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THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
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SOARING!

the Newsletter of

SOAR

lifelong learning in the North Country

Spring 2015

affiliated with:
ROAD SCHOLAR[®]
Institute Network



A Note from the Chair - The Benefits of Volunteerism

There are two different ways to consider volunteerism—from the standpoint of the organization and from the perspective of the individual. SOAR, like most voluntary groups, truly depends on all those individuals who share their time, effort and talent to make this organization work. Many members may be unaware of how much activity is required for the development of each semester’s slate of classes that are offered for our enjoyment and edification. Each SOAR committee, made up of volunteers, is responsible for its specific task. These tasks range from curriculum development (contacting and convincing presenters to share their interests and expertise) to scheduling (setting up locations and times of every class) to registration (slotting members into their desired classes) to ambassadors (acting as a liaison for members, presenters and SOAR) to membership (dealing with our expanding size) to publicity (including website and newsletter). None of this behind the scenes activity can be accomplished without a steady source of volunteers. Our SOAR organization would simply cease to exist without this type of support.

The benefit of volunteerism is clear in regard to the organization of SOAR. So what advantage does volunteering have for the individual? In the 1960’s, gerontologists (those who study the aging process) conducted research and began to develop different theories of aging. One early “Study of Growing Old” by Elaine Cumming and William Henry resulted in the Disengagement Theory in which they stated that during the aging process many social ties between the elderly and the rest of society are severed and the aged begin to withdraw. Examples of this withdrawal are seen in retirement from paid employment, the lessening of parental responsibilities as children become adults and leave home, or the move to senior citizen housing. This particular theory has been highly criticized as being too limited in describing what happens as one ages. Among others, Robert Havighurst offered another theoretical approach called Activity Theory (see “Successful Aging” *Gerontologist* 1961). According to this “common sense” perspective, as people age, those elderly who continue to participate in activities and social interaction tend to live longer and be healthier because

of their positive sense of self. The social roles may change as one ages, but the social interaction continues. Therefore, going beyond your normal activities, getting involved, volunteering can result in benefits to your overall wellbeing. Try volunteering for SOAR; you might like it and ultimately feel better psychologically and physically for getting involved.

Linda Nixon, Chair, Board of Directors

Sources:

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Activity-theory_\(aging\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Activity-theory_(aging))
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disengagement-theory

NOTICE: Membership Meeting Tuesday, May 19, 2015

The SOAR Board of Directors is calling a meeting of the membership at the spring 2015 luncheon for the purpose of acting upon the slate of officers and board members recommended by the Nominating Committee. (See below)

NOMINATING and AWARDS COMMITTEE

*Announcing the nominees for
officers and other members of the*

SOAR BOARD of DIRECTORS 2015

The Nominating and Awards Committee is pleased to recommend the following members for a one-year term on the SOAR Board of Directors to be voted upon at the membership meeting on May 19, 2015. Members present may also propose other candidates to be placed in nomination.

OFFICERS

Chair: Linda Nixon **Secretary:** Dorothy Howe
Vice Chair: Steve Hopkins **Treasurer:** Ron Frank

OTHER MEMBERS

Jim Barry	Neil Johnson	Ed Russell
Cynthia Bender	Linda Jones	Laurie Swinwood
Mark Coleman	Ruth Kreuzer	
Betty Graham	Bill Mein	

Respectfully submitted, Betty Graham, Chair, and other members: Juanita Babcock, Mark Coleman, Sandi DiGiovanna, Dorothy Howe, Roy Horst, & Carol Woodward

A peek at the working list of fall 2015 course topics (as of 04/18/15)

Fall semester tentatively runs from **September 7 - November 13, 2015** (fall luncheon date TBA)

When all the courses are confirmed, the "Preliminary List of Courses" will be posted on the SOAR web site: www.soarnorthcountry.org

