



FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Barbara Keating

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF LIFELONG LEARNERS!

October 30, 2025, will mark the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Mankato Area Lifelong Learners. A committee of seven co-chaired by Dave Janovy and Eddice Barber met on that day in 1995 and decided to organize some classes designated as "MSU for Seniors." In the last three decades, we grew to 250 members, experienced the pandemic drop to 150, and now have 244 members. We adopted our mission "to promote vitality in later years," now have a half-time office manager and enjoy a wide range of educational and social activities. Help us celebrate this milestone by joining the anniversary planning team or by sharing your stories and ideas. Please e-mail Colleen.

MANKATO AREA LIFELONG LEARNERS

Excerpt from Minnesota State Mankato *Today Magazine* Article by Joe Tougas

"Launched by MSU Faculty, The Community Group for Adult Learners Continues Toward a Fourth Decade."

"For those in the Mankato area who believe learning goes on well past diplomas or degrees, Lifelong Learners has been a source of good material for nearly 30 years. Launched by a former MSU faculty member, Lifelong Learners is an organization of area residents age 55 and older who enjoy getting together around seminar-like presentations on all types of topics, from biology to the Beatles. There are deep-dive presentations as well as book clubs, teas, dinners and film screenings. It's a way to socialize and grow intellectually, members say."

(The rest of this article can be found at: <https://link.mnsu.edu/mankato-lifelong-learners>)



WELCOME NEW MEMEBERS! WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU!

Daniel Levin	Marla Feikema	Annette McGinness	Alice Weed
Chuck Frost	Kristen Markiewicz	Don McGinness	Harold Weed
Diane Frost	Bob Ihrig	Trish Reedstrom	Gretchen Taylor
Cynthia Rossow	Gail Ihrig	Mary Kendall	Geraldine Mik
John Rassieur	Marlene Engman	Denise Luehmann	
Darrell Jodock	Janet Jones	Joel Luehmann	
Jane Jodock	Steven Jones	Barbara Kirsch	

GREAT DECISIONS 2025

The Mankato Area Lifelong Learners Great Decisions group meets on the second Wednesday of the month from April to November, primarily at Pioneer Bank. The local program gets its speakers through Global Minnesota, which is the Minnesota sponsor of the nationwide Great Decisions program run by the Foreign Policy Association. There are groups like ours across the country which meet to discuss topics selected by the Foreign Policy Association. The topics selected for next year are as follows: *American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads; U.S. Changing Leadership of the World Economy; U.S. China Relationships; India – Between China, the West, and the Global South; International Cooperation on Climate Change; The Future of NATO and European Security; AI and American National Security; and After Gaza – American Policy in the Middle East.* With a new and norm changing President about to take office, this should be an interesting year for the Great Decisions discussions. Please consider joining the group. Membership signup starts in February and should be completed by March so that briefing books can be ordered. The cost is \$50 for the 8 sessions and includes the Foreign Policy Association Briefing Book, which sells for \$35 if purchased from the Foreign Policy Association. Money from the registration is also used to provide a small honorarium to the speakers, most of whom travel to Mankato from the Minneapolis area. (GD Committee chair: Georgia Holmes)



SHARE YOUR IDEAS FOR PRESENTATIONS

The Presentations Committee is always looking for exciting and engaging topics to enrich our Lifelong Learners community. Do you have an idea for a presentation topic and/or know someone who would make a great speaker? We'd love to hear from you! Whether it's a subject you're curious about, a speaker you admire, or someone with a unique story to share, your input is invaluable. Email your suggestions to the Chair of the Presentations Committee, Steve Gilbert, at sgilbertphd@gmail.com



SENIOR TRIPS – MANKATO AREA COMMUNITY ED

Chanhassen Theater – “Grease the Musical” – Wednesday, March 5, 2025.
Register by February 3, 2025. Lunch is included. Cost is \$130.00.

American Swedish Institute private tour and buffet lunch – Friday, April 25, 2025.
Register by March 21, 2025. Lunch is included. Cost is \$99.00.

Go to: <https://link.mnsu.edu/registration>



SAVE THE DATE – APRIL 11, 2025

The US Holocaust Museum's traveling exhibition on Americans and the Holocaust will be coming to the Minnesota State University Mankato's Memorial Library from late March–April 2025. A private exhibition tour for Lifelong Learners members will be on Friday April 11, 2025, at 2:00 pm. The tour will be followed by a speaker.



