

BUCKNEL UNIVERSITY For Lifelong Learning

BILL is **MORE** than just classes



Half of the BILL members on their Hiawatha Paddlewheel Riverboat cruise along the Susquehanna listened to a geologist give a history of the river's formation while the others took in a presentation on rocks and minerals. Twice a year, BILL members can register for a wide range of classes — from arts and literature to science and technology taught by well-qualified course leaders.

But there's more throughout the year for members. Other educational opportunities can grow out of class discussions; international and local trips are offered; and various Special Presentations (see page 5) and Armchair Travel (for members only) are scheduled.

Last year, the introduction of Armchair Travel slide shows offered members a chance to vicariously visit sites around the world where other members had traveled. International trips resumed, with tours of Ireland and Sicily in 2022 and Great Britain and Spain/Portugal this year. Many have found fun in local learning on small-group day trips. This summer, the first outing carried 20+ BILL members along the Susquehanna aboard the Hiawatha Paddlewheel Riverboat for a gentle ride with expert presenters on various topics. BILL volunteer and leader Janice Butler worked with the riverkeeper so members could sail on the first cruise of the season.

Some classes have occasional social gettogethers. Logan Coney's Love in the Time of Cholera and her after-BILL classes on haiku spurred special gatherings: making pizza, touring gardens, celebrating birthdays and holding a barbecue.

To stimulate your mind and learn about interesting topics, become a BILL member. To add friends and make interesting connections, try all the BILL offerings. You won't be sorry.

~Heather Wolf

BILL OFFERS ARMCHAIR TRAVEL

Genie and John Gerdes presented an Armchair Travel session with artistic photos and a lesson about Venice: what makes it their favorite international vacation destination (they've visited eight times) as well as the particular challenges this island region faces in the future.



EXTRA EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Gunilla Geise enjoys a birthday celebration during a special BILL opportunity to take a class on haiku.

THE APRIL FOOLS, AN ADVENTURE STORY



Alma Thomas art seekers (from left) Judy Marvin, Mary Alice King and Margaret Snow traveled to an exhibit on the artist at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

BY JUDY MARVIN

This spring Margaret Snow, Mary Alice King and I traveled to Washington, D.C., to find artworks by Alma Thomas, the remarkable artist who painted colorful, abstract canvases. Snow was the leader of our recent course on the artist. Thomas was the first African American woman with a solo show at the Whitney Museum of American Art, and her painting *Resurrection* hung in the White House collection.

Rain was pouring when the bus left us on the Mall. No taxis in sight. I said, "Let's head to the National Gallery. There are always taxis there."

But every entrance was empty. No cabs. Should we walk to the Smithsonian American Art Museum in the heavy rain?

Suddenly we heard, "Aunt Judy, Aunt Judy!" My niece, Holly, and her partner appeared in an SUV right at Madison and Fourth. Laughing hysterically, we piled into her car's back seat, dripping wet. Holly and I had planned to meet later, but what were the odds her SUV would be exactly in the right place at the right time?

continued on page 2

continued from page 2

We three entered SAAM while they parked the car. At the Information Desk was a binder with the location of artworks. Thomas's paintings were on the fourth floor. On the way to her exhibit, we stopped on the third floor to see Michelle Obama's portrait.

But how to get to floor four? When we asked guards where the Thomas paintings were, none of them knew. Feeling quite lost, we heard a familiar voice: "Aunt Judy, Aunt Judy." Looking up, we saw Holly, who had found Alma Thomas and rescued us again.

Later we visited the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library to see three works on paper and were surprised to see an exhibit case there devoted to Thomas as well as a teen room named for her.

The joy of Alma Thomas, laughter, and echoes of "Aunt Judy, Aunt Judy" stayed with us on the long trip home.



Watch for new trips and casual outings for BILL members and friends.

Announcements are emailed or can be found on Facebook.

 BILL course catalogs will be available online the first week of January.

