



MARIST COLLEGE Center for Lifetime Study Chronicle

SUMMER 2023

President's Message



Our summer hiatus is time to reflect on the past year at CLS and to consider some of the newer challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Last year saw the largest offering of courses in the recent history of CLS. Each of our curriculum committees developed programs that were of a very high quality and provided the membership with enjoyable opportunities to learn, to teach and to share.

I had the opportunity to meet new friends at Locust Grove, to enrich my understanding of their life experiences and journeys. I hope you all have had similar gratifying experiences.

Our Annual Meeting in May highlighted some of the global issues surrounding education. While we are privileged in New York State to live in a relatively progressive and tolerant educational culture, we also take note of some disturbing national trends. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Darrell Wheeler, President of SUNY New Paltz, is a leading authority on higher education in the U.S. He underscored the positive relationship between diversity and quality of education. He also addressed some of the challenges college administrators face when promoting racial diversity.

This is a central feature of an increasing partisan division in our national culture. I feel it even more acutely when we travel to Florida each winter. Florida has become the poster child for the state leading this conservative backlash against DEI. Several other state legislatures including Virginia, Alabama, Georgia, Idaho and Iowa are joining in. Model state legislation has been written to prohibit colleges from hiring DEI officers, spending money on DEI, and bar training that instruct staff and faculty to identify and fight against systemic racism.

Efforts to suppress liberal education will continue. This is even greater motivation for organizations like CLS to develop curricula that promote free interchange of ideas and diverse viewpoints. Our membership continues to remind me that they support this basic mission for CLS.

The Annual Meeting was also an opportunity to welcome new members. A significant number joined following our recent Open House events. I met with some of them and look forward to getting to know all of our new members when we meet again in the Fall semester. We recognized our Council members who completed their terms of service, and we are grateful for what they have done for CLS this past year. We also acknowledged those who are assuming additional responsibilities in the coming year.

Marist College Center for Lifetime Study

OFFICERS (2023-24)

President: Jack Fein
VP Admin: John Wargo
VP Curriculum: Sharon Steinvurzel
VP Public Info: Jerry Hayes
Secretary: Dewey Lee
Treasurer: Roger D'Aquino

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Connections: Anne Sileno
Classroom Support: Lou Newman
Finance: Leonard Turkenkopf
Member Services: Pegeen & Tom Wall
Membership: Wilma Schmidt
Office Support: RongYi Pan
Scholarship: Ken Knapp
Special Events: Merrilee Osterhoudt
Trips: Betsy Kopstein-Stuts

COUNCIL AT LARGE

Ruth Kava
Carol Demicco
Gil Seligman
Bernardo Steinvurzel
Vacant

CLS Chronicle

Editor: Jerry Hayes
Layout & Design: Robin Will



~ continued on next page

President's Message (Continued)

Following the Annual Meeting, my wife Karin, my daughter Shifra and I went on a cruise to Alaska. I managed to capture some beautiful photos that I will happily share with the upcoming Tuesday travel class. We left New York at the peak of the Canadian wildfires. The air quality in New York that day was rated as the worst in the world. When we arrived in Ketchikan, Alaska the next day, we learned that the air quality there was rated as the best in the world. What a contrast! It illustrated the alternatives for a bright or dismal future we can leave for our kids.

Although summer is a time for most of us to relax, there is a lot of activity happening behind the scenes at CLS. Robin Will, RongYi Pan and Madeline Whalen are busy organizing classes and registration for a terrific Fall semester lineup.

I look forward to seeing you soon at Locust Grove and at our Convocation on September 7th.



REMINDER

By Barbara Sweet, assisted by ChatGPT

Listen, dear members of the Center for Lifetime Study,

The Fall season is almost nigh,

It's time to mark your calendars and prepare,

To learn and grow and show that you care.

Classes await with knowledge to gain,

New skills and insights to entertain,

So don't delay, don't hesitate,

Sign up today, don't be late.

From art to science, and everything in between,

There's a class for every interest to glean,

Expand your mind, and broaden your view,

There's so much to learn, and so much to do.

