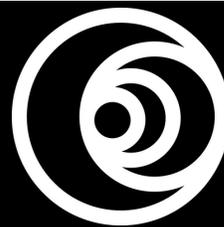


WORD to the WISE



Center for Learning in Retirement



CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

*By Rhee Ellen Wright
Advisory Committee Chairperson*

Welcome to 2025!

The Spring semester of the RVC Center for Learning in Retirement (CLR) is underway with a variety of interesting topics and class leaders. I loved seeing the photographs of our own CLR members on the front of the catalog and couldn't wait to read it cover to cover. I enjoy choosing my classes each semester. A special thanks to everybody who contributed to this impressive catalog.

The Advisory Committee continues to work on projects and activities for our members. The Speakers' Bureau has been busy with PowerPoint presentations about CLR to various community groups. Membership Committee volunteers delivered the spring catalogs to over 200 locations and are working on creating a new membership brochure. Curriculum Committee is now planning classes for summer. Media/Publicity Committee updates information online and in the hallway display cases. The Social Committee has a Movie Matinee and Lunch event planned for March 12th, and they are planning more events for the rest of the year. The Newsletter Committee, as you can see, has provided us with another informative and interesting newsletter. Thank you to the committee chairs, office staff and volunteers for their time, expertise, and dedication to CLR.

We welcome your feedback and comments. CLR can always use help. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering. It's a great way to continue our CLR mission.

I look forward to my classes and the special activities this semester; I hope you do too. Keep spreading the Word about CLR. See you around!

Welcome

INTRODUCING BECKY STOKES LAMBERT

By Ellen Taylor-White

Allow me to introduce you to Becky Stokes Lambert, Executive Director of Community and Continuing Education at Rock Valley College, or Tammy's new boss. Becky oversees RVC Traffic Safety, Community & Continuing Education, and CLR. Her programs help kids as young as six years old in Whiz Kids to 100+ years old in CLR. She grew up locally and actually graduated from RVC followed by degrees from NIU and DeVry University.



continued on page 2

Rock Valley College
CENTER FOR LEARNING IN RETIREMENT

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RockValleyCollege.edu/CLR
(815) 921-3931



COMMITTEE CORNER

MEDIA & PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

By Ellen Taylor-White

Remember that wonderful presentation with videos your CLR instructor showed during his or her class? It was perfect for helping demonstrate the point, and it worked seamlessly. Could the instructor be so tech savvy to have done this? Perhaps, or maybe one of the members of the Media & Publicity Committee helped with this.

Volunteer members of Media & Publicity are working mostly behind the scenes, to help our instructors with their presentations. It might be preparing a video so it will open directly from the PowerPoint slide to helping scan and load photos, or even helping with the basic slide set-up.

According to Arnie Ames, acting chairperson for this committee, members usually work either on the media or the publicity side of the committee. "Fifteen years ago, publicity involved local newspapers," CLR Program Director Tammy Lewis stated, "but this committee has been able to change with the times."

Some of the publicity components include things like checking the CLR website for accuracy and functionality. Have you noticed the two display cases just down the hall from the office? The displays are changed each semester to highlight classes, upcoming activities, and artwork by CLR students and art instructors. And new this year, committee members are working with Tammy to submit posts for the RVC Center for Learning in Retirement Facebook page. Watch these posts for special event highlights and notices that might affect you.

The Media & Publicity Committee is one of the many volunteer committees that help keep CLR running as smoothly as possible. But unlike the others, the committee members work in many diverse ways to achieve their goals. The current committee members are **Bob & Lois Bertolasi, Jack & Connie Croffoot, Sue Custer, Sandra Krause, Diane McCue, Rand Moore, Larry & Carol Nelson, Ed Stein, and Arnie Ames** as the interim chairperson.

The Media & Publicity Committee meets about every two months depending on need. If you would like to learn more about this committee or might have an interest in serving as the chairperson, please get in touch with Arnie Ames by leaving a message for him at the CLR office.

