

*"Education is not for life. Education is life itself."—John Dewey*

# THE LIFE GAZETTE

*Learning Is For Everyone—Sponsored by Burlington County College*

Volume 3, Issue 3

Fall 2009

## WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL

To all new and returning members, welcome back to school!

I recently came across an old Peanuts cartoon strip that went something like this . . . On the first day of the new school year, students were told to write an essay about returning to school after the summer break. One student (Lucy) wrote, "Vacations are nice, but it's good to get back to school." There's nothing more satisfying or challenging than education, and I look forward to a year of expanding knowledge. We, as LIFE members, are not required to write essays or do homework, but I am sure we all agree that there is nothing better than knowledge.

Many thanks to the Social Committee, under Kay's leadership, for presenting a very fun-filled Back to School Day Party that was held on the Mt. Holly Campus. We had 110 people in attendance, and we had a great time.

We now have a link on the Burlington County College website. The easiest way to access it is by using Google and typing in "LIFE at BCC", and use the first option. We are in the process of putting together a power

point presentation that will be used for recruitment.

Please try to attend the classes that you selected, and have a great year.

Nate Taylor  
President



## RETIREMENT

Our Best Wishes go out to Ken Honeycutt on his retirement.

Ken served the LIFE Program as secretary from March 1999 until his retirement on October 1, 2009.

At our Back To School Day, the LIFE Council recognized Ken's work with the program, and presented him with a lifetime membership to LIFE.

Ken spoke for a few minutes about his journey with the LIFE Program and his experi-

ences in working with various members of LIFE.

Ken went on to thank Linda Bennett for her support and giving him the opportunity to work for LIFE.

Ken's expertise in the various areas of developing the course catalog, registration, and publishing LIFE's various materials will be missed.

Well done, Ken, and have a long, full and wonderful LIFE!



## WELCOME

You may be wondering what will happen with LIFE now that Ken is retired, and who will be doing all the varied tasks that Ken performed for LIFE. Not to worry. Donna Fascenda has been appointed to take over from Ken. Donna begins her duties in October, and we want to welcome her. Donna had been working with the Community Enrichment Program at the college, and has experience in many of the duties Ken regularly performed.



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Sponsored by  
Burlington County College  
601 Pemberton Browns Mills Rd.  
Pemberton, NJ 08068  
Tel. 609-894-9311 Ext. 1499  
856-222-9311 Ext. 1499

### **THE LIFE GAZETTE** Staff

Managing Editor:  
Andrea Bauer

Proofreader:  
Irma Blinderman

*LIFE* publishes *The Gazette* three times a year. The next edition will appear in the Spring.

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

President:	Nate Taylor, Jr.
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Karen Bennett  
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## **SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

In the last issue I asked you to let me know if anyone was celebrating a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary. A very belated Happy Birthday to Ken Decker who celebrated his 70th birthday on board Carnival's Pride sailing to the Bahamas from Baltimore. On his actual birthday, May 27th, he was ashore in Half Moon Cay enjoying the beach, the gorgeous blue water, and the beach barbeque.



A couple of upcoming birthdays are VP Mary Ann Stankinas on December 8th, and President Nate Taylor on December 17th. A Happy Birthday to these folks, and a thank you for their work on the LIFE Council.

## **HOLIDAY PARTY**

Mark your calendars, and plan to attend our annual Holiday Party on Thursday, December 3, 2009, 12:00 noon at the Mt. Holly Campus.



## **GETTING TO KNOW THE INSTRUCTORS**

This issue we are featuring Vernon Reeves, who teaches Microsoft Office.

When you finally make up your mind to learn how to use a computer, you probably don't plan on getting a rocket scientist to teach you. But if you sign up for the Microsoft Office course given at BCC through LIFE, a rocket scientist is just what you'll get.

Vernon Reeves didn't set out to be a teacher of computer software. Nor did he plan on helping to develop our first rockets and early computer languages. He never expected to start his working career washing dishes or to finish up as a mower of many acres of grass, but when you're as energetic, as giving, and as open to all possibilities as Vern is, anything can happen.

Vern was gifted with a good head for math, so he studied it at Hofstra University, then got his Master's at Northwestern in Boston. He next joined the Army and found himself polishing pots. Thankfully, the unit's clerk, Lt. Yamahita, eventually read Vern's papers and thought a different posting was in order. He was assigned to the Army Ballistic Missile Agency at Red Stone Arsenal where he worked in a computer lab to analyze the trajectory and predict the behavior of missiles. His new boss was Werner Von Braun.