So, heed this call, and don't forget,

To sign up now, before you regret,

The chance to grow, and the joy it brings,

The Center for Lifetime Study awaits your wings.



DEI: Is There a Reason for CLS to Think About It?

Reva and Mike Cowan, Co-chairs of the DEI Initiative Committee

The leadership of CLS has affirmed a strong interest in exploring and adding DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) related course offerings, special events, and diverse recruitment and enrollment. It has also supported CLS joining with other regional adult learning communities affiliated with colleges and universities, such as Bard, Vassar, Berkshire and Westchester, in efforts to explore ways to offer courses and events of interest to our membership, as well as sharing best practices in reaching whatever DEI goals are selected.

An upcoming September 18, 2023 debate is planned that Dewey Lee has organized and will moderate between a member of the Heritage Foundation, Jonathan Butcher, and a recently retired faculty member of Dutchess Community College, Jacqueline Goffe-McNish. It promises to be a lively and informative discussion of the views the speakers bring to the event. Building off this introductory special event, CLS hopes to bring a course to the Spring semester that will further develop some of the issues raised and discussed.

It is not the intention of CLS to make people support or not support DEI in any form. Rather, it is the hope that highlighting what DEI is and is not will help our membership make informed decisions and understand why there has been both a thrust to support DEI efforts and a more recent move to say such efforts are not needed, useless, and a waste of money. Recently, the Supreme Court ruling on affirmative action which banned colleges from considering race as a specific factor in admissions is a landmark decision in this area.

Coming from many backgrounds, CLS members share positive views of DEI and its importance as well as many other members share opposite views. One thing we acknowledge is that DEI has received accolades for trying to bring diverse and equitable opportunities to a wide range of people not a part of CLS as it currently exists. We also have seen in the media that recent DEI efforts by corporate America and other groups have been “bashed” by many. We hope that you will be part of a course soon that sheds light on the wide-ranging issues and challenges associated with DEI that have prompted CLS and other area lifelong learning organizations to make this a priority to better understand.

For more background information on CLS’s DEI efforts, the reader is encouraged to read two previous Chronicle articles contained in the Winter 2022 and Fall 2022 issues listed below with appropriate links provided for each article to facilitate easy access and reading.

- ◆ [CLS’s Drive for Diversity](#), (*Chronicle*, Winter 2022 Issue, Page 5.)
- ◆ [CLS & Diversity](#), (*Chronicle*, Fall 2022 Issue, Page 6.)

Summer 2023

FROM THE DESK OF THE VP FOR CURRICULUM Sharon Steinvurzel

As Len Turkenkopf retires from the Curriculum Committee, I, with great trepidation, will try to fill his shoes which will be no easy task. Len assures me that everything will work well because he has had wonderful cooperation from members and especially from committee chairs. He has worked diligently to provide us with a wonderful choice of enriching courses through this coming fall season.

After having begun my new task, I am certain that I and the various committees will continue in his path to provide variety, stimulation and knowledge in our course selection and enjoy the company of new friends and those of long standing.

ANNUAL MEETING

Lauren Muffs

Marist College Center for Lifetime Study 2023 Annual Meeting is now in the rear-view mirror. President Jack Fein welcomed everyone to the May 30 meeting promptly at 10:30a.m. He expressed his appreciation to the attendees for their support of CLS all year and is looking forward to 2023-2024.

The keynote speaker for the program was Darrell P. Wheeler, PhD, MPH, the ninth President of SUNY New Paltz, appointed in 2022. His message to the membership was entitled: "*Culture, class and conflicts in higher education: responding with passion, purpose and action.*" He emphasized the importance of liberal arts and sciences education and the social and wealth disparities that education faces. Race and poverty contribute to the inequity of the situation. Anecdotally, Dr. Wheeler told the audience that, when he was in third grade, his parents were told by his teacher "He's not college material; don't waste your time!"

Takeaways from his well-received talk included: education and sociopolitical systems need to catch up with basic human needs and how to prioritize the need for higher education. A lively question and answer period followed.

The business portion of the meeting followed. Officers and Committee Chairs reported on the accomplishments of the past year and their goals for the upcoming year.

