



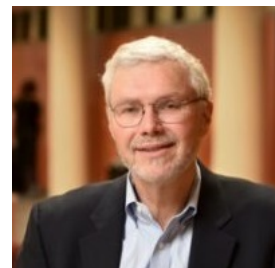
# The Midcoast Inquirer

## Midcoast Senior College's Newsletter

**WINTER 2022 Volume 17, No. 3**

### LET'S SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT MIDCOAST SENIOR COLLEGE

The winter blahs are upon us. But not at Midcoast Senior College! We have a great line-up of activities to enliven the season. Check out our Winter Wisdom lectures. Sign up for one or more of our new Winter Session workshops, classes, and lectures. Participate in our Transforming Maine Economy lecture series. There is something for everyone. And, spread the word! Share this newsletter with a friend, neighbor, or anyone you think would like to join us for lifelong learning. *Jay Kuder, MSC President*



### OUR ANNUAL FUND CAMPAIGN IS UNDERWAY



Midcoast Senior College is a non-profit organization. Our budget is dependent on the funds received through membership fees, tuition income, and donations from our community sponsors and individual donors. Our annual expenses include rent, salaries for our paid administrators, technology, insurances, and other costs. We hope you can join us during our Annual Fund Campaign so that we can continue with our mission to bring educational opportunities to seniors in our community. To make a donation, visit our website at [midcoastseniorcollege.org](http://midcoastseniorcollege.org) and click on the **DONATE** button at the top. Thank you!

## MIDCOAST SENIOR COLLEGE

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

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

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

## WINTER SESSION -- Visit website for details and to register WORKSHOPS, DISCUSSIONS & RECORDED LECTURES

*Sponsored by Thornton Oaks Retirement Community, Brunswick*



### TUESDAY

#### **iPhone Photography for Motivated Novices**—Workshop

January 10, 17, 24 & 31 9:30-11:30 a.m. In-Person; \$45

#### **Cuisine Talk: American Flavors**—Guided Discussion

January 10, 17 & 24 1:00-2:30 p.m. In-Person; FREE

### WEDNESDAY

#### **ASL Handshapes for Beginners**—Workshop

January 11 & 18 9:30-11:00 a.m. In-Person; FREE

### THURSDAY

#### **Fly Tying For Beginners**—Workshop

January 12, 19, 26 & February 2 9:30-11:30 a.m. In-Person; \$45

#### **Memoir Writing and Meditation**—Workshop

January 12, 19 & 26 1:00-3:00 p.m. In-Person; \$45

#### **Book Talk**—Guided Discussion

January 12 or 19 10:00-11:30 a.m. On Zoom; FREE

**Registration** is online at our website: [midcoastseniorcollege.org](http://midcoastseniorcollege.org); phone assistance is available at 207-725-4900. You must be a member of MSC or, for Cuisine Talk, of Topsham Library, to register. Midcoast Senior College's membership period is July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

### RECORDED WORKSHOPS FROM MSC FACULTY

(Links to recorded lectures will be on our website in January. Registration is not required.)

- **RICHARD NEIMAN:** The Ether Controversy
- **DAN POSSUMATO:** A Tale of Two Italys: The Country's Historical and Longstanding North-South Divide
- **GEORGE YOUNG:** Born With a Bullet in the Heart: Brief Lives of Seven Great Russian Poets
- **DAVID SPURR:** Future Cities in Architecture and Literature

## WINTER WISDOM FREE LECTURE SERIES

Wednesdays 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.



