

MILE FALL 2020

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Programs will be presented on ZOOM this fall. You will receive weekly emails regarding the programs and concerning any changes in the schedule, along with the ZOOM address.

September – Week 1

Thursday, September 24 – Great Decisions 9:30-11:30 AM; the sessions will be conducted via Zoom.

Great Decisions is a discussion forum that follows a curriculum developed by the Foreign Policy Association (www.fpa.org). The program is supported by the Great Decisions program book (\$25) which presents basic information on each topic. Participants read the topical section for that week, in order to discuss various points of view with one another. Active participation is encouraged, but not required. In an age where our political discourse has become more polarized, Great Decisions provides an excellent opportunity for open, fair, objective discussions and helps the participants understand multiple perspectives on these topics.

The seven topics for the fall include:

- India and Pakistan—September 24
- Red Sea Security—October 1
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking—October 8
- US Relations with the Northern Triangle—October 15
- China and Latin America—October 22
- The Philippines and the US—October 29
- Artificial Intelligence—November 5

Two additional sessions will be conducted on topics chosen by the participants – a total of nine sessions—November 12 and November 19

Moderator: Bud Sielaff, a retired Business Strategy Executive, received a BS in Engineering and an MBA in Business. He has traveled internationally and continually studies world events as an interested citizen. Bud is a member of MILE and has been a participant in the Great Decisions program for several years.

October — Week 2

Thursday, October 1 Great Decisions 9:30-11:30 AM

See program details – September 24th

Thursday, October 1 — American Pop Music of the 60's

This program presents songs that were popular during the 1960s, with a focus on music by songwriters who were connected in some way to the Brill Building. Songs that represent the Southern California scene, Greenwich Village, the British Invasion, the peace movement and other influences are also included.

American Popular Music of the 1960s was influenced by countless traditions from many cultures. This music evolved from our British and western European roots and was altered by the many waves of immigrants who brought their traditions. This music was infused with the ever-

present musical energy of African-America. Gospel, blues, jazz, swing, country, minstrel, vaudeville, Tin Pan Alley and others contributed to the development of a dynamic Post-War soundtrack. Much of that industry was centered around the Brill Building at 1619 Broadway, where composers, lyricists, recording studios, performers, publishers and business managers worked together to produce and market some of the most memorable pop music ever created.

Presenters: Together **Rick Spencer and Dawn Indermuehle** develop and present a series of theme-based music and history programs. They present songs that give cultural insight into interesting times, places and events in American history. Rick and Dawn carefully craft their vocals and accompaniment to sound as true to a song's era or style as possible. Their vast repertoire includes music from the Colonial era to the present day. Rick and Dawn use these songs to illustrate the evolution of our nation's culture and history in an informative and entertaining way.

Rick Spencer worked for 20 years as a staff musician, researcher and program developer at Mystic Seaport Museum. He toured widely in America and Europe as a member of the sea chantey quartet "Forebitter." Rick then worked at two historic house museums in eastern Connecticut. He was site administrator of the Hempsted Houses in New London, as well as curator and director of the Dr. Ashbel Woodward Museum in Franklin. He also served on the board of directors of the New London County Historical Society.

Dawn Indermuehle is responsible for researching and developing program material and creating period-appropriate vocal accompaniment on a wide range of historical songs from throughout American History. In addition to her duet work with Rick, she also performs as a member of the ensembles LongSplice and Locomotive Shipwreck. She has worked as business manager for several performing artists.

October — Week 3

Tuesday, October 6 - Facing War: Connecticut in World War I

You will explore how Connecticut was affected by the First World War. What was the state's contribution to the war effort? What was life like on the home front?

Topics will cover the "Spanish" Influenza pandemic, immigration, the social hygiene movement, and woman's suffrage.

Presenter: Natalie Belanger is the Adult Programs Manager at the Connecticut Historical Society. She holds a BA in history from Smith College and a MA in women's history from the University of Maryland. She has worked in museum education for most of her career, and also teaches history courses at Manchester Community College and other area colleges.

Thursday, October 8 Great Decisions 9:30-11:30 AM

See program details – September 24th

Thursday, October 8 – Genius of Place: The Life of Frederick Law Olmsted

This presentation is your opportunity to learn about Frederick Law Olmsted, one of America's most important historical figures. Besides creating such timeless greenspaces as New York's Central Park and Boston's Emerald Necklace, Frederick was a journalist, abolitionist, conservationist, and head of a Civil War medical unit. Justin will connect Olmsted's brilliant career with his upbringing in Connecticut.

