
The Midcoast Inquirer

Newsletter of Midcoast Senior College
December 2013, Volume 9, No. 1



Happy Holidays from Midcoast Senior College Board of Directors

*May happiness be yours during this Season of Goodwill
and may the New Year bring Peace on Earth*

Faculty Profile:

A Lifelong Learner

Linton H. Studdiford is currently teaching a course on the short stories of Flannery O'Connor. One can enjoy her short stories for their humor, rising sense of suspense, and poetic quality of her prose. However to appreciate O'Connor's writing on the deeper levels she intended, there is no better guide than Linton. Flannery O'Connor (1925- 1964) was a deeply religious Catholic, influenced by Teilhard de Chardin and Thomas Merton. Her writing has Biblical references which Linton highlights for our class. Linton's background as an English instructor, then farmer, then Episcopal priest provides a multi layered understanding of O'Connor which she so deserves.

Linton is currently a faculty member and new Board of Director here at MSC. He also serves as committee chair for Public Relations. Here is his profile in his own words: "My wife Bonnie and I have taken courses at MSC over the last five years. In the fall of 2012 I taught an 8 week course on the essayist, poet, and novelist, Wendell Berry. I am impressed by the quality and scope of the courses offered by MSC, but what I have found most valuable is the interchange and dialogue that takes place among the students and the faculty. I graduated from Princeton University with an

English major in 1963, and earned an MA degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1966. From then until 1969 I taught English at Doane Academy in Burlington, NJ. In 1969 I became headmaster.

In 1973 Bonnie and I and our son and daughter moved to a farm in Cornville, Maine that we continued to operate until 1985. In 1985 I earned my Masters of Divinity degree from Bangor Theological Seminary and was ordained an Episcopal priest. I have served parishes in Skowhegan, Sanford, Cape Elizabeth and Wiscasset.

I earned a Doctor of Ministry degree in 1998. From then until retirement my responsibility was for congregational development and clergy deployment in Episcopal Churches throughout Maine.

Since 2001 Bonnie and I have been very involved in the start of the Tom Settlemire Community Garden in Brunswick on Crystal Spring Farm property. We are entering our second year with 80 rental plots, a 5,000 square foot garden devoted to raising vegetables for the Mid-Coast Hunger Prevention Program and five "super" raised beds for gardeners in wheelchairs and walkers."

**MSC Proudly Presents
The DaPonte Quartet**

January 8, 2014, 12:15, Curtis Library
This even is sponsored by Joane Tait, Senior Vice President, Legacy Properties, Sotheby's Realty, Maine St., Brunswick

The Midcoast Inquirer

is the newsletter of
Midcoast Senior College which is hosted by University
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Current Events Forum: Richard Neiman

Midcoast Senior College is one of eighteen autonomous,
self-governing Senior Colleges in this State. We serve the
area from Damariscotta to Freeport and inland toward
Augusta. Most classes are held at the University College
site at 9 Park Street in Bath.

Our mission: to provide non-credit academic courses
and other educational events for people of 55 years and
older to continue their lifelong learning.

In Memory of...

by David McKeith
(David was the first editor of this newsletter)

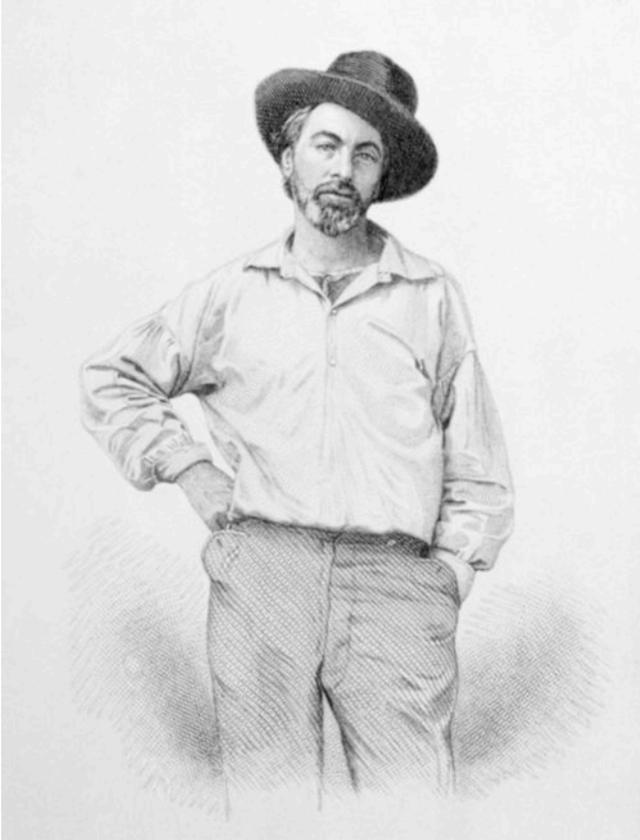
We note the passing in May of this year of
R. KATHLEEN JEWETT, former Board member
in the early years of Midcoast Senior College.
Kathleen is especially remembered for her energy
and creativity in assisting the establishment of our
effective system of student volunteers who have
been the life blood of this organization.

