



COLLEGE FOR OLDER ADULTS--FALL 2025
Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center
1 Partnership Circle, P.O. Box 1987, Abingdon, VA 24212
276-619-4300, 276-619-4377, www.swcenter.edu/COA

Course Descriptions

When registering in person, check the box for your course choices on the Registration form and mark them on the Course Descriptions pages. Turn in the Registration Form and KEEP the Course Descriptions for your records.

General Class Information

Class Registration

1. Online Registration

Visit www.swcenter.edu/coa to view the registration forms. You can securely register and pay for classes using a credit card.

2. In-Person Registration

Printed registration forms and course descriptions are available at the Higher Education Center Information desk. Payments can be made by credit card, cash, or check.

3. Registration Day & Welcome Back Coffee Hour

Register for COA classes during the coffee hour event. Payment options include credit card, cash, or check. Class descriptions will be available, and some instructors will be present to answer questions.

Important Notes

- Membership is \$40 and payment must be paid at the time of registration. Your registration fee covers any and all classes offered during the term and not per lecture.
- We encourage payment of the COA membership fee by credit card for faster refunds if necessary. Refunds for payments made by check or cash may take several weeks!
- No refunds will be issued after the second week of classes.
- Some classes have limited numbers and will be filled on a first come/first served basis. If the class is full, you will be contacted, otherwise you will not be contacted.
- By registering for classes, you grant permission for your photo to be taken and used for COA promotional purposes.

Room Assignments

Room locations are subject to change based on enrollment size or scheduling conflicts. Please check posted notices daily for updates.

Lunch Option

Local caterers have been invited to offer grab-and-go lunches during the one-hour break. Meals are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The menu will be posted.

Transportation

Transportation information is available at District Three's website, <https://district-three.org/index.php/Town-of-Abingdon> **Note:** The Higher Education Center only provides a bus stop; it does not control the bus schedule, personnel, or related publications.

Inclement Weather Use your best judgment about travel safety during inclement weather.

Schedule changes will be announced on:

- Our website: www.swcenter.edu
- WCYB-TV
- Text alert

The Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center uses **HEC Alerts** to immediately contact you during a major crisis, emergency, significant incident, or operational schedule change. To receive notifications, subscribers must enroll a mobile phone number for SMS text alerts. When an incident or emergency occurs, authorized senders will instantly notify you using **HEC Alerts**. **HEC Alerts** will provide you with real-time updates in the event of an emergency or other critical incident. SMS (Text Message Enrollment). Go to <https://goo.gl/waa48N> to enroll your mobile phone number to receive HEC Alerts.

Emergency Procedures

In case of emergency, evacuate the building calmly.

- The elevator will be out of service.
- If assistance is needed, go to a stairwell and wait for help.
- Do not open the stairwell door at the west end of the building unless it is a true emergency.

COA Motto: We must be patient with one another.

Questions? Contact Ed Morgan at emorgan@swcenter.edu or (276) 619-4377.

Course Descriptions Mondays, Special Topics

September 15, 2025

10:00 AM—Things to Know (and Do) Before Publishing a Book—Terry Shaw.

Terry Shaw of Howling Hills Publishing will lead the interactive workshop: “Things to Know (and Do) Before Publishing a Book.” They include defining your audience and goals for the book, and market research and feedback. Shaw will cover the benefits and drawbacks of traditional versus self-publishing, the importance of working with the right editor, the role of design, and the need to be your own biggest advocate.

10:00 AM—Chair Yoga—Allison Linder.

The Whitetop Yoga Instructor offers Yoga for all! Using a chair for stability support will improve your strength, flexibility, and mobility through modified yoga posture. The class focuses on how to connect your movement to your breath, supporting your respiratory and digestive health while helping you to move. Chairs are provided. Please bring your own yoga mat to place under your chair. The class will meet for three Monday sessions: September 15, 22, and 29 for one hour each.

12:30 PM—Appalachian Dialects—Amy Clark (Live Zoom Presentation).