- Tunicates Taking Over the World—Linda Auker
Quaking Bogs in the North Country—Brad Baldwin
Step into a New Dimension—Daniel ben-Avraham
Knitting (Easy) Snowflakes—Lamar Bliss
Eurydice—Kimberly Bouchard
User Friendly Mindful Meditation—Charlie Bradt
Japanese Animation—Krista Briggs
Exercising Your French—Ruth Carrington
Bridge for Fun—Ruth Carrington and Dorothy Swanson
Current Events—John Casserly
Northwest Territories and Angikuni Lake—Jeff Chiarenzelli
Memoir Writing—Helen Condon
Mississippi Gulf Study—Walt Conley
Biomedical Research—Costel Darie
Fitness for Beginners—Amy Delosh
Renewable Energy—Robert Ewy
Mah Jongg—Brenda Francey and Kay Russell
Seeing in Three Dimensions: A Brief History—Neil Garner
My Life as a Medium—Freda Gladle
Corporate Crime—Brian Harte and Umesth Kumar
Engineering Science Simulations—Brian Helenbrook
Tunes-R-Us—Clive and Sandra Henery
String Education—Sarah Hersh
Linguistics—Alan Hersker
Ecology and Physiology: Connections and Relationships—
Roy Horst
Clarinet Music—Julianne Kirk Doyle
Vicarious Voyagers XVII—Ruth Kreuzer (Coordinator)
AARP Smart Driver - Canton—Carol Lawrence
AARP Smart Driver - Potsdam—Carol Lawrence
Art Workshop A for Beginners—Leon LeBeau
History of Impressionism: The Early Years—Leon LeBeau
and Sally Kirby
Digital Photography for Beginners—Don Leonard
Raptors and the North Country —Mark Manske
Beginning Tai-Chi and Qigong—Pam March
Intermediate Tai-Chi and Qigong—Pam March
Continuing Tai-Chi and Qigong—Pam March
Fall Constellations—Bruce McClure
Former Presidents as Elder Statesmen in the Americas—
Shelly McConnell
Great Apes—John McDonald
Cold Plasma Technology—Selma Mededovic-Thagard
Figure Skating Scoring—Bill Mein
Solar Energy—Jim Monroe
The Films of Robin Williams—Peggy Mooers
Publicizing Your Book—Peggy Mooers
Medical Anthropology—Chris Morrison
Travels in China—Breyne Moskowitz
The Romanoffs—Terry Niles
Cultural Traditions of Ukraine—John and Linda Nixon
Symbiosis—Lorraine Olendzenski
Percussion Presentation—James Petercsak
WWII Model Tank Building—Craig Porta
Universalism in the North Country—Eileen Raymond
and Stevie Michaelson
Democracy and the First Amendment—Christopher
Robinson
Minerals of NY State—George Robinson
Eisner and the Comic Spirit Book—Doug Rose
Nanoscopic Worlds—Jan Scrimgeour
Swimming Course—Hilda Sorensen and Sheila Cerwonka
Medicine and Surgery—Shantanu Sur
Cryptography through the Ages—Christino Tamon
Economic Theory of Taxes—Joe Timmerman
Medieval Music—Barry Torres
The 1918 Flu Epidemic—Fran Van Horne
Crab Population on the West Coast—Eileen Visser
E. A. Poe—Bruce Weiner
Edgar Cayce Exercises—Donna Wright and Nellie Bright
The Mediterranean Area: A Journey through Its
History—Radmila Zuman



GOT AN IDEA?
The Curriculum Committee is very busy finalizing the fall 2015 SOAR courses AND already working on the spring 2016 curriculum. If you want to volunteer to teach a course, or have course suggestions, call Jim Barry at 386-4732 or e-mail him at jimbarry@twcny.rr.com

DO YOU KNOW? (as of 04/14/15)

the spring 2015 stats are...	you should...
391 SOAR members <i>(total)</i>	- cancel your registration if you can't attend a particular course
75 new members (F14-S15)	- attend classes regularly
62 courses / presentations	- wear your name tag
75 presenters/coordinators <i>(+ some student presenters)</i>	- display your parking pass
62 ambassadors	- use the SOAR website
30 classrooms / locations <i>(12 of them new)</i>	- VOLUNTEER!

COMMITTEE NEWS

AMBASSADORS COMMITTEE

Our SOAR 'Spring' finally has sprung. The buzz of committee activities and the scurrying of members and presenters in and out of classrooms presaged the end of our hibernation.

Many thanks to all our members who are serving as ambassadors this semester. Ambassador Committee members are in the enviable position of talking to many in our group as we fill positions for all of our 60+ classes. We truly have a membership of dedicated, loyal and engaged persons. The enthusiasm of your responses when asked to serve as ambassador never fails to bring a smile to our faces. How nice it is to hear: "I'd be happy to," "Of course!" and "Glad to be ambassador" when we ask you to accept an ambassador assignment to a class you are taking. Many of you speak of how much SOAR adds to your lives and how the 'extras' that membership brings, such as use of the Maxcy facilities, are so beneficial and a true bargain—just like the blue-light specials at K-Mart.

Many factors go into the selection process for each class. Specific requests are always welcome. We do try to offer you a class for which you have indicated a preference but are not always able to accommodate your wishes. The more check marks you circle on your registration form (thus volunteering to be ambassador for one of those checked classes) helps to make our job easier, and that is always appreciated. Hope to see you in class!

*Linda Jones, Chair
Ambassador Committee*

NOMINATING AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Please attend the spring membership meeting to congratulate the 2015 Super SOARer award winner.

Given every spring at the annual meeting, the **Super SOARer Award** is used to recognize a SOAR member who has significantly contributed to the development of SOAR. All SOAR members are encouraged to send nominations for this award to the SOAR office. Our past Super SOARers are: Leon LeBeau (2004), Bill Lewis (2005), Jim Barry (2006), Jean Theobald and Ruth Kreuzer (2007), Dick and Peggy Mooers (2008), Otis and Fran Van Horne (2009), Claire Begeal (2010), Pat Dishaw (2011), Betty Graham (2012), Sharon Regan and Elsie Dominy (2013), and Pat Harrington (2014).

