

Renaissance

Monthly

May 2023

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The Renaissance Singers and guest ukelele players Chuck Fleury & Gigi Franyo entertain the crowd at the luncheon on May 12.

(Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Fanto.)



On-campus events were plentiful during the Spring Semester. Pictured here is the second of two popular "Free Lunch Events" sponsored by the Social Committee

Hello, RI friends,

We usually see May as slowing down with the last days of classes, wishes for a good summer and "maybe I'll see you at a Summer in the City event." Perhaps it's just another chapter in getting back to "normal" after COVID, but we do seem to be honoring our traditions with more enthusiasm than usual these days, while trying to bring together our Zoom and in-person communities. In the last few weeks, we've seen the awards ceremony (with another free lunch), the library book sale, the installment of new officers and Council members, another music concert, and a very well-attended party, complete with an enthusiastic performance by the RI Singers and awesome guest performers as well. The bar is set high for next year, but meanwhile, get some R&R and we'll see you in the fall.



PROJECT 320

NEW GOAL FOR 320 RENAISSANCE MEMBERS BY AUGUST 20

By **Tim Casey and Elizabeth Fanto**

Looking back, Renaissance did a great job of continuing through the Covid crisis. Now, we are back on campus with two healthy programs of Zoom & on-campus classes.

However, we have lost members and we are instituting an initiative called Project 320.

Project 320 means our goal is to have 320 members by the end of the Fall registration. Currently, we have about 275 members. We need all of our members to help us build to this membership level. August 20 is the target for the end of Fall registration.

Most of us found Renaissance through a friend or recommendation. You can help by spreading the word to your friends, your clubs, groups, anywhere you socialize and let them know about the wonderful intellectual and social community we enjoy.

If you have any suggestions on how to spread the word, contact any of us.

*Tim 443-801-6272 Page 443-527-7056, Elizabeth 410-252-8531,
Ken 410-561-4377, Betty 410-783-2969*





RENAISSANCE AWARDS 2022-2023

By Shirley Bigley LaMotte



The Renaissance Institute relies upon the dedicated volunteerism of its members in assuring that the lifelong learning program remains relevant and inviting to its membership. Post COVID, Renaissance now offers fully 50% of its course offerings on Zoom or in a hybrid format, while another 150 members enjoy being back on campus for learning opportunities.

Annually, Renaissance honors three outstanding volunteers with legacy awards that carry a year's free membership. This year's award ceremony on April 18 attracted seventy members for lunch and to celebrate the winners.

The Reidy Award winner was presented to **Susan Serotte** for "working tirelessly, and what might appear thanklessly, behind the scenes to support the programs and activities of Renaissance." Susan is the 2023 Renaissance Unsung Hero. She also chairs the Summer and Winter in the City Programs Committee.

The Father Joseph Connolly Award recognizes leadership, outstanding and long service, generosity of spirit, and active participation in the Renaissance Institute. **Amanda Joyce**, Chair of the Renaissance Communications Committee and a popular classroom instructor, was honored.

The Renaissance Social Committee's creativity and commitment adds immeasurably to the community spirit within Renaissance. Its chair, **Beverly Fransen** received the Director's Award for her innate concern for others and extra extraordinary support of the Renaissance Institute, its staff, and members.



INTERVIEW WITH MUSIC DIRECTOR NANCY HEINOLD

By Ellen Lindenbaum



How did you hear about RI and when did you join?

To be honest I'm not sure when I joined RI! I was a Librarian for Cecil County Public Libraries when I retired in 2008. I was attending a get together of tennis friends and was talking to Donna Bertling and she told me all about RI. I liked the idea of learning new things and socializing as well. I checked out the catalog online and was excited to see they had a choir. After being a music director for so long and not being able to actually SING with a group, I was anxious to join. Helen Brown was the RI Singers director at that time. About two years later Helen was no longer able to participate. She was a wonderful director and lovely lady. I was asked to lead the choir and I thought, oh no there goes my singing. I said I would do it if Ted Kasckow would work with me. So for another two years Ted and I worked together. I love working with all of the RI singers, many have been choir members since I began, and we are a family.

You are a church choir director, and a law librarian! Which came first, and how have they fit into your life?

I began playing the organ and directing a small choir when I was 16. I was not really prepared for such a job at the time, but the music director had relocated and had been giving me organ lessons. I guess they were desperate! In those days small churches did not pay music directors, it was volunteer. After more lessons and MANY years of experience I'm still playing and directing at St John's Episcopal in Kingsville. The many friends and the music have helped me throughout the years to have a happy, positive attitude in life. I did work in the University of Baltimore Law Library for four years in the early 80's. Prior to that I taught elementary grades in BCPS. While at the law library I realized how much I missed working with children and decided to get my Masters in Library Science at U of M. In 1986 I got the job of Children's Coordinator for Cecil County Public Libraries where I loved working for 25 years! As children's librarian I was able to utilize my musical and storytelling skills.