VALENTINE'S DAY TEA – FEBRUARY 14, 2025

You are invited to join your Lifelong Learner Friends for a Valentine Afternoon Tea on February 14, 2025, 2:00– 4:00 p.m. at the Curiosi-Tea House, 1745 Commerce Drive, North Mankato



WINTER QUARTER 2025 PRESENTATIONS

Presentations \$5 each for **Silver** members Non-member fee: \$10 each session
Registration prior to attendance requested. **Gold** members: Please **register** via email or phone.

#1: Thursday, January 16th, 2 - 4 p.m. – What’s Funny About Aging? Part Two
(Listed in Fall Presentations as well)

Bring your sense of humor! Again! Linda Good will share gems from her extensive collection of entertaining memes, cartoons, and short videos on getting older and the aging process. We can laugh because we can relate to the issues whether presented in jest or satire, are silly or insightful, witty or dull. A collection of humorous and affirmative memes and short musical videos about aging will be presented and used to facilitate discussions about the joys and challenges of aging.

Presenter: Linda Good is a retired MSU professor of early childhood education and human relations. She is a quilter, an avid reader and recently completed her bucket list goal of traveling around the world. She currently facilitates the VINE Memoir Writers' Group. She is a frequent presenter at VINE and other local venues.

Location: Pathstone Latitude, 115 Rogers Street, Mankato

Sponsor: Steve Gilbert

#2: Thursday, January 23rd, 2 - 4 p.m. — Common GI Issues as We Age and How to Prevent Them

Common GI issues when we get older may include GI-related tumors (e.g., colorectal neoplasms) and functional GI disorders such as gastro esophageal reflux, indigestion, constipation, and fecal incontinence. Dr. Wang will provide an overview of these issues and discuss how to manage or prevent them.

Presenter: Ming-Hsi Wang, M.D., Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of Medicine, Mayo Clinic College of Medicine, Rochester, Minnesota. He is also Consultant, Division of Gastroenterology & Hepatology, Mayo Clinic Health System, Mankato. He has published numerous studies on inflammatory bowel disease.

Location: Pathstone Latitude, 115 Rogers Street, Mankato

Sponsor: Anne Fletcher

#3: Saturday, February 1st, 12:30 – 4:30 p.m. — Securing Freedom: A Screening and Discussion of Spielberg’s Lincoln

February 1, 2025, is the 165th anniversary of the passage of the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery. Join us for a screening of Steven Spielberg's acclaimed 2012 film "Lincoln" which tells the inside story of how Lincoln worked tirelessly to accomplish that during his final few months in office. Daniel Day-Lewis won an Oscar for his portrayal of Lincoln. After the movie we'll have a discussion, led by local Lincoln scholar Bryce Stenzel with an assist from Steve Gilbert, about the film's portrayal of historical events, the political challenges of passing the amendment, and the enduring impact of Lincoln's leadership. This event is a meaningful opportunity to reflect on one of the most pivotal moments in American history and its relevance today.

Presenter: Bryce Stenzel is a well-known Mankato historian and teacher; he has portrayed Abraham Lincoln for years both locally and nationally.

Location: Pathstone Latitude, 115 Rogers Street, Mankato

Sponsor: Steve Gilbert

#4: Monday, February 3rd, 2-4 p.m. Empowering Connections: Communication Strategies for Stroke, ALS, and Beyond (This is a ZOOM Presentation)

Stroke, ALS, cerebral palsy, autism and other medical conditions can isolate their victims and partially or totally eliminate their ability to speak. However, innovative technologies are being developed right here in Minnesota to help individuals regain their voice — their *own* voice. Prof. Hyppa-Martin will tell us about UMD's ground-breaking work in this area, including computerized "voice-banking" and eye- and head-controlled speech devices. These advanced technologies are on the cusp of augmenting long-standing practical tools and enabling patients to continue to speak in their own voice, stay socially connected and maintain independence. If you are interested in cutting-edge science and medicine, this talk is for you.

Presenter: Jolene Hyppa-Martin, PhD, CCC-SLP, is an Associate Professor in Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Minnesota Duluth where she directs the Augmenting Language Lab, teaches, and supervises graduate students at the Robert F. Pierce Clinic. Her pioneering work has been featured in local media, Minnesota Public Radio, and peer reviewed journals. Her specialty is Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), i.e. methods, tools, and strategies used to support or replace spoken or written communication for individuals with severe speech or language impairments.

