LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE OF VIRGINIA TECH®



CONTINUING AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION
VIRGINIA TECH

SPRING 2027 CATALOG

CALENDAR

NOV 20	Advance membership opens
JAN 5	Advance membership closes
JAN 14	Public registration opens
FEB 8	Spring program begins

Visit **cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning** for details and updates

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Welcome to LLI of Virginia Tech

What will spark your curiosity this spring? Maybe it's a subject you've always wanted to explore, a new perspective on something you already love, or a chance to meet people who share your interests. At the Lifelong Learning Institute of Virginia Tech, you'll find all of these possibilities and more through our courses, lectures, free learning opportunities, and member events. We're glad you're part of our community and look forward to another season of learning together.



Program committee co-chairs Nancy Metz and Molly McClintock.

REGISTRATION OPENS THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

See pages 4-5 to learn more about early registration opportunities.

Register online by visiting the LLI Home page at **www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning** and clicking REGISTER.

This is the fastest way to register. We recommend registering online whenever possible.

Register by phone by calling **540-231-5182.**

Please note that there will be no walk-in or mail-in registration.

SCAN TO REGISTER

Need step-by-step instructions for registering online?
Scan this QR code or visit **cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning/membership/instructions.html**.

SCAN FOR INSTRUCTIONS

THE LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE OF VIRGINIA TECH

The Lifelong Learning Institute of Virginia Tech (LLI) is a program of Virginia Tech Continuing and Professional Education (CPE) that offers intellectual, cultural, and social experiences for adults age 50 and older. Supported by member volunteers and enriched by the academic and community resources of Virginia Tech, the New River Valley, and beyond, LLI promotes lifelong learning, engagement, and connection.

CONTACT INFORMATION

CPE Registration: 540-231-5182

www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning

lifelonglearning@vt.edu

facebook.com/vtlifelonglearning

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LLI Spring 2027

COURSES AT A GLANCE

See the LLI website and online catalog for full course and event descriptions:
www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning

Classes generally meet once a week on the same day; but note occasional gaps in date sequences, which may be necessary to accommodate instructor and classroom availability.

TERM I: Classes begin February 15 - March 26

MONDAY

6. Poems of Emily Dickinson
Tom Gardner
11:00AM-12:15PM
5 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15
CRC, Concept Room

18. Exploring Oil Painting
Lois Stephens
9:00AM-11:30AM
6 weeks: 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29
Blacksburg Community Center

29. Pompeii: Stories From, Through, and Beyond the Ruins
Andrew Becker
3:00PM-4:00PM
3 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1
CRC, Concept Room

31. Resolved Virginians: Southwest Virginia and the American Revolution
Garrett Channell
1:00PM-2:30PM
4 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8
CRC, Concept Room

33. The Art and History of Capital Global Cities from Rome to D.C.
Michelle Moseley
12:00PM-1:15PM
5 weeks: 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22
Warm Hearth

35. Staging the Conversations that Communicate End-of-Life Wishes
Jerry Niles, Anne Campbell, Marian Silverman, Richard Shepherd
9:00AM-10:30AM
6 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22
CRC, Curiosity Room

37. Cooking a Vegetarian, Ethiopian Feast
Johnna Elliott, Leslie Daniel
2:00PM-6:00PM
1 week: 2/15
Blacksburg Presbyterian Church

40. Appreciating Wines of the Eastern United States
Randall Horst
3:00PM-4:30PM
6 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22
Vintage Cellar

42. Experience Yoga!
Stephanie Buffett, Gail Harbert
9:00AM-10:30AM
8 weeks: 2/15, 2/17, 2/22, 2/24, 3/1, 3/3, 3/8, 3/10
CRC, InBalance Yoga

56. Appreciating the Biodiversity of the Southeast
Eric Hallerman
1:00PM-2:30PM
5 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15
CRC, Curiosity Room

58. Making and Preserving Memories: Human Brain Function Over Time
Kylee Smith
9:00AM-10:00AM
3 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1
CRC, Concept Room

TUESDAY

4. Perceval Everett's *James* meets Mark Twain's *Huck Finn*
Ginney Fowler
1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/16, 3/23, 3/30
CRC, Curiosity Room

10. Shakespeare on Screen
Seth Davis
11:00AM-12:30PM
5 weeks: 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9, 3/16
CRC, Concept Room

14. Philosophy in Popular Songs
Linda MacCleave
1:00PM-2:30PM
4 weeks: 3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23
Zoom

16. Drawing Open Studio
Bonnie Moreno
1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 3/16. 3/23, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20
CRC, Concept Room

23. Sewing Machine Health
Joselin Landry
9:00AM-11:30AM
1 week: 2/23
CRC, Concept Room

46. Tapping into Nature's Bounty: Making Maple Syrup
Tom Hammet
1:00PM-3:00PM
3 weeks: 2/16, 2/23, 3/2
CRC, Garvin Room

47. AI for Genealogists: Practical Tools for Family Historians
Rebecca Novy
9:00AM-10:15AM
3 weeks: 2/16, 2/23, 3/2
CRC, Concept Room

59. Urological Health
Mike S. Chiang
9:00AM-10:30AM
2 weeks: 3/16, 3/23
CRC, Concept Room

WEDNESDAY

5. Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*: A Table Reading
Jeff Saperstein
9:00AM-10:30AM
6 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24
CRC, Curiosity Room

13. Big Bands: Then and Now
Kyle Hutchins
3:00PM-4:30PM
3 weeks: 3/3, 3/10, 3/17
Zoom

15. Caravaggio and the Reinvention of Painting
James Jewitt
1:00PM-2:15PM
6 weeks: 3/17, 3/24, 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21
CRC, Concept Room

26. Great Decisions
Peggy Layne
12:00PM-1:30PM
8 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31, 4/7
Warm Hearth

28. From the Conquest to the Cartels: Rewriting Mexican History
Jacqueline Bixler
11:00AM-12:30PM
6 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24
CRC, Curiosity Room

30. Ancient Egyptian Tombs and Towns: Discoveries from the Burial Sites at Giza
Lauren DiSalvo
1:00PM-2:30PM
3 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3
CRC, Concept Room

41. Appreciating Wines of the Eastern United States
Randall Horst
3:00PM-4:30PM
6 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24
Vintage Cellar

60. Plant Communication: Lessons from a Career with Parasitic Plants
Jim Westwood
11:00AM-12:30PM
1 week: 2/17
CRC, Concept Room

61. The Natural History of Darwin's Galapagos: Pristine to Anthropocene
Peter Graham, William Hopkins, Ignacio Moore
4:00PM-5:30PM
3 weeks: 2/24, 3/31, 3/10
CRC, Concept Room

63. Meet Microcontrollers, the Brains Behind Our Tools and Devices
Carl Stoesz
1:00PM-2:30PM
3 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3
CRC, Curiosity Room

THURSDAY

19. Paint Your Own Barn Quilt
Joe Ivers
11:00AM-12:30PM
5 weeks: 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25, 4/1
Blacksburg Community Center

22. Make a Quilted Basket Square with Appliqué Flowers
Paula Golden, Joselin Landry
2:00PM-5:00PM
3 weeks: 2/18, 2/25, 3/11
CRC, Curiosity Room

24. Law and Order and the U.S. Criminal Justice System
Jack Call
1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 2/18, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25
CRC, Concept Room

38. Cooking a Vegetarian, Ethiopian Feast
Johnna Elliott, Leslie Daniel
2:00PM-6:00PM
1 week: 2/25
Blacksburg Presbyterian Church

44. Euchre: The Card game for Everyone
Lois Harris, Phillip Harris
1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 3/25, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29
Blacksburg Community Center

55. The Geological History of Virginia
Ken Eriksson, W. Lee Daniels
11:00AM-12:30PM
4 weeks: 2/18, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11
CRC, Concept Room

FRIDAY

17. Watercolor Open Studio
Jesi Pace-Berkeley
10:00AM-12:00PM
5 weeks: 2/19, 2/26, 3/5, 3/12, 3/19
Blacksburg Community Center

21. Knit a Classic Cardigan with Us
Kaye Graham, Diana George, Nancy Metz
11:00AM-12:30PM
6 weeks: 2/19, 2/26, 3/12, 3/19, 4/2, 4/9
Instructor's home

39. Cooking Fusion Food Inspired by the Silk Road
Anne McNabb
2 weeks: 2/26 9:00AM-10:30AM on Zoom, and
3/5 9:00AM-1:30PM at instructor's home

54. The Science of Living Well
Vicky Dierckx
11:00AM-12:30PM
6 weeks: 2/19, 2/26, 3/5, 3/19, 3/26, 4/2
CRC, Concept Room

TERM II: Classes begin March 29 - May 7

MONDAY

7. From Memory to Memoir: How to Write Your Life Story
Wendy Welsh
11:00AM-12:30PM
4 weeks: 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19
Zoom

12. Lives in Music: Claudio Monteverdi
Christopher Campo-Bowen
1:00PM-2:00PM
2 weeks: 3/29, 4/5
CRC, Concept Room

34. Memory Masterclass: Brain Training to Support Cognitive Aging
Joanna Culligan
3:00PM-4:30PM
6 weeks: 3/29, 3/31, 4/5, 4/7, 4/12, 4/14, 4/19, 4/21, 4/26, 4/28, 5/3, 5/5
CRC, Curiosity Room

36. Age Out Loud: Reimaging the Years Ahead
Chris Moore
3:00PM-4:00PM
6 weeks: 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3
CRC, Concept Room

51. Understanding Relationships: A Family Therapist's Perspective
Fred Piercy
1:00PM-2:30PM
1 week: 4/12
CRC, Concept Room

TUESDAY

11. Reader's Theatre: Acting for All Without Fear or Fuss
Victoria Cochran, Molly McClintock
3:00PM-4:30PM
4 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20
CRC, Curiosity Room

32. William Bradford Alwood: Virginia Tech's Renaissance Man
Michael Weaver
3:00PM-4:00PM
3 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13
CRC, Concept Room

45. Grow Your Own Veggies
Erica Jones
9:00AM-10:00AM
2 weeks: 3/30, 4/6
CRC, Concept Room

48. Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation
Jamie McReynolds
9:00AM-10:30AM
6 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4
Unitarian Universalist Congregation

49. Zen for Daily Life
Russell Gregory
11:00AM-12:30PM
6 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4
CRC, Concept Room

50. Introduction to Conscious, Holistic Fasting: History, Tradition, and Current Practice
Jenn Schuppe
11:00AM-12:15PM
6 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4
CRC, Curiosity Room

WEDNESDAY

3. Reading Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*
Christine Kiebuzinska
1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, 5/5
CRC, Curiosity Room

25. The Rise of Digital Oligarchs: Challenges to Democratic Governance
Jim Bohland, Erv Blythe
11:00AM-12:00PM
5 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28
CRC, Concept Room

43. Learn to Play American Mah Jongg
Suzan Antin, Marilyn Cavell, Mària Moll
11:00AM-12:30PM
5 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28
Blacksburg Community Center

52. How to Read Your Own Mind: Cultivating the Art of Deeper Thinking
Lee Pierson
3:00PM-4:30PM
3 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14
CRC, Concept Room

53. Transforming Conflict from Breakdown to Breakthrough
Reese Ramos
9:00AM-10:30AM
4 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21
CRC, Concept Room

THURSDAY

1. Read Local: Mills Kelly's *Virginia's Lost Appalachian Trail*
Mills Kelly, Ellen Woodall
11:00AM-12:00PM
3 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15
CRC, Curiosity Room

2. Crime, Culture, and Color in Four Contemporary African American Mysteries
Britton Gildersleeve, Ginney Fowler
1:00PM-2:30PM
4 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22
Zoom

8. Italian for Travelers
June Stubbs
1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6
CRC, Concept Room

20. Floral Design
Paula Knapp
10:00AM-11:30AM
5 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29
Christiansburg Rec Center

27. Great Political Cartoonists: Herblock, MacNelly & Oliphant
Edd Sewell
11:00AM-12:15PM
6 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6
CRC, Concept Room

57. Mysteries Beneath the Surface of Streams and Lakes
Fred Benfield
9:00AM-10:15AM
5 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29
CRC, Concept Room

FRIDAY

9. Introductory Spanish
Julia S. Martin Del Campo
3:00PM-4:30PM
6 weeks: 4/2, 4/9, 4/16, 4/23, 4/30, 5/7
CRC, Curiosity Room

62. Are Radio Waves Damaging Your Health?
Tim Pratt
1:00PM-2:30PM
1 week: 4/9
Warm Hearth

LLI Information

FEES

Membership is required each term to register for courses and participate in free events. Spring membership is $60 and is non-refundable. Course and event fees are listed with each offering. Course fee refunds are available only if withdrawal occurs at least one week before the first session, or the instructor cancels the course.

FEE WAIVERS

LLI is committed to providing accessible and affordable educational opportunities for NRV residents. Requests for fee waivers are confidential and may be directed to the LLI Program Coordinator at lifelonglearning@vt.edu or 540-231-1725.

WAITLISTS

If a program is full, join the waitlist. We are often able to expand enrollment or move classes to larger spaces. Participants will be contacted if an opening becomes available.

ACCOMMODATIONS

To request accommodations for a disability, contact the LLI program coordinator at lifelonglearning@vt.edu or 540-231-1725 at least 14 days before the course or event begins.