INTRODUCING BECKY *continued*

When you ask Becky about her job history, she smiles and says she enjoyed every one of them. Her work history involves working for a number of Park and Recreation districts, most recently at the McHenry Conservation District. As an anthropology major, she loved the types of education she could provide to the folks in an environment where education was not the number one focus of the organization. The weekend after we met, Becky was off to a conference she had worked towards setting up while still at the Conservation District to finish what she had started. Becky takes her jobs seriously but still has fun. Moving back to the area a few years ago, she has family in the Rockford and Cherry Valley areas.

Although she didn't mind the commute to her McHenry job location, she enjoys her current commute to Rock Valley College more. When her present position became available, she smiled and told me she thought it might be nice to work for a place where education is #1.

A big CLR welcome to Becky who has come to the college with some fresh ideas and an energy that is enjoyable to watch as she speaks. She is also open to being an instructor at CLR, so we'll have to keep that in mind. She actually did present a class once at CLR when she was working for the Rockford Park District. She told me she finds CLR a fun place to hang out, so watch for her. She will be one of the smiling faces. Becky loves the community feel at CLR. So do we Becky, so do we!

MOVIE MATINEE



LUNCH

*Come enjoy food, friends,
and a fun movie!*

Wednesday, March 12, 2025



**Rock Valley College
Main Campus/ERC Building
12 - 3 p.m.**

**Cost: \$22 Members
\$27 Non-Members**



COMEDY MOVIE: We are unable to disclose the title of the film due to royalty restrictions, but it's a newer comedy starring five well-known, long-time, award-winning actors. All of them together on screen is a treat. The movie features a serious situation but lots of laughs (and maybe a couple tears) navigating their way through it.

LUNCH: Baked chicken, roast beef sandwiches, cheesy potatoes, California medley veggies, bread & butter, and a variety of cookies catered by Pinnon's, and coffee or water. We'll eat and then watch the movie.

LOCATION: The ERC building on RVC main campus. Lunch will be served in the main lobby in front of the library and the movie will be shown in the Performing Arts Room (PAR) on the lower level. Elevator and stairs are both available.

NOTE: Use the Springbrook entrance to the college. RVC students will be on spring break, so there will be plenty of close parking in Lot 8A in front of the ERC building which is handicap accessible.

Registration Deadline: March 7, 2025

Questions? Call (815) 921-3931

SOCIAL EVENT REGISTRATION

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Special Needs: _____

ID # (office use): _____

MOVIE MATINEE & LUNCH

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

\$22 for CLR Members

\$27 for Non-Members

Check payment \$ _____ Check Number: _____

Cash Payment amount \$ _____

**Please make checks payable to Rock Valley College.
Note: CLR cannot accept credit card payments.**

BRING TO THE CLR OFFICE OR MAIL TO:
Rock Valley College
Center for Learning in Retirement
3301 N. Mulford Road, Rockford, IL 61114

WHAT DO RVC, CLR & RPL HAVE IN COMMON?

By Maryann Leonard

Libraries! Libraries! Libraries!

RVC: You should know about the RVC Estelle M. Black Library. You ask why? So did I. CLR is a community of retired folks who take non-credit courses to feed our sense of curiosity and desire for understanding, and isn't the RVC Library just for use by those enrolled in classes and pursuing a degree? No! Not exclusively anyway. If you live in the local tax district, just present a picture I.D. and you are on track for access to a marvelous resource. (Plus, we have access rights as registered RVC students.)

While the benefits to those seeking a degree are obvious, I will simply describe the library located on the main campus in the ERC building as an incredible resource in general. I was able to tour the library with Lukas Wenner, the archivist and outreach librarian. Because it was front and center near the entrance, my eye caught the Tutoring Desk first. Who doesn't feel better with the sense of support? And to the left was a long row of computers (with connection to Wi-Fi) and another row with charging stations for laptops. The general feel is one of space and light.

