
The Midcoast Inquirer

Newsletter of Midcoast Senior College
April 2016, Volume 11, No 2



Letter from the President

Midcoast Senior College is better than ever. Our course selection and quality remains outstanding. New faculty members are joining, allowing us to insure that only well-credentialed instructors are teaching. Students are generally satisfied. If we were a corporation, our product (the courses) would be in high demand, our customers (the members) would be eagerly buying, and our stock price would be soaring.

None of this success would be possible without the committed participation of a cadre of dedicated volunteers. First among these is the faculty itself. Drawn by the manifest attractions of Midcoast Maine, many retired academics settle here and then offer their competence to our Senior College at no cost. We are indeed fortunate to have such enthusiastic individuals upon which to draw, and we have been able to selectively hone this teaching pool using your course evaluations as the guide.

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Anchor This Date



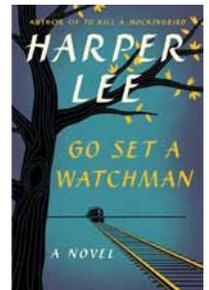
The MSC Summer Excursion 2016 will be held on Tuesday, August 16, and will feature a tour of the Portland waterfront and some islands of Casco Bay with their historic forts and natural marine life, including sea birds and seals. Mark your calendars! More details to come.

Between the Covers

Judy Smith

I was working on this article on the day that the author Harper Lee died. Her Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, is one of the most widely read and beloved books in high school, college and beyond. Many consider it a classic. At a Notre Dame University graduation, more than two thousand students held up copies of her book when she was introduced to speak. The smile on her face was priceless.

The reclusive Harper Lee was very little known. Much of what I learned about her personal life was from details after her death last week. She shunned interviews, book tours and lectures. She was thought not to have written anything else until last year when her book, reportedly to have been written before *To Kill a Mockingbird* was published. *Go Set a Watchman* quickly rose to become a best seller



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Mission Statement of *The Midcoast Inquirer*:

The Midcoast Inquirer articulates the academic spirit and educational mission of Midcoast Senior College to offer lifelong learning for older adults. To this end, we provide a bulletin board that announces course offerings, lectures and special events, and a literary forum (or virtual classroom) of essays, reviews, interviews and commentaries written by faculty and students.

--Robert C. Williams, Editor

The Midcoast Inquirer

is the newsletter of

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Other volunteers participate in the largely invisible but very necessary administrative functions of the College. Our two part-time paid employees are supplemented by a several members who regularly participate in surge operations such as course registration, bulk mailings, ordering and distribution of books, participation in public outreach activities, and serve as class liaisons. We could not operate without this assistance.

Any recognition of volunteer service must include the Board itself. In addition to their financial contributions, Board members contribute many hours in largely invisible work, including such tasks as sponsor solicitation, curriculum screening, faculty selection, financial management, procurement of facilities, coordination of special events, editing the newsletter, and other administrative functions.

I have two concerns for our future: course quality and administrative competence. We must be cautious that in our zeal for growth we do not dilute the excellent quality and academic rigor that our courses currently manifest. Careful faculty selection and critical screening of course topics can and will assure that this is achieved.

Competent administration will be a more difficult and expensive nut to crack. Our expanding membership is creating an administrative workload that our volunteer effort cannot cope with efficiently. Our volunteers, all seniors themselves, cannot efficiently master the intricacies of the various computer programs we use to manage mailing lists, registration data, book ordering, enrollment, and the budget. I believe that we will need a competent paid employee on a regular basis, perhaps full-time, in the relatively near future. At present, we do not have the funds to support a full-time employee, but our new part-time office administrator, Donna Marshall, will get us headed in the right direction.

I am very enthusiastic about Midcoast Senior College and I recognize that the membership shares this enthusiasm. Please volunteer your time when requested to assist in office administrative functions. Please consider ways to increase financial support of the College. Spread the word, express your enthusiasm, and let the entire community know that Midcoast Senior College is a vibrant, active center for life-long learning.

Tony Belmont, President



Midcoast Senior College is one of seventeen Senior Colleges in the State of Maine. We serve the area from Freeport to Waldoboro and inland up to Augusta. Most of our classes are held at 10 Tibbets Drive, Brunswick, Maine. This past Fall we offered 26 courses and enrolled 540 students. Class schedules and The Midcoast Inquirer are available on our web site for each semester. Students may also register on line at midcoastseniorcollege.org.

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become a best seller. No one knows if Harper Lee would have wanted it published as she was said to have some dementia issues.