Presenter: Justin Martin earned a BA at Rice University. Justin is the author of five books including *Genius of Place: The Life of Frederick Law Olmsted* (Da Capo Press, 2011). He lives in Forest Hills Gardens, New York, a landmark neighborhood designed by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.

October — Week 4

Tuesday, October 13 – Proposed Lunar Science Station-to Prototype Human Settlement of Space Using Lunar Resources

We now know so much more about the Moon and what it has to offer. In this presentation you will learn about lunar base concepts over the years and what the latest ideas are for lunar bases. You will learn about the findings of NASA GRAIL Mission and what lunar lava tubes are and how we might use them.

Presenter: Stevan Akerley is a retired Engineer, worked 38.6 years at P&W and then 7 years as a Technical Consultant for P&W. He received an AA in Liberal Arts from Orange Coast College, Costa Mesa, CA. a B.S. in Industrial Technology from Calif. State College at Long Beach. (Now UCLB), and an MBA in International Business and Information Tech. from University of Hartford, CT. As a lifelong space enthusiast and student of aerospace technologies, space science, planetary systems, and life sciences, Stevan is a member of The Planetary Society, The National Space Society, and is currently Director of NSS Space Ambassador Program.

Thursday, October 15 Great Decisions 9:30-11:30 AM

See program details – September 24th

Thursday, October 15 - The Connecticut River from the Air

This exciting presentation takes readers on an extraordinary adventure along the 410-mile course of New England's greatest river. Pilot/photographer Tom Walsh and author/historian Jerry Roberts explore this amazing river from its mouth on Long Island Sound to its source just a few hundred yards from the Canadian border. Rediscover this great river as it flows through four states and hundreds of years of history, punctuated by villages and towns, bridges and dams and breathtaking natural beauty. Stunning aerial photographs, wayfinding maps, and a dynamic narrative bring this incredible waterway to life like never before. So, buckle your seat belts and hold on to your hats, as we will be flying low and slow with the windows open. It is an adventure you will not want to miss, and we promise, you won't even get your feet wet!

Presenter: Jerry Roberts is an author and historian that brings history's untold stories to life through books, documentaries, exhibits, events and public programs. He has spent over 35 years in the museum field, serving as vice president of the Intrepid Sea Air & Space Museum, and executive director of the National Lighthouse Museum, the Connecticut River Museum and the New England Air Museum. He is a popular public speaker and continues to write of adventures, large and small, from his home overlooking the Connecticut River.

October — Week 5

Tuesday, October 20 - The Iron Age Bog Bodies of Northern Europe, PART 1

This is a fascinating presentation of exploration and mystery. During the Celtic Iron Age, from Ireland to Scandinavia (approx. 500 B.C. to 500 A.D.) select individuals were sacrificed, and perhaps some criminals executed, and their bodies consigned to the mysterious and myth laden peat bogs. The chemistry of the peat bogs has preserved many of these bodies for over 2000 years. Modern techniques have allowed us to learn about the individuals and about life during that period. This program will describe some of these famous "Bog Bodies" and detail what we know about their life and times.

Presenter: Michael Alan Park earned his PhD (1979) in Biological Anthropology from Indiana University. He was a faculty member (1937-2014) and now Professor Emeritus at CCSU. Michael, professor of anthropology, authored six college textbooks and one general audience book on evolution. He is a participant in several forensic anthropology studies with the Connecticut State Archaeologist and is currently conducting research on the bog bodies for an upcoming book.

Thursday, October 22 Great Decisions 9:30-11:30 AM

See program details – September 24th

Thursday, October 22 - The Iron Age Bog Bodies of Northern Europe, PART 2

Part 2 of the program: See information on October 20th.

October — Week 6

Tuesday, October 27 - Little Women, Then and Now

You have read the book and seen the movie, but what about the story of the book itself! *Little Women*, Louisa May Alcott's most famous novel, celebrated its 150th birthday in 2018-19 (Part I having been published in 1848, Part II in 1849). The anniversary has occasioned several new television and movie treatments of the novel, culminating in Greta Gerwig's Oscar-nominated film version that opened on Christmas Day, 2019. But the novel has actually never been out of print since it was first published and has had several excursions to both stage and screen during that time. This presentation is essentially a biography or a life story of a book. It begins with the circumstances of its origin and its original production. You will find out why this book was so popular originally. You will discover some of the major events in its life over the past 150 years, including the things that have kept it alive.

