

# INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING FOR ALL AGES

News You Can Use  
John A. Logan College

Office for Educational Programming  
618-985-3741, Ext. 8552

Mabel Hayes  
mabelhayes@jalc.edu

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## John A. Logan College Center for Life Long Learning for All Generations

### Did You Know That

- The Dutch believe that eating donuts on New Year's Day will bring good fortune?
- In Switzerland, people believe it is good luck to let a drop of cream land on the floor on New Years Day?
- In Denmark, you may find your doorstep littered with a pile of broken dishes on New Year's Day? Old dishes are saved all year to throw at your friends homes on New Years Eve. A pile of broken dishes means that you have many friends.
- In Spain when the clock strikes midnight on December 31, the custom is to eat 12 grapes, one with each toll of the clock, to bring good luck for the New Year? Often, the grapes are washed down with wine. Everyone interrupts what they are doing to carry out this custom.

Want to learn more? Become a part of the John A. Logan College Intergenerational Learning Program where you can tell us what you want to know more about. Call (618) 985-2828, Ext. 8583, to receive more information.

## SAVE THESE 2009 DATES!!

**"Basic Internet Skills" Short Term Class, February 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19 1:30 - 4:00,**  
**Intergenerational Learning for All Ages Annual Conference March 9,**  
**"Trail of Tears" Short Term Class, March 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26 1:30 - 4:00**  
**St. Louis World's Fair Study Tour, May 1, 2009**  
**Underground Railroad Study Tour, October 12, 2009**

## Happy New Year!

A new beginning for many things, including the Intergenerational Programming newsletter mailing list. I thought about saying, "If you do not get this newsletter, please let me know," just to see how many of you would call and say, "If we didn't get the newsletter, how are we supposed to let you know that we didn't get it?" Everyone who attended any of the study tours, or any of the conferences in the past four years, plus anyone who has called and asked to be put on the list should have received a copy. If you talk to anyone who feels they should have received a letter but did not, just ask them to call Heather at 985-3741, extension 8696, and we will be glad to mail one.



What a phenomenal response we had to this trip!!!! Dr. Mees has heard from several of you about how meaningful the study trip was and about how much you appreciate the College's commitment to intergenerational learning. I have enclosed a letter from him that he ask me to share with each of you. I look forward to a time when he can experience the trip with us. John A. Logan College is fortunate to have the support and leadership of Dr. Mees as well as that of Dr. Julia Schroeder, Vice President for Instruction.

## Registration Forms Enclosed

I have included a registration form for all of the above 2009 activities. Please note details on the flyer. Registration for all activities will be written only with no phone registrations taken. Forms may be mailed or dropped off in the Educational Programming Office, B30, from 8:00 - 4:30, Monday through Friday. If you have questions, please call 985-3741, Ext. 8696. The Internet class will be limited to 12 persons, but we will repeat the class later in the spring if there is additional interest. The Trail of Tears short-term class will be limited to 25. The St. Louis World's Fair Study Trip will be limited again to 50. We will not take registrations for the Underground Railroad Study Trip until this summer. We will continue to add short-term classes in other areas as you request them.

As the days grow dreary and cold weather aches and pains set in, I thought you might be uplifted by the following article from the Vital Aging Network Newsletter:

## Positive Aspects of Aging

Birthdays and birthday parties appeal to almost everyone, but the idea of getting older lacks appeal. Growing older does offer challenges. You must anticipate and accept certain losses and limitations. Aging is more than disease, despair, and disability. The following rewarding and positive aspects of aging can balance the negative stereotypes associated with it:

### **You are wiser.**

Wisdom is a valuable ingredient that accompanies aging. In the past, elders were repositories of wisdom. Younger people could learn and find guidance from the lives of older adults, whether tragic or triumphant. The respected elder possesses an intuitive knowledge of how to judge a situation and then make the necessary and most appropriate decisions.

### **You are confident.**

The aging person with a positive attitude can cast off the burden of superficial limitations that a youth-oriented society imposes. The confident older adult uses the skills acquired from diverse experiences in life to demonstrate and perpetuate ongoing feelings of healthy self-esteem and self-worth.

### **You are your own person.**

You know who you are; you know what you like and don't like. Contentment in your life is possible because you have a strong balance between successes and failures. You don't take rejection personally. The practical wisdom that you earned from experiencing both triumph and tragedy provides you a solid groundedness.

### **You are a conduit to the past.**

Your recollections of significant historical events are to be respected. Aging people maintain a key position through being able to give family and community an important sense of continuity with the past. You provide continuous reminders of important values that individuals and communities should maintain in the present. Your very presence creates a connection between generations.

### **You are a grand parent.**

Whether you become a grandparent to your own grandchildren or a surrogate grandparent to children of the

community, you are a role model. Individuals and communities can learn valuable lessons from various ethnic cultures because they demonstrate respect for the wisdom and balance that older generations bring to the family and community. In the past, many cultures regarded the role of grand parent very highly since the elder typically was responsible for the spiritual education of young people. Frequently elders taught the young how to read scripture and to pray.

### **You are motivated.**

Growing old is truly a gift. During this stage, you are increasingly aware of how precious time is, and you feel a desire to use it wisely. A display of enthusiastic interest in lifelong learning, leisure activities, and volunteerism can promote good personal health and inspire younger generations.

### **You are more spiritual.**

In contrast to younger people, adults age 65 and older report that spirituality is important in their lives. Spirituality helps to give our lives more meaning. Spirituality is not necessarily connected to a specific belief system or religious worship. Instead, it arises from your connection with yourself and with others, the development of your personal values, and your search for purpose in life. Therefore, spirituality is different for everyone. It may take the form of a religious service or ceremony, prayer, meditation, and/or a belief in a higher power. You also can find spirituality in nature, music, art, or a secular community.

### **Conclusion**

You must meet obvious challenges with advancing age. Fostering a network of friendships old and new, remaining connected to family and community, and nurturing spirituality will greatly assist the aging person to address these challenges with a greater sense of balance and peace.

### **References**

- Administration on Aging: [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov)  
 National Institute on Aging: [www.nia.nih.gov](http://www.nia.nih.gov)  
 Ohio Dept of Aging: [www.state.oh.us/age](http://www.state.oh.us/age)  
 Moberg, D. (2001). *Aging and spirituality: Spiritual Dimensions of Aging Theory, Research, Practice and Policy*. New York: Haworth Pastoral Press  
 The Wisdom Years, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration: <http://fspa.org/index.php>  
*Mary L. Dierling is retired from clinical general dentistry. She currently works full time as a patient advocate for HealthEastHealth Care System in St. Paul, MN and is a 2006 Bethel University graduate with a master's degree in Social Gerontology.*