

Adventures in Learning Update



Fall 2003

COLBY-SAWYER COLLEGE

LEARNING AMONG FRIENDS

Profile: Sharon Ames

Whatever in the world would we do without Sharon Ames? She has, from the very beginning of Adventures in

Katie Dow '90



Sharon Ames

Learning, been the "engine" that keeps everything running smoothly. She attends Board and committee meetings,

coordinates the publishing of the newsletter and course catalogs, supervises course registrations, handles the accounting functions, and makes arrangements for events like the annual meeting or the dinner theater. While AIL is almost exclusively a volunteer organization, Sharon, who is employed by the college along with her assistant, Laura Powers, acts as the primary liaison between volunteer leadership, community participation, and Colby-Sawyer College.

Sharon has responsibilities that include much more than her work with AIL. As manager of Public Programs and Stewardship for the college she plans and implements major public events, which include building dedications, capital campaign and community events, and special donor recognition gatherings. As part of her donor stewardship work, she is presently involved in the devel-

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During a session of Hilary and Cotton Cleveland's course, "Issues in Town Government," which focused on citizen democracy and volunteerism, these area community members and Colby-Sawyer College students spoke to the class about their community service. From left: Dan Wolf, president of Hodan Properties, Inc.; Barbara J. Stearns '32, alumna of Colby Jr. College; students Liz Reinecker and Jaron Foster, and Hilary Cleveland, study group leader.

It's Back to School Time for Older Adults

Adventures in Learning is a relatively young organization, but we're part of a movement that is more than 40 years old. The nation's first college-based program for mature learners started in 1962 when a group of retired teachers approached administrators at the New School University in New York City and asked if they would offer some courses especially designed for retirees. The New School agreed to provide space and suggested that the group design its own courses. Today the group, known as the Institute for Retired Professionals, continues to thrive.

The concept of senior learning in a college setting was new in 1962, but it clearly had lots of appeal. More lifelong learning programs were launched in the 1960s and 1970s, and today there are literally hundreds of them in the U.S. and Canada. New Hampshire boasts at least five programs: Adventures in Learning at Colby-Sawyer, ILEAD at Dartmouth, the Active Retirement Association at the University of New Hampshire, the

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Back to School, Cont d from Pg. 1

Learning Institute at New England College, and the Educational Continuum at Southern New Hampshire University.

Lifelong-learning programs have been described as “do-it-yourself universities for senior citizens” because the members usually develop their own courses and study groups and then recruit volunteer instructors from among their own membership and the community at large. Most

programs are similar to Adventures in Learning, but no program is the same. Here is a look at three other programs:

Harvard’s Institute for Learning in Retirement is located in Harvard Square in a building that features six seminar-style classrooms, a library, and a large common room that serves as a meeting place. Founded in 1977, the Institute enrolls about 500 members who can choose from 40 to 60 study groups each term.

In contrast to many programs in which homework is optional and members can take courses when they please, Harvard is strict about participation. Members are required to take at least one course each semester, and anyone who fails to do so for more than two consecutive semesters is expelled!!

ment of an age-integrated society. UNC-Asheville recognizes that retired people have a great deal of knowledge and experience that can benefit the college and the community.

In addition to offering an array of non-credit courses, the Center for Creative Retirement also recruits members with experience in law, business, the arts, health care, and other fields to serve as mentors or tutors to undergraduates.

More than 1000 retirees and semi-retirees living in or near Williamsburg, Virginia, are members of the Christopher Wren Association (CWA) at the College of William and Mary. This program offers more than 50 six-week-long courses each fall and spring.

In addition, short computer courses are taught when William and Mary computers labs are available during college breaks. Ongoing activities include a book group, lawn bowling, and Tai Chi, and there are German, Spanish, and French conversation tables where people meet each week to practice their language skills. Williamsburg has become a Mecca for retirees, and one reason the area is so attractive is the opportunity to take courses through CWA.

There were 35.3 million Americans over age 65 in 2000, and the number is expected to reach 53.3 million by 2020. With so many people still active and eager to learn, it’s certain that lifelong learning programs are here to stay.

—Julie Boardman

“With so many people still active and eager to learn, it’s certain that lifelong learning programs are here to stay.”

The Center for Creative Retirement at the University of North Carolina-Asheville is one of the most visionary programs in the nation. Established in 1988, its stated mission is to “encourage the develop-

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at Colby-Sawyer College**

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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.