Those of you who were engaged with Senior College
in its early years may also remember the generous
and wise contributions of LIBBY IRWIN. An
active board member, Libby chaired the curriculum
committee while she also taught well-attended
courses in pencil drawing. In her later years she
moved to Vermont where, as her daughter, Sarah
Gallagher, writes: "She continued to be as active
and involved as ever, paying particular attention to
her painting, putting together an informal group
which met to share and critique." Libby passed
away last June.

EDWARD J. LISTON, who passed away in
August, was an active member of our first Board of
Directors at the turn of the century, as Midcoast
Senior College commenced to offer classes. Howard
Whitcomb, current chair of the curriculum
committee, writes: "Edward brought to us
extraordinary experience as a collegiate
administrator at institutions coast to coast. During
our early years we benefited immensely from his
wise counsel. His infectious sense of humor and
self-deprecating manner resulted in his being
uniformly well-liked by all, even at contentious
moments."



On Poetry: Walt Whitman



Frontispiece to *Leaves of Grass*, 1855, steel engraving by Samuel Hollyer from a lost daguerreotype by Gabriel Harrison

by David McKeith

One hundred and fifty years ago this January, Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation became law. Poet-journalist Walt Whitman was in Washington at the time. Born in 1819, Whitman knew personally the aging generation that had fought the American Revolution and created the Federal Union with its Bill of Rights. He grew angry over the effect of slavery on American life and values and on the practice of democracy. By the 1850s, this journalist-turned-poet, who would become known as "the bard of democracy," was trying to find a voice that would draw together, in his dream of universal brotherhood, the competing

factions that were tearing apart the Union. Thus, in 1855, employing a totally new poetic form, that of free verse that broke with the literary conventions of meter and rhythm, Whitman found his voice in his self-published collection of poems, *Leaves of Grass*. Written in the first person as one would speak directly to the people, he would revise this collection eight times.

During the war Whitman lived in Washington to care for his wounded brother. There in a flow of poetry, he expressed his devout patriotism for the Union. But it was the death of Lincoln, the "father" of the Union, as he calls him here, that moved Whitman to create what has long been considered the preeminent poem of that war. It is a piece both exultant because "the prize we sought is won," but at the same time filled with Whitman's intense grief because the captain of the ship died during the voyage. Filled with metaphor (captain, ship, fearful trip, prize) Whitman's personal sense of deep loss is reflected in his repetitions. Interestingly, in his second stanza, Whitman seems unable to believe Lincoln was dead. Soon after, Whitman wrote his long elegy for Lincoln, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." We'll look at this poem in our next issue.

O Captain! My Captain!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the

bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you
the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for
you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their
eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
The arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are
pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no
pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its
voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in
with object won;
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Three Dedicated Volunteers Leave Board

By Lois Lamdin
(Lois was the second editor of the Midcoast Inquirer
and she wrote this piece last June)

Dorothy Bell has been a part of Midcoast Senior College since its inception in 2000. She joined the Board in 2002, and has served as either Chair or Co-Chair for the past seven years. This was a period of tremendous growth for the College, and Dorothy was a major planner and instigator of that growth and of our success. For many of us, students and board members alike, she was also the voice of Senior College. It was most likely she to whom you spoke if you called wanting information about

membership, registration dates, or just wanted to know where things were happening and when.