CODE OF CONDUCT

LLI participants are expected to treat fellow members, instructors, volunteers, and Virginia Tech Continuing and Professional Education (CPE) staff with civility, kindness, and respect. Demeaning, disrespectful, intimidating, threatening, abusive, or otherwise disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may result in suspension or dismissal from the program. The full Code of Conduct is available on the LLI website.

VOLUNTEER

LLI depends on volunteers to help plan and deliver programs. Learn more at cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning/volunteer.html or email lifelonglearning@vt.edu

DONATE

Your support helps LLI provide enriching educational, cultural, and social experiences for adults 50 and older in the New River Valley. Learn how to contribute at cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning/support/donations.html.

For a full list of LLI Policies, visit our website at: cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning/membership/policies.html

All program information is subject to change without notice.

ADVANCE MEMBERSHIP PURCHASE

Purchase your membership before registration opens to ensure your account is ready for course and field trip registration. This spring, those purchasing membership in advance will also receive the opportunity to register early.

Advance membership purchase is available November 20, 2026-January 5, 2027, online at **cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning** or by phone at 540-231-5182 during business hours. Please note that Virginia Tech and the LLI and CPE offices will be closed November 25-27 and December 24-January 1. Membership purchase is available online only on these dates.

Spring Term Membership: $60

Members who purchased an Annual Membership in the fall do not need to purchase a spring membership. Membership fees are non-refundable.

Give the Gift of Lifelong Learning!

Looking for a meaningful gift for someone who loves learning, exploring new interests, and connecting with others?

A spring term membership in the Lifelong Learning Institute of Virginia Tech is a wonderful way to give the gift of curiosity and connection!

Beginning November 20, gift memberships for the spring term may be ordered online through our 24/7 registration portal or by phone during business hours. When placing your order, let us know whether you'd like us to mail a gift card and spring catalog to your recipient or if you'd prefer to pick them up locally.



Give someone special a spring filled with new discoveries, shared interests, and the joy of lifelong learning!

A note about holiday hours: Virginia Tech will be closed November 25–27 and December 24–January 1.
Please plan accordingly if you need assistance by phone or would like to pick up your gift materials.

LLI Membership Benefits

Your LLI membership brings more than learning opportunities.

It's a chance to explore new interests, meet people who share your curiosity, and enjoy being part of a welcoming community.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Access to LLI courses and field trips (additional fees may apply).
- Free registration for selected courses, lectures, and webinars (see pages 27-30).
- Coffee chats, happy hours, and pop-up events.
- Opportunities to connect with fellow members through in-person and online discussions.
- Regular term updates and announcements.
- Early notice of LLI travel opportunities.
- And more ways to learn, connect, and engage.

Explore the complimentary courses, lectures, and webinars available to members on pages 28–30.

Literature, Language, & Writing

1. Read Local: Mills Kelly's *Virginia's Lost Appalachian Trail*

Mills Kelly, Ellen Woodall | Thursday, 11:00AM-12:00PM
3 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

The Read Local series focuses on a single book written by a local or regional author. Readers engage with the author face-to-face in stimulating conversations during the first and last meetings.

In 1952, the Appalachian Trail Conference moved the established trail more than 50 miles to the west. Lost in that move were opportunities to scramble over the Pinnacles of Dan, sit on Fisher's Peak and gaze out over the North Carolina Piedmont, or cross the New River on a flat-bottomed boat named Redbud. Walk in the footsteps of Virginia's earliest hikers as historian Mills Kelly tells the story of a beautiful, 300-mile section of the Appalachian Trail all but forgotten today, except by the residents of the Southwestern Virginia counties the trail used to cross.

REQUIRED TEXT

Kelly, *Virginia's Lost Appalachian Trail*

INSTRUCTORS

Mills Kelly is a historian of the Appalachian Trail and a professor of history at George Mason University. He first set foot on the Appalachian Trail in 1971 as a Boy Scout hiking in Shenandoah National Park and has had a love affair with the trail ever since. His podcast, *The Green Tunnel,* charts the history of the trail from its founding to the present.

Ellen Woodall is the manager of Blacksburg Books.

2. Crime, Culture, and Color in Four Contemporary African American Mysteries

Britton Gildersleeve, Ginney Fowler | Thursday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
4 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22 | Zoom | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

In this course, participants will read and discuss four novels by contemporary African American women. Valerie Burns's *Murder is a Piece of Cake* stars a social media expert, bakery owner, and sleuth. Alexia Gordon's *Death in D Minor* places a classical musician at the center of a murder case involving ghostly conjurations. *A Dead Man's Honor,* by Virginia Tech graduate Frankie Y. Bailey, features a crime historian whose research is interrupted by the murder of a fellow faculty member. Finally, in Barbara Neely's *Blanche Among the Talented Tenth,* the protagonist is a maid and "accidental sleuth" whose story reveals class and color prejudices within the black community.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Frankie Y. Bailey, *A Dead Man's Honor*
- Valerie Burns, *Murder is a Piece of Cake*
- Alexia Gordon, *Death in D Minor*
- Barbara Neely, *Blanche Among the Talented Tenth*

INSTRUCTORS

Britton Gildersleeve, a retired faculty member and administrator from Oklahoma State University, has been a mystery reader since age eight, when she first read the Nancy Drew mysteries. Next was her father's Sherlock Holmes. Since then, mysteries of almost all types have been a favorite distraction.

Ginney Fowler is a retired professor of English at Virginia Tech who taught African American and American literature for more than 40 years, with a special focus on the poetry of Nikki Giovanni and the fiction of Toni Morrison and Gloria Naylor.

3. Reading Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*

Christine Kiebuzinska | Wednesday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, 5/5 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* presents seven characters whom we follow through their lives and marriages, happy and unhappy. Their experiences give us insights about religion, morality, and social conventions among the aristocracy of Moscow and the elite societies of St. Petersburg during the 1870s. The novel's use of stream of consciousness and other literary devices associated with modernism make it seem more contemporary than it is, and it continues to appeal to new readers. In 2004 Oprah Winfrey's Book Club announced the novel as its summer pick, describing it as "one of the greatest love stories of all time."

REQUIRED TEXT

Leo Tostoy, *Anna Karenina.* Translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. Penguin Classics, 2002. Please read Part I for the first class.

INSTRUCTOR

Christine Kiebuzinska is an emerita professor of English from Virginia Tech with a specialty in comparative literature. She has taught three courses for LLI: Contemporary Ukrainian Literature, Atwood's *The Blind Assassin*, and Ivan Turgenev.

4. Perceval Everett's *James* meets Mark Twain's *Huck Finn*

Ginney Fowler | Tuesday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/16, 3/23, 3/30 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

This course will examine Percival Everett's recent novel, *James*, alongside the American classic, *Huckleberry Finn*. The classic novel will be read first. *James* is generally recognized as a retelling of *Huckleberry Finn*, although one critic more usefully describes *James* as a "re-centering" of Twain's novel. If Twain's novel can be said to be about freedom, Everett has described his novel as an exploration of "rights" - who has them, who doesn't, and why? We will discuss this issue and others raised by the two novels (both of which happen to be terrific reads).

REQUIRED TEXT

- Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (any edition)
- Everett, *James* (any edition)

INSTRUCTOR

Ginney Fowler is a retired professor of English at Virginia Tech who taught African American and American literature for more than 40 years, with a special focus on the poetry of Nikki Giovanni and the fiction of Toni Morrison and Gloria Naylor. She teaches this course at the request of her spring 2026 LLI students.

5. Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice:* A Table Reading

Jeff Saperstein | Wednesday, 9:00AM-10:30AM
6 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

Although categorized as a comedy in Shakespeare's First Folio (1623), *The Merchant of Venice* is often considered a problem play by modern scholars. It features a strong female character constrained by her (dead) father's wishes and a heated rivalry between the title character, a beloved merchant, and a despised Jewish moneylender. We will engage with this rich, problematic play by doing table readings of selected scenes and discussing these scenes in the context of the play as a whole. No acting experience is required.

REQUIRED TEXT

Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (any standard text)

INSTRUCTOR

A Shakespeare aficionado, **Jeff Saperstein** taught English at Radford University for 30 years. Table reads were a regular feature of his Shakespeare classes.

6. Poems of Emily Dickinson

Tom Gardner | Monday, 11:00AM-12:15PM
5 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

In this five-week course, we will look closely at many of the greatest poems of one of America's most important poets and thinkers: Emily Dickinson. We'll learn the way her mind moves and leaps, drawing us into spaces we instantly recognize but have perhaps never been able to put into words. We'll read slowly, working out connections between her poems and our own deepest questions about how we see and love and grieve and question. We'll look at her letters, talk about her biography, and spend one session surveying her continued presence in film, TV, and writing projects of all sorts.

REQUIRED TEXT

The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Reading Edition, ed. R.W. Franklin (paperback)

INSTRUCTOR

Tom Gardner is a retired English professor from Virginia Tech. He continues to write about and explore Dickinson's ongoing importance in American culture in a variety of ways.

7. From Memory to Memoir: How to Write Your Life Story

Wendy Welsh | Monday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
4 weeks: 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19 | Zoom | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

This four-week zoom class will coach participants through the process of writing their life stories. We'll begin with fundamental questions about what a story is "about," then move on to imagine its separate episodes or anecdotes and the arc that gives the whole narrative meaning. We'll read some great openings and try out our own. And we'll brainstorm methods to overcome obstacles and blocks, finding support and joy in the process. While you won't emerge with a finished manuscript in four weeks, you will clarify your vision for the project and have a chance to share excerpts with others.

INSTRUCTOR

In 2007 **Wendy Welch** and her husband founded Tales of the Lonesome Pine Used Books in Big Stone Gap, Virginia. In her bestselling 2012 memoir, *The Little Bookstore of Big Stone Gap*, Wendy tells the inspiring story of this episode in her life. She'll draw on her experiences writing, revising, publishing, and marketing the memoir to help participants tell their own life stories.

8. Italian for Travelers

June Stubbs | Thursday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

This course is an introduction to speaking and understanding the Italian language with an emphasis on cultural and artistic traditions so important to the traveler to this magnificent country. It is a continuation of the Italian for Travelers course taught in the fall, with additional vocabulary and new opportunities for practice. No prerequisite is necessary, however. Beginners are welcome. Have you ever wanted to learn Italian? Do you plan to travel to Italy? Andiamo!

INSTRUCTOR

June Stubbs was an instructor in Italian at Virginia Tech for 25 years. She holds a Masters in Italian from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and has studied at the Scuola di Dante in Florence. She has lived in Rome off and on over several years. Her favorite ristorante is Vecchia Roma, and she likes to take a cappuccino at Campo dei Fiori.

9. Introductory Spanish

Julia S. Martin Del Campo | Friday, 3:00 PM-4:40 PM
6 weeks: 4/2, 4/9, 4/16, 4/23, 4/30, 5/7 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

Retirement is a wonderful time to acquire a new language, but the task can be intimidating if others in the class have already mastered the basic skills. In this friendly introductory course, participants will be introduced to simple grammatical concepts and acquire basic vocabulary relevant to a range of conversational topics – from greeting friends, describing family, and learning colors, times, and seasons, to giving directions and asking for various kinds of help. The instructor is a native Spanish speaker from Mexico who leads the Spanish conversation group at the Blacksburg public library.

INSTRUCTOR

Julia S. Martin del Campo was educated in Mexico. A research scientist in biochemistry at Virginia Tech, she loves learning languages and speaks English, French, and Spanish fluently.















10. Shakespeare on Screen

Seth Davis | Tuesday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
5 weeks: 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9, 3/16 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

Over 400 years after his death, William Shakespeare and his works still captivate audiences of stage and screen. In this course, we will study some of the most celebrated film adaptations of Shakespeare's works as well as some highly regarded cinematic portrayals of the man himself. We will enjoy discussions about what makes a good film adaptation, how themes transcend generations and geography, and how Shakespeare continues to exert an integral influence on stage and film in contemporary society.

INSTRUCTOR

Seth Davis is the executive director of The Lyric Theatre in downtown Blacksburg. He is also a musician, teacher, avid book reader, and movie buff!

11. Reader's Theatre: Acting for All Without Fear or Fuss

Victoria Cochran, Molly McClintock | Tuesday, 3:00PM-4:30PM
4 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

You are invited to join other LLI friends in performing plays and short readings using a minimalist style of theatre that conveys meaning exclusively through vocal and facial expressions and small props. No sets or elaborate costumes, no acting experience required, and no one needs to memorize a part! Participants will learn and practice vocal control, emotional expression, character development, and timing as we create immersive performances. Scripts may include Greek myths and classic mysteries.

INSTRUCTOR

Victoria Cochran studied theatre at Oberlin College and Conservatory, founded The Moonlight Theatre in New Rochelle, New York, and has appeared in many professional and community theatre productions. Victoria's most cherished acting experience was her appearance as an extra in the film *Harriet* starring Cynthia Erivo and including Leslie Odom, Jr. and Tory Kittles.

Molly McClintock has no acting experience or aspirations, but she loves the theater and reading so this a natural fit.