Location: **ZOOM**

Sponsor: Steve Gilbert

#5: Tuesday, February 11th, 1 - 3 p.m.— Not the Camilla We Knew: One Woman's Life from Small-town America to the Symbionese Liberation Army

How did Camilla Hall, a small-town Minnesota pastor's daughter, became one of the most wanted domestic terrorists in the U.S and die in a 1974 shoot-out with LA Police? Through in-depth research and extensive interviews, author Rachel Hanel has sensitively pieced together Camilla's bewildering transformation from a gentle young woman working for social change within the system, into a gun-wielding criminal involved in the kidnapping of Patty Hearst. Camilla Hall's story is of urgent interest for what it reveals about the forces of radicalization. As Hanel ventured ever further into Camilla's past, searching out the critical points where character and cause might intersect, her story became an intriguing, disturbing, and ultimately deeply moving journey into the dark side of America's promise.

Presenter: Rachael Hanel is a Professor of Creative Writing at MSUM and the author of "Not the Camilla We Knew: One Woman's Life from Small-town America to the Symbionese Liberation Army", University of Minnesota Press, 2022.

Location: Pathstone Latitude, 115 Rogers Street, Mankato

Sponsor: Steve Gilbert

#6: Tuesday, February 18th, 2 - 4 p.m. — Strange Tales in Indian Law

This presentation will reveal strange tales of representing a tribe and their casino, being held hostage, and kicking the mafia off the reservation. American Indian tribes have special relationships with federal and state governments allowing varying levels of sovereignty and self-governance, including their own tribal reservations, laws and courts. Representing tribes involves interesting legal and practical challenges.

Presenter: Randall Knutson is a partner at the Knutson & Casey law firm in Mankato, specializing in personal injury claims. He graduated cum laude from Hamline University Law School in 1992.

Location: Pioneer Bank, 1450 Adams St, Mankato

Sponsor: Larry Nicol

#7: Monday, February 24th, 2 - 4 p.m.- The Middle Eastern Conflict and its History

Dr. Jameel Haque will discuss the historical events that have contributed to the current conflicts in the Middle East.

Presenter: Dr. Haque is an associate professor at MSU and is the Director of the Kessel Peace Institute and Coordinator of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

Location: Pioneer Bank, 1450 Adams Street, Mankato

Sponsor: Greg Suskovic



*******Snow Cancellation Policy*******



If the Mankato Public Schools close, we cancel, and no notification is sent out. However, we sometimes cancel even if the local schools are open. So, on a snowy day when Mankato Schools are open, please **check your email** before heading out to a **LLL event or presentation** to make sure it isn't cancelled.

**#8: Tuesday, March 11th, 2 - 4 p.m. — DIY: The Wonderfully Weird History and Science of Masturbation
(This is a ZOOM Presentation)**

MSU Professor Eric Sprankle will take us on a humorous deep dive into the untold story of crusaders on a campaign to suppress masturbation, sex educators fighting back, and everyday people stuck in the middle who just want to touch their genitals in peace. Professor Sprankle will introduce us to a colorful cast of characters: doctors who advocate using chastity devices, wellness influencers who believe ejaculation depletes the body of vital nutrients, pastors who preach masturbation creates mermaids, and vibrator aficionados who teach the curious how to climax. This presentation will challenge what you think you know about the very human need for self-pleasure.

Presenter: Dr. Eric Sprankle is a professor of clinical psychology at Minnesota State University, Mankato. He received his doctorate in clinical psychology from Xavier University in 2009, completed a postdoctoral fellowship in sexual health at the University of Minnesota Medical School in 2011, and was awarded tenure in the psychology department at Minnesota State in 2017. He is the author of the recently published book, *DIY: The Wonderfully Weird History and Science of Masturbation*.

Location: ZOOM

Sponsor: Steve Gilbert

#9: Tuesday, March 18th 2 - 4 p.m. - Famous Trials: The Scopes Trial, Bible vs Evolution

In March of 1925, the Tennessee Legislature banned the teaching of evolution in Tennessee public schools. A small town in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains would be the epicenter of a legal and cultural battle that summer. John Scopes, a substitute teacher and football coach, was charged with unlawfully teaching evolution to his students even though the school issued biology textbook had a chapter on evolution. William Jennings Bryan, three-time presidential candidate would prosecute John Scopes and defend the inerrancy of the Bible. The famed defense attorney Clarence Darrow defended Scopes and his First Amendment right to freedom of thought and speech. The trial would culminate in one of the greatest cross examinations in American Legal history.

Presenter: James Fleming practiced law in Minnesota for 35 years before his recent retirement, 22 of those years as a public defender. He served as the chief public defender for the 15 counties of the Fifth Judicial District in southwest Minnesota, based in Mankato, and later for the Second Judicial District (Ramsey County).

