info, go to the SPECIAL EVENTS tab at EncoreLearning.net

Friday, November 15 – Voice of America Studio Tour. The Voice of America Studio. This event is free. Registration required; limited to 20 members.

Monday, November 18 – Latino Americans. Arlington Central Library. No registration required. This event is free and all are welcome.

Friday, November 22 – Yoga: The Art of Transformation. The Arthur M Sackler Gallery. This event is free. Registration is required; limited to 15 members.

Thursday, December 12 – A Hillwood Christmas! Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens. This event is free. Donations, however, are welcome. Registration required; limited to 15 members.

Monday, December 16 – Swastikas on Wilson. Arlington Central Library. No registration required. This event is free and all are welcome.

CLUBS

To learn more about a particular club, email Info@EncoreLearning.net or call 703-228-2144, noting which club(s) you are interested in and your information. The appropriate club coordinator(s) will contact you directly.

Breakfast Club meets Wednesdays, 8 a.m. at La Madeleine at Bailey's Crossroads, intersection of Columbia Pike and Rt. 7 (Leesburg Pike). Club coordinator is Karen Cavanaugh.

Bridge Club meets monthly on an irregular schedule in members' homes. Club coordinator is Sharon Bisdee.

Cinema Club meets monthly on an irregular schedule. Club coordinators are Leanne Peters and Janice Yeadon.

Current Issues Club meets the third Tuesday of each month, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run Community Center. Club coordinator is Jim Walsh.

Ethnic Lunch Club usually meets the last Thursday of each month. Club coordinator is Arlene Kigin.

Nonfiction Book Club meets the second Monday of alternating months beginning in January at Arlington Central Library, 1:30 – 3 p.m. Club coordinators are Pat Chatten and Carter Vaden.

Russian Conversation Club is forming. Initially, meetings will take place at 2:00 PM on a day of the week most convenient to interested participants. Club coordinator is Helen Getter.

Society for Mindful Awareness meets weekly from noon to 1 PM on Wednesdays at the Arlington Central Library (ask the library's Reference Desk about room location). Club coordinators are Bruce Britton and Dwight Rodgers.

Travel Club meets the first Wednesday of each month, 2:30 p.m., Langston-Brown Senior Center, 2121 N. Culpeper St., Arlington. Club coordinator is Sharon Schoumacher.

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Look for your Spring
catalog in January.
Course registration
begins February 3rd.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY

As a learning organization, Encore Learning 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."

Encore Learning

Encore Learning offers college-level noncredit 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. Encore Learning is supported, governed, and financed by its members. Encore Learning 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, Marymount University, Elderhostel Institute Network