THE HIGHLANDS  
A CPF Living Community

*Sponsored by The Highlands Senior Living Community, Topsham*  
(Registration is not required)

- **January 4: Ross Crolius, "Bravi Tutti—A Career with the Metropolitan Opera"**  
Unitarian Universalist Church, Brunswick
- **January 11: John Dorrer, "The Transforming Maine Economy"**  
Morrell Meeting Room, Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick
- **January 18: Russ Pinizzotto, "The Wondrous Winter Skies of Midcoast Maine"**  
Morrell Meeting Room, Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick
- **January 25: Julia Lane & Fred Gosbee, "Bygone Songs of Maine"**  
Morrell Meeting Room, Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick
- **February 1: Kate McBrien, "The History and People of Maine's Malaga Island"**  
Morrell Meeting Room, Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick
- **February 8: Christopher Timm, "Ice Harvesting on the Kennebec River"**  
Morrell Meeting Room, Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick
- **February 15: Gary Lawless, "Longfellow Days—Poetry and Travel: Longfellow in Europe"** Morrell Meeting Room, Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick

## MAINE'S TRANSFORMING ECONOMY & CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Webinars from 6-7 p.m.

Free & Open to All

Midcoast Senior College is sponsoring a series of activities to increase awareness of a dramatic transformation of the economy in Maine. New businesses in areas such as biotechnology, aquaculture, renewable energy, food processing, brewing, and distilling are reshaping the nature of work, our institutions, and the communities in which we live. The series starts on **January 11 when John Dorrer, former Acting Commissioner of the Maine Department of Labor, will speak on Maine's Transforming Economy** as part of MSC's Winter Wisdom lecture series. Visit our website at [www.midcoastseniorcollege.org](http://www.midcoastseniorcollege.org) for more details.

Register today to attend each of the following free monthly webinars:

- **January 19—Building a Just, Vibrant, and Climate-Resilient Future for People and Communities in Maine** by Betsy Biemann, Coastal Enterprises Inc. Chief Executive Officer [CLICK TO REGISTER](#)
- **February 23—From Local to Global: Creating a New Industry in Maine** by Michael Dubyak, past Chairman, Wex Inc. [CLICK TO REGISTER](#)
- **March 30—A New Future for Maine Agriculture** by Amanda Beal, Commissioner, Dept of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, State of Maine [CLICK TO REGISTER](#)
- **April 19—Craft Brewing Business in Maine: The Big Picture** by Sean Sullivan, Executive Director, Maine Brewer's Guild [CLICK TO REGISTER](#)

## MEMORIES OF HANUKKAH by Niles Schore

*Niles Schore has taught many MSC courses, including recently, The Cuban Missile Crisis*



When I was in the fifth grade, I played Santa Claus in the school Christmas play. Years later, while practicing law, I played Santa at a Christmas party at a local nursing home where I was representing 50 residents threatened with loss of Medicaid payments for their care. After each performance, I went home to celebrate Hanukkah. Each time, I said the prayers over the Hanukkah lights in Hebrew, the second time my wife recited them in English.

As a young boy, I ate potato latkes made by my Grandma. I ate them with apple sauce. Years later, I ate latkes made by my wife, Anne, a good cook and good partner all these forty-three years. I ate them with sour cream. Taste and circumstances

change, but the importance of Hanukkah stays.

When I was young, Hanukkah was mostly about getting presents, every night for eight nights. Talk about sweet, I always figured we were really lucky to get presents for eight nights, not just a one-day holiday like Christmas. But even as a young boy, Hanukkah was more than presents and latkes. It was a reminder of the history of our people and our never-ending struggle just to survive a new round of hatred. Hanukkah is the story of a campaign of terror and hatred waged by the Greek King Antiochus IV some 2,200 years ago. A group of rebels, the Maccabees, led by Judah, fought back against the Greek army. After seven years, this small band of rebels defeated that enemy and was able to reclaim the Temple in Jerusalem for the Jewish People. As miraculous as the victory was, it was not the real miracle of Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights. For when the Jews entered the Temple, they found enough sacred olive oil to light the Temple Menorah for one night only. But it would take eight days to make a new supply of oil. The one-night supply lasted for the whole eight days, so the Miracle of the Hanukkah Lights was born.

I grew up after the Holocaust. Stories of resistance and survival gave me hope. Each of the eight nights of Hanukkah, even as a ten-year old, helped me to understand the drive to survive against the latest war of hatred. We played with the dreidel, a four-sided top with Hebrew letters that mean "A great miracle happened here." If you were lucky, you won raisins and almonds during the dreidel game. Sometimes, even pennies. That game was also a reminder of the centuries-long fight against hatred and terror. For the true Miracle of Hanukkah is not just the oil lasting eight nights. It is also a Miracle of a people uniting to stay alive and to keep their values alive.



