You’re invited to Lifelong Learning Institute’s 15th Anniversary Celebration JMU Festival Hall March 2, 2012 5-7:30 p.m.

At last, we can tell you what to expect when you arrive at the JMU Festival Hall on March 2, 2012! After a reception period and a cash bar that will be open throughout the evening, there is a sit down dinner with a choice of 2 entrees, followed by a “Reflections” video including founders, instructors and members. Founding leaders of the LLI program at JMU will be recognized, and honor awards will be given to four individuals whose participation as instructors and class members has been outstanding.

Reservations are needed by February 24th—detach the form below and mail it to Lifelong Learning Institute, 601 University Boulevard, MSC 9006, Harrisonburg, VA 22807.

Members are invited to bring one or more non-members to celebrate the founding and growth of the Lifelong Learning Institute. There is a fee of $15 for each dinner, with a choice of Plated Roast Chicken or Pesto Tortellini.

Member name & Dinner choice
_________________________________________ __________________ $_________
_________________________________________ __________________ $_________

Non-member name & Dinner choice
_________________________________________ __________________ $_________
_________________________________________ __________________ $_________

Total Ticket Amount $_________

Make check payable to JMU/LLI — or pay by Credit Card via Discover, MasterCard or Visa; a $2.00 transaction fee will be added to your ticket total. Phone #: __________________
Brown Bag Lunches are held at the Gilkerson Center in Westover Park (unless otherwise noted) on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, from 11:30 AM - 12:45 PM and are open to the public as a way to get to know LLI. There is no registration required, nor any fee. Bring your lunch! Come and enjoy fun and fellowship while having the opportunity to enhance your knowledge. Expanded details of each brown bag session can be found in the Brown Bag listings in the printed version of The Explorer or online at http://www.jmu.edu/socwork/lli/brownbag.html

Tuesday, February 7 - Protect Yourself: Older Adult Safety
Join Officer Rachel Hammer of the Harrisonburg Police Department and learn how to keep yourself and loved ones safe from issues directly affecting older adults.

Tuesday, February 21 - Introduction to Sweeney Todd
Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 660 S. Main St., Harrisonburg
Linell Gray Moss will introduce you to the characters, plot, and music of Sondheim’s musical, Sweeney Todd. Enhance your experience of the performance at the Forbes Performing Arts Center.

Tuesday, March 6 - Virginia Master Gardener Program
Ed Comer, a retired pediatrician, has been a Master Gardener for three years. Ed will include pictures of the gardens he has created around his home.

Tuesday, March 20 - Treasures from the Attic
Charles Welsh will present his book, Treasures from the Attic, which chronicles his father’s 19-month Navy career during World War II as told by the nearly 500 letters that he wrote home.

Tuesday, April 17 - Arboretum Tour
* Edith J. Carrier Arboretum
Discover how living and non-living organisms coexist and thrive in the forest ecology. Learn to identify a variety of native plants and trees and how Native American used them.

Tuesday, May 1 - Virginia Master Naturalist Program
Sandy Greene will present an overview of the Virginia Master Naturalist program: a statewide corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.

Tuesday, May 15 - Growing Grapes and Creating Wine
* Bluestone Vineyard in Bridgewater
Bluestone Vineyard president Curt Hartman will speak at their state of the art winery on the subject of raising grapes and turning these grapes into wonderful wines. There is a $5 fee to participate in the wine tasting.

Tuesday, May 29 - Preview of Valley Bach Festival 2012
Find out what is happening at this year’s Bach Festival. Mary Kay Adams, executive director and principal flutist, will give details of the concerts slated for June 10-17. Information about featured artists, repertoire, the commissioned work, and events will be discussed. Brief audio clips of some the works will be played. This overview will be of interest to veteran Festival attendees and also to
Dear Members:

In 1962, the first learning in retirement program, the Institute for Retired Professionals (IRP) in New York City, opened its doors. From that beginning, word slowly spread about this new learning for older adults and over the next 25 years or so, about 50 programs were started. Then, in 1988 the Elderhostel Institute Network (EIN) was established to help the growing lifelong learning movement start more programs and to provide resources to those already in existence. To date, we have helped more than 200 new programs get started.

EIN is a free, voluntary association of affiliated lifelong learning institutes, funded by Elderhostel Inc. Elderhostel is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing educational opportunities for older adults through their Road Scholar programming (www.roadscholar.org).

Early every month EIN posts a newsletter and several new columns on our web site – www.roadscholar.org/ein/intro.asp. As a central resource and communications network, the material we post is taken from your program’s course catalogs, newsletters, and other materials, and keeps all the LLIs up-to-date on what’s happening in the world of lifelong learning. At the same time, we also provide resources for new courses, and other events. We read everything we receive and love to highlight unique program offerings in the monthly newsletter.

