



Collegium News

Volume 12 Issue 3

Newsletter of the Cannon Valley Elder Collegium
"A Questing Mind Never Retires"

July 2009

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"Insomnia is very common. Try not to lose any sleep over it."

SLEEP CHANGES AS WE AGE

By Kathy Mellstrom

Myth #1: We need less sleep as we age.

Myth #2: Sleeping problems are to be expected as people get older.

There is a physiological truth behind the phrase "Sleeping like a baby." Growth hormone, in plentiful supply, causes children to sleep deeply. Lower levels of this and also of melatonin, which is important in controlling the sleep cycle, are at the root of why the character of sleep changes as we age. According to sleep research, older people typically take a little longer to fall asleep, spend less time in the deepest stages of sleep, and awaken more easily and frequently during the night.

However, this does not explain why sleeping problems are so common among those over sixty-five – some studies say over fifty percent have these complaints. The quality of sleep in healthy old age is not necessarily inadequate even though its structure has altered and it may be more difficult to get the seven to nine hours of sleep that adults need. In fact, if research subjects with other health problems are eliminated from the results, sleeping problems almost disappear as well.

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2009 Fall Term -- Class Schedule
 September 14th – November 6th
 (Register by September 2, 2009)

Class Title Time	Instructor Location
Then and Now: The Evolution of Competitive Athletics in America Monday 9:30 - 11:30 am	Jim Dimick Northfield Senior Center, Rm 106
Waking From The Nightmare: Irish Literature From 1900 To 1969 Monday 1:30 - 3:30 pm	Jim McDonnell Northfield Senior Center, Rm 106
The Myth Of Free Enterprise And The World Economic Crisis (Section 1) Tuesday 9:30 - 11:30 am	Hartley Clark Village on the Cannon
The Myth Of Free Enterprise And The World Economic Crisis (Section 2) Tuesday 1:30 - 3:30 pm	Hartley Clark Village on the Cannon
The Internet Ate My Newspaper! Tuesday 9:30 - 11:30 am	Linda Seebach NRC, Fireside Lounge
HOMESPUN Tuesday 1:30 - 3:30 pm	Marie Gery Kildahl Park Pointe
The Gothic Cathedral: Urban Jewel Wednesday 9:30 - 11:30 am	Jon Rondesvedt NRC, Theatre
The Psychology of Life After Retirement: Keeping our Balance During Times of Great Change Wednesday 1:30 - 3:30 pm	Bruce Roberts Village on the Cannon
Outstanding Shorter Works of 20th-Century Russian Literature Thursday 9:30 - 11:30 am	James Walker NRC, Parkview East, Sun Room
SCIENCE AND RELIGION & ETHICS (Lecture Course) Thursday 9:30 - 11:30 am	Ian Barbour Village on the Cannon
The African Experience Thursday 6:30 - 8:30 pm	Joseph L. Mbele Kildahl Park Pointe
Discovering Choral Masterworks Thursday 1:30 – 3:30 pm	Bob Scholz Village on the Cannon
China, Inside Out Friday 9:30 - 11:30 am	Richard Bodman Northfield Senior Center, Rm 106

NOTE #1: For a description of the courses, go to the CVEC web page (www.cvec.org).

NOTE #2: The Class Brochure will be mailed to members and posted on the above CVEC web page.

SLEEP CHANGES AS WE AGE (continued from front page)

Health conditions and chronic illnesses that are more common among the elderly seem to be what can make it hard to get a good night's sleep. Medications used to treat them may also affect sleep. Dementia, cardiovascular or pulmonary disease, diabetes, arthritis, sleep apnea, urinary problems, and anxiety related to stress or depression can interfere significantly with sleep. Furthermore, many of these problems are exacerbated by inadequate sleep, leading to worse sleep and then worse symptoms in a vicious cycle. One study, conducted at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, showed that resistance to pain decreased significantly when sleep was fragmented. This is bad news for those who are awakened by arthritis or back pain, for instance. Concentration and memory formation are also impaired by lack of sleep.

Staying as healthy as possible is obviously the best way to enjoy restful sleep. However there are many lifestyle habits that can improve your chances. They include: keep a regular sleep schedule; be engaged socially; take a short nap early in the day if you nap; expose yourself to sunlight (it increases melatonin secretion); exercise, and do it early in the day; limit caffeine late in the day. Also, avoid alcohol, large meals, spicy food, and too much liquid intake near bedtime. If you smoke and can not quit altogether, avoid smoking several hours before bed.

Reducing sleep-killing stress and anxiety can be accomplished in a number of ways, too: keep a journal and record worries or to-do lists before bed, then let go; listen to soothing music or read a relaxing book; get a massage or use relaxation techniques; talk with a friend or see a therapist about persistent anxieties.

Adequate sleep benefits us in ways that improve our quality of life. Being tired every day or having frequent insomnia is not a normal part of getting older. If you have tried making changes in your habits to no avail, see your doctor about it. There may be adjustments to medications or to the times you take them that make a difference, or your doctor may investigate for underlying health problems. It is worth it for a good night's sleep.

Improved CVEC Communications

The improved CVEC webpage has incorporated a new feature to provide more efficient distribution of our publications. On the Home Page, there is a procedure for safely submitting your e-mail address to be used for receiving CVEC Newsletters and Class Brochures. The resultant membership e-mail list will only be used by CVEC for this purpose and is on a volunteer basis, with an option to unsubscribe at any time. Publications will continue to be mailed to members who are not on this list.

The mass e-mailing program to be used by CVEC will not reveal the addresses, as is frequently the case in personal e-mail. The purpose of this program is to get the material to our students in a more timely manner, to utilize more graphics and photographs in color, and to save printing and mailing costs. We encourage you to visit our web site (www.cvec.org) and sign on for e-mail copies of future publications. If you prefer not to receive CVEC material by e-mail, you can always read it on the webpage and continue to receive it by mail.

CVEC Publicity Committee

From the Director

We have completed another successful year. We filled 36 classes and enrolled 538 students, a new record. More important, the courses were interesting and exciting, as positive comments from many of you confirmed. Our amazing program continues to provide more people with more great learning opportunities. So smile with satisfaction as you think about what you have created in Northfield.

The Spring Meeting, held at St Johns, was a great success. We learned about the courses for next fall and about our instructors and students. Hartley Clark presented an interesting review of energy and our automobiles, based on work he has done for a recent course. Many of you found the St Johns venue a great place for our meetings. Hartley's talk can be seen as a video on our new web page.

(continued on next page)



Bill
Carlson

Everyone should visit our new attractive and flexible CVEC.org web page, developed by Ed Lufkin. We plan to use this web page as a way to keep in touch on a timely basis and to publicize our events. We hope many of you will regularly check it and learn about new developments. Among the many features on the new web page is a thermometer, so you can check the temperature by clicking on CVEC.org! You may see a photo from one of your classes among those Ed has added to the page. At present you can read complete descriptions of the fall term classes and see the class schedule. Later in the summer you will find the fall class registration form which you can print and mail in case you are out of town in August. We would like to distribute newsletters and course brochures to you by email. This will provide you with the publications two weeks earlier than the printed and mailed versions and reduce our costs.

Given the current economy and the state government, it is apparent that there will not be any grants from the Humanities Commission. We will need to find a way to increase the amount contributed in our fund drive. Fortunately, very few of us have lost jobs, and the retirement fund investments are improving a bit. CVEC has been fiscally responsible, and financial resources are not currently a problem. Our happy challenge, if enrollment keeps increasing, is that we may need to develop more courses and recruit additional faculty.

Bill

FALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING October 18, 2009