

PLATO Fall Courses Highlighted at the Preview! By Nancy Schultz



Hello PLATO members and guests. The fall PLATO Preview is just around the corner, consequently it is time to consider what classes you might want to take. The preview will take place on **Wednesday, September 20th at the Madison Senior Center, 330 W. Mifflin Street, Madison.** A parking garage is available next door to the center. **The PLATO Preview will be held from 1:30 - 3:00pm.** As you know, the preview is the opportunity for you as members and guests to meet the coordinators of the various courses, ask questions, and gather more information about those courses. PLATO will have over fifty courses this fall, taking place in all parts of the county. Some of the courses will start the day

after the preview, others will begin other times. The coordinators will have this information.

Come, enjoy some treats, meet your PLATO friends, discover what interesting courses are available, meet the coordinators and find answers to your questions. There will also be the opportunity to learn about and ask questions of representatives of PLATO committees. We hope to see you there!



PLATO's 30th Anniversary News by Frank Power, Co-Chair, Anniversary Committee



Plan to celebrate PLATO's 30th Anniversary. Mark your calendars: **Wednesday,**

October 18, 2017 from 1:30 to 4:30 pm. The venue will be the same as the Annual Meeting in May: The Lussier Family Heritage Center. We predict a perfect fall afternoon and great scenic surroundings. Good light fare, wine and live musical entertainment downstairs for a modest \$15.00! There will be a crisp meeting upstairs featuring our University of Wisconsin-Madison Continuing Studies partnership through the years, PLATO's recent rapid growth and development, and the unveiling of PLATO's new Strategic Action Plan. Watch for information and invitations via email from the PLATO Office. Attendance will be limited; sign up online early and join us.

Don't Forget to Renew Your PLATO Membership! If you haven't already done so, you can get started by clicking on the "Renew Your Membership" button on the PLATO website at www.platomadison.org

President's Corner: Moving Forward



By PLATO President Scott Kolar
As we enjoy these long, warm days of summer, we know cooler days are coming and that means that PLATO's Fall Semester is just around the corner. The Curriculum Committee, co-chaired by Kathy Brown and Therese Stevens, have been working hard with course coordinators to bring you over 50 courses this fall. Along with the courses, the Special Events Committee, chaired by Carla DiIorio, will be bringing you a full line up of trips, lectures, walks, and social gatherings.

This year is PLATO's 30th anniversary. The small group of less than 30 that got together in 1997 has grown to a vibrant organization of over 1300 members providing a variety of enriching activities.

Our special anniversary event is scheduled for October 18th, so save the date!. See an update on the anniversary planning from Past-President Frank Power on the front page of this newsletter.

The fifth volume of PLATO's arts journal, *The Agora*, has been published in 2017! The Agora Editorial Board, led by Managing Editor Patricia Becker has worked hard to raise funds so that each member receives a printed copy and to select the pieces to be included.

Congratulations to members whose submissions were selected and thanks to all those who submitted entries. It is truly humbling to see how much talent we have. There are additional copies available. Please contact Louise Fowler (louise.fowler@wisc.edu) in the PLATO office to find out how to get additional copies.

One of PLATO's missions is charitable activities. In the past we have been contributing to scholarships for returning adult students. We are now expanding our reach to include contributions to organizations supporting K-12 learners. Please see the report of the Fund Development Committee Chair Tim Otis on page 5. When you receive a fund raising appeal, show your support for current and future lifelong learners by giving generously.

PLATO's strategic planning process is nearly complete. The plan will outline strategic goals for managing PLATO's

growth for the next 5 years. Developing the plan required the participation of members, course coordinators, committee members, and Board of Directors. The many hours everyone put in show the dedication and support members feel towards PLATO. Thank you to all participants for your time and hard work. Your participation will make PLATO a stronger organization into the future.

