



# The Midcoast Inquirer

## Midcoast Senior College's Newsletter

**SUMMER 2022 Volume 17, No. 1**

### A WELCOME FROM MIDCOAST SENIOR COLLEGE'S NEW BOARD PRESIDENT

I am very excited to be taking over the position of President of Midcoast Senior College. Thanks to the hard work of many members and the leadership of Doug Bates, Lynn Lockwood, and Donna Marshall, we are managing our way through the pandemic and emerging stronger and more vital than ever. Our Fall course lineup looks terrific and includes both in-person and virtual options. Check it out. Watch this space for news of future opportunities to learn and explore through Midcoast Senior College! *Jay Kuder*



### SUE KINGSLAND JOINS THE MSC TEAM



Meet the newest member of the MSC team! Sue Kingsland joins us in a new part-time position, Associate Director. Sue has extensive experience working for nonprofits in Maine with a focus on education and human services. She earned her Ph.D. from University of New Hampshire, Durham, in Sociology. You'll see Sue supporting classes, committees, our board, and executive director. We are excited to welcome Sue to Midcoast Senior College.

## MIDCOAST SENIOR COLLEGE

Midcoast Senior College (MSC) is a non-profit, 501c3 organization, founded in 2000.

**website:** [www.midcoastseniorcollege.org](http://www.midcoastseniorcollege.org)

**phone:** (207) 725-4900

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And **FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK** for even more fun news!



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## SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR SENIOR COLLEGE - MEMBERSHIP STARTS NOW

Become a member of Midcoast Senior College and join hundreds of seniors in midcoast Maine who have discovered that lifelong learning is the key to keeping their minds healthy and vibrant! MSC's membership period is on an annual basis, from July 1 through June 30. All memberships ended on June 30, 2022 so be sure to renew your annual membership today. Benefits include:

- Priority and Early Bird Registration Opportunities for Courses and Events
- Exclusive Members Excursions
- Reciprocal Benefits at Other Maine Senior Colleges

Membership allows us to produce the courses, lectures, clubs, excursions and events that enrich the minds and lives of seniors here in midcoast Maine.

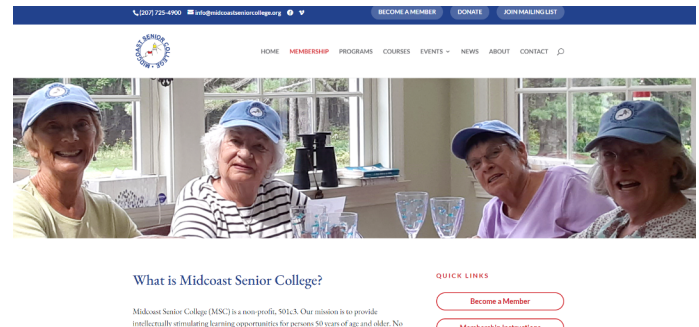
As one member puts it: "The second best thing I ever did (after moving to Maine) was to join Midcoast Senior College!"

### JOIN MSC AS A MEMBER

click or go to: [www.midcoastseniorcollege.org/membership](http://www.midcoastseniorcollege.org/membership)

## CHECK OUT MIDCOAST SENIOR COLLEGE'S WEBSITES NEW LOOK

Visit our new website today and you'll notice some changes. We're excited to announce that a year-long endeavor is complete. The new website features a blog that will bring news updates (so check in often!), a calendar, easy navigational tools, and more. It is one example of our commitment to investing in technology that makes the user experience easier for our members. Head over to the new website after you've read this month's newsletter!



click or go to: [www.midcoastseniorcollege.org](http://www.midcoastseniorcollege.org)

## SHARPEN YOUR PENCILS AND YOUR MIND: FALL TERM COURSES HAVE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

In-person? *Check!* On-line? *Check!* Hybrid? *Check!* The upcoming Fall terms will utilize all three types of learning opportunities. View upcoming courses on our website. Do you like to sing? MSC has a choral group class! We welcome new members. Enjoy this recent rehearsal of "Song for the Myra": <https://vimeo.com/720710283>.

Membership in MSC or another Maine senior college is required to take a course so be sure to pay your membership dues today.

### FALL TERM I COURSES

click or go to: [www.midcoastseniorcollege.org/fall-2022-courses](http://www.midcoastseniorcollege.org/fall-2022-courses)



Looking back on our '21/'22 courses and Winter and Summer Wisdom Lecture Series, there were many highlights and rewarding moments--too many to name them all but below are some favorites. Our Curriculum Committee, Wisdom Committees, faculty, guest lecturers, and, of course, our members, are all to be congratulated on their perseverance through the uncertain times we've faced. We hope you join us for educational adventures in '22/'23!