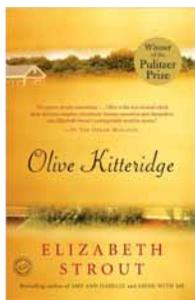
This all brings me to Elena Ferrante an Italian author of a series of novels, the first of which our book group has been reading. Book one is *My Brilliant Friend*. Ferrante's books are translated by Ann Goldstein of the *New Yorker* magazine. These four novels start with the friendship of two young girls in Italy in the 1950's and follow them through their seventies in volume four. At times, this book is raw and emotional, providing a realistic historical background of Italy during that time period.



Elena Ferrante is even more elusive than Harper Lee. No one is really sure if that is even her real name. In an article in the *Guardian*, there is no evidence that anyone including the translator has actually met her. Could she be a he? That seems unlikely with the intimate descriptions of female relationships, but we do not know now do we? The books are often referred to as the Neapolitan quartet.

Harper Lee chose to live a life away from the literary world and not write anymore (as far as we know). Elena Ferrante has also decided to absent herself from interviews, book tours and public scrutiny. She has occasionally submitted written responses to journalistic questions, but that is about it. An interesting quote from one of these is, "I believe that books, once they are written, have no use of their authors. If they have something to say, sooner or later they will find readers." A very interesting question arises: Do readers need to know or hear from Harper Lee or Elena Ferrante to appreciate their work? The Neapolitan books, written in Italian several years ago have found their way here in English.

Elizabeth Stout, (*Olive Kitteridge*). has taken a very different approach in her newest offering, entitled, *My Name Is Lucy Barton*. Elizabeth Stout, unlike Harper Lee and Elena Ferrante is well known through her book tours and talks. I heard her at Bowdoin College and found her take on writing quite interesting. *Lucy Barton* is short read and actually takes part over five days. It has been read by most of our book club already with a variety of very differing interpreta-



tions. Some loved the book for the story or the writing, others were not so impressed. We have it on our book group "docket" when the members who go South return. It should be a lively discussion.

So here we have three authors with best selling books. They each have different takes on being an author, stories that are short and stories that take four volumes to tell. How much does knowing the author mean to us or tell us about the book? I am sure there are many answers to that question.

And for those of you, like me, who are trying to sort out some of the details on the Constitution/Supreme Court issues, in the light of Justice Scalia's death, I recommend you read or reread Jeffrey Toobin's book, *Nine*, about the Supreme Court. We still have it on our shelves and I found it very helpful.

Spring, we hope, is around the corner?!?!?! Many new books will be hitting the shelves for summer reading. Perhaps you will read a favorite author or perhaps you will spot a new one. However it works for you, read on.

Judy Smith, a former teacher and social worker, has taken many courses at MSC over the years. She is an avid reader of books and children's literature.

Volunteer Recognition and Thanks!!

BRAVO! Winter Wisdom, Newsletter, Bulk Mailing, Office Help, And Spring Registration. December 15, 2015-January 31, 2016

Susan Beegel, Dorothy Bell, Tony Belmont, Joyce Bessen, Nora Bishop, Sally Broderick, Carolyn Bryant, Bob Bunselmeyer, Bianca Chambers, Miriam Charette, Dean Clark, Leona Dufour, Charles Dunbar, Juris Epse, Stuart Gillespie, Marnie Hackenberg, Jack Henderson, Nancy Hill, Linda Hjortland, Henry Hopcroft, Janet Kiel, Richard Leck, Jan Levitt, Joseph Lisi, Phyllis Lisi, Priscilla Mckeith, Leonard Meiselman, Sharon Meunier, Susan Mike-sell, Jim Millinger, Skip Orem, Esther Palmer, Jean Pope, Linda Robert, Judy Smith, Karin Soderberg, Burr Taylor, Kelly Watt, Ann Williams, Bob Williams, Phyllis Wolf



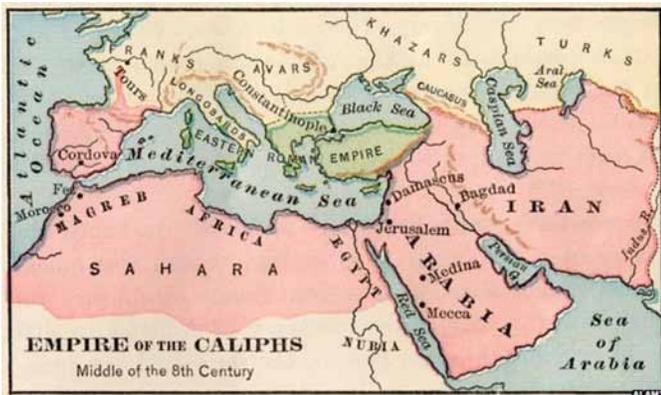
The UN and a Post-ISIS Future in the Middle East

