

# Lifelong Learning Institute

SPRING 2022 *Newsletter*



Northern Illinois University

LLI@niu.edu

## Musings...

**Carol Zar**

*Steering Committee Chair*

Happy New Year everyone –

It's been a while since we've communicated this way. The past two years have brought us many challenges. But we learned that you could teach old dogs new tricks. We switched from in-person classes to meeting via Zoom... and found that we could master this technology. We found conveners willing and able to learn how to mine YouTube for content and share their screen so everyone could enjoy it. Because of Zoom, we connected with folks outside of our usual geographic area, some former LLI members and some brand new to our group. And so LLI continued and flourished.

Now, we are hoping that, with our Spring 2022 offerings, we can go back to meeting in person. But there will be some changes, and we will all need to stay flexible! We will likely be meeting in different, larger rooms than we have previously. That is necessitated by the university's rules concerning social distancing. For the same reason, we have to limit class sizes. Be mindful of this when you register for classes, and only sign up for those you really hope to attend. And we will need to wear our masks.

Be sure to watch your email for updates on what's happening. Look for messages from the NIU Lifelong Learning Institute.

If you want to get messages about LLI members, such as a change of address, or a death, or the birth of a grandchild, or a reading relevant to a course, remember to sign up for our Google Group at NIULLI Community Google Group.

I'm looking forward to seeing you in person. Until then, stay healthy.

– Carol

## Fee Structure Explained

LLI has different expenses for Zoom and in-person terms. While Zoom terms require Zoom subscriptions, they do not require room rentals. That's why the 8-week fall term fee was \$47.50, the 4-week winter term was \$25, and the 8-week in-person spring term will be \$85, the same as in Spring 2020.

Remarkably, that \$85 fee has not increased since our Spring 2016 term, and it allows you to attend as many courses as you like. As LLI member and convener Judith Wright said this fall, "Where else can you buy this kind of stuff for just 85 bucks?"

## OTHER WORLDLY EXPERIENCES



With the exception of two years when he took a break between degrees to write and edit articles for a financial newsletter, Tom Roberts has spent nearly all of his life around academic institutions. He grew up next door to the University of Connecticut campus,

where his father was director of admissions. After high school, he earned an undergraduate degree from Hamilton College, near Utica, NY, and then returned to UConn for a master's degree in educational foundations. From there, he was off to the opposite side of the country to pursue a Ph.D. in educational administration and psychology at Stanford. Having completed the coursework requirements for his degree by the summer of 1970, Tom began job-hunting, an effort soon rewarded by an offer to join the College of Education faculty at NIU.

1970 was a pivotal year for Tom in many ways. He was writing his doctoral dissertation, launching his new career teaching educational psychology, and just a few months earlier, he'd also had his first experience with psychedelic drugs. Surrounded by the natural beauty of Lake Tahoe and in the company of friends, it was a mellow experience, but one which would have a

profound effect. To this day it continues to influence his thinking and his research interests, including the relationship of psychedelics to religion.

Tom was instrumental in bringing the first class on psychedelics into the education curriculum at Northern. Eventually, it became an interdisciplinary Honors Program seminar, which Tom regularly taught until his retirement in 2006.

You might think, based upon these brief bits of information, that Tom Roberts is stuck in some version of the 1960s counterculture – and you'd be wrong! In person he is quiet, thoughtful and extremely articulate about his research, publications and opinions on psychedelics. And come this spring, LLI participants will have an opportunity to interact with Tom personally when he teaches his four-week seminar entitled “Religion and Psychedelics: A Video Quartet.” When asked what he expects participants to take away from the experience, Tom offers a three-fold response: to help people to better understand their own minds – and the minds of others, to learn more about the history of psychedelics, and to become more informed citizens, better able to interpret literature in the area of psychedelics. That's a trifecta of good reasons to enroll. See you there!

— *Brad Pietens*

## BACK IN PERSON: WHAT'S OLD AND WHAT'S NEW

We're happy to be returning to in-person classes this spring, to seeing old friends and new ones whom we've only met on Zoom. But not everything will be the same as before, and much will be new.

### **Do I need to be immunized? Must I wear a mask?**

LLI follows all NIU protocols, and NIU requires the university community to be immunized and also to wear masks at all times when inside on campus, except in private offices. (Students were even fully masked on stage this fall.) We assume that LLI members also have received booster shots to protect both themselves and those around them.

### **What about NIU students whom I might encounter?**

All students are expected to be vaccinated; staff must be vaccinated or tested. They too must wear masks inside at all times.

### **Why the emphasis on early enrollment?**

PLEASE think very carefully about which classes you are *actually* going to *regularly* attend. If your interest is casual or if just one or two sessions interest you, then consider not signing up but checking with the convener to see if there is space in the room for an occasional visitor.

