

# Adventures in Learning Update

Winter 2005

COLBY-SAWYER COLLEGE

LEARNING AMONG FRIENDS

## Profile: Ben Acard

Ben Acard has, through his creative curriculum contributions, become an important asset to the continuing success of Adventures in Learning. He initiated and implemented the very popular lecture courses that feature different speakers each week. To date, there have been survey courses on "The Lively Arts," "The Renaissance," "The Protestant Reformation," and in the upcoming winter series,



Ben Acard

"Allied Leaders of World War II." Ben said that the list doesn't need to stop there. "Who knows?" he said. "If people continue to

like them, we could have courses on the Counter-Reformation, the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, or any number of fascinating subjects."

Ben became involved with AIL as soon as he and Jan moved here, taking two and often three courses at a time. Jan also contributed time on the Public Relations committee. Ben was a study group leader for the course on "Changing American Values"

See Profile, Pg. 2

## New Lecture Series Will Focus on World War II Leaders

A new six-week lecture series will be offered in the upcoming winter semester. Hot off of Ben Acard's drawing board, it is titled "Allied Leaders of World War II."

The AIL lecture series format is a popular alternative to the more customary discussion groups. Both have their advantages, the main difference being that, as the name implies, the discussion group allows for open participation by a relatively small group—typically 20 to 25—while the lecture series is open to three or four times as many people.

In week one of "Allied Leaders of World War II," Joe Kun will set the stage for the series by exploring the conditions and events that led to the outbreak of World War II. A graduate of the University of Budapest and the Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Joe has given numerous courses for AIL, including "Twenty-two years That Changed the World: 1918-1940," which he taught back in the fall of 2000.



Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill in Teheran, Iran, in November 1943

Each of the remaining lectures will focus on one of the Allied leaders, beginning in week two with Douglas MacArthur. Lecturer Julien LeBourgeois will explain how MacArthur came into prominence, his link to the Philippines, the liberation of the islands and Julien's own "micro-mini" role in these events. A founding member of AIL and co-study group leader of the popular Civil War course, Julien is a career naval officer who commanded a guided missile cruiser and a destroyer at sea. He also held senior NATO assignments and served as president of the Naval War College in Newport, R.I.

Week three will highlight Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces Dwight D. Eisenhower. Rob Nulsen will emphasize the challenges of Eisenhower's command and his approach to problem solving in his relationships with his own men and with General George Patton, Field Marshall Montgomery, Stalin and DeGaulle. A career army officer, Rob entered the service in July 1943 and graduated from West Point in 1949.

See New Lecture Series, Pg. 2

Profile, continued from Pg. 1

and also for the class on "Sherlock Holmes." In talking to his fellow students, he got a sense that, while they enjoyed the discussions and academic effort required in the seminar format, they also would welcome the relaxation and stimulation of a lecture course, which would touch on many aspects of a subject. The Curriculum Committee, of which Ben is now vice-chairman, approved the idea,

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*Adventures in Learning Update*, published three times annually, highlights the courses and happenings of the Adventures in Learning program at Colby-Sawyer College.

and Ben put together the first lecture course on "The Lively Arts." It was a great success and set the pattern for further lecture series.

Born in Brooklyn and raised on Long Island, Ben served in the Air Force for several years before he enrolled at Adelphia University, majoring in colonial American history. He met Jan in Puerto Rico while she was on vacation and he was on a business trip. Today they have two sons and four grandchildren.

In marketing forest products through his business career, Ben traveled world wide, establishing offices in Asia, Europe, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Russia. The long plane rides gave him the opportunity to indulge in his passion for reading, and the exposure to different cultures broadened his world-view. Today he still reads widely and has a "book room" with, he guesses, over 800 volumes, some in bookcases and others piled on tables and the floor.

Ben and Jan came to New London quite by happenstance. They were looking for a new and attractive place to spend a fall weekend, and a friend recommended an inn in New London. They had never been here before, didn't know anyone, and it was "love at first sight," Ben says. New London met all the requirements for the perfect community. It is beautifully located, has a college, a good hospital, and a bagel place. Ben says, "What more can one ask?" The weekend turned out to be very busy, and before they went home to Massachusetts, they had a real estate agent and a builder. Within two weeks, they also had the land and have never regretted the move. Their coming to New London has certainly benefited the Adventures in Learning program.

...Heidi Beckwith

**New Lecture Series, cont'd from Pg 1**

He served two terms in Vietnam—one as an advisor to Vietnamese rangers and one as an infantry battalion commander.

Next, Joe Hern, a partner in the Boston law firm of Flanagan & Hern, will repeat a lecture on Winston S. Churchill that he gave recently in Boston. The talk is a multi-media presentation retracing Sir Winston's steps during his visits to Boston in 1900, 1932, 1943 and 1949. The material is taken from Churchill's speeches and the media reaction to them.