Why do so many people in Appalachia use double negatives in casual speech? Where does the word "poke" for "paper bag" come from? What's behind the way some people pronounce "pen" and "pin" the same way? Dr. Amy Clark will discuss the history, influences and features of Appalachian dialects throughout the region and separate myth from reality. Dr. Clark is Professor of Communication and Appalachian Studies at UVA's College at Wise, and Director of the Center for Appalachian Studies. She is co-editor and author of *Talking Appalachian: Voice, Identity, and Community* (U. Press of KY, 2014) and host/producer of the *Talking Appalachian Podcast* (on all podcast directories and YouTube.) Her research and writing have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Salon*, *Harvard University Press blog*, and *Oxford American*.

2:00 PM—Virtual Cadaver Lab Tour and Demonstration—Kendra McReynolds.

Kendra McReynolds leads us on an interactive tour with two Anatomage tables in the Higher Education Center Virtual Cadaver Lab. Five virtual cadavers are available for viewing. Each is an actual image reconstructed from donors. The table and software allow examination and interaction of each body system individually and in combination with other body systems. The class can interact with the cadavers via virtual dissection tools to view body structures in multiple views and sections. There are multiple physiological functions represented on the software, such as cardiovascular function/EKG, kinesiology/exercise science, and childbirth.

September 22, 2025**10:00 AM—Our Blood Runs Black—Marsha Self and Rebecca White.**

On June 21, 1983, a devastating explosion rocked the two-left section of McClure #1 Mine in Dickenson County, Virginia. Seven miners were killed in the explosion. Marsha Self's father lived to tell about that fateful day. Rebecca White's father died in the disaster. The two authors present a harrowing account of the event and describe the dangers of coal mining and the brave and resilient men who work to power our nation.

12:30 PM — Town of Abingdon—Abingdon Tourism Staff.

Take a behind-the-scenes look at how Abingdon promotes itself as a destination through tourism, events, and storytelling. From the Barter Theatre to seasonal festivals and everyday charm, this session explores what makes the town special—and how it's shared with visitors and locals alike. Abingdon municipal staff will bring us up to date on upcoming events and plans for our community.

September 29, 2025**10:00 AM— Civil War Legacy—Peter Thomas (Live Zoom Presentation).**

Military encampments were the communal landscapes in which Civil War soldiers discovered common voices during the hardships of war. With so much emphasis on battlefield experiences, focus on soldiers' lives away from battle can be overlooked. Yet, men frequently relied on intimate spaces within the confines of an encampment to share stories and communicate with men experiencing similar struggles, and in letters to home soldiers discussed camp life more than any other aspect of their Civil War experience. This research analyzes how the relationship between encampment and soldier evolved over the course of the Civil War and offers an additional lens into understanding how the Civil War experience affected its participants. It analyzes the challenges Civil War faced, explores efforts to control and combat the hardships of campsites, and discusses how experience developed an awareness for navigating camps that helped men endure life as a soldier.

12:30 PM— *The Howling Storm: Weather, Climate, and the American Civil War*—Ken Noe (Live Zoom Presentation). Traditional histories of the Civil War describe the conflict as a war between North and South. Ken Noe suggests it would be understood better as a three-sided war between the North, the South, and the weather. Drawing from his prize-winning book *The Howling Storm*, he will explain how wartime climate conditions during the war proved unusual, as phenomena such as El Niño, La Niña, and oscillations in the Atlantic Ocean disrupted weather patterns across southern states. Unusual weather patterns shaped battlefield victories and losses, while events such as floods and droughts affected the home front and food production. Ken Noe is a native of Southwest Virginia. A graduate of Emory & Henry, Virginia Tech, and the University of Illinois, he is the Draughton Professor of History Emeritus at Auburn University.

2:00 PM—Virtual Cadaver Lab Tour and Demonstration—Kendra McReynolds.

This is a repeat of the previous presentation. See description on September 15, 2025.

October 6, 2025

10:00 AM—Abingdon's Boarding House Murder—Greg Lilly.