The “Renaissance Singers” performances each semester have been a joy for singers and audience alike. How do you select music for each performance?

I don't really have a method for choosing the pieces we sing. I try to think of a general theme for each semester. For instance, this Spring we are doing songs about the earth and its beauty. Of course, for our December concerts, we perform holiday and winter songs. I am always open to suggestions from members for pieces. If I hear a song on the radio or tv that might be good I check J W Pepper, which is a company that sells choral arrangements, to see if it is available. I can see the music online to see if it suits our choir.

What are your personal “top ten” choral works?

This is always the hardest question! I'll have to think more about this one. I love music of many genres. I always listen to Handel's Messiah during the Christmas Holidays, but I also listen to a folk group that sings beautiful harmonies “On A Winter's Night.” I love those good old gospel harmonies and recently attended an Old-time Music Festival where I heard three ladies from West Virginia sing wonderful old tunes with close harmonies. I enjoy singing works by Thomas Tallis, an English Renaissance composer. A song that always makes me feel good is Beethoven's Ode to Joy. And my favorite is when my daughters sing anything!

In addition to directing the RI Singers, you are part of the in-house RI Pickers band and are learning to play the ukulele. Do you have any plans for additional musical offerings at RI?

We have so much fun with our group Tomato Junction. The thing about musicians is that they are ready and willing to play almost anywhere at any time and once we get started it's hard to quit! We find any excuse to get together and play and always welcome more players and singers. The uke jams are such fun because we are all beginners, and it really helps to play along with others. We have so many talented folks at RI, John Meredith not only plays guitar but is a talented cello player and we had a fellow play clarinet for our holiday performance and I'm sure there are many more members who play instruments. There has been talk of doing something with instruments but maybe that will be our next great endeavor!





REFLECTION ON NATURE: BUTEO LINEATUS

By Saul Lindenbaum, April 2023



My wife, Ellen, and I have breakfast in the kitchen, next to the slider door that opens onto the deck. This affords us an excellent view of our several bird feeders, and of a heavily wooded area that borders the back of our property. It's a pleasant way to start the day, as the birds have breakfast at the same time that we do and it is usual to spot half-a-dozen species, or more, while we eat. We keep a pair of binoculars nearby in case we want to take a closer look at something, especially during the spring migration.

The binoculars are particularly useful for examining hawks, which do not come to the feeders, but perch high in the trees, at some distance from the house. We've had one or more hawks in the neighborhood for several years.

We see them (or it – it may be the same one all the time) circling over open, grassy areas, or sitting on a branch surveying the ground, looking for prey. We have become used to their piercing cries, which seem to be a warning that something dangerous, namely us, is in the vicinity.

The type of hawk that we always see is *Buteo Lineatus*, the Latin name for the Red Shouldered Hawk. *Buteo* refers to a type of predatory hawk, and *Lineatus* to the dark lines on its reddish chest. It's a handsome creature, about 12-15 inches high, with a wingspan of two feet. We've never actually seen it in the act of killing its prey, but we have seen it on the ground a few times, dining on a recent victim.

A couple of weeks ago we were having breakfast, when I noticed a hawk sitting on a branch near the top of one of our tallest trees. Suddenly, another hawk landed right next to it. We were surprised because this was something we had never seen before. We were even more surprised when the second hawk hopped up onto the back of the first, which led to a great fluttering of wings by both parties that lasted for several seconds. They then separated, and the second bird flew away.

Now, I've never lived on a farm, but I have seen a lot of nature shows on PBS, often staying awake long enough to learn a thing or two. Therefore, I was pretty sure that we had just seen two birds mating. I was even more certain of it a few days later, when we observed a repetition of the same behavior. But, just to be certain, I went to Google and searched for the mating behavior of Red Shouldered Hawks. I immediately found a beautiful video which showed the same behavior that we had seen, the flapping of the wings being the most striking feature.

Another website discussed the mating behavior of this species of hawk. I learned that the mating season begins in early April, which is exactly when we had seen them, and lasts until sometime in June. I also discovered that Red Shouldered Hawks mate for a lifetime, and that they usually remain in the same location to raise their young. With a little luck then, we will soon be seeing young hawks flying about, and can look forward to more X-rated breakfasts in the future.