Charles Dunbar

Three imperatives loom through the fog of war in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. Two are straightforward – pressing ahead with the ceasefires that are prerequisites for addressing the humanitarian catastrophes and continuing to degrade the ISIS “caliphate” by all feasible means. Although the first effort has yet to produce anything that could be called a breakthrough, Secretary of State Kerry’s efforts have produced a fragile “a cessation of hostilities” in Syria, and unpublicized talks between Saudi Arabia and its antagonists are said to be ongoing in Riyadh. Meanwhile, the effort to degrade the Islamic State’s (ISIS) caliphate has had measurable success and has put the Iraqi army in a position at least to talk of re-taking the city of Mosul from which it was routed in June 2014 by a much smaller and lightly armed ISIS force.

The third looming imperative is to dismantle the ISIS caliphate and to replace it with a UN-sponsored peace operation. In the 20 months of its existence, the caliph-

should the United Nations deploy a peace operation in the territory ISIS now controls? The short answer is that representatives of the present governments in Damascus and Baghdad would be less than welcome in these predominantly Sunni areas that were formerly under their control and that the United Nations, with its universally agreed mandate to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,” is the organization best placed to step into the breach.



ate has become a surpassingly brutal, misogynistic and grandly larcenous caricature of a state. Its unlovable nature does not keep it from drawing on nostalgia for past Islamic glories of millions of deeply disaffected Muslims and others in the Islamic world, Europe, the US and beyond. It also offers salaries and logistic support for those prepared to serve it. In short, the caliphate has become the world’s premier Islamic terrorist organization and lays claim to murderous “franchises,” such as Boko Haram in West Africa and the Islamic State in Libya, that act in its name.

It is clearly in the interest of the civilized world to end the existence of the ISIS caliphate. That said, why

Since 1948, the United Nations has deployed 71 peace operations of varying size and complexity in every region of the world. Still called “peacekeeping” missions by the UN, the mandates of these operations have ranged from monitoring ceasefires along an international border to large, multi-dimensional efforts involving national governments, international agencies and NGOs. In these operations, the mission is charged with coordinating military and civilian efforts to shepherd intrastate conflicts to successful conclusions often a final act such as a referendum or election. In recent operations, notably those in Bosnia and Kosovo, the military force involved has been managed by a national government or regional alliance such as NATO in coordination with the UN mission instead of being organized by the UN itself with troops and equipment made available by national governments.

Perhaps most important, a UN operation can be deployed indefinitely without being viewed as an occupying force. The United Nations Mission in Kosovo had been in place for nearly a decade before the Serbian government assented to the holding of the referendum that brought the new country to independence. Although none of the parties (other than the ISIS caliphate) will admit it, the turmoil that has followed the US invasion of

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Iraq and the civil war in Syria has, to put it mildly, called into question the sovereignty of Baghdad and Damascus over all the territory within their frontiers. UN mission management of the territories now controlled by the ISIS caliphate would permit a breathing space in which sovereignty and other problems could be addressed.

Neither a “post-Caliphate” Middle East nor direct UN involvement therein is a present prospect. Members of the anti-ISIS coalition are at loggerheads because their national priorities in the region differ sharply. Turkey, the key regional power, is preoccupied with its Kurdish problem, and President Erdogan is incensed at the US for arming the Syrian Kurds to combat ISIS. President Putin seems to see saving Syrian President Assad’s political skin as a ticket to Russia’s return to regional “big player” status; bombing US-armed Syrian resistance forces seems to part of the plan. Saudi Arabia, while professing readiness to fight ISIS on the ground, keeps bombing Yemen (with US support) to counter minimal Iranian involvement.

Perhaps over time the “partners” will focus more on dismantling the ISIS caliphate, and perhaps if they do, they will see the need for the UN’s involvement in the region’s future. Time may tell.

Charles Dunbar is a retired U.S. foreign service officer with postings to Algeria, Iran, Afghanistan and Morocco. He served as U.S. ambassador to Yemen and Qatar.

Where is MSC Going How Can I help?