12. Lives in Music: Claudio Monteverdi

Christopher Campo-Bowen | Monday, 1:00PM-2:00PM
2 weeks: 3/29, 4/5 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

In LLI's Lives in Music series, hosted by Virginia Tech musicologist Christopher Campo-Bowen, the work of a single composer is placed in its biographical and historical context and studied in relation to significant developments in musical genres, ideas, and techniques.

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) was a pivotal figure in the transition from the musical styles of the Renaissance to those of the Baroque period. Monteverdi's earliest opera, *L'Orfeo* (1607), is widely considered the first such work to truly show the potential of the new genre, which had been invented less than a decade before. This class will trace Monteverdi's development as a composer in the first stage of his career, when he composed not only *L'Orfeo,* but also his Solemn Vespers of 1610, recently performed at the Center for the Arts.

INSTRUCTOR

Christopher Campo-Bowen is an assistant professor of musicology in the School of Performing Arts at Virginia Tech. He completed his Ph.D. in musicology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He holds a B.A. in music from Stanford University and an M.M. in Orchestral Conducting from The Catholic University of America in Washington D.C.

13. Big Bands: Then and Now

Kyle Hutchins | Wednesday, 3:00PM-4:30PM
3 weeks: 3/3, 3/10, 3/17 | Zoom | Limit: 50 | Fee: $35

Explore the evolution of the jazz orchestra through six influential ensembles spanning nearly a century. Through guided listening and discussion, we'll begin with the foundations of the big band tradition in the music of Duke Ellington and Count Basie, then examine how Charles Mingus and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra expanded its musical language. The course concludes with the modern jazz orchestra focusing on the work of Bob Brookmeyer and Maria Schneider. Whether you're new to jazz or a longtime listener, this course offers fresh insight into the artistry, innovation, and enduring vitality of the big band.

INSTRUCTOR

Kyle Hutchins is an associate professor of practice at Virginia Tech in the School of Performing Arts, where he has taught saxophone, chamber music, jazz ensemble, and jazz history.

14. Philosophy in Popular Songs

Linda MacCleave | Tuesday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
4 weeks: 3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23 | Zoom | Limit: 50 | Fee: $35

In this class, you will explore how music and song can benefit the brain and promote healing. We will then examine songwriters as philosophers, listening to songs that explore enduring truths about the human experience. Along the way, we will compare the ideas expressed in these songs with the writings of influential thinkers, including Nietzsche, Sartre, Heinlein, Descartes, Jaspers, and the Dalai Lama. We will also examine Bob Dylan's *The Philosophy of Modern Song*, listening to selected songs from the book and discussing Dylan's reflections on their meaning and significance.

INSTRUCTOR

Linda MacCleave's lifelong appreciation for the poetic and inspirational power of music led her to develop courses on the history and cultural influence of songs. She also teaches Lifelong Learning Institute classes at the University of Richmond and George Mason University.

15. Caravaggio and the Reinvention of Painting

James Jewitt | Wednesday, 1:00PM-2:15PM
6 weeks: 3/17, 3/24, 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

This course introduces major artworks produced by the hugely influential Italian artist Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio and his followers during the period 1575 to 1700. Pictorial innovations pioneered by Caravaggio and numerous *Caravaggisti* - both men and women - in Italy, France, Spain, Flanders, and the Dutch Republic, reshaped the trajectory of European painting. We'll focus on radical pictures of sacred and secular themes originally destined for palaces, churches, and private art galleries. Caravaggio's inventive approach to light, brushwork, composition, and subject matter helped propel his emergence as a celebrity artist, whose personal life was infamously punctuated by violence, illness, and lawlessness.

INSTRUCTOR

James R. Jewitt specializes in the art and architecture of early modern Europe, with a focus on collection and display practices in Renaissance and 17th-century Italy and France. He frequently shares his research at the College Art Association and the Renaissance Society of America. He is chair of the interdisciplinary Visual Arts & Society Minor at Virginia Tech.

16. Drawing Open Studio

Bonnie Moreno | Tuesday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 3/16. 3/23, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

Beginners and experienced artists are welcome to join this art studio. The following media are encouraged: watercolor pencil, pen and ink, charcoal, pastels, conte crayon, and Prismacolor. No watercolor, acrylic, or oil paints. The instructor will provide guidance on the purchase of materials; please email her your choice of medium before class begins. Bring an ongoing project or begin a new one. Bonnie believes knowing how to use your tools facilitates your own creativity.

INSTRUCTOR

Bonnie Moreno is a licensed art teacher with an MFA in painting. She co-founded a cooperative art gallery and a community arts festival that grew into an on-site community arts center.

17. Watercolor Open Studio

Jesi Pace-Berkeley | Friday, 10:00AM-12:00PM
5 weeks: 2/19, 2/26, 3/5, 3/12, 3/19 | Blacksburg Community Center | Limit: 15
Fee: $35 | Materials Fee: $35
Participants will purchase their own basic supplies from a list distributed in advance. The materials fee is used for other specialized supplies.

LLI's Open Studio Watercolor Class is back by popular demand. It's a place for everyone and every skill level, where you will learn how to let the water do the work for you. Students will work at various skill levels with a weekly design and art element focus. Class will likely include figures, still life, outdoor scenes, and photos. More advanced students will be partnered with beginning students in class activities that involve networking, peer tutoring and critique. Individual and beginning level pull out sessions will address specific instruction, as needed.

INSTRUCTOR

Jesi Pace-Berkeley is a Professional Fellow of the Virginia Museum of Fine Art and Artist in Residence at the Don and Catherine Bryan Cultural Series, Outer Banks.

18. Exploring Oil Painting

Lois Stephens | Monday, 9:00AM-11:30AM
6 weeks: 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29 | Blacksburg Community Center | Limit: 15
Fee: $35 | Materials Fee: $20

With a no-fear approach, this class invites students to explore the many forgiving and luminous qualities of oil paints. Various materials and tools will be covered, and participants will work with both brushes and palette knives. Beginning as well as more experienced painters will benefit from the demonstrations and discussions in the quest to find and expand our visual voices.

Students are responsible for providing most of their own tools and paints; a supply list will be provided prior to the first class.

INSTRUCTOR

Lois Stephens has a passion for painting in oils and enjoys helping others explore this rich medium. She currently maintains a studio in the Newport Community Center. Her work can be viewed online at www.LoisStephens.com.

19. Paint Your Own Barn Quilt

Joe Ivers | Thursday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
5 weeks: 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25, 4/1 | Blacksburg Community Center | Limit: 14 | Fee: $35 | Materials Fee: $30

Long ago European immigrants identified their barns with painted quilt squares. The contemporary version of this traditional craft is still alive; quilt patterns painted on plywood or aluminum boards continue to decorate barns, homes, and other buildings, each pattern meaningful in some way. In this five-week class, we will learn about the barn quilt tradition, explore color theory, and acquire basic skills in painting and geometric measuring. Participants will prepare their 2 X 2 feet barn quilts in the Indian Star pattern. Then they will select colors and measure, draw, and paint the design on an aluminum board.

INSTRUCTOR

Joe Ivers is a lifelong educator and loves teaching. He has taught several LLI classes; this will be his fifth semester teaching Paint Your Own Barn Quilt.

20. Floral Design

Paula Knapp | Thursday, 10:00AM-11:30AM
5 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29 | Christiansburg Rec Center | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35 | Materials Fee: $5 for instructor-provided supplies. Participants will need to collect and bring floral elements weekly.

Spring offers an amazing variety of flowers. In this course, participants will continue to learn the elements of floral design with an emphasis on arranging for weddings, creating corsages and boutonnieres for prom, designing spring florals for front door and porch displays, and tying off and wrapping bouquets.

INSTRUCTOR

Paula Knapp is a West Coast Certified Floral Designer, interior designer, experienced teacher, coach, antique vendor, and amateur artist.

21. Knit a Classic Cardigan with Us

Kaye Graham, Diana George, Nancy Metz | Friday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
6 weeks: 2/19, 2/26, 3/12, 3/19, 4/2, 4/9 | Instructor's home | Limit: 12 | Fee: $35

Join us as we create our own versions of Maria Christine Levesque's Cocktail sweater, a classic, tailored V-neck cardigan that looks good on all body types. In this clever sweater, the button band is knitted as part of the body - no picking up stitches afterwards! Knitters choose between straight and tapered sleeves, DK yarn or fingering weight held double with mohair. Ravelry reviewers rate the pattern as very clear and below average in difficulty. The designer hopes that "this is the sweater you'll want to wear every day."

Participants should purchase the pattern and knit the gauge swatch before the first day of class.

INSTRUCTOR

Diana George, **Kaye Graham**, and **Nancy Metz** enjoy bringing knitters of mixed skill levels together to learn from each other. The laughter, storytelling, and fun just seem to happen on their own.

22. Make a Quilted Basket Square with Appliqué Flowers

Paula Golden, Joselin Landry | Thursday, 2:00PM-5:00PM
3 weeks: 2/18, 2/25, 3/11 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35 | Materials Fee: $15

Make a simple quilted basket square suitable for a pillow, wall hanging, or part of a larger quilt. In the first session, you will hand or machine piece your square. Next, you'll learn and practice appliqué techniques. In the final class, you will finish the block with embellishments. Participants should already have basic sewing skills and be comfortable using a sewing machine. Please commit to attending all three classes. Bring a basic sewing kit to class.

INSTRUCTORS

Paula Golden is passionate about quilts, quilters, their stories, and the techniques. Because she is always learning, every class becomes fresh. Her guidance is grounded in experience, but her teaching is alive with possibility. Students feel supported, seen, and invited into a creative journey rather than a lesson with a finish line.

Joselin Landry, a lifelong craftivist, stitches purpose into every thread. Rooted in resourcefulness, she creates with care, inviting us to take part in environmental change, one mindful stitch at a time.

23. Sewing Machine Health

Joselin Landry | Tuesday, 9:00AM-11:30AM
1 week: 2/23 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 10 | Fee: $15

Is your sewing machine a mystery? This hands-on workshop takes the mystery out of sewing machine care and troubleshooting. Learn the major parts of your machine, what they do, and how to perform routine cleaning and maintenance. You'll troubleshoot common stitch problems, practice adjusting tension and changing needles, and learn to recognize potential problems before they become costly repairs. We'll discuss proper storage and when it's time to seek professional service.

By the end of the workshop, you'll feel more confident, self-sufficient, and equipped to keep your sewing machine running smoothly.

INSTRUCTOR

Joselin Landry is an experienced sewist with expertise in a wide range of sewing machine brands and models and a background in teaching practical, accessible repair skills.





24. Law and Order and the U.S. Criminal Justice System

Jack Call | Thursday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 2/18, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

In this six-week course, participants will view and discuss six episodes of the popular NBC police procedural and legal drama, *Law and Order*. The episodes selected will raise controversial legal and ethical issues related to the U.S. criminal justice system and the decisions made by police officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, and juries. This is a repeat of the spring 2024 class that features the same episodes.

INSTRUCTOR

Professor Emeritus at Radford University, **Jack Call** has taught numerous LLI courses on criminal justice and the judicial system.

25. The Rise of Digital Oligarchs: Challenges to Democratic Governance

Jim Bohland, Erv Blythe | Wednesday, 11:00AM-12:00PM
5 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

This course examines the emergence of a new class of oligarchs — individuals who are amassing extraordinary wealth through digital and information technologies. The concentration of economic power within this group presents distinctive challenges to democratic governance. Oligarchs tend to be skeptical of democratic values, and the transformative new technologies they underwrite have social and political consequences not yet fully understood. Through lectures, class discussions, and assigned readings, participants will critically analyze the relationships among technological power, economic inequality, and democracy in the digital age.

INSTRUCTOR

Jim Bohland is a professor emeritus from the School of Public and International Affairs at Virginia Tech. His areas of interest include democratic governance, health policy, and disaster resilience.

Erv Blythe is vice president emeritus of the Division of Information Technology at Virginia Tech. His areas of interest include advanced communications and computational technologies and predictive analytics for security.

26. Great Decisions

Coordinator: Peggy Layne | Wednesday, 12:00PM-1:30PM
8 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31, 4/7 | Warm Hearth | Limit: 75 | Fee: $35

Great Decisions is a community discussion program on world affairs. The Foreign Policy Association (FPA) provides text and videos for discussion groups across the country. The meeting begins with a 30-minute presentation from the FPA summarizing the topic, followed by commentary from a local expert who facilitates a Q&A with the audience. This class will be held in-person at Warm Hearth. Each week's topic and speaker will be sent to registrants via email.

Topics will include:

- American Foreign Policy and the Future of Multilateralism
- American Options in the Middle East
- The Future of Germany in Europe and the Atlantic World
- U.S. - China: The Case for Engagement
- Brazil and the Global South: Confronting a New America
- AI and American Choices
- Energy Security: Challenges for American Foreign Policy
- Organized Crime in the Americas

RECOMMENDED READING

The *Great Decisions 2027 Briefing Book* can be purchased from the Foreign Policy Association bookstore in January at https://fpa.org/bookstore.

27. Great Political Cartoonists: Herblock, MacNelly & Oliphant

Edd Sewell | Thursday, 11:00AM-12:15PM
6 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

The political cartoon has occupied a powerful niche in American political life. Three men define that power in the second half of the twentieth century and the first quarter of the twenty-first: Herbert Block [Herblock], Jeff MacNelly, and Pat Oliphant. The three did not draw the same way, vote the same way, or even agree on the purpose of political cartoons. Herblock was a committed liberal. MacNelly was the only major cartoonist of his generation working from the right. Oliphant, arriving from Australia, refused to be pinned to any party at all. This course will examine their lives, work, and legacy.