Following the Nominating Committee report, Council members were elected. For the most part, all of the Council members for the upcoming 2023-2024 will be the same as 2022-2023 except that a few have changed positions. Len Turkenkopf completed his tenure as VP Curriculum but has agreed to become the Finance Chair. Sharon Steinvurzel is the new VP Curriculum. Anne Sileno will be the Connections Chair. Carol Demicco will be an At-Large Council member. Refer to the first page of this Chronicle for a complete list of Council Members.

Two amendments to the bylaws were also approved unanimously by those attending: (1) an update of the CLS Mission Statement to include inclusivity, and (2) the creation of a Trip Planning Committee separate from the Special Events Committee.



(left to right) Dr. Darrell Wheeler, Jack Fein, Kristine Cullen and John Wargo



Member Corner

CLS Welcomes New Members

Victoria Arrick
Jane Austin
Lynne Bartolucci
Nicholas DiPuppo
Margaret Douglas
Christopher Duncan
Susan Duncan
Gloria Ghedini
Ed Goetzl
Olga Hedberg
Concetta Hollister
Richard Hollister
Diane Jablonski
Martha Jones
Joyce Lacy
Catherine Law

Marion Lipshutz
Shirletta Lyons
Michael Maloney
Kimberly Maloney
Deanna Neiger
Elena Onesa-Lieberman
James O'Shea
Judie Pagonis
Donna Pistiner
Felipe Pistiner
Sara Rothman
Carol Salvas
Elizabeth Sawicki
Margaret Slomin
Victor Vynorius



~ IN MEMORIAM ~

*CLS mourns the loss of fellow member
Joan Bei (April, 2023)*

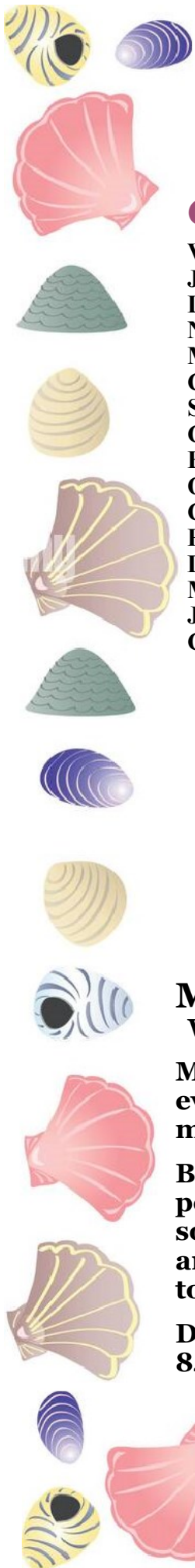
MEMBERSHIP

Wilma Schmidt, Membership Chair

Membership renewal for CLS is way behind normal. Our two Open House events did attract some new members, however there is room for many more.

Be sure to spread the word that CLS has membership openings. Let people know that besides attending classes there is much opportunity to socialize, meet very interesting people, and to serve on committees that are instrumental in making CLS the successful organization that exists today.

Direct those interested in membership to contact the CLS office at 845-575-3902 and they will be sent a membership application.



REACHING OUT FOR NEW MEMBERS

As part of our campaign to attract new members, there have been several and varied efforts to inform the community about the benefits of CLS membership.

CLS AT THE REGENCY...Reported by Dewey Lee

At the suggestion of CLS member and Regency resident Valerie Low, we took advantage of a wonderful opportunity to reach out for new members on Wednesday, June 7. Several of us presented the best of CLS to the Regency at Wappingers, a 55 plus community. Over 25 people attended. We gave a short overview of CLS along with a five minute sampling of a class done several years ago on the law of criminal insanity in New York. This is part of our continuing effort to attract new members.

Many thanks to Barbara Sweet, Herb Sweet, Wilma Schmidt, John Wargo, Robin Will and Roger D'Aquino for their invaluable assistance.

OPEN HOUSE

Encouraged by the success of the Open House held on March 8, another was held at Locust Grove on June 26. Forty people attended. The event was organized by VP of Administration John Wargo who acted as MC for the program.

President Jack Fein described various aspects of CLS. He told the attendees that CLS serves the community and attempts to improve the quality of life by providing educational and social programs.