Location: Pioneer Bank, 1450 Adams St., Mankato

Sponsor: Larry Nicol

#10: Thursday, March 27th, 2 - 4 p.m. — Mankato's Hidden History of Racism

A review of property records in Mankato found neighborhoods having covenants and deeds prohibiting local properties from being transferred to non-white persons. A local cemetery also had racially restrictive covenants. Many of these restrictions were put into place as recently as the 1940s and 1950s. Learn about the efforts of the Mapping Mankato Project of Minnesota State University, Mankato to uncover this local legacy of racism.

Presenter: Dr. Angela Jill Cooley, Professor of History at Minnesota State University, Mankato is the team leader of the Mapping Mankato Project. Dr. Cooley specializes in the history of race and civil rights in the 20th century. Ph.D. in History from the University of Alabama, Juris Doctorate from George Washington University Law School, and two-year postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Mississippi's Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

Location: Pioneer Bank, 1450 Adams St., Mankato

Sponsor: Larry Nicol

#11: Monday, March 31st, 2 - 4 p.m.— Why Drug Courts Work

What does "work" mean? Does it mean it keeps people out of prison, provides effective treatment for substance abuse disorders, reduces crime, connects addicted law-violating addicts with recovery communities, and/or reduces the cost of justice system intervention? Regarding Drug Courts, the definition of "works" includes all of these. This session will review research along with personal stories from Minnesota Drug Courts about why Drug Courts are so effective.

Presenter: Barbara Carson, Professor Emeritus from MSU Mankato, has been a consultant and program evaluator for Drug Courts and Veterans Courts since 2006, serving in 15 different Minnesota counties. While at MSU she taught students how to be probation officers as well as how to work with victims of crime. She retired in 2019 as a Professor in Sociology and Corrections, and in 2023 relocated to Minneapolis to be closer to children and 4 grandchildren. However, she continues to work with several Drug and Veterans Courts.

Location: Pathstone Latitude, 115 Rogers Street, Mankato

Sponsor: Steve Gilbert



Free Activities for All Members of Lifelong Learners



First Fridays Movie & Conversation

A monthly movie and conversation will be hosted on **First Friday** afternoons at Pathstone Latitude, 115 Rogers Street, Mankato.

Upcoming movies:

January 3 @ 12:00 pm ~ Cinema Paradiso (1988) 2h 54m (a heart-warming Italian movie with subtitles)

February 7 @ 1:00 pm ~ Enough Said (2013) 1h 33m. (a romantic comedy)

March 7 @ 1:00 pm ~ The Father (2020) 1h 37m (a psychological drama)

For information on each film, enter the name of the movie in the search bar at imdb.com and find a trailer, director and cast list, run time and more. Trailers are also on YouTube. Organizers Ron Yezzi and Steve Gilbert select the movies and facilitate conversation afterwards. There is no need to pre-register but signing in to validate membership is required. See you there!

Lunch & Dining will meet monthly at local restaurants. All members are welcome to participate! Watch your emails for dates and times to join fellow members and their guests for food, fun, and lively conversation. **Sip & Chat** meets for Valentine's Afternoon Tea, Feb. 14, 2025, 2-4 p.m. at the Curiosi-Tea House.

Our **Bridge** group meets at the WOW Zone on the third Monday of each month at 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. respectively.

Our **500** group meets at the Mankato Golf Club at 11:30 on the Second Tuesday of each month. If you'd like to participate in either of these groups, please contact the office.

Enjoy one or both of our **Book Clubs**. New members are always welcome. *Contact the office.*

Book Marks reads fiction and meets monthly on fourth Wednesdays.

History & Science Book Club reads non-fiction and meets at 2 p.m. quarterly on second Thursdays.

On March 13th the book will be Caste: The Origins of our Discontents by Pulitzer Prize winning author Isabel Wilkerson, an exploration of America's invisible social hierarchy and entrenched inequality.

Coffee & Current Events meets via Zoom on the fourth Friday of each month from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. For the winter:

January 24

February 28

March 28

This monthly discussion group, hosted by Steve Gilbert and Georgia Holmes, is a welcoming place for members to come together for informal conversations about current affairs

where we help one another try to make sense of the headlines and newscasts. There is no fee or required preparation and no commitment to attend every month. New members are welcome!

To sign-up and receive the Zoom link for the next meeting, simply send an email to coffeandcurrentevents@gmail.com.



Want to see a new social activity? Contact the office to get it started.