Presenter: Christine Doyle earned a PhD in Literature from the UCONN, in 1995. Louisa May Alcott and her writings have been the focus of Dr. Doyle's academic research since her dissertation. Professor Doyle published a book of Louise May Alcott's work as well as writing many critical articles. Dr. Doyle teaches her work in her upper-division American Lit courses at CCSU. She presents various versions of this lecture at conferences, as well as, several libraries and campuses.

Thursday, October 29 Great Decisions 9:30-11:30 AM

See program details – September 24th

Thursday, October 29 - Book Talk Frank Norris's *McTeague: A Story of San Francisco*

This presentation will discuss the influential 1899 novel *McTeague: A Story of San Francisco* by author Frank Norris. It is a book that depicts the rise and fall of three key characters that sketches a drama of ambition and possession complete with greed, jealousy and revenge. McTeague, a slow-witted and unqualified dentist, his money-obsessed wife Trina, and his friend and rival Marcus form a triangle that plays out in tragedy.

Presenter: Tom Piezzo is Director of the Brainerd Memorial Library in Haddam, CT. Prior to that, he was a reference librarian and the adult programming coordinator at the E.C. Scranton Memorial Library in Madison, CT, and a branch library manager in NYC. Tom holds a BA in English from S.U.N.Y Stony Brook, and a Master's in Library and Information Science from Long Island University. He is the Membership Chair of the Connecticut Library Association, a member of the LION Library consortium executive board, serving on two committees, and is the chair of the Valley-Shore Public Library Directors Roundtable. He has 26 years' experience as a public librarian. He has presented numerous instructional classes for the Schiller Shoreline Institute of Lifetime Learning, MILE, and has moderated several book clubs for both fiction and non-fiction at public libraries.

November — Week 7

Tuesday, November 3 - Travels in China: Iconic Places and Visits to Chinese Schools

China is a fascinating country. The pictures shared originate from three separate trips to China. We will visit Beijing, Shanghai and Jinan located in Connecticut's sister province of Shandong. The giant panda sanctuary, sponsored by the World Wildlife Association, will be highlighted in Chengdu, along with the panda-themed Panda Road school. We will move from the large cities to the beautiful Longi rice terraces of Guilin. Also included will be photos of the Terracotta Warriors of Xi'an.

Presenter: Nancy Rogalsky earned a BS in Elementary Education and Sixth Year in Reading and Language Arts from CCSU. She has a MS in Health Education from SCSU and a MALS, Wesleyan University. She is a resident of Middletown and worked in the Middletown School System as a teacher and Language Arts Consultant for 38 years. Presently, she works for the Middletown Federation of Teachers. Nancy has a daughter, married and lives in Rochester, NY. Her grandchildren, Sarah, recently earned her MBA from John Carroll University and Matthew, in his fourth third year at West Point. Nancy's passion is travel visiting all six continents.

Thursday, November 5 Great Decisions 9:30-11:30 AM

See program details – September 24th

Thursday, November 5 -Book Talk: *Connecticut Architecture: Stories of 100 Places*

This presentation features stories close to home. Connecticut boasts some of the oldest and most distinctive architecture in New England, from Colonial churches and Modernist houses to tobacco sheds and refurbished factories. Drawing from his book, *Connecticut Architecture: Stories of 100 Places* (Wesleyan University Press, 2018), architectural historian Christopher Wigren will introduce some of the broad themes of Connecticut architecture and tell stories about some of the places people have made there.

Presenter: Christopher Wigren has a MS in Architectural History from the University of Virginia. As an architectural historian and Deputy Director of Preservation Connecticut (formerly known as the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation), he works with the organization to protect and promote buildings, sites, structures, and landscapes that contribute to the heritage and vitality of CT communities. Christopher has written articles and essays in the *Hartford Courant*, the *New Haven Register*, and *Connecticut Explored* magazine.