Dorothy knew the answer and was always a warm and friendly informer and advisor.

In short, for the past 13 years, Dorothy has been the person who made Midcoast Senior College work.

Her devotion, skill, and sensitivity to others' needs, as well as her encyclopedic knowledge of past and present administrative functions, made her the source not only of all the information we needed to know, but a friend who could assist our own efforts at productivity.

Dorothy, your departure leaves us all with a profound sense of loss. Thank you for your part in making real our belief that 'Learning never ends!'

Richard Leck has spent only a year with us, but leaves a strong legacy, particularly in the area of finance and budgeting. As MSC has faced its evolution from a simple nonprofit to a 501(c)(3) organization, we were presented with new legal and structural demands for which Richard gave us informed and invaluable counsel in Board meetings.

Richard has also been particularly helpful in selecting computer software to adapt to our increasingly complex financial needs. We are sorry to lose him but look forward to seeing him frequently in our classes.

Priscilla McKeith who joined MSC in 2002 and has served as our public relations chair for ten years will leave a hole as big as her heart. She has built strong relationships with businesses and residents in the midcoast area, has conducted interviews with several of our 'veteran' teachers, has written countless articles for local news media, and has always been ready to meet with area groups to share her knowledge about the history and current programs offered at the college.

If we must lose you, Priscilla, we hope your artwork will be the beneficiary of your increased leisure time.

Recommended Reading: On Storytellers

by Judy Smith

(Judy is a student at MSC and has suggested authors for readers of the Inquirer for many years)

I believe in synchronicity, defined as a coincidental confluence of events which seem to have meaning. For example, you run into someone in a place neither of you frequent at a time you had been thinking of that person. A social worker colleague of mine always said to pay attention to those moments, that if you do, you will find they are telling you something.

As I was thinking about writing this article, I thought about, not a book, but the story tellers who make so many books so engaging for me. The synchronicity aspect was hearing during that time period, a program about storytellers and what they mean to us. I then heard that Fred Rogers, aka Mr. Rogers used to carry a quote in his pocket which read, "There isn't anyone you couldn't learn to love once you have heard their story." Then Alice Munro, at 82, received the Nobel Prize for literature. She is one of the great short story writers.

So I looked back at my reading over the years and realized that many of my favorite books were well told tales, fiction and non fiction, often short stories. At first, I thought that perhaps as a young mother trying to find time to read, that was all I had time for. However, now that I have more time for reading, I am still drawn to short story writers and just good story tellers.

My earliest memory is *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, a coming of age story of a young girl growing up in the city in the 30s. It remains on my shelf today, even after a dozen moves. Then in high school, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, about the struggles in the South with racism. Neither of these stories were

something I knew much about growing up in New England. What teachers!!

Now there is Jhumpa Lahiri, also a prize winning author, for her short stories, *Interpreter of Maladies*, about the experiences of Indian refugees coming to this country. Gail Tsukiyama is an author I found in a visit to a bookstore in Mass. many years ago. She writes fictional stories about (mostly) ancient Asian culture from *The Samurai's Garden* to the stories of women who worked in the silk industry in early Japan, *Women of Silk* and *The Language of Threads*. Her writing is like silk to my soul.

Our book group just read, *The Glass Castle*, by Jeanette Walls, a memoir of the author's deeply dysfunctional family and how she and her siblings fared. Did her troubled story define her as an adult and how? Those who read *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand do not soon forget that, also true story, of survival in World War II. What do we take away from these stories and what do we learn and do we change how we feel about cultures we do not know?

Then there is Alice Munro. She wrote short stories for many publications, finally putting them in book form in 1996, *Runaway*. Her latest compilation is *Dear Life*, described by a reviewer as "exquisite". In the Oct. 21, 2013 issue of *The New Yorker* is one entitled, "The Bear Came Over The Mountain." I read it once and then read it again. The story, like many of hers, is so rich in so many ways.

Because my pile on my bedside table is so high, I have to forego Jhumpa Lahiri's new book, *Lowland*.....for now, but I will get to it.



Four New Faculty Members for Spring Semester

Susan Danly will teach “Maine’s Place in American Art”.