- If you want a copy mailed to you, call the BILL office: 570-522-0105.
- Printed course catalogs will be on hand in the office and at local libraries.
- If you can help distribute catalogs at your church, health club, professional offices or other outlet, contact the office.
- To take courses, you must be a BILL member. See page 8 for membership information.

BILL CLASSES: how are they chosen?

BY LOGAN CONEY

First, you see the newsletter. Then the glossy, brand-new BILL course catalogue. You rush to read a hard copy or download a list of trips, courses and Special Presentations.

You revel in course offerings and options for the new term, full of the kind of excitement you remember from a Christmas morning in your childhood.

But have you ever wondered what process miraculously provides 20-plus courses each term?

The BILL Curriculum Committee performs an intricate dance throughout the year to offer quality classroom experiences.

FINDING INSTRUCTORS

First, the Curriculum Committee must thoughtfully recruit excellent instructors who develop their own course ideas. Sometimes a new instructor may simply "show up" and surprise us with a proposal. Often an instructor is found during a simple conversation at a local event. Whatever the case, establishing an approved instructor pool is the first step in this outstanding program. It is the task of the Curriculum Committee to locate these willing individuals.

EVALUATING PROPOSALS

Next, the committee prepares for the best part of the entire process: waiting for the arrival of instructors' formal proposals submitted in accordance with a determined deadline. As these arrive, the committee, consisting of Elaine Hopkins (chair), Thom Travis, Wolfe Gunter, Carl Milofsky, Mary Zimmerman and me, gathers to review and consider each proposal. The aim is to assure what is offered to you are high-quality learning experiences to fulfill the original philosophy of BILL.

We read, re-read, tweak and edit until we reach a happy consensus about each and every proposal. This is a fascinating undertaking for us as committee members and as students. Hours may pass as we discuss and debate the merits of each proposal.



BILL's Curriculum Committee includes (from left) Thom Travis, Logan Coney, Committee Chair Elaine Hopkins and Carl Milofsky. Missing from photo: Wolfe Gunter and Mary Zimmerman.

NOTIFYING INSTRUCTORS

Finally, we breathe a contented sigh and send off the "approved" or the "approved with edits" email to each instructor.

SCHEDULING AND ORGANIZING

At this point, the committee relinquishes the proposals to BILL Office Coordinator Heather Wolf, who plans the where, when and how of each instructor's requests. This is an immense task, but it comes together even with scheduling conflicts and room location issues.

Once classes end, the Curriculum Committee chair reviews the evaluations course members submit about their recent classroom experiences. Member input is vitally important for the success and development of the BILL program.

This is how BILL's awesome opportunities come to fruition from term to term.

As always, we invite you to make any suggestions you may have to the Curriculum Committee through your evaluations and in person at any of our shared events.

Your thoughts and ideas help us offer you the first-rate program we all enjoy.

WEET COURSE LEADER WOLFE GUNTER

His philosophy: "Life's too short to be miserable."

A MAN FOR ALL BILL SEASONS

U How did you get interested in teaching BILL courses?

A PERSONAL INTEREST. When I returned from China, I had a collection of over 120 copies of oil paintings from European artists (framed and exhibited in State College in 2016). In order to understand all this art, I developed my first class and proposed it to BILL. Since then, I have put 32 classes under my belt, including BILL, the libraries at Sunbury and Selinsgrove, and a summer class in Lewisburg.

You've offered a wide variety of courses – from tea to wine to architecture to Asian culture — for BILL members. How did you choose your topics?

TO UNDERSTAND ISSUES INTERESTING ME. The fact they turned into classes came from my training to run a business, which included investments. That got me in front of many board meetings where I had only a few minutes to present a clear and succinct story and answer tough questions about the planned investment. Since I cover many subjects in my classes, the key is to develop a sound "storyline" and illustrate with video clips (my classes are popular because of the videos, not my blue eyes). Classes keep me on my toes and challenge me. I spend endless hours looking at my overheads and wondering what questions might be asked.