Road Scholar, having just secured the necessary government permissions to travel to Cuba, can offer LLIs some very attractive programs and pricing. For more information about Road Scholar, watch their new DVD at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5E8rnTiESI

We encourage you to visit our web site – www.roadscholar.org/ein/intro.asp to learn more. Finally, we are pleased to announce that as of today, membership in EIN stands at an all time high with more than 400 LLIs throughout the United States, Canada and Jamaica. As a member of your LLI, you are part of a thriving lifelong learning movement that has spread throughout the United States and into almost every country around the world. It is truly global in scope.

So welcome to the world of lifelong learning where millions of people just like you are creating fulfilling lives for themselves thanks to the benefits and joys of continuing to learn, no matter what our age!

Nancy Merz Nordstrom, M.Ed.
Director, Elderhostel Institute Network

The LLI membership will vote to approve the following nominees and the remaining members of the 2012-2013 advisory board at the annual business meeting May 10.

President: Judy Liss
Remaining Members: Finance - RoxAnna Theiss, Nominations - Alice Krech, Member at Large—Betty Hoskins, Member at Large - Mo Philon
The first time we were in New York City was the early 80s when it was truly a pretty awful place to be and we never went back. But we kept thinking, how is it that we’ve enjoyed other major cities of the world and are hesitant to visit our biggest and best? What excuse do we have now that we live less than a day away and have the time to enjoy ourselves?

Still uncertain, we investigated our options. We picked Road Scholar in the first place based on our great Elderhostel experience in Florence, Italy. Secondly, we wanted a context for the visit, a bit of history, an understanding of the culture. Most importantly, we wanted a hassle-free introduction to the art of touring the town so that we’d feel comfortable making a return trip on our own.

We chose the program Signature City New York: the Big Apple Experience from www.roadscholar.org because the description looked perfect:

Whether you’re a first-time explorer or a former New Yorker reconnecting with old haunts, experience the history, culture and amazing energy of the Big Apple. Trace the story of New York City from its Dutch beginnings to its time as capital of the new United States and on to a discussion of what the future holds. Learn about the city’s architecture, economy, diversity, and politics. Expert-led field trips give you an insider’s view of New York’s great icons.

We took the Amtrak Northeast Regional train from Culpeper up to Penn Station, walked a couple of blocks to The New Yorker Hotel, and began a jam-packed week that absolutely lived up to our every expectation. The morning lecturers were entertaining and knowledgeable, our daily guide was ebullient, informative, and patient, and our volunteer helper was just that: solving any problem immediately. Individual radio receivers and ear buds allowed each person to easily hear the RS guide’s commentary and instructions during field trips, whether in a cathedral or the middle of Times Square. We also had time to explore on our own and were given explicit advice about how best to get where we wanted to go, whether via subway, bus or foot. Our fellow Road Scholars were diverse geographically, if not racially or culturally, and we enjoyed getting to know them over our group dinners at various nearby good restaurants.

Should you decide on one of the New York City programs, I have only a couple of pieces of advice because Road Scholar covers everything else: Take comfortable shoes and appropriate outerwear, but pack lightly. Plan ahead: get a good guidebook and city map beforehand and/or take your smart phone. The itinerary you get from RS will explain the daily field trips, but the city is big and complex. Road Scholar will supply a subway map, and arrange for you to buy a week-long senior pass. When the first free afternoon comes along, you’ll be more than prepared to strike out on an adventure of your own!

Joni and Les Grady

* Additional photos on page 9
The Art Mutual Interest Group is known as the "Dabblers". We indulge our love of painting, be it watercolor, oil, or acrylics by getting together once a month.

There is no professional instruction but we all offer assistance to each other. Our skill levels vary from beginner to professional. All of us look forward to seeing each other and sharing our art. We meet at Congregation Beth El on 849 Old Furnace Road, Harrisonburg from 10 AM to Noon on the first Wednesday of each month. Contact Judy Liss at 540-289-9409 or the LLI Office.

Possible Genealogy Special Interest Group— Have you toyed with the idea of delving into your family’s genealogy? Admittedly, it’s a big undertaking, but Stephen Barranco is interested in forming a group. If this appeals to you, please contact Stephen at sbarranco@att.net or by phone at 540-434-4552.

The next Theater/Music Group outing will be to view di’s opera “La Traviata”, Broadcast live from the Met, and shown at the Visulite Theater in Staunton on April 14, 2012.

The show begins at 12:55 p.m. and with two 15-20 minute intermissions in the broadcast, it lasts for 3 hours and 15 minutes. If you wish, an early 5:00 dinner is a possibility, probably at the White Star Restaurant, a few blocks away from the theater. Transportation is up to the ticket holder; some parking nearby, and the theater is not far from the big paid-parking garage which is also near the restaurant.

