



Third Age Network (TAN)

an association of lifelong learning groups in Ontario
www.thirdagenetwork.ca

Newsletter

December 2016

SAVE THE DATE - May 17, 2017

Our Third SYMPOSIUM at Ryerson University

Workshops Through the Day

Three topics to be repeated so that all attendees can participate in each one. A bull pit session will be held at the end of the day and the Annual General Meeting will conclude our activities. Of course, coffee and lunch will also be provided

Effective Volunteer Governance

This workshop will review aspects of skillful governance including: recruiting, retaining and succeeding board members; structuring your organization most effectively; getting value from board meetings; and establishing effective communication between the board and its members. The format will include a mock-up scenario which will be analyzed and discussed in small groups, followed by a larger group response.
—facilitator: Mandy Thompson, Academy for Lifelong Learning.

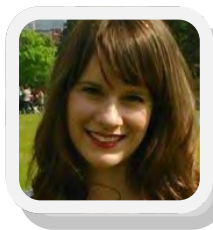
What Else?

This workshop will deal with the other events and activities which can take place beyond seminars and lectures. The members of TAN will be contacted prior to May 17 as to what extras they are already doing and what they'd like to include as part of their program. These will be collated and create discussion and exchange on the day of the symposium—facilitator: Maureen Somerville, University of Toronto Senior Alumni Association.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

***Optimizing Learning and Memory:
Tips and Tricks for the Aging Brain.***



In this talk, Dr. Cyr will walk you through the cognitive changes that occur throughout the lifespan, and attempt to answer questions such as: Which aspects of learning and memory get better with age? Which get worse? And perhaps most importantly: What can you do about it? The talk will include demonstrations of practical strategies that you can implement in your daily life to improve your ability to learn and remember new information.

Andrée-Ann Cyr, Ph.D.
Assistant professor/professeure adjoint
***Department of Psychology/
département de psychologie
Glendon College/Collège
universitaire Glendon
York University/Université York***

Enticing Communication

Keeping in touch with your members is key to growth and these days, it is almost all done online. We will be looking at several websites here and abroad that do this job very well, as well as examining newsletters that read well and are informative — facilitator: Sheilagh Hickie, Academy for Lifelong Learning

This is a great opportunity to introduce new or incoming board members to TAN and for them to learn how to better administer a lifelong learning group.

Plan to include them—more details soon—early bird registration fees will be available.

From TAN's November Board Meeting

by Nancy Christie, President

Data collection, association insurance, membership fees and the upcoming Symposium were key items for discussion at the November meeting of the Board of Directors of TAN.

Insurance for member organizations: Since the inception of a new association insurance plan, seven TAN members have purchased insurance through the TAN plan, and others plan to do so when their present insurance ends. Most have found that through TAN, their insurance is more comprehensive and less expensive than that which they purchased individually.

Our thanks go to Julian Sale of Third Age Learning, Guelph who investigated options and worked with the broker, Brad Barbour to make this new program suitable for TAN members.

Data collection: A new, more user-friendly format for collecting and collating information about TAN members has been created. Available on the 'members only' portion of the website, members are reminded to update their data when they renew their membership this fall. Julian is also responsible for this project, and will do an analysis when the new information from members has been received. Thanks, Julian



Symposium 2017: SAVE THE DATE! With the theme "Learning is Ageless", a committee has been hard at work planning challenging speakers and topics for the May 17th Symposium. Under the leadership of Margaret McGovern (LLIR—Glendon), a day full of learning and networking will be offered. More details may be found elsewhere in the newsletter. Plan to send several Board members from your organization to learn techniques to improve and expand your operations.

Membership Fees: The Board approved an increase in membership fees to \$75 per organization for 2017. Additional revenues will support expanded networking and educational activities for members.

Update on Insurance Program

by Julian Sale

Third Age Learning Guelph

- Interest in the program remains high with seven members already completed or about to complete an insurance agreement under this program.
- Others are generally waiting until their current insurance policy expires before entering into the TAN program.
- On Sept 27, Cooperators hosted a **Webex** open to all TAN members. This Webex was focused on members who were still considering the program and provided an opportunity to ask questions.

For a variety of reasons, attendance was low, however,



this Webex was recorded and is now available via a link on the TAN website in the Members Only section. Please contact

TAN if you require login information. Here is the direct link: <https://goo.gl/dG75gj>

- Even those who have been part of a larger University based insurance program, have found that such programs do not offer full protection, and are now considering the TAN program.

All who have responded have commented that the TAN Insurance program has simplified a complex issue for their organization, and that it provides great value.

This newsletter is meant to help all TAN members learn about other groups. It depends upon submissions from you. Please keep it going by sending info to:

shickie@bell.net

Learning Unlimited, Etobicoke

by Roger Weaver

Learning Unlimited Etobicoke has operated since 1978. It was started by a small group with the help of a small grant from a federal government program. It has been self sustaining since that time. We now operate 3 days a week from Fairfield Seniors Centre. Our program consists of Fall and Winter sessions and the board and volunteers take a well earned rest during the summer.