Greg Lilly presents his research, interviews, and methodology in writing the book, *Abingdon's Boardinghouse Murder*. The historical true crime explores the lives and conflicts of the victim and the accused, as well as the culture, lore, and legends that have grown over the past eighty years. The book is nominated for best non-fiction awards for the Agatha (Malice Domestic convention), the Anthony (Bouchercon), the Macavity (Mystery Readers International) and earned a spotlight by the International Thriller Writers.

12:30 PM— William King Museum of Art: A Resource for Everyone—Betsy White.

Join Betsy White as she provides a peek at the museum's history and a look at what's going on up on the hill. Currently under construction is a new wing that will hold the Worrell Collection of Wildlife Art, a world-class collection of approximately 170 pieces of original paintings and sculptures. The 20-acre campus is being renovated into a community park for all ages with an emphasis on native plants and easily accessed walkways. The museum features educational programs for adults in its Art Lab, which is a state-of-the-art space with a ceramics lab, print studio, digital lab, photography lab, and artist residency spaces. Something for everyone.

October 13, 2025

10:00 AM—The Sweet Life: Living Well with Diabetes and Associated Risk Factors—Rose Pignataro.

This empowering seminar is designed to provide individuals living with diabetes with the knowledge, tools, and support needed to manage their condition effectively and live a full, healthy life. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of diabetes, associated risk factors, and how to take better control of their health. We will discuss differences between pre-diabetes, Type I, and Type II diabetes; tracking and managing blood sugar; nutritional strategies; benefits of physical activity and exercise, stress modification; preventing complications and managing common coexisting health issues.

12:30 PM—Scott County Tourism Highlights—Brittany Robertson.

For my presentation, I will show highlights of the Scott County Bounty Trail, and detail what the grant allowed us to do for our local farmers. I will also share some of Scott County's most notable tourist destinations, including the Carter Fold, Natural Tunnel, Devil's Bathtub, and more!

Tuesdays, 10:00 – 11:30 AM, September 9-October 14

10:00 AM—Everyday Conflict Skills: Managing Conflict with Insight and Empathy—Zane Scott. This course introduces adult learners to the idea that conflict is not merely something to be avoided or resolved but a natural and potentially transformative part of our daily lives. Through understanding the processes of conflict, reflective exercises, and practical tools, participants will explore how conflict management skills can be learned and harnessed to manage conflict constructively, fostering change, innovation, and personal growth instead of division and animosity. The course will provide a mixture of concept presentations, in-class activities, and out-of-class reflection, all designed to build a tool kit which participants can use to convert damaging conflict into opportunities for personal growth.

10:00 AM—Acting/Readers Theatre—James Kroll. (This Class begins on September 16 and continues through October 21.) “Get ready to embark on a six-week journey that is part acting workshop, part performance, and full-on fun! We will begin with a study of acting, playwriting, and performance. Acting tips and techniques, play rehearsal and character study. And all of it culminates in a live performance. No theatre or acting experience is necessary; the only requirement is a willingness to try something new and an openness to having a little fun. So, what are you waiting for? Sign up now, let's see those curtains rise, and let the fun begin.”

10:00 AM—Ancient to Modern Hebrew alef-bet—Luetta Gay. I’ll be teaching the twenty-two Hebrew letters, their progression from proto-Canaanite to modern times. We will cover the ancient meaning of each letter and how Hebrew words relate back to their ancient letter meanings. Time permitting I’ll also cover the vowel markings used and how knowledge of the letters combined with Interlinear Bible sources can aid in deeper understanding of biblical passages. I began my study of Hebraic sources and letters twenty-five years ago. At that time, I was teacher and director of children ministries at a Southern Baptist church. My journey of study led me to an eventual conversion to Judaism in 2010.

10:00 AM—Our Natural Heritage Series—Various Instructors.