In order to give the prospective members examples of CLS classes, three mini-lectures were presented: Calendars of the World and Finding Longitude by John Gavin; Earth History Three and a Half Billion Years by Leathem Mehaffey; and World Geopolitics with an emphasis on Russia-Ukraine by Martin Charwat.

There was also mention of recent local trips and the hope to resume bus trips to more distant locations.

Each attendee was given a list of the Fall 2023 course offerings, an information sheet, a palm card and the Spring 2023 Chronicle. Robin Will spoke briefly about the registration process and was available to answer questions. Refreshments were provided by Members Services Chairs Pegeen and Tom Wall.

MARIST RED FOX CLUB

This is an organization which provides financial assistance to various Marist College athletic programs. Jean Breyer spoke to their Board of Directors in February about CLS and the possibility of the organizations being of assistance to each other. Jerry Hayes followed up in April, and, at their annual golf tournament on June 2, each of the 120 golfers was given one of our CLS palm cards.

VASSAR TEMPLE

Thanks to the effort of Gil Seligman, the July-August 2023 Vassar Temple Bulletin contained an article about CLS seeking new members. There was a description of the CLS program and classes and an invitation to browse the CLS website or call the CLS office for further information.

HELP CONTINUE OUTREACHREACHING

Many organizations publish newsletters for their members. There are clubs and communities which invite speakers to their meetings. If you are a member of such an organization, it would be very helpful if you could ascertain if they would accept an article about CLS or invite a speaker to a meeting. If so, please contact Robin at the CLS office (845-575-3902).



CLS Scholarship Activities

By Ken Knapp, Scholarship Committee Chair

As promised in the last edition of the Chronicle, here are the pictures of our 2023 CLS Scholar Catherine “Cat” Natonio with her family on graduation day. It was a beautiful day on the Marist campus and it was a real pleasure to meet and talk with Cat and her family.



January 4, 2023

Center for Lifetime Study, Marist College
3399 North Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Dear Center for Lifetime Study Scholarship Committee and the CLS Council,

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for your generous \$4000 Center for Lifetime Study scholarship. I was thrilled to learn of my selection for this honor, and I am deeply appreciative of your support.

I am a senior pursuing an education degree; I hope to become an elementary school teacher upon graduating from Marist College. I am currently registered for another 15 credits this Spring and plan to graduate in May of 2023. Thanks to you, I am one step closer to that goal. By awarding me the Center for Lifetime Study scholarship, you have lightened my financial burden, which allows me to focus more on the most important aspect of school: learning.

Thank you again for your generosity and support. I promise you I will work very hard and eventually give back to others, both as a teacher and possibly a scholarship to future students like myself.

Sincerely,
Catherine Natonio
Catherine Natonio

Cat originally planned to pursue her master’s degree this fall but she is also planning a wedding for one of her daughters. So, she decided to take one semester off and begin working on her master’s degree in the spring.



Making A Donation to the CLS Scholarship Fund

Donations to the CLS Scholarship can be made at any time.

You can honor or memorialize a loved one, family member, friend, or colleague. No amount is too small and will be received with appreciation and gratitude by CLS and our student recipients.

Make your check payable to Marist CLS with a note in the memo “CLS Scholarship”

Thank you!

thank you

I want to extend another “thank you” to CLS member Norma Chang. Norma gave CLS the extra cookbooks that did not sell during her cooking class. My wife, Joan, and I sold these books in the lobby of Locust Grove to raise money for the CLS Scholarship fund. It was interesting to see some people who did not buy any books but still donated to our scholarship fund. The total donation to the Scholarship fund thanks to Norma’s

generosity went from \$275 to \$560.

The 50/50 raffle at our Annual Meeting raised another raised \$250. Special thanks to our winner for donating their half of the 50/50 cash prize back to the scholarship fund.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR DUMMIES

By Herb Sweet



Unless you are living in a cave in the Himalayas, by now you must have heard about AI or Artificial Intelligence and ChatGPT and it may still be a mystery to you. Not to feel bad about that – the top experts don't understand it either. Oh yes, they understand it well enough to have put it together but not well enough to understand how it actually works. More on this later.