We are limited to 180 members per lecture due to the size of our facility. Although we have searched for other suitable facilities we haven't been able to find anything suitable yet. As most of our lecture series sell out it sometimes means that members are unable to get their first choice or attend multiple series.

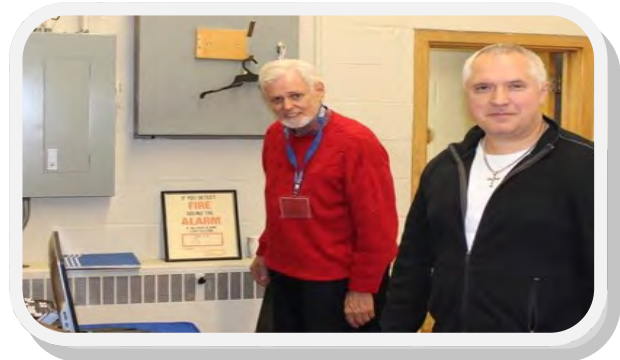
Through the work of our Curriculum Committee we try to offer a diverse series of topics including popular and classical music, art, film, design, architecture, medical research, science, sports, history and world affairs to name but a few.

Our current series are;

Defining Trends of the 21st Century: presented by David Olive, business and current affairs columnist, Toronto Star.

The Story Behind the Story: Books, The Silver Screen, And the Robber and Auto Barons: presented by Eliseo Zompanti, Head of Toronto Public Library's Rexdale Branch.

Influential Canadians who shaped the 20th Century presented by Daniel R. Laxer.



John McMillan (AV chair) left and Eliseo Zompanti get ready for Eliseo's presentation The Story Behind the Story.

Our Winter series are;

A History of the Blues: Presented by Dr. Rob Bowman, Grammy Award Winning professor of Music at York University;

Spaces of Blue: Moments of Humanity in a Turbulent Century: Presented by Robert Douglas, (former teacher and author, currently a reviewer for *Critics at Large* and teacher for Ryerson's LIFE program.

What's in a Name: The stories behind the name: presented by David Clandfield and Tim Nau.

We are looking forward to joining other TAN members at the 2017 symposium and as we approach our 39th year we look forward many more years of unlimited learning.

Want to Learn about Videoconferencing?

TAN's Videoconferencing Working Group has been exploring the use of Web-based video-technology to:

- enable travelling committee members to attend meetings remotely
 - conduct 100% "virtual" meetings (with everyone at their PCs)
 - bring in speakers from out of town (or country)
 - have back-up when a speaker is delayed
- potentially, video-cast TAL lectures into the community

While still at an experimental stage, this technology seems to hold considerable promise for the third-age community. In order to share what's been learned thus far, the Working Group will offer a video-webinar" from **10:00 to 11:00 AM on Monday, January 30** (with a repeat the following day if there is sufficient interest). If your organization would like to learn more about videoconferencing, please have your designated person contact Frank Nicholson (fnicholson@rogers.com/416.488.6131). The Working Group will provide guidance on the equipment you will need to join the webinar, and assist you in participating as required.

25 Years for the Academy for Lifelong Learning

by Elizabeth Guccione

On September 21 of this year, in a grand party held in the rotunda and Chapel of the University of Toronto's Knox College, 180 members of the Academy for Lifelong Learning lifted their champagne glasses in unison to toast the Academy's 25th Anniversary. They were celebrating twenty-five years, as Academy President Karen Melville told the gathered party-goers, during which Academicians "examined, prodded, discussed, and argued about just about every academic discipline, public event or hot issue that the human mind could devise or public policy enact."

As its website points out, the Academy is a centre for intellectually curious adults interested in understanding the world and in meeting others who share those same interests. Discussions take place in the Academy's many workshops, each workshop hour led by a member who has researched a topic and who then makes a presentation to the group. Thus, the Academy is a peer-learning organization, where members learn from one another, rather than from lectures. All workshops are facilitated by volunteers, in line with the rest of the Academy, where all activities are carried out by dedicated volunteers, with no paid staff and no office.

When the Academy began 25 years ago there were eight workshops on specific topics: art, economics, history, literature, philosophy, politics, psychology, and social science. Today, in the Academy's 26th year, there are 37 workshops, still covering those same eight disciplines, plus adding science and current affairs. Twenty-five years ago, there were 80 workshop registrants; in the 2016-2017 academic year, there is an all-time high of 400 registrants.