INSTRUCTOR

Edd Sewell is an emeritus faculty member in communication, from Virginia Tech. He has taught several LLI classes over the years, mostly about editorial or political cartoons.

28. From the Conquest to the Cartels: Rewriting Mexican History

Jacqueline Bixler | Wednesday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
6 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

Cultural historians and writers have spent more than a hundred years re-writing Mexico's "official" history, which valorized the victors and silenced the defeated. In this course, we will read and discuss texts (narrative, drama, poetry) that challenge institutionalized versions of the Conquest of Mexico, the Revolution of 1910, and the rise of the drug cartels. Engaging with these texts and each other, we will deepen our understanding of Mexico's complicated past and present.

REQUIRED TEXT

- Mariano Azuela, *The Underdogs*. Penguin Classics, 2008.
- Juan Rulfo, *Pedro Páramo*. Profile, 2023.
- Juan Pablo Villalobos, *Down the Rabbit Hole*. Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2010.

INSTRUCTOR

Alumni Distinguished Professor Emerita and Mexican wannabe, **Jacqueline Bixler** taught Spanish and Hispanic culture at Virginia Tech for 43 years.

29. Pompeii: Stories From, Through, and Beyond the Ruins

Andrew Becker | Monday, 3:00PM-4:00PM
3 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

As a unique (and heartbreaking) snapshot of a culture suddenly frozen in time, Pompeii is fascinating not only for historians but also for new generations of novelists, artists, filmmakers, and documentarians. It is frequently referenced in popular culture as well. In this three-part course, we'll explore some of the stories that surround Pompeii. What was this city like before and during the eruption? How can we best understand it in its own time and as it continues to resonate in our imagination?

INSTRUCTOR

Andrew Becker retired from Virginia Tech in December after a long career teaching ancient Greek and Latin languages, literatures, and cultures at Virginia Tech. Since 2015, Andy has also traveled as a lecturer accompanying trips to Italy and Greece sponsored by Smithsonian Journeys.

30. Ancient Egyptian Tombs and Towns: Discoveries from the Burial Sites at Giza

Lauren DiSalvo | Wednesday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
3 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

This course introduces participants to the Old Kingdom archaeological site of Giza in ancient Egypt, home to the Sphinx and three massive pyramids constructed more than 4,000 years ago. The pharaohs buried in the Great Pyramids dominate most discussions of Giza, but others were interred there too. Evidence and artifacts bring us closer to the lives of the builders, their methods and tools, and their valued place in the community. Join us as we explore Giza, its famous pyramids, the royal burials that took place there, and the thriving workmen's town and cemetery that made it all possible.

INSTRUCTOR

A classical archaeologist turned art historian, **Lauren DiSalvo** conducts research at the intersections of these two disciplines. One of her long-time side interests has been the archaeology of ancient tombs.

31. Resolved Virginians: Southwest Virginia and the American Revolution

Garrett Channell | Monday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
4 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

Everyone knows about Washington, Jefferson, and the famous Virginians in Colonial America. This course focuses instead on the men from the other side of the state - on Virginia's frontier. Learn about their views on independence and why they may or may not have joined the Revolution.

Taught over five weeks, this class starts at the build-up to the Revolution and ends with local militias' involvement. Learn about the roles of people from the New River Valley, Roanoke Valley, and beyond, and how their involvement shaped the American Revolution and, eventually, independent Virginia.

INSTRUCTOR

Garrett Channell is a professional historian and the executive director of the Salem Museum. He has a bachelor's degree in history from Roanoke College and a master's degree in museum studies from Harvard University Extension School.

32. William Bradford Alwood: Virginia Tech's Renaissance Man

Michael Weaver | Tuesday, 3:00PM-4:00PM
3 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

This course introduces participants to the legacy of William Bradford Alwood (1859-1946) an internationally known fruit grower and agriculturist. During his 16-year tenure, at Virginia Tech. Professor Alwood headed the departments of horticulture, entomology, and mycology. He was a pioneer entomologist whose research helped to revive the American fruit industry after the Civil War. Alwood was a key figure in the transformation of agricultural education into a research-based enterprise. In this three-part class, we'll study the man and his times beginning with the early days of the nation's agricultural crisis, through the development of research programs, extension divisions, labs, and collections.

INSTRUCTOR

Michael Weaver is an emeritus professor in the entomology department at Virginia Tech where he served as a professor and extension specialist for forty years. This course centers around Weaver's forthcoming book *William Bradford Alwood – Virginia Tech's Renaissance Man.*

33. The Art and History of Capital Global Cities from Rome to D.C.

Michelle Moseley | Monday, 12:00PM-1:15PM
5 weeks: 2/22, 3/1, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29 | Warm Hearth | Limit: 75 | Fee: $35

Explore the marvels of cities and their monuments in Rome, Constantinople, Paris, Amsterdam, and Washington D.C. Capital cities have always been more than merely functional; they advertise cultural power and values. We'll discuss how these values are mapped into urban layouts and encoded in sculptures and civic monuments. How are capital cities stages for art and architecture in ways that express national identity? We'll consider problems that arise when modern life overtakes ancient infrastructures, and urban landscapes are altered over time by changing regimes. If you enjoy art, history, architecture, and armchair travel, this class is for you!

INSTRUCTOR

Michelle Moseley is a professor of art history with a research focus on Early Modern Netherlands (c. 1500-1700). She has taught three previous courses for LLI.







Living Well

34. Memory Masterclass: Brain Training to Support Cognitive Aging

Joanna Culligan | Monday, Wednesday, 3:00PM-4:30PM
6 weeks: 3/29, 3/31, 4/5, 4/7, 4/12, 4/14, 4/19, 4/21, 4/26, 4/28, 5/3, 5/5 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 20 | Fee: $35 | Materials Fee: $20

Memory Masterclass is for adults interested in learning how to maximize their brain health. This six-week course, which meets twice a week, teaches strategies you can apply to daily life that can strengthen your brain's reserve as you age. Topics include learning and encoding new information and practical lifestyle strategies and adaptations to support brain health, including exercise, nutrition, and sleep. With 20 students maximum, this course is designed to promote socialization and engagement, which is one of the best brain workouts you can get. Sign up with your partner, your friends, and your neighbors to become Memory Masters!

INSTRUCTOR

Joanna (Jo) Culligan, Ph.D. is the director of the Engagement Center for Creative Aging at Virginia Tech and an advanced instructor in the Human Development and Family Science Department. She is a translational researcher and music therapist who specializes in community programming to support brain health and wellness.

35. Staging the Conversations that Communicate End-of-Life Wishes

Jerry Niles, Anne Campbell, Marian Silverman, Richard Shepherd | Monday, 9:00AM-10:30AM
6 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

Each of us would like our life story to end on our own terms. Modern technological advances and hyper-medicalization of end-of-life (EOL) choices have made reaching that goal more complicated and, in some cases, elusive. Informed behavior and active conversation can provide an essential tool for us to increase the probability that we will live on our own terms to the end. This course seeks to encourage and empower participants by sharing EOL facts and discussing how those facts and options impact our preparations for the end of our own lives.

INSTRUCTORS

Anne J. Campbell spent 25 years as a women's health nurse practitioner in Blacksburg. She is active with the Sojourn Center for Hospice Care project, a non-profit organization seeking to establish an inpatient hospice facility in the New River Valley.

Jerry Niles is a professor emeritus of education at Virginia Tech where he spent 33 years on the faculty preparing teachers.

Richard Shepherd was an emergency room physician for 20 years and then a family physician with Carilion Family Practice in Blacksburg for 15 years.

Marian Silverman, a nurse and industrial psychologist, was clinical director of Hospice of Northwest Ohio for 12 years.

36. Age Out Loud: Reimaging the Years Ahead

Chris Moore | Monday, 3:00PM-4:00PM
6 weeks: 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

This interactive six-week course challenges the common assumption that growing older means shrinking or becoming less relevant. Participants travel through six "basecamps" to examine limiting beliefs, reclaim the value of experience, strengthen vitality, rediscover purpose, deepen connection, and reimagine the adventure ahead. Storytelling, reflection, discussion, and practical exercises help participants identify a concrete next step for living forward with purpose, connection, and possibility.

REQUIRED TEXT

Chris Moore, *Age Out Loud* (can be ordered at ageoutloudbook.com)

INSTRUCTOR

Chris Moore is the author of *Age Out Loud* and founder of Senior Remodeling Experts. In this course, he draws on forty years in construction and more than a decade teaching the Certified Aging-in-Place curriculum. Chris's work has been featured on PBS's *Empowering Seniors* and WDBJ's *Here at Home*, where he challenges the outdated belief that aging is a story of decline.

37. & 38. Cooking a Vegetarian, Ethiopian Feast

SELECT ONE SESSION DATE

37. Session 1 | Johnna Elliott, Leslie Daniel | Monday, 2:00PM-6:00PM
1 week: 2/15 | Blacksburg Presbyterian Church | Limit: 12 | Fee: $15 | Materials Fee: $15

38. Session 2 | Johnna Elliott, Leslie Daniel | Thursday, 2:00PM-6:00PM
1 week: 2/25 | Blacksburg Presbyterian Church | Limit: 12 | Fee: $15 | Materials Fee: $15

This hands-on cooking course will provide an overview of six vegetarian, Ethiopian dishes and then divide participants into six work groups to prepare them. We'll make three hot dishes, two salads, and *injera* (the bread used to eat the food). Lentils, split peas, collard greens, tomatoes, and peppers will be featured ingredients. Some dishes are spicy, others mild.

Come hungry as we'll eat afterwards in a community meal. Please note that the food will be served on several shared platters. Although utensils are not typically used to eat Ethiopian food, forks will be available.

INSTRUCTORS

Johnna Elliott and **Leslie Daniel** are not of Ethiopian descent, but they each separately fell in love with the cuisine at restaurants in large cities. Some years ago, not finding Ethiopian food in Blacksburg and loving to cook, they taught themselves to prepare it and have hosted many successful Ethiopian dinner parties.

39. Cooking Fusion Food Inspired by the Silk Road

Anne McNabb | Friday
2 weeks: 2/26 9:00AM-10:30AM on Zoom, and 3/5 9:00AM-1:30PM at instructor's home
Limit: 12 | Fee: $35

The Silk Road, stretching from the far east to eastern Europe and the Middle East, facilitated the distribution of new products and the incorporation of new ingredients into traditional dishes across national borders. In an introductory Zoom class, we will discuss notable examples of this historical process and introduce the recipes we'll cook the following week. Then we will meet at the instructor's home for a morning of cooking followed by a multi-course lunch. This course was previously offered in Fall 2025; some new recipes will be included in Spring 2027.

INSTRUCTOR

Anne McNabb is a professor emerita of biological sciences and former associate dean of the graduate school at Virginia Tech. She is an avid cook who has taught Chinese and Moroccan cooking classes for LLI. She is particularly interested in international cuisines.

40. & 41. Appreciating Wines of the Eastern United States

SELECT ONE SESSION DATE.

40. Session 1 | Randall Horst | Monday, 3:00PM-4:30PM
6 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22
Vintage Cellar | Limit: 40 | Fee: $35 | Wine Fee $150. Pay the wine fee directly to Vintage Cellar by check or credit card. Look for instructions after enrollment.

41. Session 2 | Randall Horst | Wednesday, 3:00PM-4:30PM
6 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24
Vintage Cellar | Limit: 40 | Fee: $35 | Wine Fee $150. Pay the wine fee directly to Vintage Cellar by check or credit card. Look for instructions after enrollment.

The Eastern United States is experiencing a renaissance in winemaking, with producers crafting wines that are increasingly recognized for their quality and distinctiveness. Overall, Eastern U.S. wines tend to emphasize freshness, acidity, regional character, and a wider range of native and hybrid grape varieties than many wines from the Western United States. Eastern U.S. wines often blend Old World subtlety with New World fruit, showcasing aromatic whites like Viognier and Vidal Blanc and structured reds such as Cabernet Franc and Norton, with Virginia's Bordeaux-style blends. The oldest winery in the U.S. is Brothers Winery in New York soon to be celebrating 200 years.

INSTRUCTOR

Randall Horst is a wine enthusiast, buyer for Vintage Cellar in Blacksburg, and veteran instructor for LLI. He has taught wine appreciation every term since 2015.

42. Experience Yoga!

Stephanie Buffett, Gail Harbert | Monday & Wednesday, 9:00AM-10:30AM
4 weeks / 8 sessions: 2/15, 2/17, 2/22, 2/24, 3/1, 3/3, 3/8, 3/10
CRC, InBalance Yoga | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

Following grounding meditation, a wide variety of yoga postures (asanas) will connect movement with the breath, always exploring ways to improve circulation, flexibility, strength, and balance. Slow and intentional movement through various asanas will be combined with Vinyasa Yoga, where poses are linked together, flowing from one pose to the next connected by the breath. Alternative chair options will be demonstrated for especially challenging poses. This course is appropriate for most; however, those with significant musculoskeletal, joint or cardiovascular issues should consult their healthcare team.

