



The LIFE Institute

in partnership with Programs for 50+ at Ryerson University's
G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education

The LIFE Institute
The Chang School
Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto ON M5B 2K3
T: 416-979-5000 x556989
E: info@thelifeinstitute.ca
www.thelifeinstitute.ca

Important Dates to Remember:

FREE LECTURE

*THE SPORT & PREY
OF CAPITALISTS;*
LINDA MCQUAIG
Thursday, May 27

RENEW YOUR LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Thursday, July 1

REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER COURSES

Monday, July 5

FREE LECTURES MEDICAL MONDAYS

June 7, 14, 21 and 28

SUMMER 2021 SEMESTER COMMENCES

Tuesday, July 20

CIVIC DAY

Monday, August 2
Ryerson University/
LIFE Institute is closed

Interested in Free Lectures, Events and Latest News?

Follow LIFE on
social media:



LivingLIFE

Volume 30, No. 2

May 20, 2021

Happy Days Are Coming



It feels like we've been on a roller-coaster the past 16 months. When the dust settles, things may never be the same again but there's plenty to look forward to. Family gatherings, hugs and kisses, dinner with friends, coffee with neighbours, drinks at a bar, movie-

going, concerts, theatre, travel round the world.

We've hung in this far - hopefully now is the last lap to the finish.

Meet the Smooklers, LIFE Institute Pioneers



Frances and Kenneth Smookler

Following a study commissioned by the North York Board of Education in 1987, Elderhostel created a model for seniors' self-directed learning. With the involvement of three other interested organizations, a home was found on the Ryerson campus. Among those present at the inaugural LIFE meeting in 1990 were Frances

THE LIFE OFFICE IS VIRTUAL

Due to the COVID-19
pandemic, the
LIFE office is virtual.

**VOICE MESSAGES ARE
RETRIEVED INFREQUENTLY**

The LIFE Institute Office
is available to assist
you via email:

info@thelifeinstitute.ca

**Monday – Friday
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

QUICK LINKS

[LIFE Website](#)

[Contact LIFE Office](#)

[LIFE Board of Directors](#)

[Clubs](#)

[Chang School Programs for](#)

[50+ Ryerson University](#)

[ACT II Studio](#)

UNSURE IF YOU ARE RECEIVING ALL OF LIFE EMAILS?

It is important to us that we
stay connected with you!

It has come to our attention
that some members are not
receiving all their email
correspondence. If you, or
someone you know, is not
properly receiving LIFE
membership and course
emails, please contact The
LIFE Institute Office, and we
will help to ensure that the
issue is resolved swiftly.

For assistance, please email
info@thelifeinstitute.ca

and Kenneth Smookler. They would go on to serve 22 terms and 10 terms respectively on the Board.

Both lawyers, they had started practicing in separate firms but soon joined forces and remained the partners of Smookler and Smookler until they retired.

Ken's interests include research, travel and writing. In 2016 a book he wrote about a fantasy law firm called Farr and Beyond was published and is still available through Amazon. With a background in science, Ken is keenly interested in speculative fiction. He has been on the Board of three World Science Conventions and attended twenty or more, often accompanied by Frances. Her interests are more related to health and nutrition, but she has a keen interest in business too. They both enjoy travel and have probably been on fifteen or so cruises and a number of land tours. Ken was prompted by Sandra Kerr, our then Ryerson/LIFE liaison, to initiate LIFE's first travel program, which ran for a number of years, and included courses aimed at following up with tours organized specifically for LIFE members.

Kenneth has moderated courses on Law, Ethics, Travel, Sherlock Holmes and TED Talks. Together they have also moderated the course *Law for the Layman*, and in early days Fran, also a published writer (and President of LIFE 1999-2000) moderated a creative writing course. They regret that courses are no longer moderated primarily by members, which was the original aim. And, sadly, with LIFE'S ongoing growth in membership, it is no longer possible to know every member.

Thanks go to Kenneth and Frances Smookler for their voluntary commitment to The LIFE Institute for so many years. May they have many more years enjoying the fruits of their early labours helping to set it up on a solid foundation. They say, "It was a labour of love!"