*Betty Graham, Chair
Nominating and Awards Committee*

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

We hearty souls have survived another tough North Country winter. (Even our snowbird friends had a taste of winter down South.) We like to look to our warming future. As one SOAR member told me, "In spring I look forward to my seed catalogs and my SOAR booklet."

Hopefully, you found a number of courses of interest in the Spring 2015 curriculum. Volunteer instructors, who give generously of their time, are teaching the courses. The topics were picked based on body and soul: physical activities, music, art, history, English, science and games & crafts are just some of the general topics available this spring semester. Besides the various subject matters, it is also great to socialize with friends and acquaintances that we may not have seen much of since the snow started flying months ago.

The Curriculum Committee has developed a tentative list of Fall 2015 courses at this point. Please take a peek at page 2 to see the possible offerings for the fall.

If you have ideas for possible Spring 2016 courses (Yup! The Curriculum Committee is working that far ahead.) please contact Jim at jimbarry@twcny.rr.com or (315) 386 4732.

*Jim Barry, Co-Chair
Curriculum Committee*

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

As SOAR's Spring 2015 Semester got underway, our registration committee once again benefited from the assistance of dedicated volunteers. Thanks to all of them, we were able to process class enrollment requests and other data in a timely fashion. Helping us this time around were Susan Klein, Carol McRobbie, Dorothy Mein, Natalia Stahl, Laurie Swinwood, and Jean Theobald.

The committee also wishes to thank the following volunteers who helped prepare and complete our mailing of course information and registration materials to well over 400 current and potential new members: Jim Barry, Linda Jones, Sally Murray, and Doug and Jean Theobald.

We are reminded every semester that the SOAR program would not be possible without generous contributions of time and effort by volunteers such as these

*Pat Dishaw and Steve Hopkins, Co-Chairs
Registration Committee*

SCHEDULING COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for placing all the courses we offer in the various venues at times and dates that are appropriate for the sessions. We strive to select the best space for each presenter. First, we consider where the presenter works or lives. Next we take into consideration the needs of the presenter: size of class, audio-visual requirements, nature of class (needs a stage, large open space, tables and chairs, water available, etc.), specific time and date preferences. And then we seek to find the best venue available for the presentation.

The venues we use generously do not charge a usage fee. And, those who actually schedule them are very helpful to us as we work through the process. Most have dynamic scheduling—first come, first served. Hence, it is important for us to have any specific constraints the presenters have as early in the process as possible. And, of course, this is a delicate balance. We try to present the venues with all our requests at once. However, we often have to wait for presenters to finalize their constraints, and by the time we get to make the reservations, the venue's calendar has changed, which causes a further delay in the process. This is what happened this spring and that is why this spring's mailing was so late.

Waiting for presenters to give us their date, time, and location constraints is often out of our control. Having more venue locations would be helpful. You can assist by letting the office know of other venues which might be available to use. (See the SOAR website for a list of the venues we currently are using this semester.)

The committee is always seeking more members. If you have any interest in the committee's work, do not hesitate to contact either:

Arthur Freeheart: arthurfreeheart1@gmail.com
or Bill Mein: WilliamJMein@gmail.com

Bill Mein, Chair
Scheduling Committee

OUTREACH AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

The Most Useful Parts of the SOAR Website

www.soarnorthcountry.org

1) **“Home” + “Documents” box:** Print documents are often already out of date before classes even begin. There are always later room changes, or a presenter has a new time or date conflict, and inevitably some errors and/or omissions occur. The posted .pdf versions of the calendar and schedule are updated each time a change is made. Changes/corrections are in red, as are the start dates of each new class or presentation, and each event – making them all very easy to spot! Posting dates are visible on the home page; a glance will tell you if you have the latest information.

2) **“Home” + “Course Updates” box:** Course-related and other notifications/changes also are listed in this section. The updates are arranged so that the one at the top happens before the others.

3) **“Courses” tab:** Each course has its own page with additional course information such as: materials needed; assignment list; useful links from the presenter; plus some photos of the class (when available).

4) **“Locations” tab:** This section greatly expands the “Location Insert” you received in the mail. You will find: maps and photos, along with detailed info on where to park, how to get to the classroom, accessibility, restroom locations, along with tech availability and room capacity. Use it to check-out your new locations, so you know where you are going.

5) **“Presenters” tab + “Info for Presenters” box:** Would you like to be a presenter, or to learn about the process of going from an idea to a classroom? This is the place. You'll also find contact information for the key volunteers who run the SOAR program.

Ruth Kreuzer, Chair
Outreach and Publicity Committee



**YOU ARE INVITED TO
display your arts and crafts
items at the SOAR luncheon!
THIS SEMESTER DID YOU
fancy-stitch a flower?
snap a great photo?
write a sonnet?
or a short story?
paint a picture?
build a model?
make a card?**



NOTE 1: label your item with your name

NOTE 2: Your item does not have to originate in a SOAR class