**What time are classes?**

Morning sessions, as previously, will run from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Afternoon session will meet from 1 to 3 p.m., except for Notables, which will end at 2:30 p.m.

**Where will we meet?**

Most sessions will be in the Heritage Room in the Holmes Student Center, but we'll also sometimes use 71North, a room in the basement of Founders Memorial Library. You'll get a room location schedule each week via email.

**When are Notables?**

Notables have moved from Tuesday brown bag sessions, which would require removing masks to eat and drink, to a class slot on Tuesday afternoons at 1 p.m. We assure you that the content and format you like will continue.

**How will we get technical help?**

As of now, the plan is for a graduate assistant to be on call as in the past.

*This article was written in early February 2022. All information is subject to changing conditions and regulations at NIU and in our community, state and nation. Watch your email for any updates.*

## **All employees, students, and guests, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear a mask indoors while on campus.**

From: [www.niu.edu/protecting-the-pack/index.shtml](http://www.niu.edu/protecting-the-pack/index.shtml)

## **BLOOMING THIS SPRING — March 22 - May 12**

All study groups are 8 weeks, unless noted.

### **Shakespeare's Poems (4 weeks)**

*William Baker*

Examine sonnets and poems in historical, social contexts.

### **Indelible: A Study of Photographs We Won't Let Fade Away (4 weeks)**

*Joe Gastiger*

Study who, what, why of photos documenting 20th century historical events.

### **Notables**

*LLI Notables Committee*

Attend talks by experts, primarily NIU faculty, with time for questions.

### **News and Views (4 alternating weeks)**

*Elizabeth Bass*

Discuss what informed, intrigued and amused us in the news.

### **Nature Around Us — *Pam Otto***

Explore domestic habitats of insects, spiders and more.

### **What food options will be open at the student center?**

The Huskie Grill has a sports bar menu, with made-to-order burgers, wings, salads and wraps. The Depot sells grab-and-go sandwiches, salads, wraps and beverages. Qdoba Mexican Eats, the national chain, offers burritos, tacos, quesadillas and bowls. Starbucks sells sandwiches and pastries, as well as drinks. Einstein Bagels, across the mall on the lower level of Founders Memorial Library, also has sandwiches and salads.

### **Will Ellington's Restaurant be open?**

Yes, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with a new buffet format. Menus will be available in late February at [niu.edu](http://niu.edu), then search for "ellingtons."

### **I don't live locally. Will LLI go back to Zoom?**

We are certainly open to having some classes on Zoom. And, even if we are back in person for other terms, plans are for future Winter (January-February) terms, with their unreliable and even nasty weather, to be on Zoom.

## REMEMBER BEING IN-PERSON IN AUGUST?

**Judy Olsen,**  
*Event Coordinator*

The Hopkins Park LLI summer get-together had been planned for weeks. The Hopkins Park shelter had been reserved, email reminders had been sent out, bottled water had been stored in the available fridge, and everything was ready – except for the weather. The morning started out cloudy with an ominous looking sky. As time passed, the weather only worsened...there were even tornado warnings in a nearby town.

After some frantic phone calls back and forth, we decided to wait it out and go sit in the shelter house for a while to see if the weather would clear or if anyone would arrive. The weather DID clear, the sun peeked through the clouds, and people began to arrive.

Eventually, almost 30 people gathered for some catching up, conversation, and good times. We saw some people who had been on Zoom and others whom we hadn't seen in a long while. All in all, it was great to be face-to-face, to gather together, even for such a short time – and we were all looking forward to the next season of classes.

### In Memoriam 2019-2022

Gertrude Brigham  
Thelma Coles  
Betty Drake  
Fay Fuchs  
Clint Jesser  
George Nenonen  
Marilyn Loy  
Dale Osterle  
Al Resis  
Kathleen Gosnell Seiler  
George Spencer  
Dorothy Thorsen

## GOOD FOOD! GREAT COMPANY!

That's what we can promise you, COVID permitting, at our almost-annual LLI Soiree on Friday, June 10, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Hopkins Park in DeKalb. It's a chance to chat at length with fellow LLIs, to enjoy appetizers and desserts made by LLI members, and to raise some money that supports LLI extras. We hope to see you then.

## LLI TRIVIA

1. How many people signed up for LLI's very first term in Spring 2001?
2. From 2015-2019, what was the average number enrolled in LLI per year? (If you took classes in two terms, you were counted twice.)
3. What was LLI's original name?

1. 71      2. 338      3. Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILIR)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

LLI Spring 2022 ..... March 22 – May 12  
LLI Soiree ..... June 10  
LLI Fall 2022 ..... Sept. 13 – Nov. 3  
LLI Winter 2023 ..... Jan. 17 – Feb. 9  
LLI Spring 2023 ..... March 14 – May 4