Email LifelongLearners@mnsu.edu or call (507)389-2011

2025 WINTER REGISTRATIONS & MEMBERSHIP FORM

Silver Membership: \$35/year - Presentations \$5 each
 Gold Membership: \$140/year - Presentations included

Registration prior to attendance requested.
 Non-member: Presentation \$10

New Member | **Renewal** | **New Info**

\$35 Silver Membership — Member 1

\$140 Gold Membership — Member 1

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Birth Year _____

New Member | **Renewal** | **New Info**

\$35 Silver Membership — Member 2

\$140 Gold Membership — Member 2

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Birth Year _____

Annual Membership Fee (s) _____

MBR 1	MBR 2	PRESENTATIONS - \$5 each
<input type="checkbox"/> 1:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:	Thursday, January 16 – What’s Funny About Aging? Part Two- (Prior Listing in Fall Newsletter)
<input type="checkbox"/> 2:	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:	Thursday, January 23 – Common GI Issues as We Age and How to Prevent Them
<input type="checkbox"/> 3:	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:	Saturday, February 1 – Securing Freedom: A Screening and Discussion of Spielberg’s <i>Lincoln</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> 4:	<input type="checkbox"/> 4:	Monday, February 3— (ZOOM MEETING) —Empowering Connections: Communication Strategies for Stroke, ALS, and Beyond
<input type="checkbox"/> 5:	<input type="checkbox"/> 5:	Tuesday, February 11 – Not the Camilla We Knew: One Woman’s Life from Small-town America to the Symbionese Liberation Army
<input type="checkbox"/> 6:	<input type="checkbox"/> 6:	Tuesday, February 18 – Strange Tales in Indian Law
<input type="checkbox"/> 7:	<input type="checkbox"/> 7:	Monday, February 24 – The Middle Eastern Conflict and its History
<input type="checkbox"/> 8:	<input type="checkbox"/> 8:	Tuesday, March 11 – (ZOOM MEETING) - DIY: The Wonderfully Weird History and Science of Masturbation
<input type="checkbox"/> 9:	<input type="checkbox"/> 9:	Tuesday, March 18 – Famous Trials: The Scopes Trial, Bible vs Evolution
<input type="checkbox"/> 10:	<input type="checkbox"/> 10:	Thursday, March 27 – Mankato’s Hidden History of Racism
<input type="checkbox"/> 11:	<input type="checkbox"/> 11:	Monday, March 31 – Why Drug Courts Work

_____ **Total Presentation Registrations**

_____ **Total Presentation Fees**

Grand Total all Fees _____

Submit Registration form and payment to:

Mankato Area Lifelong Learners
 129 Morris Hall
 Mankato, MN 56001

Questions? Contact the office at (507)389-2011 or
 email: lifelonglearners@mnsu.edu

Invite a guest to a presentation this quarter!

Coupon

Coupon worth one free admission to one presentation for a non-member 55+ guest.

Coupon must be surrendered with sign-up
 Please print guest name in the box below.

Do not reproduce. Expires 3/31/25

Mankato Area Lifelong Learners
129 Morris Hall · Mankato, MN 56001

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

(Check your e-mail, Mankato Area LLL website, or current Facebook page for updates.)

Great Courses – The Life and Art of Vincent van Gogh:

Jan. 7- Jan. 21, 2-4 pm
Pathstone Latitude, 115 Rogers St.

Norwegian Emigration/ Immigration – U.S. HIST 430:

Offered for audit at MSU Mankato
January 13 – May 9, 2025
8-9:40 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday
Taught by **Dr. Kyle Ward**

To audit fill out the senior citizen status application form found at the bottom of this linked page:

<https://link.mnsu.edu/audit-course>

Valentine's Day Tea

Friday, February 14, 2-4 p.m.
Curiosi-Tea House
1745 Commerce Dr, North Mankato

NOTE: PLEASE CONSIDER A GIFT OF YOUR TIME OR FUNDS TO HELP MANKATO AREA LLL GROW.

We are not alone: The 2024 Nonprofit Leadership Impact Study reports that many nonprofits across the country are experiencing both a shortage of volunteers and a decrease in donations. The Lifelong Learners Council is hoping to avoid raising membership fees this year by increasing fundraising. If you have some extra funds, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to Lifelong Learners. Make checks payable to Minnesota State University, Mankato Foundation, specify "Lifelong Learners" in the memo line, and send to: MSU Foundation, 126 Alumni & Foundation Center, Mankato, MN 56001. To make a tax-deductible online donation, go to <https://engage.mnsu.edu/mall>. For the QR code, see below. To volunteer, contact Colleen Fritz.

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Coffee & Current Events

Steve Gilbert & Georgia Holmes

First Fridays Movie & Conversation

Steve Gilbert & Ron Yezzi

DINING:

Dinner
Elizabeth Peters & Sarah Suskovic

Lunch

Sue Howard

Sip & Chat

Harriet Plotz

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SCAN TO GIVE



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