Philippa King, Incoming Chair of the Host Committee



Philippa King
LIFE volunteer

When asked about her involvement with LIFE's Class Host Committee, Philippa readily revealed her enthusiasm for both the role of host in LIFE classes, and her responsibilities as Chair of the Class Host Committee. Once you read her answers, you'll want to become involved!

Philippa says: I've been a LIFE member for about four years, having joined right after I retired from a very busy career. I was so grateful to have the opportunity to think about other things and stretch my mind in different directions.

GET INVOLVED

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Denise Smith, Manager of Volunteer Services
d.smith@thelifeinstitute.ca

FAQs

Want answers fast?
Most answers can be found online. Here are some examples:

- [Refund Policy](#)
- [How to view your registrations on your iPad, iPhone, Android, or Desktop](#)

The LIFE Community is staying connected

Though the need to remain physically distant right now persists, many LIFE members are determined to remain connected during this difficult time by exploring new interests through LIFE's fascinating courses, as well as engaging with others through clubs and other member-led programs. Explore LIFE's online courses and clubs at:
www.thelifeinstitute.ca

#StaySafe
#StayConnected
#AgingStrong

After I had taken a few courses and met some very interesting people, I thought it would be fun to get more engaged with LIFE and so I offered to volunteer for any committee that needed members. As I recall, it was the LIFE office that suggested the Class Host Committee. Of course, once I became involved, I really enjoyed the experience. They are a great group of people who work very well together. Becoming the Chair just emerged from how we divided up the responsibilities based on our interests and strengths.

The pivot from in-class courses to online was a very, dramatic change. We had to quickly prepare materials to help hosts manage the new (to all of us!) demands of the technology. LIFE admin was admirable the way they were able to set things up and get training sessions established. I believe hosts are a very, valuable addition to the online experience of members. Being a bridge between the instructor and members, they monitor questions, make announcements, and are on hand to help sort out technical difficulties that might emerge.

While learning the technical skills of operating in the Zoom environment might seem challenging it really isn't, and one gets used to it very quickly. Anyone interested can certainly learn to manage; however, a cool head and calm nerves are important assets! Technology will always throw us some curve balls, but every course and host experience is different and it's this variety which makes it so interesting.

LIFE members are strongly encouraged to volunteer as a Class Host. Before the start of every semester, an email requesting volunteer hosts is sent to all members. All volunteer Zoom hosts participate in both a training and practice session before the courses start, and of course, they always have the support of the LIFE office and our committee to assist them with any issues that may come up.

Jay Waterman and Lloyd Cadsby, LIFE Volunteer Instructors / Moderators

Jay and Lloyd have been co-moderating the very popular *Politics, People and Other Issues* and *The Economist Seminar* for approximately ten years.

Here is a description of how they came to team up to do these two seminars for LIFE, and the joys and foibles that ensued:

Jay was already co-moderating *Politics, People and Other Issues* when Lloyd joined LIFE and enrolled in the course. Two years later, Lloyd stepped up to become the new co-moderator. One or two years after that, Lloyd conceived the idea of a discussion course based on articles in *The Economist*, and asked Jay to co-moderate that course. Jay readily agreed. With *Politics* on Monday mornings, and *The Economist* on Fridays, it gave structure to their week.

HOW TO USE ZOOM AS A LIFE STUDENT

The LIFE Institute's online courses are currently being offered via Zoom, a relatively easy platform in which instructors and members can connect and interact. These online courses are offered in a few different formats.

[Read more here:](#)

>> ONLINE COURSE FORMATS AT THE LIFE INSTITUTE

>> [Zoom For Participants](#)

>> [Zoom Etiquette and Best Practices](#)

[NEW >> LIFE's Online Code of Conduct](#)

MESSAGE FROM THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

We hope you are enjoying spring at LIFE and are finding real refreshment in our super selection of courses. But we are always looking for more offerings to spice up the LIFE menu!

So, if you are also taking a terrific course at another adult education institution, why not let us know about it. We're interested in instructors who are enthusiastic and knowledgeable, who can make their subject come alive, and whose courses would appeal to the LIFE membership.

