

# *The Lifelong Learner*

November 2009

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Spring Session in May 2010 will be the ninth ELLA presentation and I believe it will be one of the best yet. Almost half of the instructors will be new to ELLA's line up. There will be more Art and Computer courses and still many Fitness, Science, Arts, Humanities and Social Science courses. Many of our favourite instructors will be returning with lots of new and interesting subjects. We will have another great selection of noon time speakers to challenge our interest and intellect.

Hopefully the offering will bring back most of our previous members along with many friends new to ELLA. We want to share our wonderful program with as many students as our classrooms can hold.

We had six new members elected to the Board; unfortunately two of them found they were unable to serve. Still, the four remaining new Board members bring new ideas and fresh approaches to our organization. All but one of our committees are headed up by new Chairs and are staffed by new and previous, volunteer members.

We have formed a group of members to train on website maintenance to work with our partners in the Faculty of Extension in keeping the website up to date and pertinent.

Our former Academic Advisor and ELLA member Dennis Foth has retired from the Faculty of Extension. Dennis has been a valued advisor since ELLA was established. He was involved in the U of A Seniors' Program long before that. We wish Dennis a great retirement and hope to see him next spring. Dr. Sherry Ann Chapman will be our new Academic Advisor, helping us in our search for new instructors. In addition Susan Boychuk will replace Rob Nichol as the Program Coordinator responsible for liaison between the Faculty of Extension and ELLA.

Two of our long time former hard working Board Members Val Cload and Marg Steven have suffered serious illness. We wish them both returns to better health.

As a result of, or in spite of, all the preceding changes I hope the coming ELLA academic year is a great one for all of us.

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE

### **Tentative Courses for 2010**

Your Program committee has been working hard over the summer and fall. At our first meeting in mid-June we discussed the evaluations returned by many of our members. At our second we began to consider the mix and scheduling of different types of courses while bearing in mind the comments received.

Now, to pique your interest in next year's session, we can report that we'll have a second computer hands-on course, physical activities, fine arts including more music and literature, humanities, sciences and writing. We hope to schedule these so that there are not disappointing overlaps of similar interests in the same time slots but we must always take into account the many factors governed by instructors' availability, room sizes and equipment etc.

It seems that ‘Happiness’ will be featured twice: David Wangler will offer a philosophical and historical approach to the problem of human happiness while one of our lunch time speakers, Mark Anielski, will talk of the economics of happiness.

Last, but not least, there will be the customary variety and levels of art instruction.

The finished calendar should reach you at the start of the New Year. If you are a snow bird don't forget that you can receive it on line.

*Members' comments and answers:*

*#1: rooms are not always suitable. Reply: ELLA has little or no control of this as accommodation is free.*

*#2: Rooms sometimes change mid course. Reply: See above!*

*#3: Audio Visual equipment is not always functioning. Reply: The equipment cannot be prepared ahead because University classes run over time.*

*#4: Gardening and horticulture courses would be good. Reply: Possible instructors are too busy at this time of the year.*

*Please remember that ELLA is run by volunteers and has to work within the University's constraints.*

## **PUBLICITY COMMITTEE**

### **Marketing Project by U of A Students**

As their required research project, four third year students, in the U of A's Business Marketing 312 course have volunteered to create a marketing strategy for ELLA's Publicity Committee. To complete this project the research team will be asking a random number of members to complete a survey. If you are contacted please respond to the best of your ability.

The goal of the project is to create strategies that will assist ELLA to:

1. Maintain the interest of the present membership
2. Attract new members
3. Raise the profile of the Spring Session in Edmonton and area
4. Foster the “Joy of Learning” spirit using a variety of communication modalities.

### **Promotion Strategies**

The Publicity Committee is considering some new marketing strategies for the 2009/2010 year.

1. Run a Competition to encourage current members to recruit new members. Free tickets to all social functions will be awarded to the person who signs up the largest number of new members.
2. A one week **trial** registration will be available to a limited number of **new members** only, to help overcome the reluctance of some people to commit to a large block of time. After the first week they may complete the whole session upon payment of the balance of fees. Contact the ELLA office for more details. Give a full or partial registration in the Spring Program as a gift to a friend or a relative. Contact the ELLA Office for instructions.
3. ELLA now has an official Speakers Bureau and is looking for presenters of the already prepared presentation. If interested please contact Nancy Rae at (780) 438-3760 or [nancy-rae@ualberta.net.ca](mailto:nancy-rae@ualberta.net.ca)

## **SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

“If it weren’t for my cardiologist, urologist, ophthalmologist and chiroprapist, I’d have no social life at all”. *An octogenarian overheard on Jasper Avenue.*

Let’s face it; socializing is one of our favourite ELLA pastimes. With that in mind, your social committee is going full speed ahead in the planning of next year’s social activities.