But for now, let's just look at what this is all about and how you can put it to your advantage. You likely have used Google to find information on the Internet.

Google takes you to a list of websites where you can read articles or watch videos on your subject of interest. The new Artificial Intelligence programs take this a step further. You ask your question and in an instant it spits out the answer in easy to read text! You can ask anything from the practical to the profound. How does it do this you may ask. So I did. Here's what it said:

“As an AI language model, ChatGPT gets its information from a large corpus of text data that it was trained on. This corpus includes a wide variety of sources, such as books, articles, websites, and other written materials from the internet. The training data is processed by the GPT architecture to learn patterns and relationships in the language, allowing it to generate responses and provide information based on the input it receives. However, it's important to note that ChatGPT may not always have access to the most up-to-date or accurate information, and its responses should be taken as informational rather than professional advice.”

BTW, I think that you can now see how easy it is to get it to write essays, articles, personal notes and even poems if you feel that you are lacking the time or the ability to write up something really nice.

You can get right into it at chat.openai.com. All you need to do is to establish an account which is free. This is ChatGPT-3. ChatGPT-4 is a paid version more for commercial use than for the general public. It also is more powerful. But, it too may soon be replaced by an even more powerful program called Hyena. Technology is moving very fast. And this is the danger that the top people in the field are worried about and why slowing down is being advised.

 There is a need for you to be cautious as well. While the text generated is very convincing, the answers are not always correct. When this happens, it is called 'hallucinating'. So the best practice, just as you do when hiring a contractor, is to get a second opinion. I use the Bing AI (bing.com/chat) and also a search engine such as Google.

So try it, you may just find that you like it! 

Rabbi Charles Feinberg - Special Webinar Presentation Mission to Kyiv

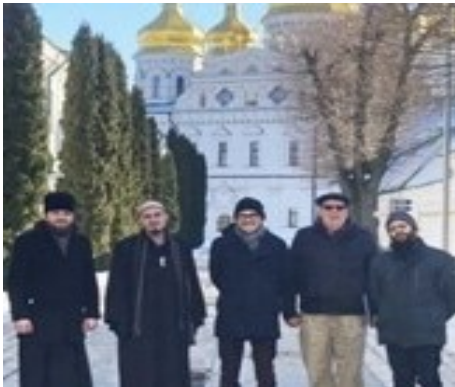
by Reva & Mike Cowan



Rabbi Feinberg

On May 4, 2023, Marist CLS co-sponsored with the Dutchess County Interfaith Council a Zoom webinar featuring Rabbi Charles Feinberg from Washington, D.C. Rabbi Feinberg shared his experiences during a five-day trip to Kyiv, Ukraine. The trip was part of an interfaith delegation of five religious leaders including the rabbi, a British imam, two Polish Catholic priests, and a British rabbi who traveled to Kyiv and other nearby areas to learn more about its religious communities, attest to the unfolding loss of life and limb, and show solidarity with the Ukrainian people. The trip was organized by an NGO, non-governmental organization, called *Europe, A Patient Organization* led by a group of young Polish intellectuals and religious leaders.

In his talk Rabbi Feinberg emphasized the delegation's mission was three-fold: to witness the devastation in the war-torn country; to affirm the multi-religious nature of Ukrainian society; and to pray for a just peace. The delegation was invited by Ukrainians for this act of solidarity during these most challenging times for Ukrainian society. During their five days in Kyiv, the delegation met with religious leaders of various faiths, government officials and members of Parliament, and listened to testimony from many Ukrainian citizens. They visited churches, religious convents, and a Jewish Masorti (Conservative) congregation. They also toured three different towns outside of Kyiv - where heavy fighting and human rights violations occurred. The delegation prayed for a just peace at the Babi Yar Memorial to Jews killed during World War II, and at St. Sophia's Cathedral, one of Kyiv's best-known landmarks.



Delegation outside of the Monastery of the Caves in Kyiv. Courtesy of Rabbi Feinberg (2nd from right).