INSTRUCTORS

Stephanie Buffett is a retired United States Air Force nurse and has practiced yoga for over 16 years. She is a certified Hatha Yoga instructor and has completed Vipassana and Presence Meditation training. Her assistant, **Gail Harbert**, has experience with yoga and provides alternative chair yoga poses to aid in improved range of motion, balance, and strength.

43. Learn to Play American Mah Jongg

Suzan Antin, Marilyn Cavell, Mària Moll | Wednesday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
5 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28 | Blacksburg Community Center | Limit: 16
Fee: $35 | Materials Fee: $18 (for National Mah Jongg Playing Card)

Mah Jongg is an exciting game of skill and strategy, with just enough luck to make it unpredictable. It's played with a set of 152 tiles based on Chinese characters and symbols. In Mah Jongg, players try to be the first to build a winning hand from among a list of patterns on the year's game card. This class will start with the rules and strategies of the game. Then we'll learn through guided practice at tables with experienced players. Find out why Mah Jongg has surged in popularity recently in this fun and friendly introduction to the game.

INSTRUCTORS

Suzan Antin, **Marilyn Cavell**, and **Mària Moll** have enjoyed playing American Mah Jongg for almost ten years and are currently instructors for the Mah Jongg interest group in the Blacksburg Newcomers Club. Suzan also teaches at the Blacksburg Jewish Community Center.

44. Euchre: The Card Game for Everyone

Lois Harris, Phillip Harris | Thursday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
6 weeks: 3/25, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29 | Blacksburg Community Center | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

In 1862, the Library of Congress Law Librarian, Charles Wharton Meehan, declared Euchre to be the "queen of all card-games." It was certainly popular with Mark Twain and his wife, Olivia, who reportedly played Euchre on their honeymoon. While not as well-known in the 21st century, Euchre remains popular nationwide, especially on college campuses. It is a fun and friendly game, suited to sociable gatherings and groups of all ages. Easy to learn, Euchre can be enjoyed quickly. Join this class and you will learn to play and soon be eager to play again. "*Your deal…*"

INSTRUCTORS

Lois Harris, now retired, previously served as the director of accounting for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ("ELCA"), headquartered in Chicago.

Her husband, **Phil Harris**, is a retired attorney who served as the ELCA general counsel until 2018. Lois and Phil grew up in the "Euchre Belt" (sometimes referred to as the Midwest) in families where everyone played this card game. Together they represent 130+ years of Euchre experience and enjoy teaching the game to others.

45. Grow Your Own Veggies

Erica Jones | Tuesday, 9:00AM-10:00AM
2 weeks: 3/30, 4/6 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 20 | Fee: $25

Growing your own food is extremely satisfying. Together we'll explore strategies and tips for growing three easy vegetables (lettuce, pole beans, and tomatillos) and one trickier one (tomatoes). Whether you have a large garden or pots on a patio, you can succeed. We'll discuss timing, diseases, varieties, and more.

INSTRUCTOR

Erica Jones is a lifelong gardener and certified Master Gardener.

46. Tapping into Nature's Bounty: Making Maple Syrup

Tom Hammet | Tuesday, 1:00PM-3:00PM
3 weeks: 2/16, 2/23, 3/2 | CRC, Garvin Room | Limit: 22 | Fee: $35 | Materials Fee: $10

This hands-on course offers participants a unique opportunity to experience firsthand a sweet Virginia tradition - the sustainable tapping of maple and other tree species to produce delicious syrup. The course will incorporate a variety of learning experiences: brief lectures on the history of and equipment used in production, a field experience demonstrating tapping techniques, independent return trips to collect and store sap, and a final session devoted to making and tasting maple syrup. Cooking with syrup and making syrup-based products will also be included.

INSTRUCTOR

Tom Hammett is an emeritus professor of forest products in the Department of Sustainable Biomaterials at Virginia Tech, where he continues to teach and conduct outreach in a variety of sustainable, nature-based enterprises. He has raised awareness about the heritage of maple syrup production and other non-timber forest products in this region and has introduced a range of tree syrups to folks in Virginia and throughout the region.

47. AI for Genealogists: Practical Tools for Family Historians

Rebecca Novy | Tuesday, 9:00AM-10:15AM
3 weeks: 2/16, 2/23, 3/2 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

AI is changing genealogy research, but knowing when to trust it (and when not to) makes all the difference. This three-session course introduces practical AI tools for family historians. We'll explore what AI does well and where it falls short, how to use it to analyze records and draft narratives of findings, and how to organize and make sense of a DNA match list. Designed for hands-on learning, each session pairs real genealogy tasks with honest guidance on AI's strengths and limitations. You will leave the class equipped to use these tools confidently and critically in your own research.

INSTRUCTOR

Rebecca Novy is the owner of Novy Genealogy and has been a professional genealogist since 2018. With a background in education, she loves to teach genealogy classes!

48. Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation

Jamie McReynolds | Tuesday, 9:00AM-10:30AM
6 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4 | Unitarian Universalist Congregation | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

Mindfulness is simply being aware of what's happening in the moment, without wishing it were different. Mindfulness needs to be experienced and practiced to realize the benefits of being present to your life, instead of ruminating on the past or focusing on the future. This course will cover some of the attitudinal foundations of mindfulness, including acceptance, non-judging, non-striving, letting go/letting be, beginner's mind and loving kindness.

INSTRUCTOR

Jamie McReynolds is a retired Unitarian Universalist community minister and mindfulness meditation teacher. He has been practicing meditation for 40 years.

49. Zen for Daily Life

Russell Gregory | Tuesday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
6 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

Zen for Daily Life dispels the mystery of Zen Buddhism with a short introduction to its history, development, and core practices. The aim of this course is to make the study of Zen approachable and directly applicable to daily life. We'll use Rahul Karn's *A Zen Quote a Day* to guide our thinking. The quotes collected in this book invite reflection and reward re-reading; discussing them together will deepen our understanding of the Zen path. So embrace your initial confusion, and bring your curiosity and courage. The course promises to give you a new way to live in the present and in the presence of what is.

INSTRUCTOR

Russell Gregory is an emeritus professor of religious studies from Radford University with a specialty in the Hebrew Bible.

50. Introduction to Conscious, Holistic Fasting: History, Tradition, and Current Practice

Jenn Schuppe | Tuesday, 11:00AM-12:15PM
6 weeks: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

Fasting is a deep, healing, spiritual tradition that humans have been engaging in for thousands of years. Join us in this interactive class as we explore this tradition from a variety of perspectives: historical, physiological, emotional, spiritual, and communal. We'll discuss the hows and whys of fasting as it is practiced today and the safety issues involved. The course does not advocate for fasting in any individual case, but it will give participants the background to discuss this option with trusted medical providers. Our focus will be on water-only fasting, but we'll touch briefly on intermittent fasting and juice fasting.

INSTRUCTOR

Jenn Schuppe, a doctor of naturopathic medicine, is a 2010 graduate of Sonoran University of Health Sciences in Tempe, Arizona. She feels strongly that few of us have truly encountered the awe-inspiring healing capacities that lie deep within each of us.

51. Understanding Relationships: A Family Therapist's Perspective

Fred Piercy | Monday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
1 week: 4/12 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $15

In this presentation, a family therapist will reflect on personal relationships and what makes them stronger and more satisfying. He will share insights based on current research and theory, as well as his own professional and personal experience. Understanding relationships is not always a completely intuitive process, so the presenter will weave in thought-provoking, humorous, and helpful examples as prompts and illustrations. More than a conventional lecture, the presentation will incorporate information, demonstration, and focused discussions, with the goal of clarifying how relationships work and what we can do to improve them.

INSTRUCTOR

Fred Piercy has 45 years of experience conducting and/or teaching marriage and family therapy. He was a tenured professor of marriage and family therapy at Texas A&M Commerce and Purdue University, as well as at Virginia Tech, where he served as department head and associate dean.

52. How to Read Your Own Mind: Cultivating the Art of Deeper Thinking

Lee Pierson | Wednesday, 3:00PM-4:30PM
3 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

A chatty email from a friend prompts an "inkling," a feeling that "*something is wrong*." In this course, we will investigate how to follow up on such feelings by thinking "creatically": overriding the faulty assumptions that *make* bad critical thinking and *break* good creative thinking. This is what you can do that Artificial Intelligence still cannot do! We'll practice this process together in class through no-pressure exercises emphasizing the 3 C's of Comprehension, and Creative and Critical Thinking.

INSTRUCTOR

Lee M. Pierson, Ph. D. (Psychology, Cornell University), has taught thinking skills to students from grade school to grad school and beyond to educational and corporate clients in the U.S. and Canada. He was for many years the director of an adult education program at Fairleigh Dickinson University's Petrocelli College.





53. Transforming Conflict from Breakdown to Breakthrough

Reese Ramos | Wednesday, 9:00AM-10:30AM
4 weeks: 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

Conflict is an unavoidable part of life, but it can become an opportunity for growth rather than frustration. In this engaging four-session course, participants will explore practical, research-informed strategies for understanding and navigating conflict with greater confidence. You'll learn how personality, communication styles, and emotions influence conflict, while developing skills to listen effectively, communicate with clarity, and approach difficult conversations with curiosity instead of defensiveness. Through discussion, real-life examples, and practical exercises, you'll gain tools to strengthen relationships, improve decision-making, and handle everyday conflicts with greater confidence.

INSTRUCTOR

Reese Ramos is the current university ombuds and director of the University Ombuds office, a resource at Virginia Tech dedicated to helping faculty, staff, and students better manage conflict.

54. The Science of Living Well

Vicky Dierckx | Friday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
6 weeks: 2/19, 2/26, 3/5, 3/19, 3/26, 4/2 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

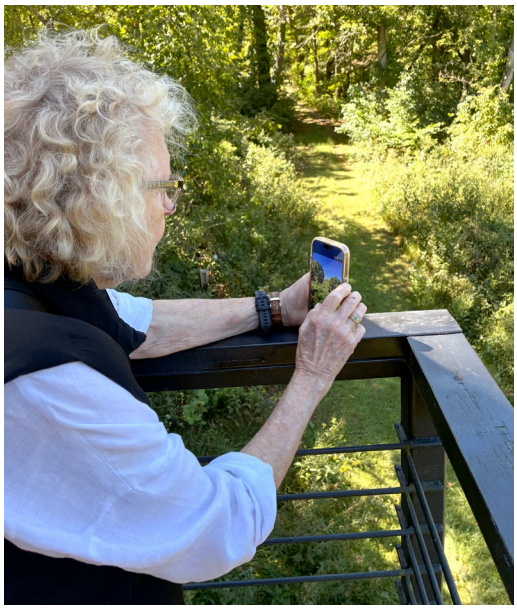
Based on the science of well-being and positive psychology, this interactive course explores what research tells us about living well and leading a happier and more fulfilling life. Each class combines engaging discussions, evidence-based concepts, and practical exercises that help participants apply the science to their everyday lives. Between sessions, participants will have the opportunity to try simple activities that reinforce the skills learned in class and encourage lasting positive change. This course was previously offered in Fall 2024 under the title "The Why and How of Happiness."

INSTRUCTOR

Vicky Dierckx is an adjunct lecturer in the marketing department at Virginia Tech, where she teaches the undergraduate course, Personal Well-being and Professional Success. She also delivers presentations and workshops on well-being, stress management, and positive leadership for government agencies and organizations.







Science, Environment, Medicine, & Technology

55. The Geological History of Virginia

Ken Eriksson, W. Lee Daniels | Thursday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
4 weeks: 2/18, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

This course will discuss the geological history of Virginia dating back more than one billion years, in a plate tectonics context. Following a brief overview of rock types, we will examine the geology of the Appalachians, Piedmont, and Coastal Plain. The final part of the course will examine the processes that were responsible for the modern soil landscape across Virginia, including the New River Valley.

INSTRUCTORS

Ken Eriksson, emeritus professor of geosciences at Virginia Tech, retired in 2020 following a 40-year career. His field of research is sedimentary geology, and he has published extensively on the geology of the Appalachians.

W. Lee Daniels, emeritus professor of plant and environmental sciences, retired in 2022 following a 42-year career at Virginia Tech. He is a soil scientist and has published extensively on the soils of Virginia in relation to geology, land use, and other factors.

56. Appreciating the Biodiversity of the Southeast

Eric Hallerman | Monday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
5 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $35

With its ancient, unglaciated landscapes, the Southeast is a temperate-zone hotspot for plant and animal biodiversity. This natural history has resulted in many species of forest trees, invertebrates (such as freshwater mussels), and vertebrates (including fishes, salamanders, and mammals). Yet, this rich biodiversity is largely unrecognized outside the professional communities that conserve and manage regional species. In this five-week course, speakers knowledgeable about key floral and faunal groups characterizing the Southeast will discuss the diversity of these groups and explain the natural history that led to our rich regional heritage.

INSTRUCTOR

Emeritus Professor of Fish and Wildlife Conservation, **Eric Hallerman**, has long worked on the population genetics and evolution of fishes and other aquatic species. His work relates these processes to the natural history of the North American continent.

57. Mysteries Beneath the Surface of Streams and Lakes

Fred Benfield | Thursday, 9:00AM-10:15AM
5 weeks: 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

When you were wading in the lake at summer camp, did you ever wonder what kinds of critters lived beneath the surface? Or why your feet and legs felt so cold while the rest of your body remained warm as bathwater? On hikes along local woodland streams recently, have you thought about life under the water and how it might be affected by organic debris, effluents, and urban runoff? And why are we seeing more of those ominous algal blooms that discolor the water and cause problems for livestock and humans? Together, we'll penetrate the surface of lakes and streams to explore these mysteries and more.