- ❑ Zoom classrooms became the new normal, and more students from distant locales, including from overseas, joined our on-line courses.
- ❑ The MSC Singers returned to in-person in Spring '22. They sang wearing health masks, yet prevailed and enjoyed their capstone practice session at the Unitarian Universalist Church then headed back over to Curtis Memorial Library for home-made treats and socializing. Listen to a rehearsal of "Song for the Myra": <https://vimeo.com/720710283>
- ❑ Winter Wisdom opened with a special concert by pianist George Lopez who brought music across the internet to more than 100 participating on Zoom. Summer Wisdom smashed attendance records as well, reaching more than 500 individuals. A deep gratitude to program sponsors, The Highlands and Sunnybrook Village.
- ❑ Merrymeeting Bay shimmered on a lovely July afternoon as MSC members enjoyed a chartered and narrated excursion with Maine Maritime Museum.
- ❑ Senator Angus King, Jr., dropped into Niles Schore's Fall course, "Our Common Purpose: Fixing Our Democracy." The senator shared his thoughts and answered student questions.
- ❑ Continued support from our community sponsors supported these any other MSC programs. Thanks to: Atlantic Federal Credit Union, Bath Savings Institution, Joane Tait SIR, Just Framing, Maine Pines Racquet & Fitness, M.W. Sewall, Norway Savings Bank, Now You're Cooking, Rhumblin' Advisers, Sunnybrook, The Highlands, and Thornton Oaks.



## MSC WELCOMES NEW PRESIDENT, BOARD MEMBERS

**Jay Kuder** starts his term as President of the MSC Board this month after serving as Vice President for one year. He brings his passion for education, MSC, and community to the Board. He recently retired as a professor in the Department of Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. Jay holds a master's degree in special education from Temple University and a doctoral degree in Applied Psycholinguistics from Boston University. His research interests are in the development of effective practices for enhancing the language and literacy skills of children with disabilities, especially those with autism. Jay is the author of three professional books and numerous professional papers.

**Rufus Brown**, a retired attorney, splits his time between Georgetown and Portland. He enjoys MSC literature courses, is an avid reader, and writes short stories. Rufus is the son of Bill Brown, a popular faculty member in MSC's early days.

**Susan Goran** retired from clinical work and is currently an adjunct faculty teaching leadership at UNE School of Nursing. She is active both as a teacher and a student in MSC classroom.

**Kevin Hart** has practiced law, edited books, and covered the U.S. Supreme Court as a newsletter journalist. His volunteerism includes board seats in other local non-profits. His MSC involvement spans several years.

**David Vogt** has had a career in technology and education as well as filmmaking. He has devoted much time to non-profit causes and enjoys being a student in MSC classes as well as family time.

### BOARD MEMBERS

Morton Achter, Director  
 Freda Bernotavicz, Director  
 Rufus Brown, Director  
 Leona Dufour, Secretary  
 Susan Goran, Director  
 Kevin Hart, Director  
 Bruce Hauptli, Director  
 Janet Kehl, Director  
 Jay Kuder, President  
 M. Kelly Matzen, Director  
 Craig Snapp, Director  
 Erv Snyder, Treasurer  
 William VanderWolk, Director  
 David Vogt, Director  
 Karen Williams, Vice President





## OVER COFFEE by Nora Bishop - A Conversation with Kelly Watt

*"Over Coffee" explores MSC members' stories. We invite you to share yours! Email Nora Bishop at [bishon@gmail.com](mailto:bishon@gmail.com).*

Kelly Watt and I have been friends for ten years. We know a lot about each other, but over lunch at Morse's Coastal Kitchen in Bath I learned more, and much of it surprising.

Kelly grew up in New Jersey, taught elementary school for 35 years, and owned a do-it-yourself frame shop for 25 of those years. After retiring at the young age of 56, she drove to Maine, planning to visit the Camden area but detoured to Bath. She drove up Centre Street, saw Town Hall, and that very day called a real estate agent. That's Kelly.

An insert in *The Times Record* listed an art class by Ed McCartan and Kelly's involvement with Midcoast Senior College began. She joined the Board and chaired Special Events where she organized annual meetings, faculty lunches, and social excursions to such places as Monmouth Theater and Monhegan Island. She took classes, volunteered at Maine Maritime Museum, and held a part-time job, all while designing and building her house. Did I say she retired ?