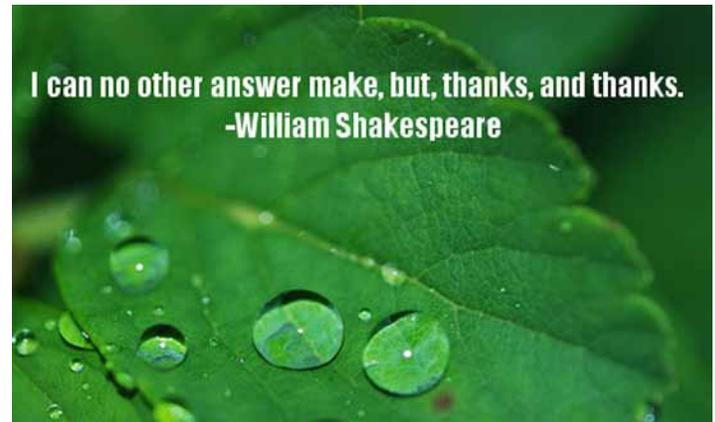
MSC is in constant need of volunteers to help with events, mailings and administrative support. In addition,

- We need to plan for computer and network upgrades on a continuing basis.
- We need paid staff to sustain an efficient office.
- We need to contemplate possible future tuition increases.
- We need to consider eliminating the book subsidy.
- We need to plan for a paperless future in many areas.

You can help by donating your time as a volunteer, by making contributions in the form of cash, stocks or bonds, and by considering naming MSC in your will or estate plans. We would also appreciate your suggestions as to how we can make our college and future sustainable. Call 207-725-4900 if you wish to volunteer.

2016 Wheeler/Thompson Founders Award Nominations

To acknowledge in a meaningful way the contributions of the two co-founders of Midcoast Senior College, Nancy Wheeler and Jack Thompson, the Board of Directors established in 2009 the Wheeler/Thompson Founders Award. Presented annually at the Spring Luncheon, this award recognizes an individual who has supported the spirit and work of Senior College in significant ways.



Nominations are solicited each spring from among past and present members/students, faculty, volunteers and others. The Board makes the final selection. Sitting members of the Board of Directors are not eligible. Nomination forms will be distributed to students attending classes later this spring. May 2 is the deadline. You may also go to our website, midcoastseniorcollege.org and vote.

Registration: Try something new!

Half of you register for courses online now. We encourage the rest of you to do so. Registration is secure. It’s as safe as buying a book at Amazon and just as fast; it saves time and paper for us all.

You will receive your catalog in the mail in early July and can see it online at midcoastseniorcollege.org after July 1. Online registration will be opened on July 11 and at the college volunteers will help you register online on July 11 and 12. Either way, you will receive a receipt of your payment and registration. Come into the office if you would prefer to register later.



Summer Wisdom 2016 Lectures



Midcoast Senior College and Thornton Oaks present Summer Wisdom 2016 Lectures on Wednesdays at 7:30 pm, Morrell Room, Curtis Memorial Library, Free and Open to the Public.

June 1---Early Voices on the Kennebec

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries people from five nations of the world came to the region of Maine and struggled to dominate the area. Using the words of people from diverse cultures, the presenter will share this fascinating, convoluted and terrible story, the results of which still resonate today.

Bud Warren grew up in Bath, attended Yale and Tufts Universities, and taught for 25 years in Andover, Honolulu and at the Hyde School. He has been involved in maritime and regional history for many years. He led the effort to build a replica of the 1607 vessel Virginia and is president of the Tide Mill Institute.

June 8---Translating Dante: Isabella Stewart Gardiner's Museum as "Paradiso"

This talk will examine the influence of Dante on Isabella Stewart Gardiner's museum in Boston, and will show how she borrowed aesthetic motifs from Dante's Paradiso as exemplified in the Italian poet's ideal of civic virtue.

Where in the Midcoast?

Do you recognize this place?

An occasional feature of the *Inquirer* will be a picture from somewhere in our area of a place you might like to visit, if you haven't already.

The answer is elsewhere in this newsletter.



Linda Docherty is Associate Professor of Art History Emerita at Bowdoin College, where she taught American and nineteenth-century European art. Her research focuses on art and identity, art and spirituality and the relationship between American and European art.

June 15---An Insider's Experience in the Carter White House

This presentation will recall a four year stint in the White House by the speaker as Appointments Secretary to First Lady Rosalynn Carter, where she had a birds-eye view of the inner workings of the Carter administration, and travelled extensively while arranging state visits.

A veteran of Edmund Muskie's senate staff, Jane Fenderson Cabot received a call in 1976 asking her to join the Carter national presidential campaign as scheduling and advance director for Ms. Carter. After her years in the White House, she became Executive Vice-President of a New York City public relation firm. She currently serves as past co-president of the Maine Women's Giving Tree.

