



Notable Quotable

“The most luxurious possession, the richest treasure anybody has, is his personal dignity.”

~ Jackie Robinson, baseball Hall of Famer



January Programs of Interest

Local History Discussion Group – this month we discuss the Arlington County Fair. Wednesday Jan 3 12:30-2:45

Lee Coffee Klatch- Mondays 10-11am

The Study of Words. Wednesday Jan. 10 11-1pm

AARP Driver Safety Class – Wednesday January 17 9-5 \$15.00 for AARP members; \$20.00 for non AARP members. (call 703-228-4403 to register)

Story of Resilience and Strength – featuring Leonard Gordon Tuesday Jan. 23 11:30-12:30

At Your Leasure *continued from pg. 1*

In addition to all the time she donates to the social committee, she leads a very popular genealogy group. Eileen Kenna represents the advisory committee at the bi-monthly Senior Adult Council meetings when Tom is unable to attend. Fran Field teaches contra dance on 5th Fridays. Caral Bennett and Inge Ercolano provide historical context to much of the program development. Our newest member Jean Jackson brings new experiences and a great list of potential speakers.

All this experience and input is very much appreciated. To make our meetings more productive, it's important to hear from you. Come talk about Lee or anything else that is on your mind every Monday from 10-11. This year put more leisure into your life at Lee.



Totally Tubular Piece of Trivia

On January 3 in 1888, Marvin Stone was issued the patent for his paper drinking straw. A former cigar manufacturer, Stone was familiar with the wrapping of paper. Prior to Stone's invention, people used straws made from blades of rye grass, but the rye imparted a grassy taste to the drink. It also had the unfortunate tendency of turning to mush if it stayed wet for too long. Stone's invention was a welcome improvement, but hardly original. Drinking straws were in use 5,000 years ago by the Sumerians, who employed straws that doubled as sieves. These drinking tubes

were used to drink beer and would filter out solid particulates that were the by-product of fermentation. A gold straw inlaid with priceless blue lapis lazuli was even discovered in a Sumerian tomb. Of course, most straws today are made of plastic, but the careless tossing of these single-use straws into the garbage has created an environmental mess. It seems that Stone's patent of a recyclable paper straw is more important than ever.

Lee Senior Center

January 2018



5722 Lee Highway, Arlington, Va. 22207
Hours of Operation M thru F 10-3
Tel : 703-228-0555
Office of Senior Adult Program/Department of Parks and Recreation.

Staff

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Judy
Engebritson

At Your Leasure

January 1st rings in more than the new year; it's also the start of Hobby Month. There's no shortage of hobbies to pursue at the Lee 55+ Center. From card making, to crochet to learning a new dance form such as Contra Dance, there are many opportunities to partake in activities that will feed your soul and inspire your creative side. Of course, hobbies aren't the only way to improve your well-being, socializing with others, sharing experiences or simply shooting the breeze is a great way to connect with the world around you.

This month, the Lee-Madison advisory committee is kicking off a new series of Monday Morning Kaffe

Klatches. This fine group of volunteers help with staff develop and implement many of the programs that take place here. Together, our goal is to provide you with quality leisure programs that are fun, interesting and some cases, extremely relevant. You probably know who the advisory committee members are but just in case, here is a brief introduction. Tom Sipusic is the chair. He along with Fran Field lead the weekly partner dance classes. Roberta Thibodaux is the co-chair. She volunteers at the front desk on Mondays. She also leads the book club discussions. Eileen Bogdanoff is the treasurer.

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Gone for Good – Words on the Way Out

Every year, Lake Superior State University reveals its list of overused words or phrases that it feels *must* be banished from use forever. Which words made the cut? As you can imagine, a few choice words from the American political sphere, namely: *bigly*, meaning “a swelling or blustering manner,” and *post-truth*, meaning “a society where facts matter less than impressions.” There are also plenty of words related to social

media and the Internet: *ghost*, which is “to abruptly end communication on social media,” and *listicle*, which is “a numbered or bulleted list created to attract views over the Internet.” The English languages is indeed a living breathing entity. There's always some about it that sparks a discussion. If talking about words is your thing, be sure attend the monthly session: Study of Words.

An American Original



Foster earned \$15,000 during his lifetime; today his songs are worth millions.