INSTRUCTOR

Fred Benfield taught and conducted research in freshwater ecology for roughly 50 years as a member of the Department of Biological Sciences at Virginia Tech.

58. Making and Preserving Memories: Human Brain Function Over Time

Kylee Smith-Russel | Monday, 9:00AM-10:00AM
3 weeks: 2/15, 2/22, 3/1 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $35

This course examines the neuroscience of memory from multiple angles: the distinct types of memory and their functions, how memories are formed and stored in the brain, and how aging and disease alter memory over time. Students will also explore evidence-based strategies for supporting cognitive health and preserving memory as we age.

INSTRUCTOR

Kylee Smith-Russel is a postdoctoral fellow at Virginia Tech specializing in research on traumatic brain injuries (TBIs). She earned her doctorate in behavioral neuroscience from the University of Texas and focuses on identifying blood biomarkers to predict outcomes after TBIs in children and adults.

59. Urological Health

Mike S. Chiang | Tuesday, 9:00AM-10:30AM
2 weeks: 3/16, 3/23 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $25

Urological health plays an important role in overall wellbeing for both women and men. In this two-part class, a retired board-certified urologist with over 40 years of clinical practice will help participants understand some of the common urological conditions that affect quality of life. The session on men's health will include discussions of prostate conditions, prostate cancer, and sexual medicine. The women's health presentation will explore, among other topics, urinary tract infections, incontinence, and hormone replacement. Ample time will be reserved for questions from the floor.

INSTRUCTOR

Mike Chiang, M.D. practiced medicine in Valdosta, Georgia before retiring and moving to Blacksburg in 2024. In retirement, he has enjoyed painting, woodworking, and participation in LLI classes.

60. Plant Communication: Lessons from a Career with Parasitic Plants

Jim Westwood | Wednesday, 11:00AM-12:30PM
1 week: 2/17 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 36 | Fee: $15

Since ancient times, poetry, folklore, and mythology have represented plants as sentient beings gifted with powers of communication. Within the last hundred years or so, scientists have undertaken the rigorous study of plant-to-plant communication - its various methods and the purposes it serves within a larger environmental context. Much can be learned from the study of parasitic plants. Because they obtain their nutrition from a host plant rather than conducting their own photosynthesis, they have become master communicators. This presentation explores the sophisticated abilities of parasitic plants to locate and attach to their hosts as a fascinating case study in plant communication.

INSTRUCTOR

Jim Westwood is a retired professor in the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences at Virginia Tech, where his research program focused on parasitic plants.

61. The Natural History of Darwin's Galapagos: Pristine to Anthropocene

Peter Graham, William Hopkins, Ignacio Moore | Wednesday, 4:00PM-5:30PM
3 weeks: 2/24, 3/3, 3/10 | CRC, Concept Room | Limit: 25 | Fee: $35

This three-session, discussion-centered seminar will center on the natural history of Galapagos, the archipelago's importance to the evolutionary thinking of Charles Darwin, and the challenges these once-pristine islands face in an age of tourism and human settlement. Out-of-class reading, podcasts, and documentary-viewing will complement class discussions and guest lectures, with two or more of the instructors collaboratively participating in each session. We'll cover the natural history of Galapagos, its geology, flora, and fauna; Darwin in Galapagos; and Galapagos in the Anthropocene era. If scheduling permits, participants will have the opportunity to connect via Zoom with Virginia Tech faculty and students on site in Galapagos.

INSTRUCTORS

Peter Graham, professor emeritus of English, edited *The Portable Darwin* and authored *Darwin's Sciences* with botanist and science historian Duncan Porter. He is also author of the comparative study, *Jane Austen & Charles Darwin: Naturalists and Novelists.*

William Hopkins, director of Virginia Tech's Global Change Center and professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation, studies how anthropogenic disturbances trigger physiological and behavioral responses in wildlife.

Ignacio Moore, professor of biology, studies physiological and behavioral adaptations to unique environments, focusing primarily on the adaptive responses of tropical birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

62. Are Radio Waves Damaging Your Health?

Tim Pratt | Friday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
1 week: 4/9 | Warm Hearth | Limit: 75 | Fee: $15

Fifty years ago, the only radio waves to which everyone was subjected came from radio and TV broadcast transmitters. Today, we are closely surrounded by radio transmitters: cell phones, Bluetooth devices, thousands of low earth orbit satellites, leaky microwave ovens, and police radar speed measurement systems. How do our bodies respond to this assault by radio waves? Can they cause cancer or other diseases? This presentation will examine the possibility of damage from radio waves, the regulatory framework that exists to protect our health, and two sources of radio waves that are known to cause damage to humans.

INSTRUCTOR

Tim Pratt is a retired professor from Virginia Tech's College of Engineering. His research centered on many aspects of radio communication and radar.

63. Meet Microcontrollers, the Brains Behind Our Tools and Devices

Carl Stoesz | Wednesday, 1:00PM-2:30PM
3 weeks: 2/17, 2/24, 3/3 | CRC, Curiosity Room | Limit: 15 | Fee: $25 | Materials Fee: $25

Microcontrollers are everywhere! If you have ever operated a remote control, used a fitness tracker, or tapped on a touchscreen, you have engaged with a microcontroller. Yet most of us know little about how these minicomputers work. This course is a hands-on primer on microcontrollers - what they are, what they do, where they are found, and how to get started working with them. Following an introductory lecture, participants will use a microcontroller beginner's kit to build and run simple projects. No knowledge of programming is required for this plug and play project. A final class will explore the role of AI as a tool in computer programming. Laptop required.

INSTRUCTOR

Carl Stoesz is a retired mechanical engineer who has been working with microcontrollers both professionally and as a hobby for over 15 years. Using a microcontroller, he has made a breathalyzer, a kiln heater controller, a rocket altimeter with GPS and radio transmission, a motor position controller and more!

Online Registration: Helpful Hints

Having trouble with your password?

If you're repeatedly being asked to change your password, the issue is likely that it contains characters the registration system doesn't accept. This can sometimes happen when using a password generator. When creating your password, make sure it meets all of these requirements:

- At least 12 characters
- At least 1 uppercase letter
- At least 1 lowercase letter
- At least 1 number
- At least 1 of these special characters: ! * + - / ? @
  Please note: These are the only special characters allowed.

Join the waitlist!

Is the program you wanted already filled? Add your name to the waitlist. We can often accommodate additional students simply by moving a class to a larger room. Your waitlist registration helps us gauge interest and make those adjustments when possible. Last term, we were able to move most waitlisted members into their requested classes.

Not sure if you can attend yet?

Registration remains open for each program until its first session has taken place. Once you know what works for your schedule, simply return to the registration site and sign up for the classes you can attend. Check out the handy guide at the front of this catalog that groups courses into Term I and Term II, making it easier to find classes that start later in the term.

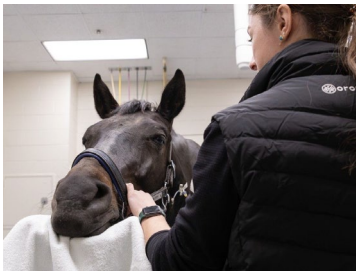
REGISTRATION OPENS THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

Register online by visiting the LLI Home page at
www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning and clicking REGISTER.

SCAN TO REGISTER

64. From Discovery to Patient Care: How Veterinary Clinical Trials Turn Innovation into Treatment

Friday, 2/26, 2:00 PM-4:00PM
Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine, VMIA (Administrative) Building, Duck Pond Drive, entrance adjacent to the grove of trees | Limit: 24 | Fee: $15



How does a promising research idea become a treatment for veterinary patients? Go behind the scenes of veterinary clinical trials and discover their critical role in advancing animal health. Through real-world examples from the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine, we'll explore how discoveries move from the laboratory to the clinic, improving care for pets and their families. Learn how collaboration, innovation, and scientific rigor turn promising ideas into better medicine.

After the talk, student ambassadors will lead a short tour to see classroom spaces, multidisciplinary and clinical skills labs, and small and large animal teaching hospital areas.

PRESENTER

Robyn Fox, LVT, is a clinical trials coordinator at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine with more than 20 years of experience in veterinary medicine. She manages clinical research activities and supports patient care, helping bring innovative treatments from research into clinical practice.

65. From Artifact to Exhibit: How the Montgomery Museum Tells Our Stories

Friday, 4/9, 10:30 AM-11:45AM
Montgomery Museum of Art and History, 4 E. Main Street, Christiansburg | Limit: 30 | Fee: $15



Join the staff of the Montgomery Museum of Art and History for a behind-the-scenes tour of the museum exhibits and collection storage spaces. Learn how artifacts find their way to the museum, how they are cataloged and cared for, and how curators use these collections for exhibits and patron research. You will have time to explore the exhibits on you own after the tour.

PRESENTERS

Sherry Wyatt is executive director of Montgomery Museum of Art and History. **Grace Attalah** is collections and communications coordinator at the museum

66. Exploring Karst and Wildflowers at Mill Creek Springs Preserve

Tuesday, 4/13, 11:00 AM-4:00PM
Mill Creek Springs Natural Area Preserve | Limit: 12 | Fee: $15



The Nature Conservancy's Mill Creek Springs Preserve, just northeast of Blacksburg, is a protected natural area not normally open to the public. Visit during peak spring wildflower season to enjoy a spectacular display of woodland wildflowers and learn about this unique karst landscape. Our guide will explain how underground caves and springs shape the preserve's ecology and discuss efforts to protect this important conservation area amid growing development pressures. Bring your camera—if we have timed it right, the wildflowers should be in bloom!

The hike is about 2 miles roundtrip, along a relatively level creek bed. Expect to cross the creek and possibly get wet feet. Pack a lunch.

PRESENTER

Wil Orndorff is the karst protection coordinator for the Virginia Division of Natural Heritage, which serves as Virginia's lead agency resource for cave and karst related issues. He has studied the karst hydrology of the system that feeds Mill Creek Springs (TNC Blake Preserve) in Montgomery County and the invertebrate fauna that live in the cave and springs.

67. & 68. Take Flight: Hands-On Drone Experience

SELECT ONE SESSION DATE

67. Session 1 | Friday, April 16, 1:30PM-3:30PM
Virginia Tech Drone Park, 2143 Oak Park, Blacksburg (near Duck Pond) | Limit: 20 | Fee: $15

68. Session 2 | Friday, April 30, 1:30PM-3:30PM
Virginia Tech Drone Park, 2143 Oak Park, Blacksburg (near Duck Pond) | Limit: 20 | Fee: $15

Learn the basics of drone operation in this introductory session at the Virginia Tech Drone Park. After a short classroom overview and safety briefing, participants will move to the outdoor netted flight cage to try their hand at flying a drone, weather permitting. With guidance from our host and trained interns, everyone will enjoy about five minutes of personal flight time and the thrill of piloting their own drone in a safe, supportive environment.

GUIDE

Veronica Spradlin is the operations and training manager of the Virginia Tech Drone Park.



69. & 70. Wildflower Walk at Falls Ridge Preserve

SELECT ONE SESSION DATE

69. Session 1 | Wednesday, 4/21, 10:00AM-11:30AM
Falls Ridge Preserve, Elliston. | Limit: 20 | Fee: $15
Group will meet in Blacksburg and carpool to preserve.

70. Session 2 | Thursday, 4/22, 10:00AM-11:30AM
Falls Ridge Preserve, Elliston. | Limit: 20 | Fee: $15
Group will meet in Blacksburg and carpool to preserve.

Falls Ridge Nature Preserve is 20 – 30 minutes from Blacksburg, but it is a hidden treasure given that the preserve has been closed to the public for 5 years. This is your chance to learn about the marvelous spring flora and fauna of this Nature Conservancy property and to enjoy the lovely travertine waterfall, karst landscape, caves and amazing wildflowers during this spring environment.

This is an easy to moderate hike with mostly dirt trails. There are challenging steps along the way, so bring your walking sticks.

PRESENTERS

Barbara Glaser and **Sandy Weber** are experienced Nature Conservancy volunteers who enjoy sharing the beauty of the Falls Ridge Preserve.



71. Art on the Streets: A Walking Tour of Downtown Roanoke

Friday, 4/23, 1:30PM-3:30PM
Meet in the lobby of the Hotel Roanoke | Limit: 20 | Fee: $15

Join City of Roanoke arts leaders for a walking tour of Downtown Roanoke, exploring resident-led public art strategies. The 1.5-mile walk will feature murals, sculpture, and partners working together through the arts and humanities to create a welcoming environment, support artists, advance community goals, and create every day the place they want to be.

PRESENTER

As the City of Roanoke's arts & culture coordinator, **Douglas Jackson** staffs the 15-member Roanoke Arts Commission as they advance the community through collective strategies building on the city's strong arts and humanities assets.