Beverly Almgren will deliver the fifth lecture on the myths and realities of the man who was called "Uncle Joe" by FDR and Churchill—the mysterious Joseph Stalin. Throughout the alliance with Hitler, the division of Poland, and Stalin's becoming a member of the Allied Forces, there was a gap between the "official" and the real man. Beverly will explore the reasons for this dichotomy. A specialist in Russian history, Beverly is an associate at the Davis Center for Russian Studies at Harvard University.

In the sixth and final session, Hilary Cleveland will discuss the role of President Franklin D. Roosevelt as Commander-in-chief during World War II. Roosevelt prepared a predominantly isolationist country for war, and after Pearl Harbor, he oversaw the mobilization effort with lasting consequences for the growth of bureaucracy and the increase of presidential powers. Hilary will also speak of FDR's foreign policy decisions from the Atlantic Charter to the Yalta Conference. A founding member of AIL and a popular study group leader, Hilary has been a member of the faculty Colby-Sawyer College since 1955, currently as an adjunct professor of political science.

... Dick Little

## Preview of Winter 2005 Courses

Adventures in Learning is delighted to offer eleven exciting courses for the winter term, including, for the very first time, a three week mini-course. The term begins on Monday, January 17, 2005 and will continue through Friday, March 11. The winter Catalog will be mailed the week of October 25, and the registration period will open on Monday, November 8 and close on Friday, November 26. We will continue to follow the practice of accumulating all registration applications received prior to the opening of registration as well as those received on opening day. At the end of the opening day, if it is determined that more applications have been received for any of the courses than there are spaces available, the "first-day lottery" will apply for those particular courses only. In the event that an applicant does not gain entry into any of his/her first three course selections, the enrollment fee will be returned.

Here is a peek at our winter 2005 course offerings:



Richard Burmann

### *A Practical Look at American Country Antiques*

Study group leader Richard Burmann will examine the world of American antiques with special attention to 18th and early 19th century New England furniture along with related decorative arts, including folk art. Guest speakers, an appraisal day, and a visit to the Burmann home will enrich the learning experience.

### *Intelligence Updated*

The 9-11 Commission and various political developments are bringing many changes in the American intelligence establishment. Joe Kun will provide an update on what's happening in Washington and discuss the history and development of intelligence organizations in the U.S. and around the world.



Joe Kun



Beverly Almgren

### *Russia Past and Present*

Beverly Almgren will survey Russian history with an emphasis on factors that affect the country today. Subjects covered will include Russian art, geography, revolutionary traditions, the fall of Communism, and post-Communist Russia and its problems.

### *Four Great Cities of Islam*

Charles Kennedy will trace the history and culture of Islam through an armchair tour of four cities: Baghdad under Harun al Rashid, Cordoba and the Andalusian synthesis, Agra under the Moghuls, and Istanbul in the age of Suleiman the Magnificent. The class will also consider whether the conflict between the West and Islam is inevitable.



Charles Kennedy



Hardy Hasenfuss

### *Making the Most of Retirement*

Hardy Hasenfuss will lead this course, which explores ways in which participants can tap into their wisdom and find meaning and joy in their later years. A retirement success profile and various other exercises will supplement active group discussion.

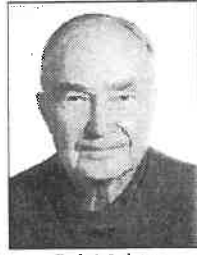


Joe Kun



Julien LeBourgeois

Photo by Katie Doer



Rob Nulsen



Joe Hern



Beverly Almgren



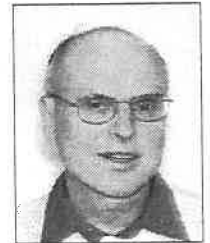
Hilary Cleveland

### World War II Leaders: A Lecture Series

This lecture course begins with an introductory lecture that examines the causes of World War II and continues with five lectures about key leaders who helped resolve one of the world's most deadly conflicts: Douglas MacArthur, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Winston S. Churchill, Joseph Stalin, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

### Weather on the Internet

The Internet has a vast amount of weather information that most people don't know how to find or use. Meteorologist Brent Scudder will present the basics of weather and show the class how to ferret out information from various weather web sites.



Brent Scudder



Julie Machen

### Revolutionary Virginia: Southern Cradle of Independence

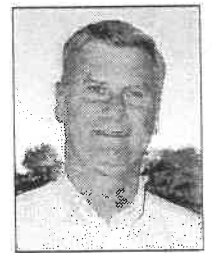
Julie Machen's three-session mini-course (an AIL first!) will examine the colony of Virginia to determine why it produced so many leaders like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry who were willing to risk everything in the cause of independence.