I asked Kelly how learning was different in retirement from when she was young. Her answer surprised me. "I have the same elements of curiosity and pursuit of things that interest me now than I did then." It was the 1960's and the world was chaotic as she saw it: Vietnam, racism and drugs. She wanted to be in charge of her life, to do something creative. Instead she was enrolled in a convent for her last two years of high school. She rebelled. "If you can imagine, there were lots of rules to be broken, and I promise you, I found rules that nobody knew existed and broke them all. I got into trouble, bad trouble."

At college, with adulthood beckoning, she realized that she needed to dig her grades out of the doldrums. She worked her head off and graduated with a degree in psychology. Not wanting to go into nursing or become a secretary (the other two professions open to women so her mother believed), she became a teacher and found she was good at it.

She needed each child to be the best he/she could be, to learn the concepts, of course, yet manage time and set goals and understand how to achieve them. She often met with children who were rebellious or had little confidence and worked with them before and after hours to the point where, after months of hard work, the child could say, "I know where I'm going now." "That's huge!" said Kelly. "It's those moments you understand that you have to be more than you thought you needed to be in order for a child to walk away saying, 'I'm going to remember you.'"

On a different note, I asked her what she did for fun: "I drove motorcycles and fast cars, stick shift convertibles, and did sky diving when I could afford it." She attended the first session in Huntsville, Alabama that NASA offered for teachers. She toured the Design Center, met visiting Russian cosmonauts and saw the International Space Capsule under construction. They simulated weightlessness and built and launched three stage rockets. "I still have my spacesuit. It was a blast." When I asked if I could take her picture in it, she suggested that I find someone in



*Kelly served on MSC's Board from 2012-14 and as chair of Current Events until '18. She continues to participate as a student and cohost.*

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**INDEPENDENCE DAZE: How Immigrants and Women Composed America's Patriotic Songs by Robert C. Williams**

*Robert C. Williams is a retired historian living at The Highlands in Topsham. He is a former board member and newsletter editor of Midcoast Senior College, where he teaches various courses.*

In 1775 there were hundreds of indigenous First Nations in North America, but only thirteen British colonies of immigrants ready to declare their independence. We were, from the outset, a nation of immigrants, but not the only nation in the neighborhood.

Our Declaration of Independence was voted by the second Continental Congress on July 2, 1776, ratified and declared on July 4, and announced publicly only on July 8. The Liberty Bell in Philadelphia did not ring on the Fourth. It may have been one among many bells rung on the Eighth. White men from North and South continued to sign the Declaration until 1783 when the war with Great Britain came to an end.

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, allegedly signed its own "resolves" of independence on May 20, 1775 and sent them to Philadelphia. When a text was published in 1819, neither Thomas Jefferson nor John Adams believed the Mecklenburg declaration was anything but a patriotic fiction. They had never heard of it.

Congress removed an inconvenient section of Jefferson's draft of the Declaration that denounced the slave trade so as not to irritate the delegates from Georgia and South Carolina. Slaves and women, after all, were property, not citizens.

To celebrate independence, John Adams called for "bonfire and illuminations from one end of this Continent to the other," but Adams meant every July 2, not 4. In the 1790s the fledgling political parties, Federalists and Democrat-Republicans, held separate July 4 celebrations, an early privileging of party over country. On July 4, 1866, a firecracker in a woodpile in Portland, Maine, ignited a conflagration that burned down half the wooden houses in the city.

Patriotic songs soon abounded. Ironically some of our most famous ones were composed by immigrants and women. Samuel Francis Smith (1808-95), whose parents came from England, composed "My Country Tis of Thee" in 1831. A Baptist minister, he taught at Waterville (now Colby) College in Maine. Harvard College later denied him an honorary degree for his hymn because its lyrics appeared unworthy and the British tune was simply "God Save the King/Queen." At least it was not "Rule Britannia."

Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910), a woman who could not vote, wrote the lyrics to the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" to the tune of a soldiers' song, "John Brown's Body." John Brown, it turns out, was not the famous abolitionist but a Scottish immigrant soldier in the Union Army who was habitually late to drills. His comrades joked that maybe he had died and wrote songs about him.