1. Day 1 Registration. As usual this is the time for the veterans among us to welcome new members and make them part of the ELLA experience. Coffee and tea will be provided to encourage you to hang around and meet our new members.
2. AGM and Lunch. As in past years, the Upper Crust will provide a delicious lunch at a reasonable cost prior to the AGM.
3. Celebration Reception. In response to members’ suggestions we will again have a wind-up social after class on the last Thursday of the session. It will be held in the Faculty Club and a cash bar and hors d’oeuvres will be provided at a small cost.

*\* You’ll be surprised at how many retired cardiologists, urologists and GPs attend ELLA!*

### **Remembering David Cook**

*By Margaret-Ann Armour*

David Cook died on September 13, 2009 and ELLA, the University of Alberta, the Edmonton music scene, and medical educators around the world have lost a passionate and inspiring friend. David might best be described as a Renaissance Man with his accomplishments both in Medical Sciences and in the Arts. His love for music and his superb ability to share that love endeared him to ELLA participants at his lunch time lectures. His formal education at the University of Oxford was in pharmacology and as a faculty member at the University of Alberta since 1969, he built an impressive record of research into vascular pharmacology. David, and the students in his classes, soon discovered he was a gifted teacher (he received 6 Teacher of the Year awards in the Faculty of Medicine, more than any other member of the faculty), and he became more and more devoted to the teaching of medical students, and the whole process of medical education. His teaching was recognized nationally with the award of a 3M teaching fellowship, the premier Canadian award for undergraduate teaching. In recent years, he traveled the world, as a sought after advisor in the development of medical education in many countries as far flung as Malaysia and Tibet.

David was well known by Edmonton music lovers for his engaging, entertaining and informative pre-performance talks for Edmonton Opera, the University’s Department of Music and the Millcreek Colliery Band. He was the inspiration behind the development of the “Arts and Humanities in Healing and Medicine” Program in the Faculty of Medicine, a program which is a bridge between David’s passions – healing and music.

On a personal note, I came to know David as one of the cohort of 10 who won 3M awards in the same year. David helped us become a closely knit group; we basked in his huge presence, his unbounded kindness, and his gregariousness for people and for life.

Our thoughts are with his beloved partner Maryann and her daughter Rachel.

## Seniors make the best students

By Jeff McCune

There is nothing more rewarding to a teacher than the look of illumination on a student's face when they grasp something new. Especially when followed by dozens of questions on the heels of that insight. Sometimes the questions are simple and easily explained or far more complicated and lead to convoluted discussion. Either way, discussion is the end result and that is the real joy of teaching.

When I was first invited to lead a Music course for ELLA I was excited by the idea, as I love working with seniors, especially when they are as unique as the ELLA students who exhibit great joy when learning something new.

While not a teacher by profession, I've spent a lot of time preparing lectures for various audiences and topics for students that range from junior high to graduate and post-doctoral programs. What always strikes me most is the interest and attention spans in these different age groups: the teens have the shortest attention span and shallowest level of interest, while the university alumni appear the most interested and focused. Youngsters can become hyper-animated when something excites them and the university folks can focus with devastating attention when something grabs them.

Both groups pale in comparison to interest level expressed by my favourite ELLA members. These remarkable people are unlike the majority of seniors I encounter. True they are over 60, usually retired but there the similarities stop. Overflowing with life experience, they are well-traveled, well-educated and vital. It is their wealth of experience, and generosity that make ELLA members such wonderful students. They pay attention and really want to learn. This means that instructors have to be 110% prepared, no making-it-up-as-we-go-along with this group.

One of my favourite ELLA moments occurred when I saw my former junior high school vice-principal in my class. It was a wonderful feeling of coming full circle. He was still as kind, brilliant and engaging as he was 30 years ago, hardly changed and still excited about learning.

ELLA students continue to challenge their abilities, to keep their lives fresh by trying new things. I liken this quality to Giuseppe Verdi, who after writing tragic opera his whole life, at 80 decided to write his only comic opera, *Falstaff*, a work of total genius and utter delight. Now that is keeping it fresh!

### NEWS AND INFORMATION:

**ELLA Athletes:** Two ELLA members are to be congratulated for their success in senior swimming events.

**Dr. Larry Judge** recently participated in the upper age group swimming competitions at the World Masters in Sydney, Australia. Larry won gold in 3 events – the 100 metres backstroke, 50 metres backstroke and the 50 metres free style and a silver medal for the relay race.

**Charles Toth** was a competitor in the Alberta 55+ Seniors' Games in Airdrie, Alberta. Charles won a gold medal for swimming a lap in an average time of 4.8 seconds in the 800 metres competition. Also, he won a silver medal for the 50 metres breaststroke.

Well done guys!

### HELEN READY

The Seniors' Association of Greater Edmonton (SAGE) has presented Helen Ready with the Community Service Award for Social Justice and Peace. Helen is an excellent Choice to receive this award. She has served on numerous boards including the Unitarian Church Social Justice Group and the ELLA Board. In addition to co-chairing Project Ploughshares, Helen is also assisting with the World March for Peace and Non Violence. During her nursing career, she founded the "Alberta Nurses for Nuclear Disarmament".