1. September 9, Appalachian Ethnobotany and Agroforestry—Ryan Huish. What can we learn from the rich biocultural heritage and traditional relationships with native plants? Humans have held relationships with hundreds of Appalachian species to help provide food, medicine, craft, ceremony, and more. Interdisciplinary research helps us understand the significance of this rich biocultural heritage in south-central Appalachia. For example, wild/tended native food and medicinal plants play valuable but often overlooked roles in agricultural systems and cultural sovereignties—in the past, present, and future. Preserving traditional knowledge (such as plant uses, lexicon, ecological connections, etc.) can help us learn and appreciate more about respectful relationships with, and stewardship of these special resources.
2. September 16, Maps: Viewing the World from Above—Link Elmore. Throughout human history, we have used maps to mark our territory, give directions, and better understand the world around us. This class will look at well-known and famous maps from history, as well as more modern examples. We will discuss different kinds of maps, what makes a good map, and the revolution in cartography brought about by computers and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The Nature Conservancy’s Clinch Valley Program has a thirty-five-year history of land protection, resource management, and community engagement in our region. Our speaker will discuss how location and technology are critical tools used to fulfil their mission “to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends”. Link Elmore is Restoration and GIS Coordinator for TNC’s Clinch Valley Program in Abingdon.

3. September 23, The Natural History of Songbirds—Steven Hopp. We will explore the ecology of typical songbirds, including both migrant and resident species, discussing their annual life cycle including migration, breeding details, and strategies for the winter months. Dr Steven Hopp recently retired from Emory and Henry University where he taught Wildlife Monitoring and Sustainable Agriculture courses in their Environmental Science department. He has studied birds for over forty years, with a focus on vireos. He is the president of the board for the Blue Ridge Discovery Center and on the board of Appalachian Sustainable Development.
4. September 30, The Blue Ridge Discovery Center—Lisa Benish. Join us for an engaging presentation about the *Blue Ridge Discovery Center* (BRDC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to connecting people of all ages with the natural and cultural heritage of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Learn how BRDC fosters environmental stewardship through hands-on education, citizen science, and community programs. Discover more about our Center and how you can get involved—whether by volunteering, attending events, or supporting local ecological efforts. This session will be informative, inspiring, and a great way to connect with the natural beauty of our region.
5. October 7, The Virginia Wilderness Committee—Lacey Dean. What is Wilderness? What does it mean to you? Wilderness is a unique part of our American heritage; however, people hold varying perspectives about what it means. At times it is feared, “wilderness is a dark and dismal place where all manner of wild beasts dash about uncooked.” Though shared by a settler in the 1600s, perhaps it is a familiar sentiment to some today. Others may align with Edward Abbey, who said, “wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit.” The United States was the first country in the world to define and designate Wilderness areas through law with the 1964 Wilderness Act and currently celebrates nearly 112 million acres of designated Wilderness. This presentation will define what Wilderness is and is not, why we need it, and where to discover it in Virginia. Organized in 1969, VWC works closely with the congressional delegation from Virginia to pass federal legislation under the 1964 Wilderness Act, which provides permanent protection to outstanding wild areas on public land in Virginia. VWC has been instrumental in passing legislation that designated all existing 24 Wilderness areas in the George Washington & Jefferson National Forests and in Shenandoah National Park.
6. October 14, Butterflies of Far Southwest Virginia —Chris Allgyer. The presentation will consist of my butterfly photographs taken mostly in Wise, Lee, and Scott counties. Topics will include the life cycle of butterflies, gardening with native plants to support adult butterflies and their caterpillars, butterfly mimicry, and the Monarch Watch citizen science project.

Tuesdays, 12:30 – 2:00 PM, September 9-October 14

12:30 PM—Mahjong—Susan Godfrey. Come join Susan Godfrey and Joann Stone in learning American Mahjong, a tile-based game originating in China that combines elements of rummy and gin rummy. It is a social, strategic, and mentally stimulating activity. Mahjong is highly addictive and fun with a unique combination of luck, skill, and challenges. The game can be played and enjoyed at all levels—from beginner to senior. It can be great fun for an afternoon with grandchildren or joining friends to start your own Mahjong club. The fun is free but there is a fifteen-dollar (\$15) charge for the required player’s card. The fee will be collected in class by the instructor.

