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# **SOARING!** *the Newsletter of* **SOAR**

*lifelong learning in the North Country*

Summer 2022

affiliated with:

ROAD SCHOLAR  
*Institute Network*

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## **Message from the Chair**

I am excited to be taking on the responsibility of serving as the Chair of the SOAR Board of Directors! Thank you to all who supported me and the other members of the Board who have volunteered to do the Board's work.

I wish to thank the SOAR Board, led by out-going Chair Lyn Swafford, for working so hard over the past two years to meet the challenges of conducting all business with a closed office, organizing classes on Zoom, and sending correspondence primarily through email.

I also wish to thank those SOAR members who stuck by us during the pandemic and those members who are coming back to us as we return to in-person classes. Attending class on Zoom was fun for a while, but nothing beats getting together in-person!

*Janet van Weringh*

## **SOAR Board Members**

Chair – Janet van Weringh  
Vice Chair – Lynn Swafford

Secretary – Bill Mein  
Treasurer – Phil Shatraw

Juanita Babcock, Davis Mark, Brian Gardam, Anne Hopkins, David Mathie, Carol McRobbie, Carol Rossi-Fries, Ed Russell, Jerry Sharp, Alicia Walters

## **SOAR Committee Chairs**

Administration & Finance –  
Phil Shatraw

Ambassador – Bill Mein

Archives – Lyn Swafford

Curriculum – David Mathie

Events (Meet the Chef) – TBD

Executive – Janet van Weringh

Membership, Nominating & Awards –  
Juanita Babcock

Outreach & Publicity – Lyn Swafford

Publications – Anne Hopkins

Registration – Carol McRobbie

Scheduling – David Mathie

Technology – Jerry Sharp

## **A Tribute to Jim Barry**

SOAR has lost one of its most effective and committed advocates. Jim Barry passed away during the weekend of June 25th. Jim joined shortly after its inception and became co-chair of the Curriculum Committee in 2003—a position he held until stepping down in 2021. In addition, he served two separate terms on the Board of Directors.

Initially, SOAR's courses were limited in number (fourteen in the first year) and academically oriented. Just before Covid turned our world upside down, the course list had grown, reaching as many as 65 in the spring of 2019. In addition to the number of offerings, the scope of courses expanded to meet the varied interests of SOAR's diverse membership. They ranged from Tai Chi to Galaxies, art classes to climate change, Tiffany windows to bats; the number and diversity seemed endless. In no small measure due to Jim's tireless efforts, SOAR was able to grow its membership to over 400 in 2019.

Tirelessness understates Jim's work ethic. To find new presenters and to maintain relevant conversation with them, Jim scoured the local media and professional journals. At any one time, he would have over 175 potential courses at his fingertips. His phone calls to potential instructors were welcomed and dreaded in equal measure. He was persistent in his pursuit of an interesting course. The amount of time he spent on behalf of SOAR is hard to grasp. Not only did Jim develop the curriculum for each semester, he went out of his way to make sure that people were aware of the organization, stopping at libraries, government offices and private businesses to drop off SOAR literature. He also did not forget the course instructors, making sure that each of them received a small gift of gratitude for having taught and often delivering the gift in person.

SOAR recognized Jim with its Super SOARer award. Jim was not interested in recognition, but in the success of the SOAR's educational mission. He will be greatly missed. We offer our sincerest condolences to his family.

## **Membership Fee**

SOAR will reinstate the \$75 membership fee this Fall. This will allow us to offer more services (such as having an Administrative Assistant in an open office and resuming the ability to mail materials to those who prefer receiving paper to email) as we work to get back to where we were pre-Covid.

## **New Administrative Assistant and New Office Hours**

Good news! Juanita Blakemore has agreed to accept the position of SOAR's Administrative Assistant (AA) once again. Please join me in welcoming her back! This seems so right as our organization returns to in-person classes and as we work to build up our pre-Covid numbers. Starting July 25, the SOAR Office will be open during the week just as it was before the pandemic brought office access to a close.

## **Paper or Email?**

The SOAR Board realizes that not all our members use email and that many people prefer paper mailings. For the past two years, however, nearly all of SOAR's correspondence with its membership was through email because we were unable to use volunteers to prepare paper mailings.

This Fall we will return to mailing newsletters and paper packets, as SOAR has done for so many years, to those members who choose to receive them that way, while continuing to email materials to those members who choose to receive them electronically. While we are happy to mail paper packets, we would like to save money and paper by asking members to accept their packets electronically.

We wish to thank those who filled out the questionnaire in May indicating their preference for receiving correspondence. This includes Fall 2022 registration materials.

If you did not fill out this questionnaire, please give us your preference ASAP by contacting us: go to <https://forms.gle/CV4mqgFCz4G6J2DK8> to fill out the questionnaire (copy and paste this URL into the address bar of your browser) or email [soar@potdam.edu](mailto:soar@potdam.edu) or phone 315-267-2690. Please include your name, email address and mailing address. If you no longer wish to be on SOAR's mailing list, please let us know.

## **Seasonal Addresses**

Many SOAR members leave the North Country for part of the winter. If you wish to receive our mailings in paper via the Post Office, please make sure we have the correct winter address and that we know when your mailing address changes.

## **Some Statistics**

Fall 2019:	405 active members	61 courses
Fall 2020:	130 active members	12 courses
Spring 2022:	165 active members	32 courses

## Fall Semester Courses

We are also pleased to offer courses in topics that were unavailable during our “Zoom” semesters: Art, Dancing, Exercise and Gardening being the most obvious.

## Fall 2022 Registration

Registration packets (including a paper registration form and a link to the online registration form) will be mailed and emailed approximately August 10. Registration starts Monday, August 15.

## Vaccinations and Masks

SOAR continues to follow the rules mandated by SUNY Potsdam. Currently, everyone attending SOAR classes in-person must be vaccinated (two Pfizer/Moderna or one Johnson and Johnson) and the wearing of masks is optional. However, this can change at any time.

## Courses for Fall 2022

1. AARP Safe Driving
2. Be on the Jury! Who Killed Charles Lindberg's Son?
3. Beautiful Malaysia
4. Beginning Tai Chi and Qigong
5. Canine Body Language
6. Ceramics
7. Continuing Tai Chi and Qigong
8. Cruising America's Inland Waterways
9. Current Events
10. Dams of the Raquette River
11. December Holidays
12. Department of Theatre and Dance Production Engagement
13. Detecting Toxic Metals in Your Drinking Water: A Home Test Based on Color Change
14. Drinking Water Treatment
15. Flight of Friendship 7
16. Humor: Exercises to Change the Character of your Thought
17. James Joyce's Ulysses: Controversies and Conundrums
18. Liars, Murderers, and Rapists: The Biology of Deviant Behaviors in Nature
19. Mah Jongg for Fun
20. Medicare A, B, C and D's – What Everyone Needs to Know
21. Mixed-Media, Drawing, Painting, and More
22. Modern Western Square Dancing
23. Patterns in our genomes: What can they tell us about evolution?
24. Quantum Mechanics, the dream that stuff is made of
25. Sky in Motion
26. Solve a Mystery – Mystery at Magnolia Gardens
27. Stretching for Couch Potatoes
28. Stretching on a Mat
29. Travel stories from a world-traveling composer/conductor
30. Trees and Shrubs of the North Country
31. Utility of some useless mathematics
32. Vegetarian Cooking – Local, Fresh, and Delish
33. Watercolor Workshop
34. What is GardenShare?
35. Why People Falsely Confess to Crimes
36. Women's Place
37. Zhou Enlai: A Subordinate's Efforts to Influence the Prince