Helen is a tireless volunteer who works hard without complaint and is unbelievably modest; not many people are aware that Helen was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for her work with “Doctors and Nurses against Nuclear Proliferation”.

Helen served on the ELLA board as past Co-Chair for the Program Committee and as Vice President. Congratulations Helen.

### **MARG STEPHEN**

We regret to report that Marg Stephens had a major stroke some time ago and spent several weeks in the University Hospital. Marg was recently transferred to the Dr. Gerald Zetter Care Centre Rm. 3N 301, 9649-71 Avenue, Edmonton T6E 5J2. Marg is making continuous and steady progress, and would welcome visitors. Marg was among the grass roots members of ELLA and has devoted time and her many talents to the continuing success of the organization. She was a major participant in programming courses and a Past President and member of the Board. Marg is known for her tireless work, her optimistic attitude, her gentle persistence and her kindness to all.

### **JOYCE BUCHWALD & VAL CLOAD**

Joyce Buchwald is recovering from a broken hip after a nasty fall some months ago. She has been out of hospital for a while and is now living in Churchill Manor, downtown.

Val Cload is now home after spending at least a month in the University Hospital. She is on the mend and getting stronger every day.

We send these ELLA Stalwarts our best wishes for a full recovery.

### **LISE STORGAARD**

I was horribly shocked at reading in this morning's paper the report of the tragic and untimely death of Lise Storgaard! She was a fine citizen and a lovely lady. I am sure that her passing is a great loss to the community and to each of us. Her vibrancy and contributions in our class last spring will live on through each of us. I extend my condolences to close family and to all who knew her personally. *Colin Soskoline*

### **ELLA BOARD 2009 – 2010**

#### ***Executive***

President – Ray Lieberman  
Treasurer – Dave Ferraro  
Secretary – Noma Morrissey  
Past President – Larry Judge

#### ***Directors***

Ruth Bertelsen  
Larry Judge  
Enneke Lorberg  
Jan McGregor  
Chips Reid

#### ***Committee Chairs***

Administration – Ron Bourassa  
ByLaws – Don Chadsey  
Editorial – Maggie Dower  
Program – Ted Snow  
Publicity – Nancy Rae  
Social – Faith Fernalld  
Finance – Dave Ferraro

Mary Pemberton and Maria Yukele have resigned for personal reasons.

**The above are just a few of members who volunteer their time to assist in the running of ELLA. Thousands of volunteer hours are donated each year, for example Administration alone accounted for over 650 hours last year.**

## **REMINDERS:**

### ***Membership renewals:***

ELLA membership year is from October 1 to September 30 and this is to remind people who did not pay in advance at the Spring Season that now is the time to renew. Your \$20 membership ensures that you will receive the 2010 Course Calendar in January prior to general release.

Early renewal of membership guarantees your opportunity of a 25% discount for the Faculty of Extension courses in music, art and humanities program.

Website:<http://www.extension.ualberta.ca/liberalstudies/humanities.aspx>. To register and make payment for these courses contact James –Dean Sauter (780) 492-3093.

### ***Snowbirds please note:***

For those who will be out of the country when the registration opens on Jan.11, 2010 follow the procedures outlined below. By doing this ahead of time, you will increase the chances of getting your first choice of courses.

- a) Check the course calendar on line at [www.extension.ualberta.ca/ella](http://www.extension.ualberta.ca/ella) either on a home computer or at the public library of the city where you are visiting.
- b) Ensure that your \$20 membership is paid up. (by VISA or cheque.)
- c) Write a cheque for the fee (\$220 standard, or \$245 if you want Art courses) payable to The Univ. Alberta, dated Jan 11, 2010 (no VISA)

Registration information will be attached to the calendar. Remember, registration is not considered complete until the membership is paid and the program fee has actually been received in the ELLA office.

### ***Donations:***

Last year's Newsletter reminded members that donations to ELLA are tax deductible and this led to a considerable increase in the amount donated.

ELLA, as a non-profit charitable organization, can issue Registered Charity Tax Receipts.

Donations to ELLA's Discretionary Fund can help to ensure that ELLA achieves its goal of maintaining the cost of the courses at an affordable level. Also, the amount of donations received can be a contributing factor to the success of any future grant applications. Please note that bursaries are already covered by the University Endowment Fund.

***Staples and Office Depot Rewards:*** If you don't want to use reward points for yourself donate them to ELLA. The rewards, contract numbers are: Staples- 8164128293 and Office Depot – 14220657718. If you forget these numbers just give the telephone number of ELLA (780-492-5055) to the cashier. Every little bit helps to keep costs down.

### ***How to contact ELLA:***

Edmonton Lifelong Learners Association (ELLA), U of A Faculty of Extension,  
Suite 2-936B, 10230 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5J 4P6.

Phone: (780) 492-5055. If nobody answers, leave a message; calls will be answered year round. The office is open and staffed but not manned on a daily basis. Website: [www.extension.ualberta.ca/ella](http://www.extension.ualberta.ca/ella) Email:

[exella@ualberta.ca](mailto:exella@ualberta.ca)