PLATO provides great value for its members with a modest annual dues payment and no charge for courses. We are able to do that because we rely mostly on volunteers. Louise Fowler, our wonderful and capable office assistant is a UW employee who provides the foundation of our administrative support. But she is contracted for only 20 hours a week. Everything else - setting up courses, teaching the courses, organizing and running trips and events, and much of the administrative work - is done by volunteers. **Without volunteers PLATO wouldn't happen. Please consider getting involved** and help PLATO continue to be a great place to be. For more information about volunteering check out the

Get Involved tab on the PLATO website.

Fall 2017 Courses

By Kathy Brown and Therese Stevens (Curriculum Committee Co-chairs)



The PLATO Curriculum Committee has arranged an interesting array of more than 50 Fall courses. Your favorite ongoing courses will continue to be available, along with a host of new ones. Here are some of the new entries for your lifelong learning adventures:

The Muslim Experience in Madison. This course will explore the cultural, social, political and religious experience of Muslims in Madison. Muslim guests will share views and reactions on political and cultural issues including the role of women, terrorism, and the effects of national and world events on their lives here and in other countries.

Mindfulness Meditation. Craig Wille will facilitate this new course. Participants will learn and practice the various types and lengths of mindfulness meditation. Participants will gain an understanding of the theoretical basis of mindfulness meditation as

viewed through a secular Buddhist lens.

Experience Art. This new course will be held in the Chazen Art Studio Classroom. Participants will experience art in a fun and relaxed environment designed for the novice! Each week, we'll explore a new medium and create a unique work of art with what we've learned. Painting, printmaking, and more await you when you experience art! All materials provided!

Stage Presence: A taste of Madison's finest actors, singers and dancers. In each class, one Madison arts organization will be showcased: Organizational description/history; performance; and Q&A. The most important segment is the performance: Cuttings from a play, songs/arias from a musical production and dance routines from a recent performance.

The Wisconsin Idea is Still Alive. The University of Wisconsin's relationship to the state is in the news headlines, and this course will utilize videos and handouts from a UW Sociology course offered last Fall to discuss the importance of the Wisconsin Idea.

Creating Tolle's "New Earth". Participants will examine the powerful ideas

set forth by Elkhart Tolle in his 2005 best-selling book, *New Earth: Awakening to your Life's Purpose*, and determine how they apply to their own lives.

Reflections on "War on Poverty". The course will explore approaches by federal, State and local government agencies to help poor people. We will examine policies and programs, the impact of these programs, and what we have learned.

Great Ideas in the Global Environmental Movement. Drs Craig Davis and Bill Eisinger will examine how concerned thinkers laid the foundation for the environmental movement that resulted in a global view of our role in environmental degradation. In addition they will explore the many practical, moral, and ethical issues related to sustainability.

New Locations for Fall Courses

The Curriculum Committee has made connections with several new locations for a few of the Fall courses: Christ Presbyterian Church on East Gorham and UW Health at the American Center. Both offer free parking and lovely facilities.

Propose a New Course

The Curriculum Committee is always looking for new course ideas for our

members. If you are interested in coordinating a course, submit the Course Proposal form (found on the PLATO website). How about proposing a new Winter or Spring course? Those proposals are due by October 1. For questions about courses or the Curriculum Committee, contact Kathy Brown (co-chair). Her email address is:

kathyft@charter.net

The Agora V.5 2017

by Patricia Becker



We invite all PLATO members to join us in celebrating the publication of *The Agora*, Volume 5. Preparation of this issue by the 13 dedicated members of the Agora Editorial Board began last summer. At the February 1st deadline we had received 131 submissions of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and visual arts, including photographs and digitized versions of acrylic, oil, and watercolor paintings, sculptures, and crafts. There were many excellent submissions - it was not easy

for the juries to limit selections to the 10-12 top ranking entries in each category. There followed many hours of proofing and compiling the 41 selected pieces into the draft manuscript. In the meantime, to offset printing costs we also needed to raise funds to supplement support from the PLATO Board. These we garnered through two grants, one from the Madison Arts Commission and the other from Dane Arts, as well as donations from eight community business sponsors and individual PLATO members. We are indebted to the Department of Continuing Studies graphic artist, Nancy Koberle, for creating the final proof that went to the printer in June. Throughout this process, we relied on the meticulous and gracious help of Louise Fowler, PLATO's Office Coordinator, to whom this volume is dedicated.