Profile, Cont'd from Pg.1

ment of a high-level lifetime giving society for donors that will debut in September 2003.

In talking with Sharon about the various aspects of her job, it is obvious from her enthusiasm that she loves the college and her work there. She marvels, as we all do, at the growth and amazing success of the Adventures in Learning program and at the variety of course offerings and the ability of all the study group leaders.

Born in Toledo, Ohio, Sharon and her family moved to Phoenix, Arizona, when she was 13. After finishing school, she married, had three children, and, in time, worked as a real estate broker in Phoenix and later in office-building management in Fort Worth, Texas. Much of her customer-service experience and event-planning expertise was developed working in the hospitality business at Shanty Creek Resort in Bellaire, Michigan. While at the resort she was involved

in general management operations with an overview of all the major departments comprising day-to-day activities. One of her very favorite projects was the creation and establishment of a Disney-like fantasy character designed to enhance the children's program. The character ultimately popped up everywhere, including local community events, and was incorporated into all the resort activities.

Sharon is an avid genealogist and began coming to New Hampshire in the mid-1980s to research her paternal family history. She says, "I'm a tenacious researcher and have spent entire vacations in pursuit of information pertinent to my family. In the process, I simply fell in love with New Hampshire and always told myself that someday I would live here." In April 1997 that day came, and she joined the staff at Colby-Sawyer College.

Sharon lives in a cozy antique house in Wilmot, not far from the homestead farm of her ancestors, who were among the first settlers in the town. Her three children live farther away than she would like – a son is in Arizona, and a daughter and son, along with four grandchildren, in Michigan.

A frequent patron of the town's library, Sharon is a new member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Wilmot Public Library. In her leisure time, she is still actively involved with genealogical pursuits, and enjoys photography and scrapbooking. Additionally, she has discovered the joys of perennial gardening, and she continues to enjoy the entertaining antics of Hemingway, her very handsome white Persian cat.

—Heidi Beckwith

In Memory of Susanne "Danna" Andrews Foote

Adventures in Learning wishes to pay tribute to Danna Foote, who is sorely missed by family, friends, and colleagues. She and her spouse, Bob, moved to New London in 1994 and both became active students in the newly formed Adventures in Learning at Colby-Sawyer College.

In its second academic year of operation (1999-2000), Danna was appointed to the first Membership and Publicity Committee (now the Public Relations Committee) beginning Jan. 26, 2000, on which she continued to serve until her recent death.

A gracious and competent advocate for Adventures in Learning, Danna was a quintessential volunteer. AIL is especially grateful for her part in compiling and editing the course catalogs that are so vital to this organization, as well as being the first and only committee "minute taker."

In appreciation for the gift of her expertise and presence, a contribution has been made in Danna's honor to the Community Garden at Tracy Memorial Library from the Adventures in Learning community.



**Danna Foote
1930-2003**

Preview of Fall 2003 Courses

Another academic year is almost upon us and, once again, Adventures in Learning is pleased and very eager to present to you an exciting array of courses for the fall 2003 term, which begins Sept. 22 and runs through Nov. 14, 2003. The fall *Catalog* will be mailed in mid-July and the registration period for the fall term will open on Monday, Aug. 4, 2003. Because the “first-day lottery” policy implemented last year has been effective, 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. Following is a sneak preview of our course offerings for fall 2003.

Changing American Values

Democracy, with all of its risks, must be a public affair. Sharing is the essence of teaching and learning. Ben Acard will explore the notion that our society is changing so rapidly that our institutions are not keeping pace. We will share our thoughts on readings and current events.



B. Acard



J. Schlosser

Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha* – Life as the Guru

Based on Herman Hesse's classic *Siddhartha*, John Schlosser will explore Siddhartha's journey of spiritual self-development from his youth to his old age through discussions of the novel and meditative and journaling techniques that provide first-hand experience of the Eastern spiritual tradition.

From the Cloning of Dolly the Sheep to Stem Cell Research

Microbiologist Judy Bohn returns to lead an exploration of the basic functions of a human cell. Learn how scientists manipulate these cells in ways not found in nature. The mechanical and chemical techniques used in this new technology will also be discussed. Participants may engage in lively discussion or just sit back and listen.



J. Bohn



S. Reeves

Israel's Prophecy: A Gift of Generative Power

This course will offer a look at prophecy in the books of Amos, Hosea and Isaiah against the background of their times. Led by Sarah Reeves, participants will reflect on the ways prophecy does and does not transcend their particular pivotal times.



