



WASHINGTON COLLEGE
ACADEMY *of*
LIFELONG LEARNING

20 *years*

OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

1992 – 2012

*Oil painting on cover by Bonnie Howell
commisioned by WC-ALL.*

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As a small liberal arts institution, Washington College believes that an education in the liberal arts begins a journey of lifelong learning. That journey is exemplified by the support of Washington College for the Washington College Academy of Lifelong Learning, WC-ALL. WC-ALL, now entering its twentieth year of successful leadership in our community, offers both the College and the community the opportunity to live the life of inquiry long after any formal affiliation has ended. In return, we appreciate WC-ALL's support of our undergraduate programs through an annual scholarship and the provision of a mentor program for our international students.

On behalf of Washington College I extend our best wishes to WC-ALL on its twentieth anniversary and beyond.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. B. Reiss". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "M." and last name "Reiss" clearly legible.

Mitchell B. Reiss
President, Washington College

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

“And it seems like only yesterday” Upon hearing that WC-ALL was about to celebrate a twentieth birthday, that has been the universal reaction to those in the community who were “present at the creation.” WC-ALL got its start thanks to a handful of far-sighted community residents eager to add continuing education to the cultural opportunities available in the Kent County area, and to the support of President Charles Trout of Washington College. Now, two decades later, the institution continues, significantly larger in size and in program offerings, but still dedicated to the same goal of enriching the life we all enjoy here with opportunities for new learning.

For the vibrant growth and continued viability of WC-ALL, many deserve thanks. Principal among those is, of course, Washington College, which opens its campus and its classrooms to us and provides both logistical support and continued encouragement. Then there are the many people who have served on the Council over these years and our three capable administrators. Success does not just happen and during these past twenty years many, many hours have been dedicated to providing inspired leadership and constant new ideas for improvement. Finally, and most importantly, there are the many more who have acted as instructors in our classes and speakers at our lunch programs. They are the ones who in fact fulfill our goal and without whom we could not exist. I hope that all of those involved, past and present, will feel that one of the rewards for their efforts and their time has been the continued strength of the institution.

The Council believes that milestones deserve celebration. As this year progresses we will sponsor a number of special tributes to

this twentieth year beyond this Anniversary Booklet. Included will be a year-long Learn-at-Lunch series featuring various faculty representatives from different academic departments of Washington College. They will all be distinguished speakers in their own right, but we hope will also bring to you an appreciation of the extraordinary talent in the College right here at our own doorstep. We will also sponsor a two-day trip to Williamsburg preceded by classroom courses on Colonial America, and an overseas excursion to the wonders of England and Scotland.

We hope that all of you will share in many of these events. We also thank you for your interest and participation in our programs over the years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Christie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "J" and a distinct "Christie" ending.

John Christie,
Chair, WC-ALL Council

LEARNING ADVENTURES WC-ALL CELEBRATES TWO DECADES

For 20 years, hundreds of friends and neighbors, eager learners all, have poured over WC-ALL course catalogs, anticipating each season's new classes. They've studied, discussed, argued, questioned, analyzed, and broadened their perspectives. They've

*“WC-ALL
is one of the
reasons we
chose to live in
Chestertown”*

made new friends and ventured into challenging intellectual fields. They've laughed and socialized on trips, over lunch, and at special events.

In short, countless lives have been enriched thanks to an idea that became reality 20 years ago. By spring 2012, WC-ALL had offered nearly 700 courses. Close to 200 instructors had taught classes, often several over the years, sharing their expertise, experience and devotion to learning.

How did WC-ALL evolve from an idea into today's vital, exciting academy? To see how, step through the following history, from the beginning to this twentieth year. And at each step, tip your hat to the many whose ideas and actions have made it so.

EARLY YEARS...

First an idea: In 1991, a steering committee forms to envision an Academy of Lifelong Learning at Washington College, influenced by the Road Scholar (Elderhostel) model, yet independent. In November, the committee petitions Washington College for sponsorship and presents a by-laws draft to President Trout. “Perfecto!” he says, and Washington College Academy of Lifelong Learning (WC-ALL) is launched, ready to begin in 1992.

Pioneering first officers lead off: Joan Ellenhorn, chair; Lyle Ritchie, treasurer; and Lillian Baltzersen, ssecretary. A governing council of 12 gathers to map the way for WC-ALL’s first year. This first council sets up administrative, curriculum, and promotion committees to get the ball rolling. In a major vote of confidence, Washington College donates seed money, office space and late afternoon classroom use to the new organization.

The first WC-ALL catalogs appear, one for spring, one for fall, each listing classes for two six week sessions. So begins the pattern for every academic year to the present. In the first year, twelve challenging courses are offered. Among the academic fields: history, American leadership, Shakespeare, geology, ethics, health and human development, and art, film and music appreciation.

Ninety-four charter members sign up, eager to pursue new directions in learning, led by peers as instructors. No papers, no grades, no homework—just learning for learning’s sake attracts the original students and hundreds more over the next twenty years.

A noted economist presents the first Learn-at-Lunch program, beginning another tradition. In coming years, over 120 diverse programs will engage members.

A first WC-ALL annual meeting in November 1992 sums up accomplishments and coming attractions.

In sound financial shape by 1994, WC-ALL expresses gratitude to the College with a financial donation. A member suggests starting “Friends of Washington College Library” to support Miller Library. It grows as an independent organization where community members enjoy programs and fundraise through donations, book sales and other events.

In 1995, the first WC-ALL Showcase introduces instructors and classes for next sessions. Members meet instructors and register for classes in another tradition that exists to this day.

A new Mentoring Program pairs students with WC-ALL members. The focus later changes to help international students understand their new country and community. For many, it marks the start of lasting friendships.