🕖 Do you have a bucket list?

I DON'T NEED ONE. I'm a one-million-mile flyer on United and have flown many other airlines. I've traveled most of the places I was interested in and have dived many great reefs around the world. I don't need a bucket list. Unfortunately, I lost my dear wife of almost 50 years in September 2021.

Watch for Gunter's class offerings next semester, including his special tea course.

REGISTRATION FOR SPRING COURSES BEGINS Monday, Jan. 29, at 11 a.m.

SPRING COURSES BEGIN Monday, March 4

U Tell us a little about your "real life" – your career past and present.

I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN COLOGNE, GERMANY. After high school, I studied chemistry and finished with a Ph.D. in 1976. My 30-year career in the chemical industry involved a lot of moving for me and my wife and son (an extra hardship for them). Over the years, we lived in Cologne, Brussels, New Jersey, Pittsburgh, Wilmington, Beijing, Bonaire and finally Winfield. During my career, I ran a business unit for Hercules Inc. with profit and loss responsibility and ended up living in Beijing for five years. In 1996 I became a U.S. citizen, and I retired in 2001 from Eastman Chemical.

Why Winfield? How did you choose this area?

WE'D BEEN LIVING IN BONAIRE after retirement, and our son decided to go to graduate school at Bucknell. He'd been living in Philadelphia and asked us to come home, specifically to this area. My wife agreed, and so we ended up here.

WHY I **'BILL'**

We asked some BILL members to tell us about their courses — why they decided to take one, why they like them, why they keep enrolling for more.

ANNE PUSEY, LEWISBURG

Many years after retiring from Bucknell and becoming a widow, I thought my good life was over until I learned about BILL and immediately dived in. BILL offered me a chance for an extension of interesting life. I pursued my old interest in biology and took courses like The Amazing Animal Brain and Survival Strategies of Plants. I also indulged myself and took courses about Western operas. This term I am taking the third course on plants and animals, and the third course on opera. Materials for the courses are fascinating and instructors are incredibly knowledgeable. Their enthusiasm for their subject matter clearly shows through their wonderful presentations. Discussions with mature and self-motivated classmates make the classes even more fun and stimulating.

Besides the courses, BILL provides lectures on interesting

I am grateful to the people who tirelessly worked to start BILL and keep it running smoothly.

subjects. I have gone to lectures about
Frankenfood, U.S. economics, conflicting interests of China and the United
States, the super telescope and the galaxy, and many more. I enjoyed numerous slide shows in the travel diaries from BILL members that helped me imagine myself traveling to places like Dubai, India, Ecuador, Uruguay, ancient cultural sites in South America, and Venice, Italy.

And I appreciate BILL-organized trips abroad. As I get older and physically more fragile, solo oversea travel becomes intimidating. Traveling with other BILL friends becomes an excellent alternative. BILL has enriched my life and lifted my spirit and hope for the world.

ANDY FRANCE, WILLIAMSPORT

Several years ago, a retired chemistry teacher friend asked me to co-lead a course on religion and science in the BILL program. I had no idea what he was

Cheers to all those who bless us with the wonderful gift of BILL. ??

talking about, so he told me about BILL. We offered the course for two terms. I came away deeply impressed by the commitment, subject knowledge and teaching skill of everyone (except for me), along with the administrators. I was hooked. Since then I have enrolled in one or two courses every semester.

To age is one thing. To age and cease gaining new knowledge and relationships is a bummer. BILL makes it possible to avoid the "bummer syndrome." Such a variety of subjects each semester; such an enriching cross-section of students and leaders; such an experience of joy and fun. This is what BILL is all about.

DAN and JULIE EHRGOOD, MUNCY

We live on a dirt road with no visible neighbors in a township zoned exclusively for agriculture. In our minds this is the best place in the world to live and to ride out a pandemic. But there are some limiting factors about our isolation. BILL is a catalyst in expanding our creative minds and intellectual needs. It is a pleasure to think critically about ideas and to have them supplemented by wonderful teachers and fellow students. We love meeting interested people who readily share interesting aspects of themselves. And our little slice of heaven provides a welcoming gathering spot to enhance and expand this community and gather around a fire for a picnic or pizza party. We are still not too old to have fun.