Rabbi Feinberg who is retired from being an active pulpit rabbi and has led a support group for prisoners' rights, commented on why he undertook such an arduous and dangerous trip to Kyiv. He highlighted that it represented an important moment and opportunity. The Ukrainians had extended an invitation, and he felt honored by it. Consequently, he arrived on a Tuesday morning and left Saturday evening. One cannot fly directly into Kyiv since the airport is closed. Therefore, his itinerary included a flight to Warsaw (Poland) and then involved a series of train trips, from Warsaw to Krakow and then from Krakow to Przemyśl, Poland followed by an overnight train ride from Przemyśl to Kyiv.

Regarding the danger in making such a trip he indicated there was an element of danger to it; but the people of Kyiv go about their normal business even though you never know where or when there might be a Russian missile or drone attack. Moreover, there is a nighty curfew from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

The presentation certainly brought the war to a more personal level than one sees in nightly news broadcasts. Rabbi Feinberg's slide presentation can be viewed at the following URL => <https://www.marist.edu/documents/d/guest/rabbi-charles-m-feinberg-feb-2023-mission-to-kyiv-ukraine-presentation-slides>

WARNING! Some of the slides in this presentation depict graphic images for war. Viewer discretion is advised.

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MARIST
Center for Lifetime Study



Fall 2023
Course Catalog
& Schedule



The Fall 2023 course catalog was emailed on July 11th.

The last day to register for fall classes is **Sun. Aug. 13th at 5PM.**

Click link below to register for Fall 2023 Classes:

<https://www.marist.edu/professional-programs/cls/course-registration>

MEMBERSHIP

NOW OPEN!

Consider Joining the

MARIST

Center for Lifetime Study



The Marist College Center for Lifetime Study operates under the auspices of the Marist School of Professional Programs. Its purpose is to provide opportunities for educational, intellectual and cultural growth for men and women age 55 and older.

CLS is dedicated to the continual academic growth and social fulfillment of our members. No experience or educational background is required for membership. Courses are determined by curriculum committees and suggestions from CLS members.

CLS is a volunteer organization guided by a Council elected by the members. Members are encouraged to get involved by volunteering to serve on a committee, teach a class or participate in our community outreach programs.

CLS provides a rewarding experience of learning and fellowship in a relaxed atmosphere. Members enjoy classes at the Locust Grove Estate and classes via Zoom as well as planned trips and social events.

CLS offers courses in the arts, social sciences, humanities, sciences, and life and leisure studies taught by experienced individuals including college faculty, CLS members and community leaders.

CLS strives to foster a diverse and inclusive environment. We welcome all backgrounds, beliefs, and identities.

Annual Membership Includes:

- ✓ Eight-week sessions are offered each spring and fall and a mini-series in January. Subject matter is drawn from the arts and literature, social sciences, general sciences, and life and leisure studies.
- ✓ There is a wide range of course offerings. Classes have included such topics as art, computers, current events, economics, gardening, history, healthcare, law, literature, music, poetry, politics, religion, science and travel.
- ✓ Special events may take the form of lectures, day trips, and visits to exhibitions or museums.
- ✓ Access to various Marist College events and programs as well as access to the James A. Cannavino Library, The McCann Center pool, and the Marist Bookstore - Barnes & Noble.

~ membership dues are collected annually



All of our instructors and trip leaders volunteer their time.

All courses, trips, and social activities are arranged by CLS member volunteers.



If you are interested in joining the Marist Center for Lifetime Study or would like more information, email: MC.CLS@marist.edu or call the CLS Office at (845) 575-3902

Visit our website: www.marist.edu/professional-programs/cls

CLS MEMBERSHIP

CLS has membership spaces available for the 2023/2024 year
(July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024)

CLS no longer maintains a waiting list for membership. The word of mouth has always been that it takes a long time to become a member of CLS. Since this is no longer true, we hope that current CLS members will spread the word to friends and to anyone that has expressed an interest in CLS.

Fall classes start on September 5, 2023. If you know of anyone interested in joining they can contact the CLS Office at (845) 575-3902 or by email: mc.cls@marist.edu.

* When sharing information about membership, please mention that **all** members will be **required** to have an email address and access to a computer, smart phone, or other device with internet capabilities.

Wilma Schmidt, Membership Chair