Unfortunately, it is also a Miracle that must be repeated age after age. Today, the hatred is back. The resistance against it is still here. And today, as I eat latkes, I have some with apple sauce and some with sour cream. Never underestimate the power of inclusion.

## MSC STUDENT SEARCH FOR COMPANION



Many at MSC knew my beloved Maltese, Willie. He accompanied me to senior college classes . . . at least in the car. Willie passed away at 17 years old. Ever since, I have been searching for a new little white fluffy dog--not to replace Willie but to care for and give a loving home. And, for companionship, the way only dogs can. As these dogs are hard to find, MSC has kindly allowed me to present my need here. If you have a lead, or even a suggestion, I will gratefully receive it. Perhaps a found dog can become a MSC mascot! I have attended a senior college course almost each semester since 1976, first at OLLI and then at Midcoast Senior College. Technically challenged, since Covid I have

learned new computer skills, especially under the tutoring of wonderful MSC co-hosts. ~ Ellie Asherman  
(Please respond to [mscoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org](mailto:mscoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org) and we will relay your info to Ellie.)

## A TIME FOR THANKFULNESS: SUSTAINABLE, SELF-SUFFICIENT, CONSERVATIONAL by Steven Piker

*Steven Piker, has taught many courses for MSC and other Maine senior colleges*



The disappearance of Indian cultures, widely expected in 1900 among both Indians and settlers, did not occur. Rather, a vibrant pan-tribal Indian cultural renaissance occurred which has revitalized Indian identities and has done so, in significant part, by creating directions toward solutions of crisis-level problems that the settler society created for all its inhabitants--Indians as well as settlers. Among the crisis issues are, especially, sustainability and self-sufficiency, which would enable an enduring environment that could realistically provide the promise of endless tomorrows for all.

The heart of this process, for Indians, is often the "coupling of foodways and identities." Angela Ferguson of the Onondaga (Iroquois) Nation observes, "(Our) ancestors know that we're here, and I think that's what makes us all feel good. They're thanking us for (using) this land for the purpose for which it was intended, to feed the people." Thus, the land becomes a part of the transgenerational social world of the Onondaga and as esteemed as are one's kinfolk, filling the need to be able to feed oneself and not depend upon the outside.

And it happens! Not only on reservations, but also among the half (or more) of American Indians who live in cities where Indian community groups have created gardens for traditional foods cultivated in the traditional manner. Having the garden helps Indian communities reclaim their identities as indigenous people, while living intermixed with settlers. These community groups also have sought and found in the cities Indian schools where students can learn the culture of traditional foodways, often using the language of their ancestors.

At the heart of much of the Indians' food and lifeway's identity affirmations is the metaphor, "the three sisters" who are (literally) corn, beans, and squash, the dietary staples of many Indian peoples. Their sisterhood is expressed in this dietary threesome and much more importantly in the crops' manner of growing and living where they are inextricably intermixed and are literally mutually supportive in Indian gardens.



The kinship idiom suffuses the Indian coupling of food and lifeways. In the Indian understanding, they and their crops and their prey animals and the land which nourishes all are as kin. And this gestalt nourishes sustainability and conservation. Now, the holiday season is upon us, and it is a time for thankfulness. We can be thankful to our Indian fellow Americans for this example that they provide for us and hopeful that we will take it to heart.

### CURRENT EVENTS FORUM ANNOUNCEMENT

The MSC Current Events Forum has been on hiatus since late spring. The weekly guided discussion group has met at Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick. We are considering restarting in February with a few changes. First, the senior college will support the role of forum moderators with guidelines in how to moderate civil, respectful discussion. If you would be interested in serving as a moderator in a future Current Events Forum, please let us know of your interest. The college wishes to foster high-quality discussions that reflect the best civil discourse this community has to offer. We welcome feedback. Please direct any questions or comments to Bruce Hauptli, MSC Board Member at email: [hauptli@me.com](mailto:hauptli@me.com).

