

2-FOR-1 DINING PASS AT MALOO'S @ PARK CIRCLE

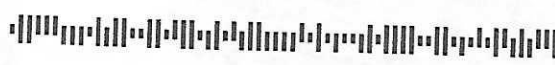
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Hagtown

magazine

LAYING THE SMACK DOWN IN HUB CITY

BEHIND THE RING
WITH THE NATIONAL
WRESTLING LEAGUE'S
HOUSE OF PAIN
WRESTLING
FEDERATION



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The IRP semesters run for eight weeks in the spring and fall, with 39 lectures held on Tuesdays and Thursday for just \$25, and occasional bus tours on Wednesdays (for an additional fee).

Life-Long Learning For A Good, Long Life

by James Rada Jr. & photos by Turner Photography Studio

The Institute for Retired Persons offers lectures and outings for social seniors on the go.

Before he retired in 2006, John Ricci was a self-described “tech rat.” He kept up-to-date on all of the developments in his field, but outside of that, he referred to his knowledge base as “ignorant.” A few years ago, a neighbor gave him a copy of a list of lectures held by the Institute for Retired Persons at Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pa. “It was a copy of a copy of a copy. I couldn’t read it, so I threw it away,” John says nonchalantly. His neighbor did convince him to attend, though.

“I was like a kid with a new toy,” is how John describes his first time attending. “It has broadened my academic knowledge 100-fold.” The institute has been going strong for 34 years, and has a lot of people looking to replicate the program in their own communities. “We get calls from all over the country looking for [local] chapters,” John says. Unfortunately for those callers from elsewhere, there is only the original. While there are imitators, none of them offer 39 different lectures on a wide-ranging list of topics for just \$25 a semester.



"I like the opportunity to stretch my mind and learn something new, which happens almost every time I attend a lecture."

SANDRA POWERS

What You Can Glean In 2017

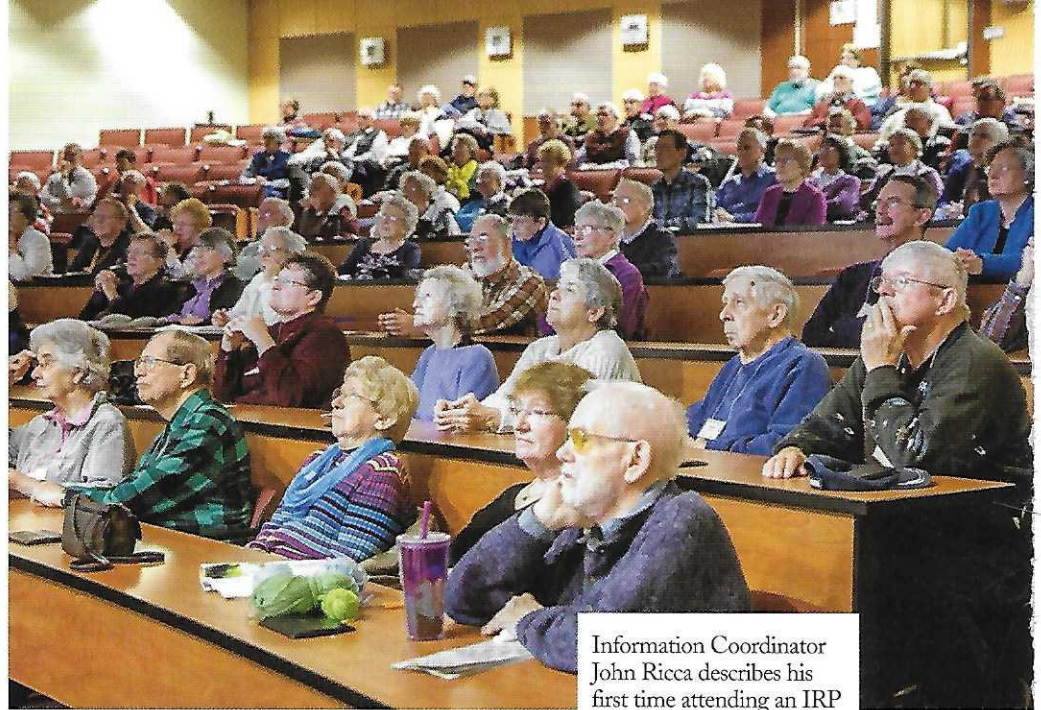
The Institute for Retired Persons spring semester just ended, but potential subjects are already being discussed for the fall semester, which will begin on Sept. 5 and continue for the following eight weeks. Some of the assorted prospects being discussed for their potential include:

- Downtown Revitalization of Chambersburg
- Religion in the Gilded Age
- Elizabeth Keckley; Personal Modiste and Confidante of Mary Todd Lincoln
- The History of the Lincoln Highway
- Vernal Ponds and Ephemeral Wetlands
- Great Decisions; The Future of Europe
- Civil Rights in Chambersburg
- Bead Science
- Crime in Franklin County
- Radical Jihad; Worldwide and U.S.
- Al-Qaida and ISIL; An Overview and Update
- No Free Lunch; Flim-Flams, Schemes and Scams
- Harriet Lane Johnson; James Buchanan's First Lady

The semesters run for eight weeks in the spring and fall, with lectures on Tuesdays and Thursday, and the bus tours are on Wednesdays. Since there's no attendance taken, attendees only have to go to the lectures that they want — and even a single lecture is worth the paltry tuition fee. "Nobody can beat that, and we've been doing it for 34 years," John says. "We don't do fancy, and all of our presenters are volunteers."

The \$25 tuition covers the 39 lectures but the Wednesday tours do incur a small extra charge that varies depending on the trip. Bruce Foreman of Chambersburg says he attends about half of the sessions each semester with his wife. "We like that it's eclectic," he adds. "There are talks on all topics. We go to whatever piques our interest. They are stimulating talks."

Bruce has been part of the Institute for Retired Persons since 1998 when a



Information Coordinator John Ricca describes his first time attending an IRP lecture as being like a kid with a new toy. "It has broadened my academic knowledge 100-fold."


former director introduced him to it. He began attending with his first wife, and he continued to attend after she died. He later met his second wife at the institute, which is another reason he likes it. "You meet a lot of interesting people," Bruce says. "It's non-threatening and non-demanding. It's an enjoyable way to add to an active lifestyle."

After Sandra Powers and her husband retired, they split their time between Washington, D.C., and Chambersburg. When they were in Chambersburg one time, they saw an advertisement for the institute. "We were eager to find a way to keep our minds active," Sandra says. They attended and enjoyed themselves so much that they have regularly attended for the past five years.

Sandra used to be an English teacher and a rare book librarian, so she likes the lectures about history and literature, but she also attends the technological ones because she likes learning new things. "I like the opportunity to stretch my mind and learn something new, which happens almost every time I attend a lecture," Sandra says.

The Institute formed in 1983 when several retirees in Chambersburg met and presented papers to their group as a way to stay active. "That first year they

met in someone's house, and it has continued to grow a little bit every year," John says. As they grew, the institute began adding outside speakers, which increased the topics that could be discussed. One of the reasons that tuition is so inexpensive is because it is a volunteer organization. Some of the members present, but even outside speakers aren't paid.

"No one in the organization gets a penny. It's strictly volunteer," says John McDermott, director of the institute. The institute also made arrangements to use the lecture halls at Wilson College to hold the dozens of people who attend each lecture. Now in its 34th year, some members have been attending the Institute for 15–20 years. 

Where To Sign Up

Visit the Institute for Retired Persons website at www.irp-online.org for more information. You can also call Information Coordinator John Ricca at 717.352.8996 or email him at johnricca@earthlink.net to request an IRP brochure.