72. Behind the Fences: Virgina Tech's Livestock Research Centers

Tuesday, 4/27, 10:00AM-11:30AM
Etgen Learning Center, 400 Plantation Road NW, Blacksburg | Limit: 20 | Fee: $15

Did you know Virginia Tech maintains cattle, sheep, and horse centers within Blacksburg's town limits? Join Dave Linker for a behind-the-scenes tour of these Plantation Road facilities and learn about the care, management, and research that support the university's animal science programs. With more than 25 years of experience, Dave shares engaging stories and practical insights – and you might even catch a glimpse of newborn calves or lambs during this fascinating visit.



PRESENTER

Dave Linker is a retired farm manager who oversaw agricultural operations and livestock management at the Plantation Road facilities. His work included managing the sheep center, cattle facilities and equestrian center, as well as providing expertise on artificial insemination and other animal husbandry practices.

73. & 74. The Linkous-Kipps House: A Historic Restoration in Blacksburg

SELECT ONE SESSION DATE

73. Session 1 | Wednesday, 4/28, 10:00AM-11:30AM
Linkous-Kipps House, 2190 Merrimac Road, Blacksburg | Limit: 20 | Fee: $15

74. Session 2 | Thursday, 4/29, 10:00AM-11:30AM
Linkous-Kipps House, 2190 Merrimac Road, Blacksburg | Limit: 20 | Fee: $15



Set amid a beautiful Blacksburg horse farm, the Linkous-Kipps House is one of Virginia's best-preserved examples of early 19th-century log architecture. Owned by the Linkous and Kipps families for six generations, the house is undergoing historic restoration by its new owners, the Graham family. Enjoy a presentation and tour exploring its connections to the Preston family, a Revolutionary War prisoner, and a Civil War bullet hole still visible in the transom glass.

Note: Upstairs access requires climbing stairs; no elevator is available.

75. Explore Glen Alton with a Ranger

Tuesday, 5/4, 9:30AM-1:30PM
Glen Alton Day Use Area, approximately 45 min to 1 hour drive from Blacksburg. Carpooling encouraged. | Limit: 20 | Fee: $15

PRESENTER

Beth Christensen is a forest ranger with the Eastern Divide Ranger District.



Glen Alton is a 304-acre property in Giles County that was a working farm until the 1980s. Majestic trees, open pastures and picturesque buildings create a pastoral setting that invites wandering. We'll walk along trails that meander through wetlands, riparian woodlands, hardwood forests, open meadows, pond habitats, and coniferous stands for just over an hour with a forest ranger as a guide. We'll return to the picnic tables to eat our bag lunches before heading back to Blacksburg.

This is a relatively easy walk.

76. Restoring Forest and Wetlands on Toms Creek Farm

Wednesday, 5/5, 10:30AM-12:30 PM
Park and meet at 10:30AM Sunnyside Pentecostal Holiness Church, 2275 Lick Run Road, approximately ½ hour from Blacksburg. | Limit: 15 | Fee: $15



The Obenshain family has been farming in Montgomery County for 90 years. They acquired the Thompson Place Farm in the early 1950s. In 2015, the family partnered with the New River Land Trust to place a conservation easement on the farm's 400 contiguous acres that include the current stream and wetland bank site.

Beth Obenshain, one of the 12 family members who own the farm, and New River Land Trust Director John Eustis will explain the 15-year stream and wetland mitigation project to restore the native forest and wetlands along Toms Creek and Keisters Branch. Visitors will be driven to the site but are also welcome to walk in the fields and wade in the creek [if they want] as they learn about the complexities of restoring wetland vegetation, replanting trees and removing acres of invasive plants. We'll also learn some history of this part of Toms Creek settled originally by the Price family near Longshop and Sunnyside.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT
Free Lectures

MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT: FREE LECTURES AT WARM HEARTH

LLI Sustaining Partner: Warm Hearth Village

Warm Hearth Village has been a Sustaining Partner of the Lifelong Learning Institute of Virginia Tech since its founding. By generously providing meeting space and ongoing support, Warm Hearth helps LLI offer a wide range of programs and activities. In return, LLI welcomes Warm Hearth residents to attend our free lectures each term, regardless of membership status. This longstanding partnership has played an important role in LLI's success, and we look forward to continuing it for years to come.

Non-member Warm Hearth residents are invited to attend the following talks held at Warm Hearth; registration is not required.

77. Understanding NIL and the Changing World of College Sports

Derek Gwinn | Monday, 2/8, 10:00AM-11:30AM
Warm Hearth Village Center, Tall Oaks Room | Limit: 75 | Fee: $0



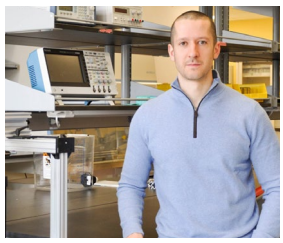
It's a new world in college sports. Derek will help us understand how NIL (Name, Image, & Likeness) and revenue-sharing work for athletes, teams, and Virginia Tech. Then we'll get into questions, including yours. What is the role of coaches and administrators, and the broader impact on student-athletes and teams? From where does the money come, and who decides who gets it? Does every athlete get paid? What about the non-revenue sports? Do athletes have agents? How does jealousy among athletes play out? Are classes even required? How is VT funding compared with other ACC schools? Come grab this opportunity to learn from a knowledgeable person!

PRESENTER

Derek Gwinn helps lead regulatory strategy for Virginia Tech Athletics, including policies and processes related to NCAA, ACC, NIL, and university requirements. He joined VT Athletics in 2013 and assumed the role of executive associate athletic director of regulatory strategy and governance in 2023.

78. Histotripsy: Using Ultrasound to Treat Cancer Non-invasively

Eli Vlaisavljevich | Friday, 2/19, 10:00AM-11:30AM
Warm Hearth Village Center, Tall Oaks Room | Limit: 75 | Fee: $0



Histotripsy is a new, noninvasive treatment that uses focused ultrasound waves to destroy diseased tissue without surgery, radiation, or heat. Guided by real-time imaging, the technology can precisely target tumors while limiting damage to surrounding tissue. Dr. Vlaisavljevich will explain how histotripsy works, discuss his research on its use in treating liver cancer, and explore other promising applications for both human and veterinary medicine.

PRESENTER

Eli Vlaisavljevich is a professor of biomedical engineering at Virginia Tech. He directs a focused ultrasound (FUS) laboratory developing histotripsy and other FUS technologies for non-invasive treatment of cancer and other diseases.

79. You shouldn't say that!": Good Words, Bad Words, and Who Gets to Decide

Abby Walker | Friday, 3/5, 10:00AM-11:30AM
Warm Hearth Village Center, Tall Oaks Room | Limit: 75 | Fee: $0

No one wants to say the wrong thing, but because words have complex social histories and language is constantly inconstant, it's not always clear what the right words are. This presentation explores different components of words, ways that a word's usage can change over time, and evidence of how we react neurophysiologically to taboo words. We'll learn that there are no inherently "bad" words, but that doesn't mean that there aren't real consequences to our word choices.

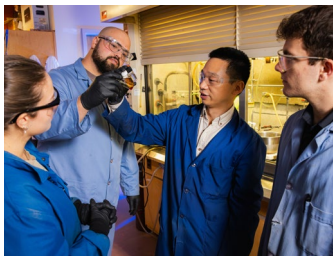
PRESENTER

Abby Walker is a linguist in the English department at Virginia Tech, with research interests in language variation and change and how people listen to each other. Her favorite U.S. English word is "lollygagger."

80. Turning Plastic Waste into Soap, Detergent, and More

Greg Liu | Tuesday, 3/23, 10:00AM-11:00AM
Warm Hearth Village Center, Tall Oaks Room | Limit: 75 | Fee: $0

This talk highlights recent Virginia Tech research from the Liu group on turning waste plastics into useful products such as soap, detergents, lubricants, and other chemicals. Learn how this innovative "upcycling" process works and how it could give discarded plastics a valuable second life. The research offers promising ways to reduce plastic pollution, reuse existing materials, and create more sustainable alternatives to products traditionally made from petroleum.



PRESENTER

Guolian (Greg) Liu is professor of chemistry, chemical engineering, and materials science & engineering, and Blackwood Faculty Fellow at Virginia Tech. His research interests include polymer recycling and upcycling.

81. Meet and Protect Wildlife!

Megan Johnston | Friday, 3/26, 1:30PM-2:30PM
Warm Hearth Village Center, Tall Oaks Room | Limit: 75 | Fee: $0

Ever wonder where to safely place a turtle you see crossing the road? Join the Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center to learn about how to protect the wildlife around us. We'll learn about the work that the Center does as well as background information, stories and educational facts about live "Wildlife Ambassadors" who will be joining us. Come away with a better appreciation of how you can help to protect our local wildlife.



PRESENTER

Our presenter and the live guests are from the Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center of Roanoke. The Center is a nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation facility and hospital for injured, sick and orphaned native Virginia wildlife. The Center is dedicated to treating and safely releasing these animals back to their homes in nature as well as educating the public about the protection of wildlife.

82. Attracting and Nurturing Pollinators (Ideally with Native Plants)

Stephanie Huckestein | Tuesday, 4/6, 4:00PM-5:00PM
Warm Hearth Village Center, Tall Oaks Room | Limit: 75 | Fee: $0

Local pollinators co-evolved with the plants indigenous to our area. Many pollinators are very specialized in the types of flowers they will visit and the species of plants on which they will feed.

Learn about the ecological relationships and unique characteristics of area pollinators and the plants on which they rely for food and shelter.



PRESENTER

Stephanie Huckestein loves the fascinating world of plants. She teaches plant-focused courses at Radford University and manages the Biology Greenhouse on campus.

83. Understanding Your Choices: Advance Care Planning, Palliative Care, and Hospice

Beth Scott | Wednesday, 4/14, 3:00PM-4:30PM
Warm Hearth Village Center, Tall Oaks Room | Limit: 75 | Fee: $0

This presentation offers a practical, compassionate guide to planning for healthcare decisions during serious illness. Learn how advance directives, healthcare powers of attorney, and living wills can help ensure your wishes are understood and respected. The talk will also explain the differences between palliative care and hospice, when each may be appropriate, and how they support patients and caregivers. Participants will be encouraged to consider what matters most and begin important conversations with loved ones and healthcare providers.

PRESENTER

Beth Scott is director of case management at LewisGale Montgomery and LewisGale Pulaski, with decades of experience. She oversees a team of RN case managers, social workers, and a palliative care nurse. She holds a leadership role on the Clinical Ethics Committees at the Montgomery and Pulaski hospital locations.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT

Free Webinars

AARP Virginia

84. Understanding and Overcoming the Rural Urban Divide

Anthony Flaccavento | Fri, 2/12, 1:30PM-3:00PM
Zoom | Limit: unlimited | Fee: $0

What drives the divide between rural and urban America—and what might help bridge it? The first half of this session explores the economic, cultural, communication, and media forces that contribute to misunderstanding and mistrust, while challenging common assumptions about rural people and communities. The second half turns to solutions, examining promising and tested strategies for rebuilding trust, expanding rural prosperity, strengthening connections, and finding common ground across the rural-urban divide.

PRESENTER

Anthony Flaccavento is a farmer, author, economic development consultant, and former congressional candidate from Abingdon, Virginia. He is the co-founder and executive director of the Rural Urban Bridge Initiative.

85. Tracking Wild Cats: Cameras, Genetics, and Conservation

Marcella Kelly | Fri, 4/2, 1:30PM-3:00PM
Zoom | Limit: unlimited | Fee: $0

How do scientists study animals they rarely see? Large wild cats living in dense jungle environments are notoriously elusive, but remote cameras and genetic sampling are revealing their hidden lives. Professor Kelly will show how these non-invasive technologies help researchers track jaguars, pumas, and other wild cats and learn about their behavior, populations, and habitats. Discover how this research supports conservation efforts—and enjoy remarkable photos and videos captured along the way.



PRESENTER

Marcella Kelly, professor in the Virginia Tech Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation, has studied jaguars, pumas, and other large wild cats in Belize for more than 20 years. Using remote cameras and genetic sampling, she investigates the lives of animals that researchers rarely encounter in person.







LLI Spring 2027

REGISTRATION WORKSHEET

Please use this worksheet to collect your choices and to facilitate online or phone registration beginning January 14, 2027; credit cards only. Some material fees may apply; see catalog description for details. Walk-in and mail-in registration are not available.