The *agora* was the ancient Greek market place where citizens gathered to share ideas and creative works. In that spirit, the PLATO *Agora* is now not only in every PLATO member's household, but also available to the Dane County community through the South Central System libraries and a number of community

centers and retirement centers. And so now we celebrate *The Agora*, Volume 5, and trust that all PLATO members are celebrating with us this evidence of the richness of the PLATO experience.

The Agora Editorial Board:
Patricia Becker, Managing Editor

Lewis Bosworth Lorna Kniaz, Barbara Carson, Jim Mavis, Mary DeWolff, Aleta Murray, Felicitus Ferington, Phil Paulson, Rose Ann Findlen, Joane Storlie, and Susan Young Hoffman

Questions? Contact Managing Editor Patricia Becker via email ptbecker@wisc.edu.

Special Events 2017

by Carla DiIoria, Chair

What makes an event special? Why should you take note? *Definition of special.* 1 : distinguished by some unusual quality; being other than the usual : additional, extra.

In PLATO, special events have included a trip to a play at a new theater in the Chicago area; a talk about the Wisconsin connections of Aldo Leopold and John Muir; a walk along a rocky gorge carved by glacial waters;

a friendly get-together at Memorial Union Terrace;



a day trip to tour architectural treasures of Frank Lloyd Wright. Future plans include many more exciting possibilities. To take part yourself all it takes is your interest and the price of the event. Complete information about each is regularly posted on the PLATO webpage, featured in the weekly emails sent on Mondays and Tuesdays and in the periodic mailings to those of you without access to a computer.

How do we choose what to do? Our Special Events Committee members are full of ideas and we are always open to members' suggestions and participation in planning future happenings. Our considerations include accessibility, length of travel required, time of day, week and year, cost of the activity and whether we think there is enough interest to warrant planning an event. To join us on the committee or make a suggestion simply contact the current chair, Carla DiIorio, at carlad@tds.net or 608-257-

9164 or another member of the committee.

Report of The Fund Development Committee Activities by Tim Otis, Chair



The Fund Development Committee was very active during 2016. The Committee provides the vehicle for PLATO'S charitable mission, by raising funds to be distributed to UW Madison and community based initiatives to promote educational opportunities for low-income/marginalized individuals

During 2016 more than 100 PLATO members donated \$17,000 to the PLATO Education Fund.

PLATO has a formal agreement with the UW-Madison Foundation to invest and administer the Fund, assuring prudent, professional management of all donations, however PLATO has complete control over funding decisions. During this past year The PLATO Board authorized giving \$17,200, an increase of \$4,000 from the previous

year. PLATO is committed to distributing at least the amount donated each year.

The following initiatives were supported by donations in 2016.

Returning Adult Student Initiative at UW Madison: \$9,000 (3 scholarships)
The Odyssey Project at UW Madison: \$4,200 (1 scholarship)

Lussier Community Education Center: \$2,000 (middle school science project)

Boys and Girls Club of Dane County: \$2,000 (After school education project)

These scholarships and project funds provide crucial support in helping these individuals and agencies achieve their educational goals. This year (2017) PLATO will be celebrating its 30th anniversary. In recognition of this the PLATO Board has authorized increasing the funding for University and community initiatives to at least \$23,000. It is our hope that more PLATO members will choose to donate to the PLATO Education Fund, allowing us to even further expand our support for these important educational initiatives.

Funding Authorizations for 2017-18.