**MOM'S CRECHE by Nora Bishop**

***Nora Bishop is a student, volunteer co-host, and member of the MSC Senior Scribblers Writing Group. This piece was written as a prompt response during a recent Scribblers meeting exercise.***

My name is Lambie and this is my story. It's not grand or memorable, except for maybe a few, but it is true.

I started out life on a shelf of JJ Newberry's store in Kingston. I thought it was a pasture because there were so many animals fighting for space. There were donkeys, sheep, camels, and of course, dogs, so many in fact that we couldn't see the grass. Humans were there too, wise men, kings, shepherds, and angels. Maybe I'm forgetting something because I'm just a baby. As I said, there was barely enough room to breathe, but since we were made of plaster, we didn't really need to breathe or for that matter eat or drink.



The camel told me that big humans would pick out the best of us and take us away. And it was true, day after day, someone would come and take a wise man, a camel or donkey, or even a full-grown sheep. I wondered where they went and if they were happy. I just knew the pasture was emptying and it became lonely and cold, especially at night when the store closed, the lights went out and the people left.

It wasn't until the day before Christmas when a little boy picked me up and stroked my fur. Yes, I was made of plaster, but my coat was felt, and four-year-old Frankie chose me to take home to join the few others, a Mary, a Joseph, and a baby Jesus. How did that little boy pick me? It turns out that Frankie's family would stand beside the road outside their home and hail down the Trailway's bus on its morning run to Kingston for their annual Christmas shopping trip. Once in Kingston, they had to go to the bus depot and climb a steep hill to Broadway, where all the shops were. They'd hurry from Montgomery Wards, to Wentworth's, and J.C. Penny's, Mom taking frequent rest stops, each time returning with more plastic bags. If there was time they could go to Ing's and have Chicken Chow Mein and green tea. They did. The last stop before catching the bus for home was JJ Newberry's for what all the kids had waited all year in anticipation.

One of the wise men later told me that Frankie's family was poor, but each year, a different kid would get to choose another figurine for the crèche. I felt chosen. Frankie would pet me then pass me to Joey, then Anne and Colleen for all to stroke my sides before positioning me just right on the pasture of my new home. Joey made a cardboard stable which he colored with crayons to look just like what Bethlehem's real stable was like and Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus were placed inside. I had my place of honor looking on. Many times, that first year, Frankie picked me up, and even though I was plaster, I felt the warmth of his hands as he stroked me. Every December thereafter, new figures joined us, kings, shepherds, camels, or sheep. One day, over tea with Mom, (she was my mom too), our very picky neighbor told her that she should get rid of that lamb. He was filthy. "Oh no, he has history," and so I stayed. And Frankie picked me up stroked me and passed me to Anne.

Years passed and eventually the stable fell apart. There was even a four-year period when we disappeared from the family, and I stayed wrapped in newspapers in a box. Those were cold dark days. But then Frankie's old tenant said she couldn't live with herself and needed to send the crèche home. That year, Anne's seven-year-old son Michael made a new stable of Lincoln Logs while some of the newer figures were made of plastic. There were four camels, five donkeys, seven sheep, two sets of kings and several angels. The set passed from Mom to Anne to Molly and eventually to my home in Bowdoinham where I now sit amid balsam branches and pinecones on the dish cupboard. But I always felt at home, because I was positioned so that I could look in at the stable and watch the baby, Jesus. Mom always let them touch us. She said that to touch, to feel was to hold the true meaning of Christmas in your heart. And I can still feel Frankie's hands.

## NATIVE MISTLETOE by Val Libby

***Val Libby taught a MSC Fall 2022 course, Three Centuries of New England Gardens. The article below will be published by the Penobscot Bay Press.***



If you plan to make a kissing ball to foster romance over the holidays, you might decide to use our native mistletoe. Found in coastal spruce woods, Eastern Dwarf Mistletoe (*Arceuthobium pusillum*) is abundant, although few people would notice or recognize it. Unlike its southern relative American mistletoe which has evergreen leaves, our mistletoe is deciduous and holds no leaves in the winter. It forms a ball-like tangle of stunted branches referred to as a “witch’s broom” and commonly grows on spruce and balsam trees, occasionally on pine or larch. In spring, Eastern Dwarf Mistletoe releases clouds of yellow pollen from miniscule flowers and, in October, tiny sticky seeds are carried by wind and water and birds to new branches. There it may sprout and drill into the living wood to extract moisture and nutrients.