By 1997, yearly course offerings reach 23. 200 members sign up. In a tribute to continuing College support, WC-ALL creates a Scholarship Endowment Fund. The annual scholarship generated by this Fund is given each year to a Washington College student, preferably one interested in pursuing a career in education. WC-ALL continues to contribute to this Endowment Fund which has grown in size to over one hundred thousand dollars.

In 2000, the College and WC-ALL co-host a Millennium Symposium addressing problems and possibilities of the coming century.

INTO A NEW CENTURY

For 2001-2002, courses top 36 and nearly 300 members sign up. WC-ALL celebrates its tenth anniversary.

Over the years, day-trips enrich WC-ALL offerings, taking members to the opera, museums, historic and other cultural sites.

First wine-tasting dinner in 2002 tempts members with fine cuisine, wines from Australia and South Africa. The popular dinners continue in following years, featuring fellowship, gourmet dining and wines from around the world.

WC-ALL Players perform dramatic readings two summers at the Chester River Pavilion.

Dr. Wayne Bell teaches the first combined class of undergraduates and WC-ALL members. From time to time, members join undergraduates in other classes, most recently, Innovative Leadership in Education.

As WC-ALL grows so does communication. A bi-annual newsletter sends highlights to all members. A new WC-ALL website and the internet become central to the administration of the growing program, facilitating registration, course descriptions and evaluations, surveys, notices of upcoming events, and much more.

In the classroom, instructors transition to new computerized teaching tools. While traditional lectures, question and answer discussions, and whiteboard notes also continue to facilitate learning. Members become savvier electronically through how-to computer courses, growth in internet use, messaging, eBooks and digital photography.

Reaffirming the close relationship, Washington College designates WC-ALL full departmental status. The president, provost

“The instructor is a remarkable teacher. She does her homework, provides valuable materials and is an excellent communicator, using honesty, thoughtfulness and humor to engage us.”

and faculty members often speak at academy programs. Liaison is enhanced by a College faculty member who becomes a full-fledged member of the WC-ALL council, ensuring continuous close communication between the two institutions.

A dedicated committee reviews WC-ALL operations, spelling out processes to support the organization long into the future. Classroom safety guidelines are developed for instructors; new council members receive notebooks on leadership of WC-ALL.

The WC-ALL annual meeting becomes a business and social event where members honor instructors and celebrate fellowship.

In 2011, a busload of members travels to the Gettysburg Battlefield and the nearby Eisenhower Farm for a successful first overnight trip.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes three administrators—first Sue Urda, then Anne Singer, and now Susan McRae—help smooth the way during WC-ALL’s twenty year evolution and continued growth.



So happy Twentieth, WC-ALL. Thank you, founders, instructors, leaders, members and others along the way who have dreamed, created, built, and participated enthusiastically in this special organization. A special thank you to Washington College for a beautiful campus home and continuing support for this community of intellectually-engaged, lifelong learners.

THE WC-ALL FUTURE

WC-ALL is proud of its past and its many accomplishments over the first twenty years. However, as with any robust organization, energy and attention must always be paid to the future and what can be done to grow and improve on what has been achieved.

With just that in mind, a year ago last summer the Council took time out from its usual duties to devote three half day sessions on the subject of where we hoped to be five years—or even twenty years—from now. Many subjects and issues were discussed; however, our plans ultimately centered around three ambitions.

INCREASE MEMBERSHIP. Although our membership numbers have steadily increased over the years, so has the size of the general community that we serve. With that in mind, we very much want to do what we can to increase our membership and to broaden the base and diversity of those who attend our programs. Doing so is not simply a numbers game; we believe it will enhance the program experience for all concerned. Two of the concrete steps we have taken to accomplish this goal are to broaden our publicity efforts and to enhance our course offerings.

EXPAND COURSE OFFERINGS. The Council is committed to the concept that our academic course offerings are the core of what we are all about. With that in mind we renewed our dedication to searching for new peer instructors and new topics of study as well as to encouraging our popular instructors

to continue responding to the enthusiasm of their students. The results can be seen in the dramatic recent rise in course registrations, which, we recognize, has one drawback in the form of wait lists caused by classroom space limitations. However, we intend to continue this effort, hoping that the growth in both the community size and membership size will contribute to continued success.

BROADEN TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES. The Council members participating in our focus on the future became quite excited about the potential for more expanded travel for our members, particularly travel directly connected with classroom offerings. You saw the first fruit of this enthusiasm in our overnight trip to Gettysburg and it will happen again this fall with a two day sojourn to Williamsburg. Also on the horizon are plans for trips abroad, the first to be England/Scotland next spring. By this more adventuresome travel, we hope to bring to our members some new horizons at reasonable cost and with WC-ALL friends.

“Excellent and fun course. I learned a lot and looked forward to each session.”

The Council is a committed group. However, we take no pride in having exclusive access to the best ideas for our future, and would welcome thoughts and ideas from our members at any time.

WC-ALL COUNCIL CHAIRS

Joan Ellenhorn, 1992-1996
Jane Hukill, 1997/98 and 1998/99
Ben Ribaud, 1999/2000
Ted Chase, 2000/01
Dick Hawkins, 2001/02 and 2002/03
Dick Lance, 2003/04 and 2004/05
Juli Dulmage, 2005/06
Jim Sood, 2006/07 and 2007/08
Ginny Barker, 2008/09 and 2009/10
John Christie, 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13

WC-ALL ADMINISTRATION

Sue Urda, 1995-1998
Anne Singer, 1998 - 2011
Susan McRae, 2011 -

Our thanks to Gerry Edwards for researching and writing our history, to Anne Singer for research assistance, and to Diane Landskroener for the design and layout of this booklet.



WASHINGTON COLLEGE

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