Riding the elevator up takes you to stacks of books and more. At one end of the space is a writing room with faculty serving as coaches. On our way to the opposite end were a series of enclosed study rooms that can be reserved in three-hour blocks. Upon arriving at the other end, there is a corner room with bay windows and upholstered furniture for a cozier experience. If you settle in to do some studying, planning, or reflecting, you might even be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of one of the resident swans on campus.

For those of you with grandchildren approaching college age, you now know a little more about one of Rockford's options available to them, and you can be a more educated resource. Isn't it nice to know we have such an incredible resource available to help meet our needs? If you are interested in taking a library tour, look for the summer CLR class led by Lucas Wenner on July 17.

CLR: We also have our in-house library, located at the Bell Center in Room 007 referred to as the "break room". This small library is maintained by (you guessed it) a volunteer - Gladys Gregorcy. The first descriptor that Gladys offered was that the CLR library was akin to the "free little libraries" that you see in peoples' front yards or along the road - operating on the principle of take a book, share a book. That's right - no sign-outs at this library of donated books. But one request that Gladys emphasized is that returns and donations be placed on the cart in the back corner of the room.

As you head to the back of the room, walking along the left side, notice the "Great Courses" collection of DVDs. This is some of the finest viewing available. To name just a few subjects - American Identity-Great Presidents-Famous Romans-Evolution-Wisdom of History - how is that for a sample of scope? Moving along, you'll see a shelving unit with war stories (some histories, some biographies) covering WWII, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, for example. There are a few audio books on CDs to consider too.

Across the back of the room is the collection of fiction and some additional non-fiction. The top shelf notes large print books and local authors. There is also quite a large collection of jigsaw puzzles. That about covers our collection waiting to be enjoyed by you. Do stop in and take a look.

RPL: Have you taken advantage of the availability of the Rockford Public Library Bookmobile which comes to the Bell Center parking lot every 3 weeks on Tuesdays from 9 to 9:45 am. While it's called a bookmobile, it's really much more. It includes music, movies, games and Chromebook which is a type of laptop computer that can be checked out. In addition, they are working to increase their digital accessibility. You can review the books they have on hand and also order items from the catalog at large. When it comes time to return a book, they can handle that as well.

Check out the Rockford Public Library website and click on the mobile banner. Their hotline number is (815) 966-2742. The spring mobile library dates are also listed on page 8. Thank you, Kathi Kresol, for taking the time to educate us on this terrific resource. Kathi has been with the bookmobile since the beginning and shares her resources with much enthusiasm.

ROCKFORD'S LAURENT HOUSE

By Lou Bowe

Are you familiar with a Usonian home? Have you heard of the Laurent House? Interestingly, some people of the Rockford area are unaware of it. Frank Lloyd Wright, the world-renowned architect designed and built the Laurent home which he called, "my little gem". It was one of his favorites.

Larry Nelson, a CLR member and long-time docent for the Laurent House, will be presenting a special class at the Bell Center on **Monday, March 31 from 2-3:30 p.m.** He will discuss the house in more detail, share many interesting facts, and explain the characteristics of a Usonian home. Don't miss out on this great opportunity to learn more about Rockford's own Laurent House. Register in the CLR office.



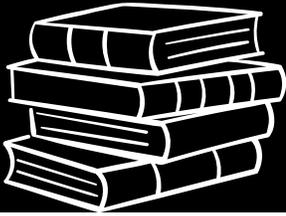
The Laurent House was built for a disabled veteran, Ken Laurent and his wife. After serving in the US Navy during WWII, Ken had surgery in May of 1946 to remove a spinal tumor which left him a paraplegic. The Laurent couple had seen some of Frank Lloyd Wright's homes featured in an August 1948 *House Beautiful* magazine article and felt his architecture would work well with Ken's needs. The Laurent's wrote to Wright specifying their requirements: open floor plan, wide hallways and doorways, lower light switches, and many built-ins. It should be noted that the things Wright included in this home in the 1950's would become things expected in homes for disabled veterans today as a result of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Frank Lloyd Wright decided to design the Laurent House. It is the only home he built for a person with disabilities. After WWII, many Usonian homes, also called the homes of the United States of North America, were built for many families starting over after the war. The houses were to be built for about \$10,000. The homes had 3 main zones for efficiency: a living area, bedroom and kitchen-dining area. There would be no attics or basements. The hemicycle Usonian homes have a curved glass wall situated to allow for maximum exposure for light and heat. The glass wall also helps blend the home with nature aided by the color pallet used by Wright.