12:30 PM—U.S. Healthcare Finance—Robin Feirabend MD. This five-session course is intended to provide attendees with a broad overview of the U.S. healthcare system and how it is financed, including current challenges, controversies, and approaches to reform. It is intended for individuals who want to have a deeper understanding of how our healthcare system works. It is not intended as a resource for seeking advice regarding personal healthcare coverage. The Course will review: The size and cost of the U.S. health care system and the complex ways we pay for health care in the U.S. We will examine some of the current and future challenges facing patients and providers including access to care, cost of care, medical debt, and the increasing corporatization of health care. We will also cover consolidation in the healthcare industry, how healthcare financing works in other countries, options for improving healthcare financing, and models for healthcare reform in the U.S. (Please note. No class session on 9/24/25)

12:30 PM—Eclectic Topics in Science and Engineering—James Warden. Your grandparents never imagined that well before the year 2000 civilization would be measuring time more accurately than Earth's rotation, that we would be living in a virtual hive of communication, and that both of these would be made practical by a theory called quantum mechanics, cooked up over a century ago. How is this possible, and why do some people still consider quantum theory to be "weird"? This course will take a whimsical look at these topics and will continue by examining some of the best ideas humanity has come up with, followed by a few spectacular engineering and ill-planned blunders. We will conclude with a gallery of some amusing optical illusions which attempt to trick our brains into seeing images that are not "real". If any of these tickles your imagination, please join us in exploring some wide ranging and possibly oddball topics.

12:30 PM—Flannery O’Conner Short Stories—Judith Wylie PhD. English. We will be reading, studying, and discussing short stories by the renowned Southern author Flannery O’Connor. O’Connor’s stories are often labeled as grotesque although she herself claimed them to be merely realistic. In an ironic, even a sardonic tone, she deals with topics of disability, race, poverty, religion, even violence. Her works are puzzling, fascinating, provoking, and often disturbing—open to conversation and interpretation. This is not a lecture class. Plan to read closely, ask questions, discuss, and draw your own conclusions and meanings. We will be using *The Complete Stories* (it has a painted peacock on the cover). Please come to the first class having read *“A Good Man is Hard to Find.”* As our author notes: “Art never responds to the wish to make it democratic; it is not for everybody; it is only for those who are willing to undergo the effort needed to understand it.”

Wednesdays, 10:00-11:30 AM, September 10-October 15

10:00 AM—Introduction to Computing—Sonia Vanhook. We will start with the very basics of computer use. This is a great beginner course for everyone wanting to get started or learn more about their computer.

10:00 AM—Immersion Room Experience—Karen Brown. It is almost like being there! The Immersion Room is the newest HEC's education technology tool. Each week the class will explore experiences in new topics from healthcare skills, history, science, safety, and more using the Immersion Room technology. This class will be highly interactive by exploring content and challenges through using the innovative immersive technology in the room. Limit twelve participants. Please be advised: the immersion room experience may not be suitable for persons prone to seizures or motion sickness with movement!!

10:00 AM—Exploring the Films of Jean-Pierre Jeunet—Laken Bridges. Jean-Pierre Jeunet is a French screenwriter and director who combines fantasy, realism, and science fiction to present the mundane in a new light. He is widely considered to be one of, if not the, most influential directors in modern French cinema. In

this class students will explore JPJ's world through films including: *Delicatessen* (a dark comedy about cannibalism in a post-apocalyptic world), *City of Lost Children* (a dystopian alternate universe where a scientist steals children's dreams), *Amelie* (a magical realism romance story), *MicMac*s (a fantastical adventure of a man who aims to take down a weapon's manufacturer), *Bigbug* (dark comedy involving suburbanites who are on lock-down while an AI robot uprising takes place outside). All films are in French with English subtitles.

10:00 AM—Traveling Tales –Eileen Garner. A taste of the exotic has found its way to Abingdon. Local folks share memories of their travels.

September 10, Eileen Garner, *Iceland: The Golden Circle*.

September 17, Ellen Mueller, *Kaleidoscope of Northern Ireland*.

September 24, David Foglesong, *Discovering Peru and Bolivia*.

October 1, Lisa Wade, *Viva L'Italia: Lake Como*.