Just send us both the name of the instructor and the course, and we'll do the rest. You'll be helping us add a new flavour to our LIFE curriculum and giving your fellow LIFE members a special treat.

Email :
curriculum@thelifeinstitute.ca

A few Q & A:

Q: How has this been a rewarding experience for you?

A: Engaging in discussions with informed and interested colleagues has been a joy. The opportunity to exchange even sharply differing viewpoints while maintaining a friendly and respectful atmosphere is something we look forward to. The varied backgrounds and perspectives of the participants enrich the discussions immeasurably.

Q: People often have rather strong opinions regarding topics related to political and economic issues. Has this been a challenge?

A: On very few occasions we have had to caution members with respect to comments which were unacceptable as either tending toward racism or inappropriately personal. Fortunately, such instances are rare.

Q: What has it been like for you to deliver courses via Zoom?

A: Nothing quite substitutes for being able to sit together during discussions and bolster old and new friendships by going together to lunch or coffee afterwards, but Zoom has enabled us to continue the participation. The support of LIFE staff and volunteers with the technological side has been essential and the system for the most part has worked well.

Q: What advice do you have for anyone considering volunteering to moderate classes at LIFE?

A: We would encourage anyone to get involved. Bear in mind that moderating current events discussion groups is a comparatively easy gig, because you do not need to be experts in any particular subject. Rather, you can tap into the expertise of others, either class members or occasionally a guest to act as a resource aiding in the discussion.

Tamara Handler, Writers' Circle Club Coordinator



Tamara Handler
LIFE volunteer

"I feel privileged to listen to this writing," Tamara Handler says of the members' work shared during their twice-monthly meetings. What a wonderful endorsement of people's willingness to share what they've written, either at home on their own, or during the spontaneous writing sparked by a "prompt" word from Tamara to begin each meeting. That spontaneous writing often inspires longer pieces.

A voracious reader all her life, Tamara also has a long and powerful connection to personal writing. She began her own work at a traumatic time in her life, her way of clarifying issues for herself. Writing about the past is



LIFE is working on a membership video to encourage current members, like you, to renew their membership starting Thursday, July 1.

The video will also aim to recruit new members from far and wide.

As a member of the community, you are LIFE's best ambassadors, and we want to hear from you.

What does LIFE mean to you?

Please send a brief reply to admin@thelifeinstitute.ca by Tuesday, May 25

so a choice of comments can be included in the video.

This is also an ideal time to start spreading the membership word to family members and friends.

cathartic for her and writing about life events daily during travel provides a source of delight when read on her return.

Her enthusiasm, warmth, and love of writing are huge assets for the *Writers' Circle Club*. Originally a member of the *Recording Recollections* for three semesters, Tamara eventually was invited to co-moderate, then moderate the group. That group evolved into the *Leaving a Legacy* course, attended by many LIFE members over several years.

The *Writers' Circle Club* began with COVID, and works wonderfully on Zoom, Tamara says. Club members are respectful of one another, often offering constructive and positive suggestions for improving each other's work. The group is small at twelve LIFE members and offers an interesting opportunity "to have your work judged by people who don't know you."

Whether you love to write now, or have long thought about writing, and love the idea of a supportive community, Tamara Handler and *Writers' Circle Club* might be the right place for you.

Milvi Ester, Chair of The LIFE Institute Board of Directors; *My LIFE journey – so far*

If I had to summarize my LIFE experiences in one sentence, it would be: I joined for the learning and stay for the people and community. As a LIFE member and volunteer, I enjoy opportunities to explore different topics of interest, interact with a diverse group of people, and feel a sense of purpose and accomplishment – and have a few laughs along the way.



Milvi Ester

I joined The LIFE Institute six years ago. My interest in finding out more about LIFE was piqued at a New Members' event. I remember feeling welcomed and enthused. I was invited to help at an upcoming event. This led me to join, then Chair the Events Committee, planning and holding social events (remember when?).

My next volunteer role was becoming a LIFE Board member and, most recently, Chair of the Board. I was a little nervous to take on such hefty responsibilities. However, based on the outstanding support, trust, and experience of the Board members, I am glad to have jumped in.