Tickets are $25.00 (senior price) each. Tickets are transferable (preferably to an LLI member) but are non-refundable. I will have 12 to 15 tickets to sell; let me know whether or not you will join us for dinner—see above. Checks must arrive by February 14th. Make checks out to Adair McConnell and mail to 1272 Parkway Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22803. Call Adair at 540-433-1496 with questions.

FREE AARP Tax-Aide Help

AARP Tax-Aide Volunteers are returning to the Price-Rotary Senior Center in Westover Park, 305 Dogwood Avenue, Harrisonburg, VA on Tuesdays and Saturdays from February 4 – April 14, 2012. Tuesday hours are 8:30-11:30am and 12:30-4pm, and Saturday 8:30-11:30pm. Walk-ins only --- first come, first serve. Come early and be prepared to wait. NO appointments or phone contact!

Bring your social security card and photo ID. If this is your first time, bring your tax return from last year; federal and state taxes will be filed electronically. The volunteers are highly trained and experienced local volunteers. This service is available to anyone, but especially for retirees, those on a limited income and small businesses. No charge and no tipping! A current LLI member has had used this service every year since 2000, with complete satisfaction. It is always done professionally and confidentially and double-checked for accuracy.

For more information about this service, call AARP at 1-888-227-7669.
Spotlight on Instructors

Bob Bersson

Israel, Palestine, the “macro,” the “micro” . . . and the artist

For Bob Bersson, understanding one of the world’s most intransigent conflicts calls for “the micro” as much as “the macro.”

“The arts are good, because you can get out of the political realm that’s all black and white,” says Bob, who is teaching “The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Through the Arts” -- his third LLI class on Israel and Palestine -- this spring.

“History and political science can keep us more at the macro level – but in art, you are meeting very convincing human beings that you can identify with,” explains Bob, a JMU art professor emeritus who has lived in the Middle East. People his LLI learners meet on film range from the Israeli freedom-fighter portrayed by Paul Newman in the 1960 epic, “Exodus,” to the Palestinian widow whose struggle to keep her condemned orchard is conveyed in “Lemon Tree” (2008).

Bob’s next class will continue exploring the issues probed, through Jewish, Muslim and Christian perspectives, in his course last spring, and add other art forms to the films his Fall 2011 offering focused on. While providing synopses of the complex history, Bob says, “In film and art, we’re not getting into the politics so much as the experience.” The class will examine designs for the Jerusalem Temple (c. 900 BC) and Dome of the Rock (8th Century AD), which, he notes, each “became very powerful areas of conflict, up until the present.” Additionally, poetry, short stories and music will be explored. Bob – who teaches guitar and has performed in local bands – will share music from the Middle East ranging from traditional and sacred to rap.

Israel inspires his own art significantly. In the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, he came upon one iconic vista where a Roman column, Turkish Ottoman tower, and the 1700s Hurva Synagogue appeared together below a modern construction-project crane. In drawings, he’s recreated those layers of a millennium’s history around a focal palm tree.

This New York City-area native, educated at Brandeis and the University of Maryland, also identifies his personal worldview in layers: One is “being Jewish” – which in 1970-71 drew him to live in two Israeli kibbutzim on a work-study project. (He’s returned for recent visits, maintaining contact with Israeli relatives. On the conflicts, he notes, “Their own views differ.”) Bob’s “layers” also include “being part of an extended Mennonite family” (that of his wife, Dolores) – and friendships with Muslims. (Recently, while Dolores taught in a Cairo school, Bob studied Arabic and Egyptian instruments while getting to know Cairene people. Back in Harrisonburg, his home for 22 years, he’s helped lead a dialogue group on Israel-Palestine.)

“In LLI you have generally well-educated, thoughtful people who don’t tend to stereotype,” says Bob, who has also taught Israeli-Palestine issues to undergraduates. He likes to invite diverse views into discussion, and does not share the hopelessness often voiced about the conflict. He cites Israelis and Palestinians forming grass-roots partnerships to meet shared needs.

Bob calls LLI students “the ideal learners,” and LLI “an ideal situation for education. There’s no outside work unless people want to do it. It frees up both the students and the teachers. I’m energized – I feel uplifted and positive after each class.”