The Laurent's moved into their home in 1952, raised two children and lived there for 60 years. After their deaths, the Laurent's home was sold in 2012 to the Laurent House Foundation, a non-profit organization to preserve and protect the home. That year the home was added to the National Register of Historic Homes. The Laurent House located at 4646 Spring Brook Rd in Rockford was opened to the public in 2014, and in 2020 a visitors' center located across the street was opened.

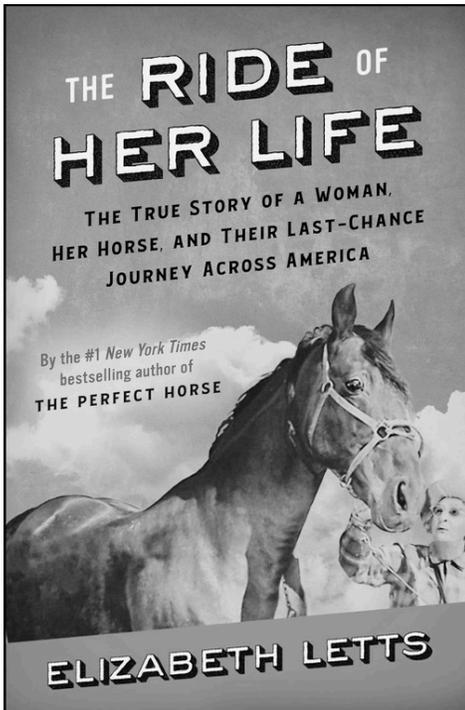


The Laurent House is providing \$5.00 coupons to all students attending the March 31 presentation if they choose to take the house tour. Tours will begin for the season in April. I have come to love this house! I encourage you to take the class and the tour this spring. If you are lucky enough to have Larry as your tour guide, you will be thoroughly introduced to the Laurent family, their lives and their beautiful home.



BOOK NOOK

By Kim Carew



THE RIDE OF HER LIFE

This small book, though less than three hundred pages long, holds a treasure trove of awe of a woman's adventurous undertaking across America. *The Ride of Her Life* by Elizabeth Letts is a true story of 63-year-old Annie Wilkes of Minot, Maine, that is both heartwarming and filled with a colorful history of American life in 1954.

After suffering the loss of her family, her farm, and being given two years to live, Annie decides to follow her heart and, against all advice, heads out on the road with her dog and a horse for the Pacific Ocean; the one place she has always wished to see.

The reader experiences travel during this era and is amazed that Annie did not even own a roadmap; she just headed west. When the going got difficult, she heard her father's words in her mind, which encouraged her to move forward, "Keep going and you'll get there." Annie called herself the original Saddle Tramp and relied on the kindness of strangers to assist her with the essentials of food and board.

Along the way, we meet some American celebrities, such as Art Linkletter, Andrew Wyeth, and Groucho Marx. Yet it is the

common everyday people who enrich Annie's journey and color her two-year adventure across the map.

Based on Annie's journals, newspaper accounts along the way and personal interviews, Letts shares with the reader a tale of perseverance and refreshing glimpses of humanity. Another book of hers worth mentioning is *Finding Dorothy*, the story told by the wife of L. Frank Baum about the creation of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and meeting Judy Garland.

The Ride of Her Life is the CLR Book Discussion group's selected book for March. If you have questions or would like to join us in-person or via Zoom on March 17 at 10 a.m., please contact Malia Hennessy at (847) 347-6454.

GET INVOLVED >>

BOOK DISCUSSION SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP



Upcoming books and meeting dates are listed below. The group meets on the third Monday of the month from 10-11 a.m. at the Bell Center or online.