June 22---Perspectives on Recent Events in North Korea

This presentation will review the recent internal and external developments in North Korea, put them in historical perspective and discuss implications for future U.S. engagement policies with North Korea.

Bradley Babson is a consultant on Asian affairs with a concentration on North Korea. He worked for the World Bank before retiring in 2000. He is chair of the DPRK Economic Forum at the US-Korea Institute, and serves on the advisory council of the Korea Economic Institute of America. He is also president of the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust.

June 29---Greece's Current Crisis: A Historian's Reflections

The dimensions of Greece's current crisis, which began in 2009 as a volatile component of a global economic crisis, captured the world's attention. This presentation will attempt to explain aspects of the situation in historic and cultural terms, and to point out that although many of the root causes of its debt crisis are self-inflicted, the Greeks alone are not totally responsible for it.

S. Victor Papacosma is Professor Emeritus of History and Director Emeritus of the Lemnitzer Center for NATO and European Studies at Kent State University. A Bowdoin graduate, he has published extensively on Balkan and Greek issues. He is currently a member of the board of Senior College.



FRENCH HUGUENOT REFUGEES LANDING AT BOWDOIN IN 1685
After the Decree of the Edict of Nantes

Historical Nuggets from the Mid-coast Past

Everyone knows that General Samuel Waldo (1696-1759) (von Waldow) helped settle the coastal towns along Broad Bay, imported German settlers to populate them, and modestly named two towns after himself, Waldo and Waldoboro. But what about Waldeboro’s neighbor, Bremen?

In 1828, the town of Bremen (pronounced Bree-men) set itself off from Waldeboro and Bristol and was incorporated by the new State of Maine. Bremen took its name from the Hanseatic League town in northwest Germany from which the first boatloads of Huguenot refugees came to Maine in the 1730s. Why the name? No one in Bremen seems to know.

Huguenots were not quite Germans or Ulster Scots, although many came from France via Germany and Northern Ireland. Pierre Baudoun arrived in America in 1686 from Ireland as a Huguenot refugee following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. He soon prospered in land purchases and Boston real estate. His grandson James Bowdoin II (1726-90) became the second governor of Massachusetts. His great-grandson James Bowdoin III (1752-1811) donated much of the family’s Brunswick land to what became Bowdoin College. The Baudouns became famous as the Bowdoins.

The famous Brementown Musicians of the Grimm brothers’ fairy tale never quite made it to Bremen. But the little coastal town of 800 or so people in Maine still bears the name of a German town on the Weser River where hardy Protestant refugees from France found temporary sanctuary before taking sail for the New World. Perhaps Bremen, like Bowdoin College, owes its name to its courageous Huguenot ancestors who helped settle Midcoast Maine.

Fall Enrollments

The word is in on the final enrollments for MSC courses this past Fall. According to our records, some 425 individuals took 24 courses, resulting in 522 course enrollments. Congratulations to all involved!

RAFFLE! RAFFLE!

ANNUAL MEETING LUNCHEON

MIDCOAST SENIOR COLLEGE

TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2016

Join us to celebrate another very successful year, and take a chance to win a pair tickets to one of four of the midcoast’s musical treasures !

- Bowdoin International Music Festival (\$80 value)
- DaPonte String Quartet (\$50 value)
- Maine State Music Theater (\$100 value)
- Oratorio Chorale (\$50 value)

Cash only – 1 chance \$5; 3 chances \$10; 7 chances \$20

Support Midcoast Senior College and its educational efforts!

WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

The **Mystery Picture** (page 6) Eagle Island is an island in Maine’s Casco Bay and the site of the retirement home of the polar explorer Admiral Robert Peary (1856-1920). The island and home have been preserved as a Maine state historic site. Peary bought the island in 1881 and retired there in 1911, after he had achieved fame and glory with his (sometimes disputed) expedition to the North Pole. His family continued to live in the house until the property was donated to the people of Maine in 1967. Eagle Island was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971 and declared a National Historic Landmark in 2014. *Wikipedia*

Mark Your Calendar

- Monday, May 2, 2016: **Wheeler/Thompson Award Nominations** Due
- Wednesdays, June 1-29, 2016: **Summer Wisdom Lectures**, Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick
- Tuesday, June 14, 2016: **MSC Annual Meeting/Luncheon**, Thorne Hall, Bowdoin College (more information coming by mail).
- Monday, July 11, 2016: **Course registration** begins
- Tuesday, August 16, 2016: **MSC Summer Excursion**, Portland Harbor



...because learning never ends.

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