--Chris Edwards
Please call 568-2923 to check availability before registering: B session March 12-April 13

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<td>1:00-3:30 pm</td>
<td>Mennonites in the Valley (S12B1)</td>
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<td>1:00-3:30 pm</td>
<td>Power and Ideals: <em>All the Kings Men</em> (S12B2)</td>
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<td>1:00-3:00 pm</td>
<td>The Colonial History of the Shenandoah Valley (S12B3)</td>
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<td>9:00-11:00 am</td>
<td>The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict Through the Arts (S12B4)</td>
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<td>1:00-3:00 pm</td>
<td>Tell Me the (Other) Stories of Jesus (S12B5)</td>
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<td>Grave Tidings! (S12B6)</td>
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<td>The Modern Middle East Through Its Literature (S12B7)</td>
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<td>1:00-4:00 pm</td>
<td>Golf With a Shotgun: Learn the Game of Sporting Clays (S12B8)</td>
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<td>2:00-4:00 pm</td>
<td>Foundations of Music Theory I: The Three R's (S12B9)</td>
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<td>Bad Boy Jacob 'n His Bodacious Babes (S12B10)</td>
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<td>9:00-11:00 am</td>
<td>Rooms of Their Own: Short Stories by Women (S12B14)</td>
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<td>1:00-3:00 pm</td>
<td>You Are What You See: How Every Movie Mirrors Its Society (S12B11)</td>
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<td>3:30-5:30 pm</td>
<td>New Horizons Concert Band (S12NHB)</td>
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<td>7:30-8:30 pm</td>
<td>Planning a Trip to Israel (S12B13)</td>
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<td>9:00-11:00 am</td>
<td>Songs of the Mute Stones: Greek Mythology and Archaeology (S12B15)</td>
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<td>1:00-3:00 pm</td>
<td>Taking Photos that are More Than Memory Prompts (S12B16)</td>
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Welcome New Members!

**Bayse:** Denise Call, Nancy Donnelly  **Bridgewater:** Pat Laurenz, Jodi Morra, Jude McLaughlin, Jim Miller, Ronald Pierce  **Linville:** Carla Jacobs  **Harrisonburg:** Ruth Berger, Jean Blackwell, Marcia & Larry Brown, Don Burkhart, Wallace Caldwell, Donna Cook, Carol Congdon, Alice Cosby, Richard Deadrick, Mae Guthrie, Samuel Hart, John Hertzler, Jeanette Kelly, Bob Lucan, Peggy Miller, Ann Payne, Jonny Price, Helen Scully, Whitney Scully, Marcia Stirewalt, Yvonne Taylor, Marilyn Turner, Bobbi Wachter, Cara Yoder  **McGaheysville:** Liz and Allen Brown, Ann Hurley, Caroljenn Ka-cho, Hugh McGinnis  **Mt. Sidney:** Carolyn Harvick  **New Market:** Pat Murphy  **Penn Laird:** Elizabeth and Edward Chappell, Mimi Gerding, Diana Zimmerman  **Port Republic:** Irvin Hess  **Singers Glen:** Kate Anderson  **Stanley:** Weldon Bagwell  **Staunton:** Ted Ashby, Robert Depew, Laurie Gunderson, Donella McGreer-Minez  **Timberville:** Linda Driver, Darnice Pettigrew  **Waynesboro:** Mary Ernest
The Virginia Forum is an annual interdisciplinary conference that brings together leading scholars studying all (or nearly all) things Virginia. The 2012 theme is “Greater Virginia” and emphasizes Virginia’s relationship across political and geographic boundaries to broader ideas, patterns, and adjoining regions. All aspects of Virginia life, geography, environment, history and culture will be presented. The opening plenary session is from 5:00 –6:30 on March 29 at the main library in downtown Harrisonburg. It will be a roundtable discussion of “The Shenandoah Valley and its Historians.” This is free and open to the public, as is the 8:00 keynote address on March 30th, titled "Defining Virginia: How Geographic Expectations Shaped the Indian Boundary, 1763-1784."

Admission is $75.00 for the entire program, but there may be a reduced rate to attend single sessions—TBA late February. Contact Dr. Chris Arndt at arndtjc@jmu.edu

A sampling of a few of the papers that will be presented: Early Virginia Economy, The Dilemma of Slavery in the Old Dominion, Jefferson and his Legacy, Slavery and Race in the Old Dominion, Reconstruction and Jim Crow, The Valley.
Sculpture on the front of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine— independent tour on our own - Joni Grady

Highline Park—a wonderful linear park built on top of the old elevated railway on the west side of midtown NYC

Czech crystal chandelier acquired just before WWII

Photos taken by Bill Dent during a LLI trip to Roanoke to visit the O. Winston Link Museum, lunch at Hotel Roanoke and a visit to the Virginia Transportation Museum in November 2011

Original breakfront from 1889
Engine 1281 was built in Norfolk and Western's Roanoke shop in just two weeks, in June 1943. This is the shortest amount of time ever taken to build a steam engine in the U.S.