Chair role and future directions:

In a nutshell, my role as Board Chair is to help the board lead in ensuring a sound future for LIFE, keeping us on track to fulfill its

**Looking for
more ways to
connect and
engage?**

**Why not try a
LIFE CLUB?**

Meet new members.
Learn and discover together.

Are you looking for other
people with similar interests
to your own? Or do you want
to learn something new in a
virtual social setting?

The LIFE Institute has a
variety of clubs that will be
meeting by Zoom until on-
campus gatherings resume.

Clubs are open to all current
LIFE members for no charge
or a nominal annual fee.

>> LIFE CLUBS

mission; facilitating board meetings, practicing good governance by ensuring actions taken are in line with the organization's bylaws, goals, and mission; putting change in motion; and molding a collaborative board culture.

Probably the greatest challenge for me is continuing to lead the board during this unprecedented pandemic crisis, mainly dealing with immediate concerns and long-term challenges. The Board has embraced the virtual world (our new norm?) to ensure LIFE continues to prosper, guided by our Strategic Plan.

My message to members:

Get the most out of your LIFE membership. As our pandemic journey continues with reduced social interactions, it is even more important to focus on nurturing our interests and passions to maintain our well-being. We can then continue to thrive as a community of learners.

Instructor Profile: Michael Pinkus



Michael Pinkus, The Wine Guy

I have a BA in English literature from the University of Western Ontario and a diploma from Fanshawe College in Radio Broadcasting. I have been interested in wine and the wine business for the better part of twenty-five years or more. My interest in wine was sparked by a friend who asked me what I had done over the Christmas break and all I could tell her was about the wines that I had tried. She said: "maybe you should be in the wine business".

My interests lie in music and movies. Having been a radio disc jockey and morning man out in British Columbia, I have always been a big fan of movies and I've actually spent full Saturdays in an AMC Theatre. I read mostly mystery and suspense books and I have written at least one book, unpublished.

LIFE CORE VALUES

LEARNING

We believe learning is core to healthy aging, and we strive to include educational opportunities in all we do.

COMMUNITY

We create a convivial environment that supports learning, builds relationships, and enables everyone to contribute.

INCLUSION

We listen to each other, seek to understand each other, and broaden our viewpoint. We welcome people of all backgrounds and abilities.

INTEGRITY

We are truthful and honest in all we do. When faced with difficult decisions and hard choices, we do the right thing.

The earliest connection I have to The LIFE Institute is 2007. Somebody approached me to create a wine course for LIFE members. I was 37 at the time. I could not take the course, but I could lead it, which was kind of funny to me. Now I can do both. Just recently we incorporated a little bit of food into class - which was the first time we have ever done that.

My favorite part of class is talking to students and the interaction. Wine lubricates the mouth and the soul. There have been some great discussions about wine, some great stories that people tell and pouring wine always makes me everyone's friend.

Thanks to COVID-19 I can't do wine tastings which is a major part of my education. There have been a few Zoom meetings where winemakers send wine, but those mass tastings where you can taste over a hundred wines in an afternoon have been curbed. Thankfully, there are still enough agents in Ontario who need their wines tasted and enough wineries who still need feedback. I have probably tasted 50% less wines in 2020 than any other year of my entire 20-year career writing about wine.

I will continue to teach wine, as long as you guys want to drink wine. Want to talk about wine. And want to learn about wine.

The 2020/21 LIFE Institute Student Awards

The LIFE Institute Student Awards are presented by LIFE Institute to recognize and reward commitment to studies and activities at Ryerson University designed to improve the lives of older adults in the community at large.

Established in 1996, The LIFE Institute has presented financial assistance to 118 students. This year's recipients are:

- *Esther (Anne) Cabildo*, BA Psychology
- *Claudia Idzik*, MA Psychology
- *Sabila Rehman*, BSc Honours Bio-Medical Sciences
- *Victoria Ross*, BScN Collaborative Nursing
- *Mirelli Van Heer*, MA Social Work and
- *Virna Deganis*, Project Management (CED)

[READ MORE ABOUT THE 2020-2021 LISA AWARD WINNERS](#)

[SEE A LISTING OF ALL 118 STUDENT WINNERS](#)

To continue providing this award, your donation to the Fund is essential. Personal donations of \$20 or more will receive a charitable tax receipt. Contributions can be made through [The LIFE Institute's website](#).