COMMITTEE UPDATES



Our member survey shows us once again that variety is the spice of life at Renaissance. The **Curriculum Committee** has put together 66 courses for the fall semester with a wide range of topics of interest to our members. We welcome back our veteran instructors and anticipate meeting some new ones. Our greatest challenge has been balancing both on campus

and Zoom courses so that both learning venues have a menu of excellent courses to choose from. We hope by now everyone has in hand the fall semester course schedule and catalog and is looking forward to the course previews on May 16 and 18. – terry weisser terryweisser@gmail.com

Villains Wanted: Is there a person in history or a fictional character you just love to hate? Carol Daddazio is putting together a class on such people. Maybe the villain isn't so terrible in another context or maybe there are some redeeming qualities she/he possesses. If you are interested in presenting someone, call Carol at 617-93-2288 or email cdaddazio42@gmail.com



The **Marketing Committee** has met often throughout the past year. Through hours of serious discussion, we have hammered out the components of our “brand.” This is important and while moving forward in concept, we know there is far more to be done. Currently, a new progressive RI brochure and its proposed distribution is underway. we expect to convene over this summer and, hopefully, we'll have this product in hand, and more to report in the coming months. - Paula Murphy murphpgm@gmail.com



It has been an amazing year for the **Social Committee**. We welcomed the return to group activity in our new headquarters and we figured out how to create group gatherings. We are fortunate to have had at least one ZOOM party thanks to the knowledge and experience of Sue Brooks. What will we be doing next year??? Watch for notices! Many thanks to those who made this year possible. It has been a pleasure getting to know you and working with you. - Beverly Fransen fransenbeverly1@gmail.com

The **Membership Committee** is requesting your assistance to grow the membership for the Fall semester. We have expanded our contact lists to include new referrals for the Fall 2023 semester. The fall list now includes names of people who have requested information from the RI website. If current members of RI have friends or relatives that may be interested in Renaissance, please send their names and email contact information to *Joe Lapicki* jlapicki@aol.com



Summer in the City: RI members have done it again! A generous outpouring of SIC submissions has filled the coming months with opportunities to spend time with old friends – and meet new friends. You're sure to find something you like, with over 50 events that include food, art, dance, music, film, games, museum visits, outdoor adventures, and more. Find the full listing on www.renmember.com



Sponsors are waiting to hear from you! To sign up:

- Email hosts.
- Record events on your personal calendar.
- Let sponsors know if you must cancel.
- Join waiting lists for events that are filled.

A big **THANK YOU** to all who pitched in and supported the committee's efforts to create this year's Summer in the City!! - *Susan Serotte* nsed7915@comcast.net



WHAT ARE THE CLUBS DOING?

The Mystery Book Club's next meeting will be here before we know it. I hope we will be able to meet outside this time. Our upcoming selections:

- Friday, **May 19, 2023** ,11:30 AM (last Friday in May is Memorial Day Weekend) **The Broken Spine** by Dorothy St. James, (AKA Amelia Peabody) We hope to meet outside at the Village of Cross Keys. Please bring your lunch or purchase lunch at Easy Like Sunday if you wish. I will notify you by **email May 19**, early in the AM, if we need to change our location.
- Friday, **June 23, 2023**, 11:30 AM (June 30 is July 4th weekend) **Murder at the Vicarage** by Agatha Christie
- Friday, **July 28, 2023**, 11:30 AM **The Couple at the Table** by Sophie Hanna All of the above books at least one copy available at the Baltimore County Library. We hope to select a book for August and one for September at our next meeting. Please come with suggestions. *Nikki Cole* [410-382-6489](tel:410-382-6489) colendleb@aol.com



The **Music Fellowship** events mostly took place on Wednesdays at Noon in FIC 003, and we hope to continue the tradition in the fall semester. The semester ended with a Concert by the Renaissance Singers, led by Nancy Heinold, at the RI year-end party on May 12.

- The summer schedule includes:
- May 24 Uke Jam and singalong
- June 21 Song Circle
- June 29 Bluegrass Concert at Emory Grove by “Highstrung Revisited “with special guest” Denis Smith.
- Aug. 22 Bluegrass Jam at Peabody Heights Brewery.

Check the Summer in the City listings at renmember.com for details on these events. – *John Meredith* – johnmeredith1439@gmail.com



In closing, our monthly poetry offering, sung by Roy Rogers and Dale Evans (and written by Dale Evans, based on a song by Foy Willing).

*Happy trails to you, until we meet again
Happy trails to you, keep smilin' until then
Who cares about the clouds when we're together?
Just sing a song and bring the sunny weather
Happy trails to you, 'till we meet again.*