JILL GHNASSIA, MILTON

Participating in BILL has added color to the autumn of my life. What a pleasure it is to sit in a course with like-minded classmates and participate in challenging and stimulating discussions. To be able to explore topics and areas I never had time to as an undergraduate or graduate student or while working full time is a pure joy. Thus, delving into the anthropology of the Northwest Coast Indians, studying how music has evolved through the centuries, reading the literature of Chile, and honing my understanding of modern French drama was not only enriching but also fun. These courses have opened new and exciting vistas as well as allowed me to converse with new acquaintances and build a community of learner-friends whom I continue to see.

CC'Tis a joy to be surrounded by inquisitive minds.

> Dan and Julie Ehrgood's fire pit is the site of informal get-togethers with BILL friends, like this celebration with members of a haiku discussion group: (from left) Rose Timbrell, Julie and Dan Ehrgood, Mary Alice King, Lisa Proud, Sylvia Denger and (seated) course leader Logan Coney.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

BILL offers periodic lectures throughout the term. These sessions, held at the Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village Common, 6 Tressler Blvd., Lewisburg, provide opportunities for members and friends to explore new topics with distinguished presenters. An email reminder and reservation form are sent to members before programs, noting meeting location and time.



Enjoy lunch and a lecture

- •Programs begin at noon, but doors open at 11:30 to welcome preregistered guests.
- •Buffalo Valley will provide meals (\$12 each) for those who order ahead of time.
- •You may bring your own food, if you wish.
- •Beverages are provided for all attendees.

Be sure to register five days before the program by responding to the email invitation or calling the BILL office (570-522-0105).



Have afternoon tea and hear a speaker

•Doors open at 3 p.m. and programs begin at 3:30.

•Refreshments are provided free, thanks to Buffalo Valley.

Please check www.bucknell.edu/ lifelonglearning for current COVID policies.

Don't miss these interesting presentations – mark your calendar now. Invite a friend!



Bidenomics: Rhetoric and Reality

BY JACOB POWELL, BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY



Since the 1980s, several concerning economic trends have increased economic insecurity: stagnant growth rates, increased frequency and severity of economic crises, increased income and wealth inequality. President Biden's economic policies have been some of the first to push back against these trends. Given the precarious character of the U.S. economy, are these efforts enough to reverse them?

Jacob Powell is an assistant professor of economics at Bucknell.



The Questions Left Unasked: The Integrity of the Ballot BY KANDIS DUNCAN, LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Never before have the integrity of the ballot and the validity of elections been so challenged. The good news is the numerous investigations following the questioning of our electoral system's integrity have reaffirmed that our elections are free and fair. It is time for us all to arm ourselves with deeper knowledge of how our elections operate so we can be assured our ballot will count and the basis of our democracy is secure.

Kandis Duncan is president of the League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area.



Artificial Intelligence: Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Society and Education

BY PARAM BEDI, BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY



Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative technology that is reshaping our daily lives. AI is now an integral part of various industries, from health care to finance, entertainment to transportation, and even education. AI is also being used to commit fraud and create new and creative scams. Bedi will discuss how AI is transforming various industries, its ethical considerations, and a glimpse into its future. Was ChatGPT used to create this session description? Join us and find out!

Param Bedi is vice president and chief operating officer at Bucknell.



An Environmental History of Central Pennsylvania

BY BEN MARSH, BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY

COTTER MEMORIAL LECTURE

The land here in Union County has multiple histories that interact with each other. This presentation will trace the threads that together built our cultural landscape, emphasizing the ways the ridge-and-valley region shaped people's lives, the human use of forests and farmland, the growth of river towns, and the evolution of post-industrial landscape value systems.