Susan was Senior Curator at the Portland Museum of Art from 2002-2012. During her career she specialized in the fields of American art and the history of photography. She received her Ph.D. from Brown University and her B.A. from the University of Wisconsin. From 1993-2000 she was Curator of American Art at the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College. Prior to this she was a Curator at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art. She has also been a lecturer at several universities.

Stephen Loebs will teach “An International Comparison of Health Systems”

Stephen Loeb, Bowdoin '60, is a Professor Emeritus of Health Policy and Management at The Ohio State University where he taught graduate level courses for 40 years. He received his Ph. D. in Medical Care Organization from the University of Michigan. He has published in the areas of health care finance, managed care, and health policy. Stephen currently holds a faculty appointment as Distinguished Lecturer at Bowdoin College.

Tom McCarthy will teach “Terrorism: Views of Its Root Causes”

Tom McCarthy, a graduate of Northeastern University and a Viet Nam Veteran, is a retired U. S. Secret Service Special Agent. Since 1995 he has traveled worldwide, including war zones, for the Department of State lecturing and providing training to host countries' protection services. Tom recently retired to Camden.

Leonard Meiselman will teach “Modern Art is Our Art”

Born and raised in NYC, Leonard Meiselman received his art education at the Cooper Union, the Skowhegan School of Art, and the Cranbrook Academy in Michigan. After living in Florence, Italy, he returned to the United States and now maintains studios in New York and Wiscasset. Leonard has had one-person exhibitions at the Camden Arts Center in London, the Yeshiva University Museum in New York, the Holocaust Center in Manhasset, Long Island, and elsewhere.

Thank You: Mary Ann Gesner

Last fall Mary Ann Gesner gave up her position on the board of directors of Senior College as the director of administration. For several years she had averaged up to 20 hours per week as a key volunteer. She had decided it was time to pursue some new interests.

Mary Ann worked at TD Bank for almost 20 years as a Risk and Compliance Manager. She also provided technical support for business clients.

These were exactly the skills Mary Ann had honed and Senior College required as we grew. Mary Ann managed our financial records, and member and faculty services. Agnes Beale is now working part time as a Senior College employee to take over these services.

I asked Mary Ann what drew her to Senior College after her retirement. She loved the courses and their high quality for which she gives credit to Howard Whitcomb. Among the faculty she enjoyed are Stu Ross and painting; Ronnie Kamphausen and her nature field trips every class; John Bradford and the history of Maine she had never learned in school; Barbara Snapp's food course; and Jim Todd on the patterns of life and living.

I also asked Mary Ann to share her concerns for the future of Senior College. Her major concern is that

we maintain the human aspect as the role of technology becomes greater. She also hopes we will continue to maintain the high quality of our classes.

We thank Mary Ann for her great commitment to Senior College.

Announcements

Senior College Membership Dues Collection to Change

The Midcoast Senior College Board of Directors decided this past fall to change the schedule of membership dues collection to ease our bookkeeping and financial record keeping. Beginning next semester, Spring, 2014, membership dues will be collected each semester, rather than yearly. Membership dues will be \$15 each semester.

We Depend Upon Volunteers

All activities of Midcoast Senior College run on volunteers. There are fifteen members of the Board of Directors: they sit on the committee that selects the instructors; they are responsible for public relations; they assist in registering students and act as liaisons in classrooms; they are the classroom

instructors, and guest lecturers for Winter Wisdom, and Summer Wisdom, and they arrange for special events like the June membership meeting, and summer outing. Due to the rapid growth of MSC, we have for the first time added a paid, part time administrative assistant.

There are many different kinds of opportunities for you to serve, using skills you already have or new ones you may wish to learn. You can help for a few occasional hours or devote more time as you become engaged in what we do.

Midcoast Senior College is currently seeking volunteers for the areas of: fundraising and development; and computers and software. Call us and leave a message at 442-7349 or email to info@midcoastseniorcollege.org. We thank you.

Winter Storm Warning

If you wake on a snowy Wednesday morning when we have scheduled a Winter Wisdom lecture, and the Brunswick School Buses are NOT running, in that event Curtis Library will be closed and our program is cancelled. There will be a make up date.

Hiroshige, Two men by a gate in the mountains