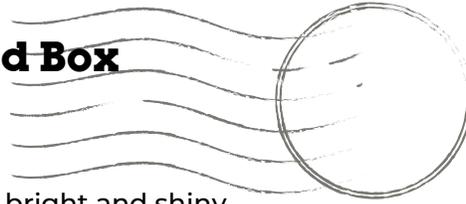
April 21: *The Elephant Whisperer* by Lawrence Anthony
May 19: *The Next Ship Home* by Heather Webb
June 16: *The Nurse's Secret* by Amanda Skenandore

For more information or to be added to the group mailing list, contact Malia Hennessy at (847) 347-6454.



Bigger than a Bread Box

By Jan July - December 2024



Black with a touch of red, it is bright and shiny.

It sits about 4 ½ feet above the ground.

Glowing stars and stripes decorate its sides.

Because it is unique, it pleases me when I look at it.

And hopefully it will avoid the crushing fate of its predecessors.

It protects my mail; letters and bills, magazines and solicitations.

It seldom disappoints.

My mailbox.

Pills

By Jan July - October 2024

Pills, pills, pills, those pesky pills!

Big pills, little pills, round pills, gel pills,
sugary gummies, and capsules.

Pills too big to swallow.

Pills that roll and pills that hide.

Brown pills, red pills, white pills and pink and green and yellow ones

What, no black pills?

Pills, pills, pills, those pesky pills!

Pills that ease your wheeze, make you pee,
calm your itch and lower your blood pressure.

That dissipate your gas and relieve your constipation.

Pills that cause bruises, ease your pain,
make you talk too much,

calm your jitters or make you dizzy.

All those necessary pills that cost a fortune.

And don't get me started on that subject!

Pills, pills, pills, those pesky pills!

NEW ZEALAND MAORI & TRADITIONS OF AOTEAROA

By Joanne Newton



Meet Nicky Bennett who immigrated with her husband Gavin from Aotearoa, the Māori name for New Zealand, to the USA in 1992 during the US nursing shortage. Both born and raised in Te Ika-a-Maui (the north island of New Zealand) at a time when access to Māori culture and language was becoming more mainstream and encouraged. Though not Māori, they were blessed to be deeply involved personally through friends, co-workers and as students with the culture, learning much from their involvement. Having lived in the Rockford area since 1998, both Nicky and Gavin work in the field of nursing. Nicky also manages and volunteers at The Bridge Clinic of Rockford, a free primary care medical center for those without insurance located downtown. Nicky will be leading a class for CLR members on **March 20 from 2-4 p.m.** Be sure to register!

The goal for this class is to share a more in-depth insight into their culture and have some fun. She will explain why it is so precious and meaningful to all Kiwi's (New Zealanders), no matter their background or ethnicity, through stories, language, music, art and photos. Nicky will also highlight the importance of looking at one's own local history and the joy of becoming more aware of First Nations People that reside here in Winnebago County and across the country.

Joining Nicky will be John Messley, a CLR member and professional photographer, who recently visited New Zealand with his wife Karen. He will share some of his photographs from their trip with the class.

✓ check out
RockValleyCollege.edu/CLR
for all the latest CLR info

✓ Check out our first ever CLR promotional video featuring CLR members and instructors.
YouTube.com/watch?v=z7NGI2ZiHzc



RPL
ROCKFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Visit the Mobile Library

Bell School Road Center
East Parking Lot
Tuesday mornings • 9 - 9:45 a.m.

Mar. 4 & 25 • Apr. 15 • May 6 & 27

Take advantage of this convenient library service. Rockford Public Library cardholders can check out and reserve books, check out multimedia, use the computer, and more!

