

**Lifetime Learning Institute at SUNY New Paltz**  
**Annual Meeting Minutes**  
**March 5, 2015**  
**Woodland Pond**  
**9:00 am**

**Present:** 42 members

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 am, following a social time.

**Opening Remarks:** Dr. Clinton Bennett, President

Clinton expressed his appreciation and gratitude to Ann Burdett (Events Chair) and to the staff of Woodland Pond for organizing this Annual Meeting and breakfast. He made the following comments on his tenure as President this past year:

- Shortly after last year's Annual Meeting, some members expressed concerns through the Members-At-Large. These concerns were discussed in Council, and measures were set in motion to adjust certain procedures and policies. This response demonstrates that our Institute has become a mature organization, able to take constructive criticism, to learn and to change. That is why we are here today: when we stop learning and changing, we may as well stop breathing.
- LLI is a truly vibrant, dynamic organization, due to the dedication, commitment, and skill set of every member of Council, past, present, and future. A tremendous amount of work goes into the curriculum and the catalog. The Curriculum Committee gathers an impressive range of subjects. The new catalog offers 34 courses, the second largest in its history. All 35 members of the Committee deserve our gratitude and appreciation. Clinton said he was constantly amazed that all the LLI volunteers acted as if LLI was paying them a generous stipend for their efforts.
- There has been ongoing work on revising and updating the Tickler Calendar, which is a useful handbook of timelines and responsibilities for Council members.
- Currently, Committee Chairs serve at the pleasure of the President. They are appointed or reappointed annually. There is a 4 year term limit, though a Chair may be reappointed after a 1 year absence from that post. This bylaw was discussed, and Council could not identify a good reason why term limits should be in place for Committee Chairs. Next year, Council intends to amend the by-laws to reflect this change. This amendment will be voted on at next year's Annual Meeting.
- The role of the Member-at-Large has been expanded. They have been organizing social events for members, and will eventually take over the annual Volunteer Reception.
- LLI has maintained a healthy balance financially, without increasing the

membership fee. This has set us free from what is often a major problem for

2

volunteer organizations. Because of this financial health, Council plans to offer a second scholarship to a deserving SUNY New Paltz student, and to support appropriate community events. In the future, there needs to be a membership-wide discussion on what initiatives LLI should support.

Clinton asked that current Council officers and Committee Chairs stand and introduce themselves, and thanked them for their service to LLI.

**Minutes of 2014 Annual Meeting-** Susan Webber, Secretary

Susan asked for amendments to the 2014 Annual Meeting minutes. There were none. Ellen Berlin made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Marny Janson. The motion passed.

**Report on LLI Finances-** Ed Rogers, Treasurer

Ed reported that LLI is doing well financially. At this moment, there is a net balance of \$32,000, while there are a few bills outstanding, and some new memberships still coming in. LLI has 210-212 paid members, which is on par for years prior. Ed reiterated that Council plans to approve a second SUNY scholarship this year. He passed out copies of the most recent budget report for perusal by members, and invited questions or concerns by membership.

**Proposed Slate of Officers and Elected Council Members for 2015-2016-** Alma Sloan, standing in for Terry Scott, Chair of the Nominating Committee

Alma reported the Nominating Committee (Terry Scott (Chair), Alma Sloan, Ed Steele) presented the following slate of officers and Council members for 2015-2016:

Vice President- Phyllis Sturm

Treasurer- Ed Rogers

Secretary - Faith Nichols

Members-at-Large- Alma Sloan, Alice Barner, Faye Bishop

A motion to accept the slate was made by Sue Webber, and seconded by Marilou Abramshe. The slate was approved.

In accordance with the bylaws, Marilou Abramshe, Vice President for 2014-2015, will become the new President, and Clinton Bennett will serve as the Immediate Past-President.

It was noted that LLI is still looking for a Chair of the Public Relations Committee.

**Introduction of 2015-2016 President, Marilou Abramshe-** Dr. Clinton Bennett

introduced the new LLI President, Marilou Abramshe. He said that Marilou has not only been Vice President, but has been Chair of Classroom Management Committee, as well as Co-Chair of the Catalog Committee. She has been acting Public Relations Committee

Chair, as well as a presenter and classroom assistant to LLI classes. Clinton thanked

3

Marilou for assuming his Presidential duties while he was ill.

Marilou is highly qualified to become President of LLI. Marilou is a wife of 51 years, and mother of 4 adult children, and a grandmother of 2. Her father served in the U.S. Army, and as a child, she attended school in the U.S, Germany, and Japan. She graduated from Mount St. Vincent College in 1962, and received a M.Ed. From Long Island University, as well as a supervisory diploma from Fordham University. She taught grades 3, 6, 7, and 8 at St. Joseph's School in Croton Falls, NY, and became its Principal in 1994. She went on to become Principal of St. Columba School, and an adjunct professor at Marymount College. She has served on numerous educational committees and participated in workshops on the implementation of NYS standards. She maintains a lifelong interest in geography and the social sciences, as well as the use of primary documents in classroom instruction. She has been a consultant to the Geography and Mapping Institute, as well as to the NY Geographical Alliance. Marilou brings extensive professional experience and enthusiasm to her Presidency of LLI. Clinton presented her with the President's gavel.

#### **Remarks by New President-** Marilou Abramshe

Marilou thanked Clinton and said that, although he has been ill, he has always been available when needed. She presented him with a gift from Council and members in recognition of his work for LLI.

Marilou stated that she moved to the area in 2009 after retiring. She knew she wanted to be a life-long learner, and saw an article in the Daily Freeman about LLI. Sally Rhoads recruited her as a volunteer, and the rest is history.

What Marilou likes most about LLI is that it is an all-volunteer organization. So many are willing to contribute their time and talents to making this an effective and well-run institute. In LLI, many hands lighten the load. She read the mission statement of LLI: "The Lifetime Learning Institute of SUNY New Paltz promotes diverse and enriching learning experiences for older adults, provides opportunities for social interaction, and encourages individuals to use their knowledge and skills in creative ways." She stressed that all the LLI volunteers use their knowledge and skills to support LLI. As she starts her year as President, Marilou thanked the volunteers for all the work they have done thus far, and all the work still to be done to make LLI the organization we know it is.

#### **Announcements**

- Marilou reminded members of the change in scheduling for the spring session, due to extension of SUNY classes due to snow closings. She thanked the Reformed Church for cooperating by rescheduling some classes there.
- Marilou thanked Sheyda Eversley for her hard work as the Chair of Curriculum Committee, and Sheyda thanked all her volunteers.
- Sally Rhoads, a Past President, on behalf of the members of LLI, said she looked

forward to a wonderful year with Marilou as President.

**Adjournement** The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,

*Susan Webber*

Susan Webber