Sounds delightful? Well, all mistletoes are parasitic plants. It’s just their nature.

*Reference: Maine Forest Service*

## CRANBERRY DELIGHT by Laura Wilkinson of Now You're Cooking

A fresh and fragrant cranberry relish recipe courtesy of Midcoast Senior College's community sponsor Now You're Cooking located in downtown Bath.

### Recipe

- 1 1/2 cups fresh cranberries, finely chopped
- 2 scallions, minced
- 1 small jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

*Mix all ingredients together. Serve with goat cheese on crackers.*



**STUDENT REFLECTIONS ON A MIDCOAST SENIOR COLLEGE COURSE*****Reading stories in French* - Teacher: Jayne Boisvert / Student: Freda Bernotavicz**

This was an advanced intermediate course where we discussed short stories from the literature of the Francophone world. 19th century and 20th century fiction from areas as varied as Vietnam and Quebec in addition to France allowed us to explore new cultures while continuing to improve our reading, listening, and speaking skills. The first class was hybrid of in-person and Zoom. However, after one student tested positive for COVID the rest of the course was on Zoom. Though the technology worked well and I liked the convenience of not having to drive to class, I missed the social interaction and camaraderie that we had begun to develop in the first class. Jayne is a wonderful instructor. She is very knowledgeable and supportive and did an amazing job of following up with more information between classes. The whole class was in French and I appreciated learning about Francophone countries and cultures through the eclectic choice of short stories. I particularly enjoyed learning some new phrases, such as how to say, "the computer is frozen" and "the internet is unstable" en français.

***Beowulf: Then and Now* - Teacher: Leona Dufour / Student: Keith Fleeman**

This course was a deep dive into the Anglo-Saxon poem. We did not read the poem in the original, but rather the Seamus Heaney version which provided both the Old English and his translation on facing pages. While we focused mainly on the story, the class was wonderfully enriched with discussions of the digressions in the poem, the history and culture of medieval times, climatic conditions that may have affected the poem, efforts to locate the poem's true setting, and the influences of Christianity on a pagan society. We concentrated on the women in the poem and their place in society, matters of kingly succession, and the importance of honor and bravery. Our instructor, Leona Dufour, encouraged lively discussions with our fellow classmates. They gave wonderful life to the poem and helped each of us to appreciate it in deeply personal manners. Each class sent my literary soul singing.

***The Life and Music of J.S. Bach* - Teacher: Peter Griffin / Student: Deb Showalter**

The class was designed to offer an overview of Bach's life and music and show his development as a composer and offer a sampling of his many musical works. It also touched upon the influences of other musicians and musical styles popular in his lifetime, and the variety of the instruments available. Peter developed a handbook to accompany the class. First, he delved into a few principles of music theory. This background, I believe, was designed to enhance our understanding and appreciation of Bach's musical techniques and style. Over the weeks, we listened to many examples of Bach's music, both instrumental and vocal. In many cases, we were able to identify these basic principles as the composer applied them in these works. We were delighted to be in on some of the musical "secrets" behind the compositions. Also, I found the biographical information especially interesting, as it provided a window into the life of a professional musician in the years before modern European countries came to be.

***Self-Guided Nature Tour of Merrymeeting Bay* - Teacher: Terry Porter / Student: Carol Gillespie**

The class discussed the history of the bay, both how the bay was formed, as well as the peoples and wildlife that have inhabited it. We learned just how unique and special Merrymeeting Bay is and why it is so important. With each class Terry gave us information on and directions for a walk to explore different parts of the bay. I really enjoyed Terry's class, especially going on the walks around the bay. A friend and I try to walk every week and this class gave us new places to explore. It was fascinating to learn how important Merrymeeting Bay is and the class made me notice many things that I usually just walk by without a second glance.