Katie's

coffee·conversation·community

CUP

CARS & COFFEE ROCKFORD

By Al Hoglund

Katie's Cup, located in Rockford's Mid-Town District on 7th Street directly across from the Rockford Board of Education building, is more than just a regular coffee bar. It offers breakfast items that complement coffee and a luncheon menu that consists of soup and sandwiches. The main café has a fireplace that is exposed to all the tables in the main area and has a seating capacity of 50. Katie's Cup is clearly a place that has a pleasant and comfortable atmosphere where friends and groups meet. Katie's hosts musicians on a regular basis. The Bittner Room seats 60 while the Community Room seats 35. They host a variety of meetings e.g., business training, birthday parties, baby showers, book clubs and other private events. The rooms are available at a competitive hourly rate.

In the café area, you may see a group occupying a table or two, playing cards or discussing a committee matter that needs to be resolved. CLR partners with Katie's Cup to offer classes at their location. The next CLR class there is "Cars and Coffee Rockford" presented by Rev. Michael Thomas on **April 29 from 1-2:30 p.m.** He is co-founder of Cars & Coffee and the pastor of Zion Lutheran Church just down the street from Katie's. The presentation for CLR is a \$5 community awareness class. Come to learn more.

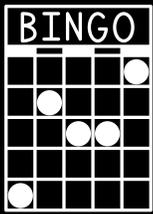


On the 1st Saturday of the month from 9 am-12 pm April through October, Katie's Cup sponsors a car show in the Rockford Board of Education parking lot that is right across the street. This event consists of a hearty mix of vehicle types.

Katie's Cup is the home for Rockford's Midtown Market (farmers market) and is indoors from November through March on the 1st Saturday of the month. During the months of June through October, the Farmers Market is held outdoors in the Rockford Board of Education parking lot on Thursdays. Rockford Midtown Market accepts link (EBT) and they participate in the Link match program. This program aids the communities that have a shortage of fresh produce.

Malika Miller, manager of Katie's Cup, is also the Rockford Midtown Market manager. Malika is the former owner of Social Butterfly Catering in Atlanta, Georgia. She has over 30 years of food and beverage management experience. Her mother, Ruthie D. Fairchild, was a community activist as well as the Outreach Coordinator for Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and at Zion Lutheran Church for many years. Ruthie passed away several years ago, and Malika returned to Rockford to carry on her mother's legacy of serving the needs of the local community.





FREE LUNCH & BINGO

Thursday, March 27
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Bell School Road Center
Room 13

*Hosted by Northern Illinois
Care Coalition (NICC)
in partnership with CLR.*



Lunch will be served followed by a brief educational presentation. NICC members Michelle Bowman from Edward Jones and Lindsey Gregg from PEAK Medical Home Care will share information about financial planning, care services, and the benefits.

Stay for BINGO -- prizes will be awarded to winners!

This event is **free** to attend but **seating is limited** and **reservations are required**.



IMPORTANT

Reserve your seat by calling Lindsey with NICC at (815) 980-0740 no later than March 20. CLR will NOT be taking any reservations for this event.

Northern IL Care Coalition

What is NICC? It's a group of health care professionals who share information and resources for the benefit of the individuals they serve. They work together to promote the safety, health, and wellness of the older adult population of the Northern Illinois region through services as well as community education. They host events throughout the year at various locations to reach individuals in the community to help them plan for future needs or decision-making for healthcare emergencies. CLR thanks NICC for hosting a fun event here for the first time.

WEAVING WORDS

FOR CLR

By Jan July



B	V	C	L	R	E	T	I	R	E
F	U	N	O	J	U	L	R	K	P
I	S	T	A	M	M	Y	O	I	U
N	I	V	N	Q	P	O	A	C	P
A	G	E	X	Y	B	U	S	S	M
N	E	R	I	N	M	W	T	O	T
C	U	P	R	F	F	L	O	E	Z
E	R	A	R	T	I	Z	U	Y	R
O	E	X	C	E	L	S	R	V	C
L	U	C	I	D	M	A	A	R	P

WORDS TO FIND:

AARP
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book

bus
CLR
computer
Erin
Excel
film

finance
fun
learn
retire
RVC
SIG

Tammy
tour
trip
you
Zoom

BONUS WORDS:

ax
but
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loan
lucid
pup
roast

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