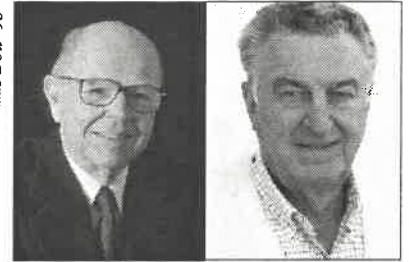
W. Barndt

Blindspots

This course, led by Walter Barndt, will improve your awareness, understanding and ability to think differently about the decisions you make. It's intended to enable you to more clearly anticipate, recognize, and assess the many transparent and less obvious signs, signals, and messages that you can't or don't want to acknowledge: your own blind spots.

The Civil War

They're back! Millard Hunter and Julien LeBourgeois return with another ever-popular offering of what many historians agree was the central event in our history as a nation. As one historian put it, "All of our history led up to the Civil War, and all subsequent history descended from it."



Katie Dow '90

J. LeBourgeois M. Hunter



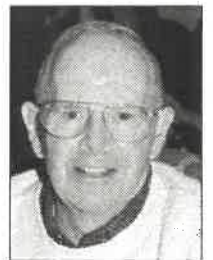
L. Freeman

Cooking Should be Fun

It was so much fun the first time around that LoriAnne Freeman has agreed to offer another opportunity for participants to gather for hands-on learning of menu planning, easy cooking techniques, and stress-free recipes to impress friends and family. No reading, homework, debates, or in-depth discussions required.

Stones, Bones, and Biblical Tomes

Based on the latest findings and interpretations of 24 scholars presented at The Biblical Archaeology Society's fifth annual conference, Arthur Rosen offers ten of these talks sequenced chronologically from the period of Abraham through Jesus, and will put each into historical perspective. The result will be a survey of biblical times punctuated with new archaeological findings and interpretations.



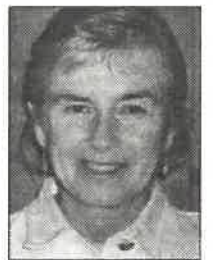
A. Rosen



A. Lang

A Sampler of New England Poets

We in New Hampshire live in fertile soil renowned not only for producing lush landscapes, but also for inspiring rich poetic voices. Participants in this course will listen to as well as converse with some of these voices in celebration of the diversity of poetry currently blossoming in our region. Join Natalie Davis and Ann Lang as they delight the study group each week with personal visits from the poets being studied.



N. Davis

Out of Tin Boxes: The Harvey Family and Their Times 1774-1866

Local author Carlton Bradford will lead this course covering one hundred years of local, state, and national history, from the Revolution to the Civil War, based on three prominent Harvey family men who are the subjects of *Out of Tin Boxes*. Participants will be invited to conduct some personal historical research of their respective towns and villages.



C. Bradford

Adventures in Learning Honors Study Group Leaders at Annual Meeting

In its fifth year, Adventures in Learning has come to represent a successful partnership between Colby-Sawyer College and the people of the New London area, according to President Peter McKee. Speaking at the AIL fourth annual meeting on Thursday, May 22, at the college's Wheeler Hall, Peter noted that 561 people participated in 28 AIL courses in 2002-2003, a sharp rise over the program's first year, when 323 people were enrolled in 15 courses.

The real credit for the program's success, Peter maintained, belongs to the AIL Curriculum and Public Relations Committees, its study group leaders, and to Colby-Sawyer staff members Sharon Ames and Laura Powers. AIL marked the occasion by honoring the service of the sixty-four people who have served as Study Group Leaders.

On a sad note, Peter remembered the contributions of two study group leaders who passed away this year, the sculptor Winslow Eaves and Deniza Martin, leader of several courses in English history.

Dan Darrow, chairman of the Curriculum Committee, highlighted the committee's work in recruiting leaders, evaluating proposals, and handling logistical tasks. He recognized committee members Dick and Carolyn Sweetland and Bob Foote who, having completed their three-year terms, are retiring. New committee members include Mary Shepard, Lee Van Bremen, Dee Segerson, and Dick Pearson.

Achievements in the past year include Ben Acard's introduction of the lecture series format, the development of a new leader evaluation form,

and the revision of the Study Leader Guide. Additionally, program leaders have improved the process of ordering textbooks and laid the groundwork for the next three terms of courses.