October 8, Ellen Mueller, *Highlights of Scotland*.

October 15, Ted Pile, *Exploring Canada and New England*.

Wednesdays, 12:30-2:00 PM, September 10-October 15

12:30 PM—Gardening—Snow Ferrenia. Summer and fall are the perfect times to review our garden and mull over what we would like to do and need to do. It's the ideal planning, planting, and bed reworking time. Also, gardens and the natural areas are ablaze with a diverse array of fascinating plants. One for every season and use. Especially the all-important pollinators.

1:00 PM—Multi-Genre Creative Writing Workshop—Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig. Helping you grow your writing ideas is the goal of this extended eight-session offering (2.5 hours weekly). We will try our best to create a supportive, honest environment in which participants can share work, receive feedback, and strengthen their craft and creative visioning. During our first meeting, we will create a workshop schedule and develop community guidelines. The remainder of the course will be devoted to workshopping drafts and revisions of in-progress work. Classes will meet from 1:00-3:30 pm on Wednesdays. (9/17, 9/24, 10/1, 10/8, 10/15, 10/22, 10/29, and 11/5.) Limit: 12 participants.

1:00 PM—Introduction to Thomas Aquinas (and Why He Still Matters!)—Paul Macdonald. This course introduces the thought of medieval philosopher and theologian Thomas Aquinas, who is also one of the greatest thinkers in the Western intellectual tradition. In the course, we will explore the following central areas of Aquinas's thought: the relationship between faith and reason; the existence and nature of God; the human person and human happiness; ethics and virtue; and law and politics. Throughout the course, we will also explore how Aquinas is relevant today, and how he can help us think more clearly and deeply about the pressing issues that continue to face us in the areas of philosophy, religion, ethics, and politics. The instructor will provide readings for each week. The main text we will draw on, Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*, is available online.

Week 1: Introduction to Aquinas, and Aquinas on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason

Week 2: Aquinas on the Existence and Nature of God

Week 3: Aquinas on the Human Person

Week 4: Aquinas on Human Happiness

Week 5: Aquinas's Virtue Ethics

Week 6: Aquinas on Law and Politics

12:30 PM—The Life and Works of Mark Twain: Words, Wit & Wisdom—Cindy Pojeta. Mark Twain's life reflects our nation - from the frontier days to the beginning of the modern age. When Samuel Langhorne Clemens was born in 1835 our flag had 24 stars and Andrew Jackson was president. When he died in 1910, William Howard Taft was president and there were 48 states. Twain had many lives: river boy, printer steamboat pilot, western prospector, reporter, lecturer, traveler, and writer. Although he is most often associated with Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, there is so much more to explore. In his lifetime he met Czar Alexander II, Kaiser Wilhelm, King Edward VII (when he was the Prince of Wales), Winston Churchill, Frederick Douglass and Harriet Beecher Stowe. He was friends with Ulysses S. Grant, Helen Keller, Nikola Tesla and William Dean Howells. Just weeks before his death he played miniature golf with Woodrow Wilson in Bermuda and the two of them lobbied hard to ban automobiles on the island. Join in the discovery (or rediscovery) of the master of American Realism. We will discuss his life and major works, as well as read and discuss several short stories. William Faulkner called Twain the "father of American literature." Ernest Hemingway famously said: "All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn." Come find out if you agree.

Thursdays, 10:00-11:30 AM, September 11-October 16

10:00 AM—Robotics Survey—Sonia Vanhook. Will robots drive our cars, clean our houses, and perform surgery one day? Come to this class to gain a basic understanding of how they work. A variety of robots will be studied (such as Code & Go, Coding Express, Cubetto, Lego EV3, Sphero, and Drones). This hands-on course requires students to program the robot – it should be loads of fun!

10:00 AM—Martial Arts/Self Defense—Randall Mullins. Martial arts instructor Randall Mullins provides instruction on self-defense for seniors. Basic techniques for protecting yourself from danger and defending yourself in dangerous situations. The course will focus on Aikido, "The Way of Blended Energy" a Japanese martial art designed to use a larger and stronger attacker's energy against them. We will cover the history of this martial art, evading attacks, escaping from grabs, holds, and other attacks, and how to use any household object as a defensive weapon.