COURSES

- ☐ 1. Read Local: Mills Kelly's *Virginia's Lost Appalachian Trail*, Thursday, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 11:00AM-12:00PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 2. Crime, Culture, and Color in Four Contemporary African American Mysteries, Thursday, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 1:00PM-2:30PM, Zoom, $35
- ☐ 3. Reading Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, Wednesday, 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, 5/5, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 4. Perceval Everett's *James* meets Mark Twain's *Huck Finn*, Tuesday, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/16, 3/23, 3/30, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 5. Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*: A Table Reading, Wednesday, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 9:00AM-10:30AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 6. Poems of Emily Dickinson, Monday, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 11:00AM-12:15PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 7. From Memory to Memoir: How to Write Your Life Story, Monday, 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 11:00AM-12:30PM, Zoom, $35
- ☐ 8. Italian for Travelers, Thursday, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 9. Introductory Spanish, Friday, 4/2, 4/9, 4/16, 4/23, 4/30, 5/7, 3:00 PM-4:30 PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 10. Shakespeare on Screen, Tuesday, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 11. Reader's Theatre: Acting for All Without Fear or Fuss, Tuesday, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 3:00PM-4:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 12. Lives in Music: Claudio Monteverdi, Monday, 3/29, 4/5, 1:00PM-2:00PM, in person, $25
- ☐ 13. Big Bands: Then and Now, Wednesday, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3:00PM-4:30PM, Zoom, $35
- ☐ 14. Philosophy in Popular Songs, Tuesday, 3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23, 1:00PM-2:30PM, Zoom, $35
- ☐ 15. Caravaggio and the Reinvention of Painting, Wednesday, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 1:00PM-2:15PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 16. Drawing Open Studio, Tuesday, 3/16. 3/23, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 17. Watercolor Open Studio, Friday, 2/19, 2/26, 3/5, 3/12, 3/19, 10:00AM-12:00PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 18. Exploring Oil Painting, Monday, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29, 9:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 19. Paint Your Own Barn Quilt, Thursday, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25, 4/1, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 20. Floral Design, Thursday, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 10:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 21. Knit a Classic Cardigan with Us, Friday, 2/19, 2/26, 3/12, 3/19, 4/2, 4/9, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 22. Make a Quilted Basket Square with Appliqué Flowers, Thursday, 2/18, 2/25, 3/11, 2:00PM-5:00PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 23. Sewing Machine Health, Tuesday, 2/23, 9:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $15
- ☐ 24. Law and Order and the U.S. Criminal Justice System, Thursday, 2/18, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 25. The Rise of Digital Oligarchs: Challenges to Democratic Governance, Wednesday, 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, 11:00AM-12:00PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 26. Great Decisions, Wednesday, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31, 4/7, 12:00PM-1:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 27. Great Political Cartoonists: Herblock, MacNelly & Oliphant, Thursday, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6, 11:00AM-12:15PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 28. From the Conquest to the Cartels: Rewriting Mexican History, Wednesday, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 29. Pompeii: Stories From, Through, and Beyond the Ruins, Monday, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3:00PM-4:00PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 30. Ancient Egyptian Tombs and Towns: Discoveries from the Burial Sites at Giza, Wednesday, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 31. Resolved Virginians: Southwest Virginia and the American Revolution, Monday, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 32. William Bradford Alwood: Virginia Tech's Renaissance Man, Tuesday, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 3:00PM-4:00PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 33. The Art and History of Capital Global Cities from Rome to D.C., Monday, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22, 12:00PM-1:15PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 34. Memory Masterclass: Brain Training to Support Cognitive Aging, Monday, Wednesday, 3/29, 3/31, 4/5, 4/7, 4/12, 4/14, 4/19, 4/21, 4/26, 4/28, 5/3, 5/5, 3:00PM-4:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 35. Staging the Conversations that Communicate End-of-Life Wishes, Monday, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22, 9:00AM-10:30AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 36. Age Out Loud: Reimaging the Years Ahead, Monday, 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3, 3:00PM-4:00PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 37. Cooking a Vegetarian, Ethiopian Feast, Monday, 2/15, 2:00PM-6:00PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 38. Cooking a Vegetarian, Ethiopian Feast, Thursday, 2/25, 2:00PM-6:00PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 39. Cooking Fusion Food Inspired by the Silk Road, Friday, 2/26 9:00AM-10:30AM on Zoom, and 3/5 9:00AM-1:30PM at instructor's home, in person, $35
- ☐ 40. Appreciating Wines of the Eastern United States, Monday, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22, 3:00PM-4:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 41. Appreciating Wines of the Eastern United States, Wednesday, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3:00PM-4:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 42. Experience Yoga!, Monday & Wednesday, 2/15, 2/17, 2/22, 2/24, 3/1, 3/3, 3/8, 3/10, 9:00AM-10:30AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 43. Learn to Play American Mah Jongg, Wednesday, 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 44. Euchre: The Card game for Everyone, Thursday, 3/25, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 45. Grow Your Own Veggies, Tuesday, 3/30, 4/6, 9:00AM-10:00AM, in person, $25

- ☐ 46. Tapping into Nature's Bounty: Making Maple Syrup, Tuesday, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 1:00PM-3:00PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 47. AI for Genealogists: Practical Tools for Family Historians, Tuesday, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 9:00AM-10:15AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 48. Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation, Tuesday, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4, 9:00AM-10:30AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 49. Zen for Daily Life, Tuesday, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 50. Introduction to Conscious, Holistic Fasting: History, Tradition, and Current Practice, Tuesday, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4, 11:00AM-12:15PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 51. Understanding Relationships: A Family Therapist's Perspective, Monday, 4/12, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 52. How to Read Your Own Mind: Cultivating the Art of Deeper Thinking, Wednesday, 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 3:00PM-4:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 53. Transforming Conflict from Breakdown to Breakthrough, Wednesday, 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 9:00AM-10:30AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 54. The Science of Living Well, Friday, 2/19, 2/26, 3/5, 3/19, 3/26, 4/2, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 55. The Geological History of Virginia, Thursday, 2/18, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 56. Appreciating the Biodiversity of the Southeast, Monday, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 57. Mysteries Beneath the Surface of Streams and Lakes, Thursday, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 9:00AM-10:15AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 58. Making and Preserving Memories: Human Brain Function Over Time, Monday, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 9:00AM-10:00AM, in person, $35
- ☐ 59. Urological Health, Tuesday, 3/16, 3/23, 9:00AM-10:30AM, in person, $25
- ☐ 60. Plant communication: Lessons from a Career with Parasitic Plants, Wednesday, 2/17, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 61. The Natural History of Darwin's Galapagos: Pristine to Anthropocene, Wednesday, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 4:00PM-5:30PM, in person, $35
- ☐ 62. Are Radio Waves Damaging Your Health?, Friday, 4/9, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 63. Meet Microcontrollers, the Brains Behind Our Tools and Devices, Wednesday, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 1:00PM-2:30PM, in person, $25

FIELD TRIPS

- ☐ 64. From Discovery to Patient Care: How Veterinary Clinical Trials Turn Innovation into Treatment, Friday, 2/26, 2:00PM-4:00PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 65. From Artifact to Exhibit: How the Montgomery Museum Tells Our Stories, Friday, 4/9, 10:30AM-11:45AM, in person, $15
- ☐ 66. Exploring Karst and Wildflowers at Mill Creek Springs Preserve, Tuesday, 4/13, 11:00AM-4:00PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 67. Take Flight: Hands-On Drone Experience, Friday, 4/16, 1:30PM-3:30PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 68. Take Flight: Hands-On Drone Experience, Friday, 4/30, 1:30PM-3:30PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 69. Wildflower Walk at Falls Ridge Preserve, Wednesday, 4/21, 10:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $15
- ☐ 70. Wildflower Walk at Falls Ridge Preserve, Thursday, 4/22, 10:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $15
- ☐ 71. Art on the Streets: A Walking Tour of Downtown Roanoke, Friday, 4/23, 1:30PM-3:30PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 72. Behind the Fences: Virgina Tech's Livestock Research Centers, Tuesday, 4/27, 10:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $15
- ☐ 73. The Linkous-Kipps House: A Historic Restoration in Blacksburg, Wednesday, 4/28, 10:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $15
- ☐ 74. The Linkous-Kipps House: A Historic Restoration in Blacksburg, Thursday, 4/29, 10:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $15
- ☐ 75. Explore Glen Alton with a Ranger, Tuesday, 5/4, 9:30AM-1:30PM, in person, $15
- ☐ 76. Restoring Forest and Wetlands on Toms Creek Farm, Wednesday, 5/5, 10:30AM-12:30PM, in person, $15

FREE MEMBER PROGRAMS

- ☐ 77. Understanding NIL and the Changing World of College Sports, Monday, 2/8, 10:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $0
- ☐ 78. Histotripsy: Using Ultrasound to Treat Cancer Non-invasively, Friday, 2/19, 10:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $0
- ☐ 79. You shouldn't say that!": Good Words, Bad Words, and Who Gets to Decide, Friday, 3/5, 10:00AM-11:30AM, in person, $0
- ☐ 80. Turning Plastic Waste into Soap, Detergent, and More, Tuesday, 3/23, 10:00AM-11:00AM, in person, $0
- ☐ 81. Meet and Protect Wildlife!, Friday, 3/26, 1:30PM-2:30PM, in person, $0
- ☐ 82. Attracting and Nurturing Pollinators (Ideally with Native Plants), Tuesday, 4/6, 4:00PM-5:00PM, in person, $0
- ☐ 83. Understanding Your Choices: Advance Care Planning, Palliative Care, and Hospice, Wednesday, 4/14, 3:00PM-4:30PM, in person, $0
- ☐ 84. Understanding and Overcoming the Rural Urban Divide, Friday, 2/12, 1:30pm-3:00PM, Zoom, $0
- ☐ 85. Tracking Wild Cats: Cameras, Genetics, and Conservation, Friday, 4/2, 1:30pm-3:00PM, Zoom, $0

REGISTRATION OPENS THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

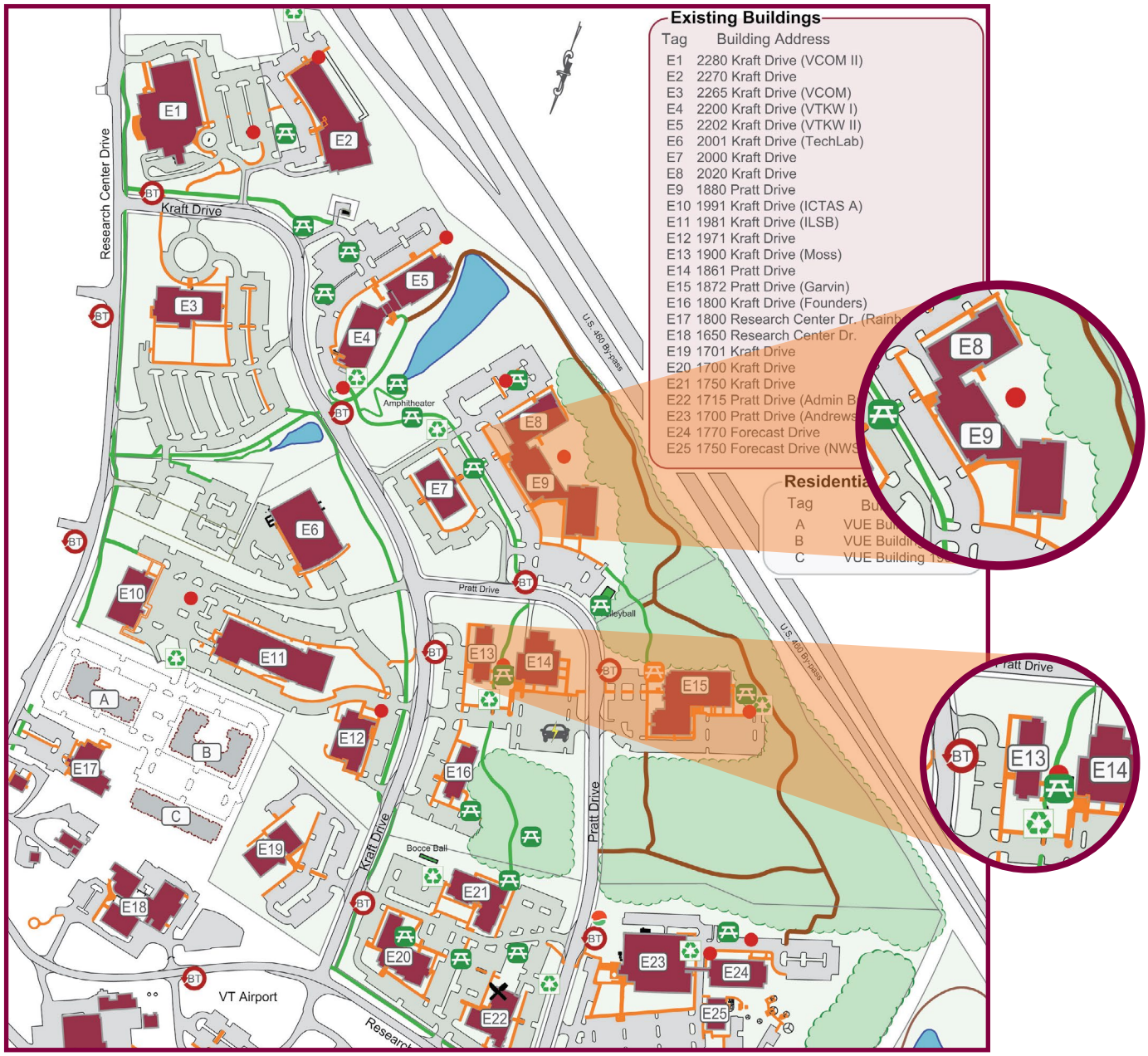
Corporate Research Center Locations

E7: 2000 Kraft Dr.
In Balance Yoga
Suite 1204

E9: 1880 Pratt Dr.
Concept Room
Suite 2018

E13: 1900 Kraft Dr.
Curiosity Room
Suite 1000

E15: 1872 Pratt Dr.
Garvin Room
Suite 1050



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SPRING 2027

REGISTRATION OPENS
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

SCAN TO REGISTER

Register online by visiting the LLI Home page at **www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning** and clicking REGISTER.

This is the fastest way to register. We recommend registering online whenever possible.

Register by phone by calling **540-231-5182.**

Please note that there will be no walk-in or mail-in registration.