How to Confirm Your Registrations, Invoices, Refunds etc.

Log-in to thelifeinstitute.ca using your username and password.

Go to your profile by selecting **My Profile** in the grey menu bar at the top of your screen.

At the top of the screen in your profile, you will see a message that says:

Welcome, Jane Doe

Click on the downward facing arrow and select **Invoices**.

The screen will update. Select the **Event Registrations** tab.


When you select (click the link to) your course registration/event the screen will update with all the date, time and location information you require, including a link to an online map.

For more information, including diagrams and specific directions for tablets, phones, PCs etc., please view the online resource:

[How to Confirm Your LIFE Registrations Online](#)

FREE JUNE LECTURES: Medical Mondays

The LIFE Institute, in collaboration with Programs for 50+ at The Chang School, is pleased to offer *Medical Mondays*, a talk/lecture series **complimentary to all members**. The lectures will be offered on all four Mondays in June to coincide with Seniors' Month.



**Medical Mondays
JUNE 2021**

The LIFE Institute, in collaboration with Programs for 50+ at The Chang School, is pleased to offer this lecture series **complimentary to all members**.

JUNE 7 - Dr. Petra Dorfsman, The Institute for Functional Medicine
Introduction to Deutenomics

JUNE 14 - Dr. Thomas Seyfried, Biochemical Geneticist
Cancer as a Mitochondrial Disease: The Origin, Management, and Prevention of Cancer

JUNE 21 - Dr. El-Soheemy, Department of Nutritional Sciences, U of T
Nutrigenomics: Do Our Genes Determine What we Eat?

JUNE 28 - Dr. Samir Sinha, Sinai Health
Living Longer, Living Well: Expert Advice to Enable Healthy Aging

More information and registration links coming soon.

www.thelifeinstitute.ca

You must register for each lecture individually.
Register on the LIFE website now:

REGISTER ►



2020 – 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Milvi Ester, *Chair*
Lorne Bernstein, *Vice-Chair*
Angèle Mongul, *Vice-Chair*
Philip Abrahams, *Secretary*
Janice Winton, *Treasurer*
Virginia Bosomworth,
Immediate Past Chair
Barb Atlas
Eva Bell
Harvey Bernstein
Sheila Clenman
Vince Fearon
Paul Herbert
Rhonda Singer

Dalia Hanna
ex-officio

*LivingLIFE is published by
LIFE Institute. Opinions
expressed are not necessarily
those of the Institute. Articles
may be reprinted provided
credit is given and a copy sent
to the Institute.*

The LIFE Institute is a Charitable
Organization R#891567646RR0001

In Memoriam

We are sorry to inform readers, the following LIFE Institute members passed away recently.

We remember:

- Marcel Brochu, February 7, 2021
- Barry Cooper, April 4, 2021
- Allan Currie, May 11, 2021
- Susan Gorewich, April 17, 2021
- John Twomey, January 4, 2021
- Mary Twomey, October 11, 2020
- Ellen Willows, May 2021

and Katherine Barber "*The Word Lady*", LIFE Instructor, April 24, 2021

The LIFEcares program sends cards to members who are ill, have suffered a bereavement, or are celebrating a special occasion. If you know or hear of someone who should receive a LIFEcares card, contact the LIFE office. Sharon Roebuck is our current LIFEcares volunteer.

THE BACK PAGE

LivingLIFE is produced by volunteers Fran Bleviss, Peter Douglas, Carolyn Filteau and Ruth Lerner. To make sure it is interesting and useful for LIFE members, we welcome your comments and suggestions. We also appreciate story ideas for consideration. Please send them to either Peter Douglas at pt.douglas@icloud.com or Ruth Lerner at rzlerner@hotmail.com.