Stephen Foster has been called America's first pop artist, thanks to the musical artistry he put into penning some of the 19th century's most memorable songs. You may not be familiar with all 200 of his hits, but his classics "Oh! Susanna," "Camptown Races," and "Old Folks at Home" (known as "Swanee River") have earned their rightful place in America's national songbook. Don't be surprised to find yourself humming some of these tunes on January 13, Stephen Foster Memorial Day.

Long before the technology was available to record music, Foster was a professional songwriter. He was born near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in a community of immigrants from Italy, Scotland, Ireland, and Germany. His own musical compositions would eventually reflect the influence of European musical traditions as well as church hymns. Living in an era before formal schooling, Foster taught himself how to play the

clarinet, violin, guitar, flute, and piano. He likely wrote his first hit, "Oh! Susanna," as a teenaged member of a secret society known as the "Knights of the S.T." (Square Table). "Oh! Susanna" eventually became the anthem of the California Gold Rush.

Foster may today be lauded as an American icon, but in 1855 his life took a bad turn. His parents and best friend died, he separated from his wife, and he became heavily indebted to his publishers. It was during this time in his life that he wrote "Hard Times Come Again No More." Sadly, with no copyright laws to protect his songwriting, Foster did not reap much financial reward for any of his compositions. By the early 1860s, his life was a daily struggle, and he was forced to move in and out of hotels in New York City. He died on January 13, 1864, with just 38 cents in his wallet. Although he died a pauper, he has achieved status at the forefront of America's artistic elite.

The Dirt on Farming

January 10–13 brings No-Tillage Week, an awareness campaign aimed at spreading the word about the benefits of no-till farming. Farmers have tilled soil for thousands of years, turning over dirt in preparation for planting. This practice, however common, may not create the healthiest soil. By leaving soil untilled, it absorbs more water, retains the organic matter of previously planted crops, improves the cycling of nutrients, retains beneficial microorganisms in the soil, and reduces erosion and

runoff. No-tillage also reduces labor, fuel, irrigation, and machinery costs, while reaping comparable harvests. In this way, no-till farming has been shown to be very profitable, if managed correctly. As in all things, change comes slowly. Transforming a farm from till to no-till is a daunting task. The promise of higher yields, drought-resistance, and lower costs need to be proven before farmers hop on the no-tillage bandwagon, and that is what this week is all about.



No-till farming techniques help preserve precious topsoil.

Coffee Klatsch Coming to Lee

If you are in the neighborhood of the Lee Senior Center between 10:00 to 11:00 am Mondays starting in January, consider dropping into the Lee Center Coffee Klatsch for some coffee and conversation. That is what coffee klatsch means. It comes from German *kafeeklatsch*. *Klatsch* means "gossip". The third ingredient in traditional coffee klatsches is bakery. Lee Center will provide the coffee and cookies. You must provide the

conversation, but that shouldn't be hard. What's more human than a friendly chat? You might want to hang around a bit afterwards to listen to the "Just Playin' Country" group.

Twelfth Day of Christmas

The last day of the Twelve Days of Christmas falls on January 6, and in Ireland it doesn't end with twelve drummers drumming, but with *Nollaig na mBan*, or Women's Christmas, or Little Christmas, as it's also known. This is the day the Christmas decorations come down and (finally) the women of the house get a much-deserved rest after catering to guests during the busy holiday season. In 1998, an article published in the *Irish Times* newspaper noted that while even God rested on the seventh day, Irish women didn't get to rest until the twelfth!

The holiday is especially common in southern Ireland's counties of Cork and Kerry, where families celebrate a yearly reminder of the strength and importance of Irish women, especially mothers, who have long been considered the backbone of the Irish family. In Ireland's olden times, the women would save the turf, cut the hay, and paint the barn, all while raising the children and feeding the family—no small task considering how large traditional Irish families were. While a woman's

role in Irish society has evolved over the years—they have moved far beyond the boundaries of the home and into the community, business, and politics—women are no less revered.

On January 6, it is common for children to give their mothers and grandmothers presents or cook them breakfast. The men take over the household duties for the day while women gather socially in the pubs and restaurants for a little well-deserved girl time. In fact, it is the one time of year when restaurants and bars are filled entirely with women.

Luckily, the notion of Women's Christmas is becoming popular for Irish women beyond Cork and Kerry, and even becoming popular with women who aren't even Irish. And the celebration is becoming more than just a night out at the pubs. Modern Women's Christmas celebrations are including discussions about women's health, political involvement, and most any other women's issues: less food, and more food for thought.



Women's Christmas is celebrated mainly in the Irish counties of Cork and Kerry.