Another woman, Katharine Lee Bates (1859-1929), a professor of English at Wellesley College, wrote "America the Beautiful" to an 1882 tune composed by organist Samuel Ward of Newark, New Jersey. Bates's lyrics were inspired by her view from the top of Pike's Peak during her visiting year 1893 teaching at Colorado College. She and Ward never met, and her song did not get its current title until 1910. Bates never married, but lived in a "Boston Marriage" (lesbian) with

*(continued on page 8)*

## MSC VOLUNTEERS IN THE CLASSROOM



If you've taken a MSC class in the last couple years, you probably took it on Zoom where you will have benefited from the help of what we call a class co-host.

Co-hosts are volunteers who assist in on-line classes (also known as "liasons" when we are in the classroom.) On Zoom, the range of help depends on the needs of the teacher and the type of course. They get to know the teacher and students in a rewarding experience that is enriching and fun. Also, co-hosts do not pay tuition for the class that they assist. We train and support co-hosts with all the tools they require.

We hope that you'll consider giving us some of your time and help. If this is a

**In June, MSC hosted a luncheon for its class co-hosts at the home of one of our co-hosts, Judy Fiterman.**

volunteer position that might interest you, please reach out to Donna Marshall at [info@midcoastseniorcollege.org](mailto:info@midcoastseniorcollege.org). We hope you'll join us!

**A College for Seniors is cool  
Not at all how we used to see "school"  
No tests and no grades  
To get in the way  
Having fun is the Number One Rule.**

Limerick for MSC by Harry Hopcroft

**We** welcome your submissions! Please send an email with your poem, essay, drawing or other creation to Donna Marshall at [info@midcoastseniorcollege.org](mailto:info@midcoastseniorcollege.org).



### Over Coffee, continued from page 5

the street—preferably a woman. Did she have a hidden pleasure? "Fry me a hamburger and give me the grease!" Someone from the past she would like to have coffee with, the answer came quickly, "Eleanor Roosevelt."

I leave her working on her latest needlepoint creation and am reminded of her comment, "I'd like to come back in my next life as either tall or an artist." She isn't tall, but is definitely an artist. ☐

### Independence Daze, continued from page 6

Katharine Comans, who died in 1915. Bates was raised a Republican, then switched to the Democratic Party in 1924 to support the League of Nations of Woodrow Wilson.

George M. Cohan (1878-1942) was "born on the Fourth of July" (actually July 2 or 3) to Irish immigrant parents in Providence, Rhode Island, and composed his own "Yankee Doodle Dandy" for a musical in 1904. He actually wrote the lyrics and music himself.

In 1931, the "Star Spangled Banner," a British drinking song from the War of 1812, with lyrics by Francis Scott Key, a Maryland slaveowner, became our official national anthem. In 1938, July 4 became a paid federal holiday for all federal employees. An America First movement called for isolation from Europe, non-involvement in foreign wars and support for proto-fascist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the followers of radio priest Father Coughlin. In 1940, "Make America Great Again" isolationists around presidential candidate Alexander Wiley opposed further involvement in war abroad. The slogan was later used by presidential candidates Goldwater, Reagan, Clinton and Trump.



*Irving Berlin was a Russian Jewish immigrant via Ellis Island whose patriotic compositions included "God Bless America" (1918)*

"God Bless America" was composed by another immigrant, U.S. Army soldier Irving Berlin at Camp Upton, Long Island, in 1918. Berlin was a Russian Jew whose family came to America in 1893, landing at Ellis Island. His song was first performed by Kate Smith on her Radio Hour Show of November 10, 1938. Some prefer it as our national anthem and stand up when it is sung.

Finally, in 1997 Mariah Carey composed and sang her "Fourth of July" to highlight her immigrant background: Irish on her mother's side, African-American and Venezuelan on her father's.

So there you are. July 4 remains a day to celebrate American independence, to celebrate *liberty*, but also to rededicate ourselves to the unfinished business of peace, justice and *freedom* for all in a diverse democracy within a republic. This land is your land (as Woody Guthrie wrote in 1944) and my land, to have and to hold, a Republic to keep if we can. Tyranny is always a clear and present danger. America's strength lies in openness to hope and change, immigration, gender equality, the opportunity to succeed or fail, and the recognition of fallibility in our history. We are always a work in progress precisely because our Founders promised so much. Authors of liberty for some, they created a new nation that promised freedom for all.

Juneteenth and July 4 remind us each year that we are not done yet, that each of us has the power and opportunity to improve the world and remake America, and that diversity, immigration, conflict and political division have always been chapters in the American story. God Bless America! "How can I keep from singing," as the hymn says. Especially on the Fourth of July. Or the Second. Or any day you wish. ☐