When his enlistment was over Vern went to work in the private sector and found himself more and more involved with computers and doing more and more learning and teaching. He was one of the designers of the computer business language COBOL and he and his boss were in charge of the section that built the first COBOL processor. He also worked on ComTrain, an early commercial translator. As each stage of each new development was completed, he taught his fellow workers how to run it and apply it. After he retired he still kept busy. As a member of R.S.V.P. he volunteered at Virtua Hospital where, among other duties, he taught Access.

Then in 2002 his friend, Fred Snow, became a volunteer teacher of computers at BCC. Fred asked Vern if he'd help. Vern agreed to "run around the class room and trouble shoot" while Fred lectured. But Fred wanted to teach "hardware" (how to build a computer) and the students wanted to learn about "software" (how a computer works). Fred deferred to Vern, who has been teaching three semesters a year, usually to about 10 students per class, ever since. And he always welcomes input from the students in his classroom. "Any talent I can find in class I expose," he said. "I see that light dawn when someone gets a concept and I loved it. I enjoy it too much to stop so I'll just keep on teaching until the end of never."

Now about all that grass that occupies the rest of Vern's time. He and Mrs. Reeves own 16 acres that once sustained many horses. They now have only one horse, the elderly but still handsome Waffles. Although Waffles does his very best, he's no match for all that grass-covered land, so when Vern isn't teaching he's most likely mowing.

*By Tina Hoffman*

I want to thank Tina for putting this article together, and wish her well as shortly after this she experienced some health issues requiring hospitalization and rehab.

If you are willing and able to write about one of our many talented instructors, I would be happy to hear from you.

The next issue of the Gazette will be in the new year.

### **20th ANNIVERSARY**

At the Annual Meeting on April 15, 2010, LIFE will be celebrating its 20th Anniversary, and plans are underway to make this a very special event.

You are encouraged to step up and volunteer toward this effort, and should contact Nate Taylor with any ideas you have on how or what we can do to make this a day to remember.

### **ELECTIONS**

It is once again time to think about elections, and in this regard if you have a desire to be on the Council and help to guide and direct the LIFE program, please contact Nate Taylor or any of the Council members. A Nominating Committee will be formed shortly, and if asked to serve it is hoped that you will agree.

### **APPRECIATION LUNCHEON**

The annual Appreciation Luncheon was held on June 11, 2009 at Prospectors in Mt. Laurel.

President Nate Taylor welcomed all who attended, and thanked them for their unstinting service to LIFE, for without their willingness to lead classes we would be in a very difficult spot.

Joel Popler, VP of Curriculum, spoke about the upcoming fall semester. There are 53 classes slated for this fall including water exercise, dancing and day trips to stimulate social and physical activities as well as classes dealing with Eastern and Western Religions, Bridge, The Importance of Long Term Care Planning, and History of American Popular Music, to name a few.

A big thank you to Joel, our VP of Curriculum. Joel does a wonderful job and spends many hours of his time at the LIFE Office at Parker Center to make sure all our courses are in our brochures and that they get out in a timely fashion. He does this willingly and without pay!

**LIFE VOLUNTEERS  
WANTED**

**LIFE OFFICE**

Office Assistants  
Monday/Wednesday  
10 a.m.—3 p.m.

Also acceptable any other day you  
can volunteer. Hours adjustable.

Computer skill is helpful but not  
essential.

**Call LIFE Office:**

609-894-9311, ext. 1499  
or  
856-222-9311, ext. 1499

**GAZETTE EDITORS  
WANTED**

1. Joke Book Editor
2. Trivia Page Editor

Call Andrea Bauer at

609-298-4747

or

e-mail

[amb2351@comcast.net](mailto:amb2351@comcast.net)

**MAIL SQUAD**

We send out three course  
brochures and at least three  
Gazettes every year plus  
invitations to LIFE's various  
functions. When this occurs  
we require people to affix  
mailing labels and stuff enve-  
lopes, etc. If you can help,  
please contact the LIFE Of-  
fice.

**SPEAKERS GUILD**

Members wanted who would  
be willing to go to various or-  
ganizations to speak about  
the LIFE program and encour-  
age membership.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Members wanted to help with  
curriculum development, pub-  
licity, and social/membership.

If you are interested in any of  
the forgoing, contact the LIFE  
Office by calling 609 894-  
9311 ext. 1499 or the Presi-  
dent of LIFE phone number  
609 894-9311 ext. 1772.

You can also reach us by  
email [LIFE@bcc.edu](mailto:LIFE@bcc.edu) .



Burlington County College  
Parker Center  
601 Pemberton-Browns Mills Road  
Pemberton, NJ 08068-1599

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