### The Indian Subcontinent—from the Mughul Empire to the Present

William Sullivan and Sheldon Boege will provide an overview of the history of the Indian subcontinent up to its partition and independence in 1946 and examine the economic and political progress since then. This will include a look at India and Pakistan's changing and growing roles in the region.



William Sullivan



Sheldon Boege



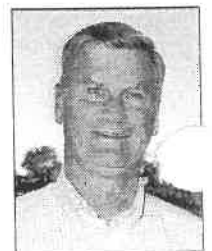
Jim Bowditch

### Don Quixote

Jim Bowditch returns to lead a course on the second best-selling book in history, *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes. Class members will share their reactions to the lively adventures of the Man from La Mancha and explore the reasons for the book's enduring appeal.

### Working with Powerpoint

Led by Sheldon Boege, this course covers design and preparation of Powerpoint screen or print-oriented presentations for Windows and Macintosh computers. Through on-screen examples, the class will learn how the software works, how to incorporate graphics and text from other applications, and more.



Sheldon Boege

# Four Things You May Not Know About Adventures in Learning

## 1 The mini-course has arrived. (An AIL “first.”)

The Board approved the idea in August, and the winter term will mark the advent of the first AIL mini-course. In this case, it's *Revolutionary Virginia: Southern Cradle of Independence* with Julie Machen. “A mini-course is one that lasts for three or four sessions,” explained Betsy Boege, chair of the Curriculum Committee, adding that “the cost would be \$20 per course instead of the usual \$35.”

Mini-courses will add a new and much-needed dimension to AIL.

Often members don't sign up for a course when they realize they can't attend all the classes. A three- or four-session course will make it easier for everyone to find something to fit his or her schedule. Betsy said that the Curriculum Committee is experimenting with mini-courses and hopes to offer two each term.

## 2 We have two honorary members. (Another “first.”)

At its June meeting, the Board elected Hilary Cleveland and Bob Gray to honorary membership in AIL. Outgoing president Peter McKee initiated the vote by offering the following resolution: “Whereas Hilary Cleveland has been a driving force in the establishment of Adventures in Learning and has been active in every way in its development: as a member of the organizing

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committee, many times a course leader, a member of the Curriculum Committee and a member of the board; be it resolved that she be made an HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBER OF ADVENTURES IN LEARNING with all the benefits and privileges that befit that membership.”

A similar resolution for Bob Gray noted that he was a member of the original organizing committee, a board member, a study leader, and the author of our by-laws. Congratulations to Hilary and Bob for this well-deserved honor.

A few years ago, a similar honor was bestowed on Julien LeBourgeois, another founding member of AIL, when he was named an honorary member of the AIL board. As an honorary board member, Julien is entitled to attend its meetings, where he continues to make a vital contribution to the success of our organization.

## 3 The Curriculum Committee is always looking for new study group leaders.

If you have expertise in a subject or an interest you'd like to explore with others, you should consider leading an AIL study group. You don't have to have any previous teaching experience and the Curriculum Committee will provide lots of support. If you decide to lead an AIL study group, you will be invited to attend an orientation meeting and will be given a “Study Group Leader's Guide.” In

addition, you will be assigned a “contact” on the committee who can assist with any questions.

To find out more, call Betsy Boege at 526-7426. Every term, AIL is pleased to welcome several new study group leaders. This term, we have five newcomers: Beverly Almgren, Hardy Hasenfuss, Brent Scudder, Julie Machen, and Richard Burmann.

## 4 You can download course registration forms from the AIL website.

Don't worry if you lose or misplace your AIL newsletter or course catalog. Just go to [www.colby-sawyer.edu/adventures](http://www.colby-sawyer.edu/adventures) and you'll find the newsletter and all the information that's in the current catalog. You can even download the course registration form. You'll need Adobe Acrobat Reader software, but if you don't have it, just click on the words “Click here” (highlighted in blue) and in a few minutes a free version of the software will be installed on your computer.

A year ago, Brian Faughnan of Wilmot agreed to be the AIL webmaster. Each term, he enters new course descriptions and other information and arranges to have the newsletter transmitted from the printer. Many thanks to Brian for doing an excellent job in keeping the AIL web site up to date.



**Adventures in Learning**

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“Just imagine how advantageous it was for me that *Adventures in Learning* came to CSC at the same time that I was completing my formal degree! Not only do I have one more opportunity to stay connected with the college I love, but also I can enjoy discussions about a variety of learning I would never have entered into while pursuing a particular major and being required to take exams and write papers to prove my abilities! ... I will never cease to be impressed and thankful for the new dimension ALL provides to me now that I, as a “super senior,” have time to share learning and related social events with wonderful new friends and fellow participants.”

**Janet Nixon of New Boston**

*(Janet returned to Colby-Sawyer for her bachelor's degree after raising six children. She was cited in an earlier newsletter as the ALL member who comes from the longest distance to take courses.)*