Ben Marsh is professor emeritus of geography and environmental studies & sciences at Bucknell.

A LOOK AT A BILL COURSE...

AROUND THE KITCHEN TABLE Writing About Food

MARGARET WEIRICK TALKS ABOUT BILL'S INTERESTING FOOD AND WRITING COURSE.

What BILL course would I like to take? I glanced quickly through the topics in last term's catalog and saw FOOD. Well, I like to cook. Haven't been doing much for a while. Why not compare notes and recipes with some other BILL chefs?

I signed up for Around the Kitchen Table: Writing About Food and arrived the first day of class eager to get back to cooking. To my dismay, I realized this class was not about preparing food, but WRITING about experiences with food.

The little girl in me wanted to quit right then, but my adult self held sway as I began to pay attention to what course leader Mary Bernath actually had in mind for the course.

Because Bernath had spent 40 years teaching English literature and creative writing at Bloomsburg University, she was accustomed to dealing with recalcitrant students who didn't want to be in class or do the work assigned.

That was me.

Our overall assignment was to write about our own experiences with food and how these influenced our lives. Classes would consist of discussions of each person's writing and Bernath's subtle suggestions for improving our stories.

I admit I do like to write and do like to eat, so I began thinking back over my life and the many places I have traveled. Would they make stories?

I never thought my trip to Europe with my mother when I was 13 was a food adventure, but I realized it really was. As we worked our way south from London to the Hague, down the



••I wanted a spoon in my hand, but I ended up with a pen."



Around the Kitchen Table

FOOD MEMORIES



Memoirists in the book they took home at the end of their course are (top, from left) Megan Bishop, Bill Byron, Logan Coney, Judy Hontz, (below, from left) Heather

Wolf, course leader Mary Bernath and Margaret Weirick

Danube to Mainz, Germany, then on to Rome and Naples, I could see myself once again a young teenager, trying out new foods and trying to pretend I was not from Northumberland, Pennsylvania.

It made a great story, and I even found some pictures of me at 13 from the trip to put with the essay.

Next, I mentally examined my six-week visit to my friend in Singapore and realized that, too, was an adventure in eating. We ate in all kinds of restaurants there, from food stands in car parks along with local laborers to fancy international hotels serving the rich and famous.

As we six students became more comfortable with each other and Bernath's expectations, we all wrote and shared our adventures with food. Our instructor was so pleased with the results she published our essays in book form, complete with whatever photos could be provided.

The book is called *Around the Kitchen Table*, but for me the title will always be Eating My Way Down Memory Lane.

Check with Mary Bernath if you'd like to see a copy of the book, and watch for future courses like Around the Kitchen Table: Writing About Food. This fall her BILL class was Writing Your Family Story—Listening, Remembering, Creating.

Same trip, Germany. Colder!

NEWS FROM BILL'S STEERING COMMITTEE

BILL's Steering Committee cares for the long-term health of the institution as well as responding to immediate challenges, such as COVID. Members include Coordinator Heather Wolf; Pam Benfer representing Bucknell; chairs of BILL's four committees; and eight BILL members in four-year rotating terms. This year, Carole Madle joined us in one of those four-year terms.

The committee has been working on several strategic goals:

- CLOSER TIES TO BUCKNELL. Last spring, President Bravman delivered the inaugural Edward Cotter Memorial Lecture. This fall, we planned a reception to recruit Bucknell retirees as BILL members.
- FINANCIAL HEALTH. BILL's budget depends on membership fees, course tuition, and donations. This year we've ramped up opportunities for sponsorships; look for our sponsors in the catalog. Bob Kallin can discuss sponsorships or donations with you.
- ACTIVITIES BEYOND COURSES for BILL members. The robust program of Armchair Travel slideshows continues. Let Tony Ludovico know if you'd be willing to share travel photos. Members have enjoyed several local day trips. Share ideas for day trips with Janice Butler.
- MORE INSTRUCTORS. Courses are the core of BILL. Membership has returned to pre-COVID levels; each term barely enough courses satisfy the demand. Please let Elaine Hopkins know if you have any interest in teaching. You don't need a degree, just expertise and enthusiasm for the subject.
- MORE VOLUNTEERS. BILL is a volunteer organization. Each year more than 50 people teach, give presentations, serve on committees and help with events. As BILL's only paid employee, Heather Wolf often needs assistance. Let her know if you are interested in volunteering.