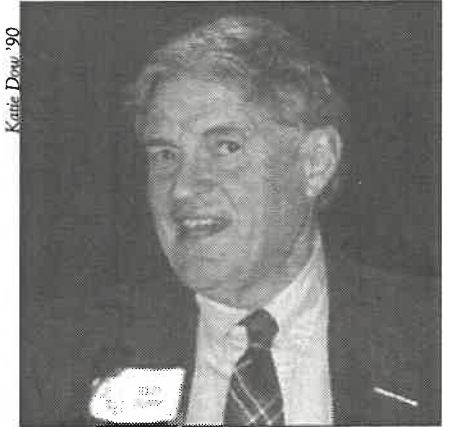
Reporting on AIL's finances and facilities, Treasurer Dick Cogswell announced that AIL now has seven classroom venues, yet the program continues to search for more space. With new audiovisual equipment, AIL leaders are able to feature overheads and slide presentations.

First-year revenues of \$18,000 have grown to \$29,000 in the past year just completed; and, although the college does not charge for the services and facilities it provides, AIL has made annual contributions to the college, most recently \$10,000.

John Callahan, who presented the Nominating Committee's report, proposed the renewal of terms for directors Bob Foote, Bob Scott, Sandy Stark, and Gusta Teach. Once the motion passed, he then proposed an increase in the size of the board to seventeen directors. He recommended James Bowditch and George Tracy to fill the two new slots, and the motion passed easily.

Featured speaker Dr. Theodore R. Sizer discussed "School Reform: Just What Does This Mean?" A recognized authority on public school reform, Dr. Sizer formed the Coalition of Essential Schools, a national high school reform group.

In his lecture, Dr. Sizer presented his views on why the system of secondary education needs to change. Declaring that public schools are in "bad shape across the board,"



Dr. Theodore Sizer

he noted that few reforms have occurred in the last 100 years.

For example, the existing system is organized according to students' age, yet research and experience reveal that children develop at different rates, Dr. Sizer maintained. Additionally, he asserted that the traditional practice of dividing classes into subjects serves to isolate students' learning experiences, and often means that children "are never asked to make sense of it all."

Dr. Sizer held up the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School in Devens, Mass., which he founded, as an example of a new direction in education that works. Classes are structured in three "clusters:" technology, arts & humanities and health & wellness. This encourages cross-pollination of ideas. He described the school as "hard to administer, but very very successful."

Of the current federal government initiative, No Child Left Behind, Dr. Sizer said, "It constitutes high expectations measured against a low standard." He called it "a serious example of attempting to reform without re-forming."

Another Year of Adventures in Learning

Adventures in Learning eagerly anticipates another exciting year of offering not-for-credit educational enrichment opportunities for adults in the Kearsarge-Lake Sunapee area. Our new membership year will run from July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004, so once again, it's time to renew your annual membership to be eligible to participate in the upcoming array of intellectually stimulating courses and pleasurable activities that Adventures in Learning has planned.

As you know, the Adventures in Learning fee structure has remained the same throughout these first five years of operation but now, in view of substantial membership growth and increased administrative costs, the Board of Directors has voted to increase the program fees for the coming academic year. New fees are as follows:

Annual Membership \$40 per person
Class Enrollment Fee \$35 per person

Come and be a part of all that is scheduled for the 2003-2004 academic year. Renew your membership today! Simply complete the form below and return it with a check made payable to: Colby-Sawyer College. Please mail renewal form and payment to Sharon Ames, Adventures in Learning, Colby-Sawyer College, 541 Main Street, New London, NH 03257. For your convenience, a membership card for the current year will be sent to you upon receipt of your membership renewal payment.

Adventures in Learning Membership Renewal Form 2003-2004

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Town/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Amount enclosed (\$40 x number of memberships) = \$ _____



Adventures in Learning

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Katie Dowd '90

Following Adventure in Learning's annual meeting, this past year's study group leaders gathered for a group photograph. The leaders in attendance included: (seated from left) Tony Parra, Hilary Cleveland, Bob Gray, Julien LeBourgeois, Dusty Logan, Charlie Carey, and Christine Hamm. Middle left to right: Jim Bowditch, Judy Bohn, Sarah Reeves, Barbara Beskind, Art Rosen, Dick Little, Millard Hunter, Nan Vulgamore, Don Clark, Morris Edwards, Charles Chamberlain, and Chuck Kennedy. Last left to right: George Tracy, Charles Terry, Dick Pearson, Frank Hammond, Peter McKee, Mac Plante, Sheldon Boege, and Joe Kun.