Returning Adult Student Initiative: \$10,500 (an increase of \$1,500)

The Odyssey Project: \$5,000 (in increase of \$800)

Community Youth Education Programs: \$7,500 (3 grants: This could be increased depending on the amount of contributions)

As part of this effort a letter was emailed to all members in May asking for nominations of community agencies that provide educational opportunities for low income/marginalized youth. We were pleased to have received 19 responses nominating 13 organizations. We are currently following up with these agencies and will be making decisions about how many we can support. Thank you to those members who made nominations.

During the next few weeks you will be receiving, by mail, a request to donate to the Fund. How much we can expand our efforts depends on your donations.

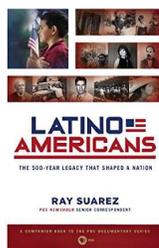
Please consider donating to support this important PLATO sponsored initiative.

If you have questions about the Fund or would like more

information about making a donation please contact one of the members of the Fund Development Committee. (Committee members: Tim Otis, Pat Becker, Mike Briggs, Frank Power, Alan Zuckerman, Arden Trine, Barry Orton, Tom Martinelli, Scott Kolar)

PLATO Diversity Committee News

by Frank Power Chair, Diversity Committee



Book from the *Latinix in America* Bibliography compiled by the Diversity Committee.

After a strong start, including the September 2016 Coordinators Luncheon discussion on Bridging the Gap in membership, the distribution at the September Preview of 50 copies of Matthew Desmond’s award winning book, *Evicted* and the November 2016 public meeting, *Evicted and Homeless in Madison*, at the Central Library, the Diversity Committee has focused on educating ourselves and the PLATO membership on the issues of diversity, inequality, and injustice in the

greater Madison area. This included the *Diversity Picks*, updates from the PLATO *Diversity Committee-Building Bridges & Staying Informed* in the Weekly Announcements, and on the web site, and the affirmation of and participation in diversity related courses led by committee members Rick Orton and Lewis Bosworth. The committee has wrestled with making their agreed upon committee goals harmonize with the charge given the committee by the PLATO Board. Dialogue is underway. The full committee meets monthly at the downtown Madison Senior Center. New members are welcome; Contact the chair at franpwr@aol.com

Summary of the 2017 PLATO Annual Meeting

by Frank Power, Co-chair 2017 Annual Meeting Committee
The 2017 Annual Meeting, held at a new experimental time, 3:00 to 6:00 pm and at a new venue, The Lussier Family Heritage Center, was a genuine success. About 175 members attended; 91% of the evaluations rated the event overall as excellent or very good. After registering attendees enjoyed light fare and wine and good company downstairs. Some enjoyed the outside tables and the prairie

scenery. The business meeting, held upstairs, led by President Scott Kolar, was brief and well done; the Strategic Plan Update by Treasurer Tim Otis was clear and succinct. The keynote speaker was UW Professor Patty Loew. Her talk on “*The Indian Nations of Wisconsin*” stressed the serious environmental challenges currently facing the Wisconsin Indian tribal lands.

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting by Secretary Sybil Better which record the official actions taken, including the 2017 PLATO Awards Ceremony for Distinguished Service presented to Mary Boyd and Patricia Becker, are available on the web site.



Mary Boyd receiving her Distinguished Service Award.

Thanks are due to all who helped make the day a success especially the planning committee members, Aleta Murray, Janet Cabot, Don Reeder, Suzy Griffiths, and JoAnn Savoy. Special thanks are due

to JoAnn and Suzy for their extensive work in preparation before, during the event, and after with the clean-up. Finally, the experimental \$10 event fee was too low by half with hindsight. The net cost of the event was about \$2900. We are still learning. We are PLATO!

**PLATO FALL COURSE
PREVIEW REMINDER**

**Wednesday, September 20th
at the Madison Senior
Center, 330 W. Mifflin
Street, 1:30-3:00pm.**