November — Week 8

Tuesday, November 10 - The World Refugee Crisis: Your Role in Connecticut

The topic of this presentation is timely, challenging, and a growing concern. As the world refugee crisis continues to be the largest since World War II, the U.S. has stepped down as the historic leader in welcoming persecuted people seeking safety. In addition, asylum law and practices within U.S. borders have been altered and challenged, instilling fear in our immigrant community and causing havoc at the U.S. southern border. Through this, many citizens still have critical questions. One question is: What the difference is between refugees, asylum seekers and other immigration categories? Still, a more pivotal question: What can anyone within the U.S. do to help, when our government seems focused on stopping such access to personal choices? This presentation will address all related issues, and questions. You will learn clear steps that you can take.

Presenter: Chris George has been the Executive Director of IRIS, Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services, Connecticut's largest refugee resettlement agency. Based in New Haven but working with community groups all over the state, IRIS has welcomed more than 1,000 refugees to Connecticut in just the last three years. Chris has spent most of his professional life living in, or working on, the Middle East. He spent a total of 12 years in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Chris was Executive Director of Human Rights Watch — Middle East for two years. He worked nine years with Save the Children (mostly in the Middle East) and three years with American Friends Service Committee. Chris began his international career in 1977 as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Muscat, Oman. He speaks Arabic.

Thursday, November 12 Great Decisions 9:30-11:30 AM

See program details – September 24th

Thursday, November 12 - Pearl Harbor: The Stories Behind the Story

This presentation not only deals with numerous Connecticut connections to the infamous sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, but also deals with the often overlooked historical antecedents of the attack—a battle in the Russo-Japanese War, as well as, a surprise attack in Italy during World War II—which render the attack in Hawaii not as big of a surprise as it has been portrayed. The huge role that the Japanese obsession with oil played in the attack is also discussed.

Presenter: Philip Devlin has a BA from UCONN and a MALS from Wesleyan University. He is a retired teacher who taught English, History, and Latin at Haddam-Killingworth High School.

November — Week 9

Tuesday, November 17 – The Black Pharaohs: Recent Excavations at Nuri

This presentation is perfect for those interested in archaeology and recent excavations in Egypt. The necropolis of Nuri, burial site of Nubian kings who ruled Egypt, is located at the Fourth Cataract of the Nile and contains approximately 73 pyramids. The first king to build a pyramid there in about 664 BCE was Taharqa, 25th Dynasty King of the combined Empire of Egypt and Kush. Until 2018, Nuri, an UNESCO World Heritage site, had not been explored for over 100 years and most people were unaware of its existence. This lecture will focus on the current work at the site including underwater excavation of a previously unexplored pyramid burial site.

Presenter: Stephanie Denkowicz graduated from the University of Manchester - Manchester, England. She received a Masters' in Egyptology (Commenced September 2019). At the University her accomplishments include the following: Diploma in Egyptology (July 2018). Outstanding Achievement Award, Best Project. *Miserable Kush: The Relationship Between Egyptians and Nubians in Middle Kingdom Egypt*. She also Certified in Egyptology (July 2015) and received the Outstanding Achievement Award, Best Paper, *The Tomb of Tjery: A Reflection of an Elite Saite's Religious Beliefs*. Stephanie is a graduate of Rutgers University School of Law - Newark, NJ (J.D., 1977) and the University of Arizona (B.A., high distinction, 1974). She is serving on several boards including the American Research Center in Egypt and the Egyptological Seminar of New York. She is a Team Member, University of Arizona Egyptian Expedition, working at the Temple of Tausret Project, West Bank, Luxor, Egypt (2012 - 2016 seasons) as Field Assistant. She supervised excavation and assisted ceramist Rexine Hummel (Royal Ontario Museum) in the processing of pottery. She was also field assistant at Nuri, Sudan (2018 and 2019 seasons).

Thursday, November 19 Great Decisions 9:30-11:30 AM

Thursday, November 19 - Charles Darwin's Voyages to New Worlds, Intellectual and Otherwise

As a young man Charles Darwin became a passenger on the voyage of the HMS Beagle that showed him a natural world full of change. This opened for him an intellectual world previously traveled by others, but not with his new insights. This world had excitements and dangers very much like the exotic world he observed while traveling on the Beagle.

Presenter: Kenneth Noll is a professor of Microbiology at UCONN in the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology. His research is studying the roles that gene exchange play in the evolution of microorganisms. Professor Noll earned a BS in Microbiology from The Ohio State University and an MS degree from the University of Houston (Biology) and the University of Illinois (Microbiology). Kenneth received a PhD in Microbiology from the University of Illinois under Dr. Ralph Wolfe and a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Illinois under Dr. Carl Woese.