10:00 AM—World War II Combat Aircraft—John Bradley. Famous aircraft from World War II continued to be utilized in military missions after the end of WW II hostilities. They performed in a variety of missions never envisioned by their designers in the Arab/Israeli conflict in 1948, Korea in 1950, and Vietnam in 1965. Their WW II aircrews, likewise, were trained in their new roles and missions. This course studies the effectiveness of our leaders' decisions made under the pressures of wartime.

10:00 AM—Genealogy Lab—Paula Moad. Digging for your family's roots and branches. Paula Moad guides class members on how to use internet genealogy resources: DNA testing, newspaper archives, and public records to find lost relatives, construct a family tree, and gather their family's history and stories. Basic computer skills are required for this class!

10:00 AM—The Virtual Road Trip—Monica Hoel. It's the road trip that allows you to experience the region while never leaving the Higher Ed Center! We'll have a different speaker each week who will introduce us to a fascinating aspect of the region. This semester we're "going" to Grinder's Switch, the wild blue sky, the hometown of Edith Bolling Wilson, the sports history books, the howling hills, and the great unknown! Come along for an exciting ride!

Sept. 11: Tom Brake will discuss the fascinating Purple Martin. Tom has worked with Martins for years, and we'll have a chance to visit his Martin houses on the VHCC campus.

Sept. 18: Lily Kingsolver, co-author of *Coyote's Wild Home*, will fill us in on the intriguing lives of coyotes.

Sept. 25: Ron Peterson, author of true crime books like *Under the Trestle* and *Chasing the Squirrel*, will introduce us to the mysterious life and disappearance of Wally Thrasher.

Oct. 2: Joe Matthews, former Sports Information Director at Emory & Henry University, will introduce us to some of the captivating sports stories that got their start in SWVA!

Oct. 9: Lori Freeman worked for years as an assistant to Sarah Ophelia Colley Cannon -- better known as Minnie Pearl! She has a great story to share.

Oct. 16: Grant Gerlich is the Director of Museums for Wythe County, Virginia. He'll share history, culture, and the opportunity for a great field trip!

Thursdays, 12:30-2:00PM, September 11-October 16

12:30 PM—Extraordinary Women of the Last 100 Years—Linda Davidson. Have Women played a significant role in history over the last 100 years? Who are the heroines of our age? What stories do they have to tell? Why is it important to you? Did our generation live up to the accomplishments of the women in the previous 100 years? Is it true that "well-behaved women seldom make history?" Or is it true that these unconventional women made the unexpected happen by creating changes that empowered other women for future generations?

12:30 PM—Tension Between Good and Evil—Mary Darcy and David Rouse. The course examines the struggle between opposing forces, moral and immoral, within the individual and society. Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and *The Brothers Karamazov* are used to gain insight into the inner struggle between feelings, inner peace, redemption, on the one hand, and logic and rationality on the other. Knowledge of these novels is helpful but not necessary as the instructors will provide critical aspects of the texts as well as videos of Dostoevsky that discuss his values and beliefs. Instructors will also provide notes to enhance understanding of the text. Class discussion is encouraged as we hope to present aspects of what is known about the novels which will be used to create new insights with the class. Key terms and points of discussion include guilt, desire, redemption, inner peace, rationality, morals, and logic.

12:30 PM—Genealogy Lab—Independent Work. The Genealogy Lab will be open until 2:00 PM for students to pursue their family tree research.

12:30 PM—Recovering Your Finances—Andrea Haubner and Andrea Wann. For seniors living on a fixed income, financial management during times of inflation and uncertainty can be a source of anxiety. Virginia Cooperative Extension Service Agents Andrea Haubner and Andrea Wann will offer guidance on personal finance. Weekly topics include Knowing Your Money Style, Budgeting, Credit, Credit Reports and Scores, Payments and Priorities, Understanding Banking, Earning and Wages, and Starting to Save.