Although Karen pointed out in her address that workshops were the core of what the Academy is all about, "it's not all that we are." The Academy has a series of public Forums throughout the year, plus Spring Talks in April and May, where experts esteemed in their fields speak on today's important political, ethical and artistic matters. There is also a successful year-long Walks program which introduces Academicians to Toronto's history,

architecture, and natural world. The Academy holds five major social events during the year, as well as offering technical support for presentations and extensive communications through the Academy's website, newsletters, emails, and, recently, a Facebook page.

The Academy has also created two scholarships – at Victoria University and at the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies – that have helped dozens of mature students to further their education.

In her closing remarks, Karen went back to the beginning. "In the audience today are several people I consider the most extraordinary, valuable and committed members of the Academy - our charter members. Charter members are the 80 pioneers who were in our first workshops back in 1991. Remarkably, several of them are still members."

One by one, Karen asked the eight charter members in the audience to stand up, and they were enthusiastically applauded. These were among the people who helped to establish the organizational model the Academy has followed for 25 years. "Your steadfastness," Karen added, "shows more than any words could how great a role the Academy plays in the lives of its members."

Finally, Karen asked new members to stand up as well.

"Twenty-five years from now," she said, "one of you will be standing here at the podium as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary."



Charter member Laura Baldwin and former president, Jim Pike speak to those attending the party (see photo below).



Thornhill Lifelong Learning – Getting Ready to Launch

by Cheryl Avrich

Thornhill Lifelong Learning Inc. (TLL) was formed in May 2016 by a group of 10 Thornhill women interested in bringing learning and enrichment opportunities to active adults age 50+ living in Thornhill and surrounding communities.

Group members were aware of lifelong learning programs in downtown Toronto, a 40-60 minute commute, and they wanted to develop a similar program closer to home. With further research, our group discovered the Third Age Network (TAN) of Ontario. TAN members have provided immeasurable support to our budding organization.

As of November, we have incorporated, formed a Board, created a website www.thornhilllifelonglearning.com (still a work in progress), found a venue – the Schwartz/Reisman Centre – conducted a community survey on topics of interest and are now in the process of signing up our 4 speakers who will launch our program next spring. Topics will include: Future trends for Boomers and Seniors, Brain

Health, Middle East (we're narrowing topic now) and 100 Days post new US President - and impact on Canada. After that, we plan to offer 6 lectures in the Fall and Spring with a format similar to many of the other TAN groups to start with.

Each of our 10 Board members has kicked in \$100 in seed money to finance TLL in exchange for free lectures for the first year. We are building and managing a website on our own (we hope!) and getting some free professional support for printing and a logo. We are currently discussing a sponsorship with our venue to advertise our program to its 6000 members.

We sincerely want to thank those of you who have patiently given us advice and practical templates to get us started! It's very much appreciated!



The board of one of TANs newest groups, Thornhill Lifelong Learning. Find them at www.thornhilllifelonglearning.com

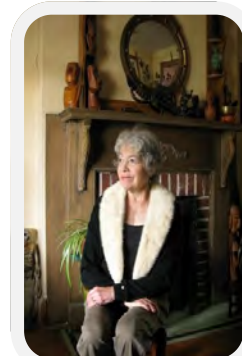
Front Row from left: Judi Bodnoff, Cheryl Avrich, Faygie Goodman, Fran Cohen;

Back Row from left: Cathy Kreuter, Silvia MacCon, Barbara Barak, Ginger Mittleman, Monique Isaacson.

Missing: Jennie Dale

It is with sadness that we announce that Carol Farkas passed away on Saturday, October 29. Carol was the representative for TAN from the Ulyssean Society and also their president. She also was a long time member and former facilitator at the Academy for Lifelong Learning and Ryerson's Act II Studio. Carol was also a noted storyteller in Toronto.

The new representative and president of the Ulyssean Society is Beverly Bloom..

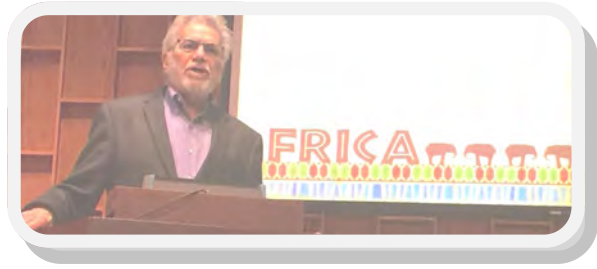


Caplan at Barrie Lecture

Third Age Barrie (TAB) has completed its 5th consecutive lecture series to packed houses. Dr. Gerald Caplan organized five lectures under the general rubric *Misunderstanding Africa*. His personal experiences living and working on the African continent stretched over 40 years and including writing the report *Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide* (2000) for the Organization of African Unity's International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda.

Caplan delivered the first three lectures himself: the myths and realities of Africa, the horrors of the Rwandan genocide, and the challenges facing South Saharan Africa today.