If you can help meet BILL's strategic goals, leave your contact information with Heather Wolf in the BILL office.

STEERING COMMITTEE

- Genie Gerdes, chair Janice Butler, vice chair Karen Payne, communications chair Elaine Hopkins, curriculum chair Bob Kallin, development chair Jeff Evans, Special Presentations chair
- Pam Benfer Adelyn Elliot Biff Lahner Carole Madle

Katharyn Nottis Becky Perez Thom Travis Heather Wolf



APPRECIATION AWARD.

Tony Ludovico received special recognition upon the completion of his term on the BILL Steering Committee. Committee Chair Genie Gerdes presented the award at BILL's spring member reception at Ard's Farm.

GIVE A LITTLE – GET A LOT

Think about it . . . courses, member receptions, armchair travel shows, Tea & Talk lectures, Lunch & Learn programs, domestic and international travel opportunities. **WOW!**

Life without BILL would create a void, a space where our brains and imaginations would stagnate, where our curiosity would dim and our social interaction would diminish.

DON'T LET THAT HAPPEN!

Please consider a tax-deductible gift to help sustain BILL's mission. Your support makes a difference to our health and happiness — not a bad return on investment.

Please mail your check to: Bucknell Institute for Lifelong Learning 115 Farley Circle, Suite 111 Lewisburg, PA 17837

Or you can give by credit card online at give.Bucknell.edu. Under "Designation," "Make your selection(s)," scroll to the last "Search for the fund of your choice" and click "Other." Then type in Bucknell Institute for Lifelong Learning and follow the remaining directions on the site.

~Bob Kallin

THE FACE BEHIND FACEBOOK

Carole Madle coordinates BILL's Facebook page, which has nearly 200 members. Carole produces 10 online posts a month, some about BILL courses, special programs and events, and other lifelong-learning opportunities available through BILL. Members are encouraged to post their own photos of trips, events and classes directly on the page or send them to the BILL office for posting. Facebook is a way to keep everyone aware of BILL's wide list of opportunities. Join or take a look at our page at www.facebook.com/groups/357468110973640. Carole's a member of BILL's Steering and Communications committees and has taken courses for 10 years. She looks forward to every new term's offerings. Check out her interesting Facebook posts.





115 Farley Circle, Suite 111 Lewisburg, PA 17837

SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, Dec. 2 Member reception Tuesday, Jan. 23 Lunch & Learn Monday, Jan. 29 Spring registration begins Thursday, Feb. 29 Lunch & Learn Monday, March 4 Spring classes begin Thursday, May 2 Tea & Talk Tuesday, May 14 Lunch & Learn



NEWSLETTER STAFF Nancy Craig, editor-in-chief Jane Parker, copy editor

Contributors:

Logan Coney, Jeff Evans, Genie Gerdes, Wolfe Gunter, Bob Kallin, Carol Madle, Judy Marvin, Margaret Weirick, Heather Wolf

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570-522-0105

Email: lifelonglearning@bucknell.edu Web: bucknell.edu/LifelongLearning

Bucknell Institute for Lifelong Learning

Grow Your Mind!

Is it time to renew your annual membership? Sign up before registration.

If your BILL membership expires Dec. 31 or you want to become a member, use the form below or go online at www.bucknell.edu/lifelearning and click on Courses, Memberships, Program & Travel on the right side of the page. Follow the directions to join or renew. Remember, if you are renewing, DO NOT create a new account. Contact the BILL office if you have questions or are brand new to bill.

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