His message was a stark one. In addition to dividing the continent up among themselves, Western interventionists looted Africa of its best people (slavery), its natural resources, its wealth and its brainpower, leaving an entire continent without the means to provide universal education or proper health care for its peoples. Moreover, because Europeans and white South Africans held a monopoly on power everywhere, it was almost impossible for Africans to develop the administrative leaderships necessary for a smooth transition after independence was achieved.



These and other consequences of Western practices in

Africa are the subjects of Caplan's book *The Betrayal of Africa* (2008). Our audience of 250 benefited from two further sessions. Ky'okusinga Kirunga and Janet Solberg of the Stephen Lewis Foundation provided us with thought-provoking accounts of the hardships faced by the African health sector, and outlined the 'on the ground' efforts employed by the Foundation to combat the HIV/AIDS endemic there.

In the final lecture Fran Fearnley spoke about and displayed highly sophisticated, skilled and imaginative Zimbabwe (Shona) art. Ms. Fearnley is the owner of ZimArt's Rice Lake Gallery in Baillieboro, Ontario. She provided an excellent background account (with illustrations) of the origin and nature of Zimbabwean stone carving, described her successes in bringing stone carvers to Canada to demonstrate their talents, and brought wonderful samples of that art for display.

TAN Membership Survey

The Membership Survey, stickhandled by Julian Sale, is very important for TAN. It tells us about our members, their registration numbers, operation methods, lectures or peer learning, and lots of other important information. Please take a look at your data online and update it if necessary.

The new and revised Membership Survey is now fully operational and the results are available on the TAN website in the Members Only section.

The intention was to simplify the questions and to present the questions in a manner that allowed for the data collected to be easily graphed.

All 28 TAN members have been sent a link which allows them to update their information periodically. Information is live and shows up in the results immediately.

Most, but not all members, have updated their info. If you find that your organization does not have up to date info, please ask your TAN rep to help.

If any TAN members want to update their information but have misplaced their link, please contact Julian Sale at juliansale@gmail.com Julian and also help with any other questions you might have.

New Ideas Day at LIFE

by Jeanette Brown

The LIFE Institute celebrated its 25th anniversary last year, honouring twenty-five years of offering programs and events to a growing membership. However, looking to the future, we realized that there was a need to think differently about how we deliver programs to our members. What worked for 500 members may not be as successful for 1800!

The Membership Engagement Committee decided that one way of looking for answers on how to adapt was to engage our membership in a New Ideas workshop. We wanted to give LIFE members an opportunity to think outside the box, to reconsider the way we do things at LIFE and come up with some new ideas to ensure our members continue to be engaged and experience quality programs. Participants represented a cross-section of the LIFE membership: long term members as well as new members with different preferences in their choices of programs.

The workshop, held in May 2016, was structured around “Brainwriting” a technique that encourages creativity in small groups. Unlike “Brainstorming” in which the strongest members of the group often push the discussion in their preferred direction, “Brainwriting” begins with a silent, writing exercise. People build on each others’ ideas but in writing. Once that is completed, the verbal discussions begin.

A Big Thank You to Sandra

by Nancy Christie

We couldn’t manage without her!

Sandra Kerr, Director, Programs for 50+ program at Ryerson University has been a wonderful support to TAN since it’s inception. Indeed Sandra was one of the founders of TAN nearly 10 years ago along with Sheilagh Hickie and Nancy Christie.

As an advisor to TAN, Sandra brings a wealth of knowledge about Third Age programs in Canada, the US and world wide. Not only is she familiar with developments in later life learning, upcoming events and people “in the know”, she has a good feel for government and how to approach policy makers on matters related to Third Age learning. Sandra’s sage advice is always welcome at TAN discussions. Not only that, because of her extensive knowledge and experience in our field, she is a repository of information and has great connections with researchers and activists in related fields, linking TAN with wonderful resources.

In addition to the advisory role that she plays with TAN, Sandra has facilitated TAN meetings by regularly providing space for Board and committee meetings. Our three Symposia have been located at Ryerson.



The groups in this workshop developed ideas for new LIFE programs, new ways to deliver the programs, approaches structuring more opportunities for members to socialize and new methods to recruit members to contribute to LIFE as volunteers. Their work has been documented in a report, the ideas have been sorted into categories and passed along to the relevant committees. Some of these ideas are already being implemented.

“The energy in the room was exciting.” “A great day!” “Great to participate in the future of LIFE.” These were just some of the comments from participants at the end of the workshop.

The Member Engagement Committee learned a lot from the member feedback about the structure of the workshop and ways that we will change it for the next time. If you would like to know more about this New Idea Day, please contact Jeanette Browne. (jeanettebrowne@yahoo.ca).



This practical assistance has been of particular importance to TAN’s ongoing work, and we feel we have a “home” at Ryerson. TAN is indebted to Sandra and the 50+ program for their commitment to life long learning in general and the Third Age Network in particular. Our sincere thanks!