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Jeff Anderson DLI Chairman
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7 down, 18 to go: DLI growing,

The Kerrville community has now experienced seven highly rated, participant-evaluated classes since the Dynamic Learning Institute opened its doors three weeks ago.

Joyfully, we also surpassed the 500 attendance goal we targeted to reach by the conclusion of DLI's first semester. All of this with 18 of 25 spring semester classes still ahead.

We are very thankful for the broad community support we are experiencing. Developing an initiative like the Dynamic Learning Institute involved a multitude of action steps. DLI, from my perspective, began last June when SERV Kerrville accepted a challenge from Kerr County Commissioner Tom Moser. He believed our community needed a learning forum offering year-round classes featuring Hill Country experts with lifetimes of interesting experiences to share.

The following week, Walt Koenig, president/CEO of the Kerrville Area Chamber of Commerce, expressed unequivocal interest in joining DLI's organizing team.

Later, we learned that his commitment of time and service was born from his extensive international life experiences where lifelong learning is a valued part of the everyday fabric of the society. In the week's ahead, DLI participants will enjoy opportunities to learn from Koenig's vast international diplomacy experiences.



In January 2017, Koenig and his wife, M.G., moved from the international arena to relocate to Kerrville and lead the Kerrville Area Chamber of Commerce. He had recently completed four years of service as the senior commercial officer at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. There, he fostered private business sector growth through increased trade and investment. His efforts resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars of new business in Afghanistan.

His activities included the commercialization of military bases, the conduct of a series of highly successful trade and investment promotion events and the mentoring of businesses large and small.

Koenig's assignment in Afghanistan followed four years of diplomatic service in Iraq and 25 years as an international business executive in the telecommunications industry.

War in Afghanistan, Feb. 20

On Feb. 20, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Dietert Center, 451 Guadalupe St., Walt Koenig III, a founding DLI board member, will be the featured DLI class instructor will present "War in Afghanistan — Perspectives from a Diplomat on What Happened and Why."



“Once my time with the U.S. State Department was completed in 2015, I wanted to share my experiences in Afghanistan. Our involvement in this war theater has been under-reported and largely misunderstood,” Koenig said. “For the sake of the many Americans who made great sacrifices in service to our country, it is important that people know what happened. The opportunity to deliver these classes gives me the venue to share insights that the news is not providing effectively.”

The War in Afghanistan is the longest in U.S. History. The American commitment to this continued conflict appears to be never-ending.

His class will examine the historical timeline for the American involvement in the Afghan war and will critically examine what has happened in this pivotal part of the world and why — all from the perspective of a diplomat who directly supported the coalition forces in Afghanistan for four years.

Koenig will share experiences, photographs and insights on the United States’ involvement in this lengthy conflict.

“I was greatly honored to serve our country as senior commercial officer at the American Embassy in Kabul and will consider this Afghanistan Class successful if participants gain a better

understanding of the historical context of this unique nation,” he said.

He plans to examine for dynamic learners the reasons the Afghanistan conflict began, the critical events that took place and are taking place and the lessons that we, as a nation, should take away.

“Many families have members serving in these theaters, and I especially hope these family members in attendance will gain insight. There are many aspects of our involvement in Afghanistan which are not well known and, given the great investment that we have made in both blood and treasure, that everyone should be aware of what is happening there and why,” Koenig said.

DLI board members Charlie and Ronda McIlvain will serve as hosts for the class.

Cost to attend the class is \$20 per person. To register, call [792-4044](tel:792-4044), Mondays through Fridays, or register anytime online at www.clubed.net.

Texas Tales: Tall and True

Humorist and folklorist Donna Ingham will take the ancient art of storytelling and give it a Texas twist to entertain audiences of all ages on Feb. 22 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at the Dietert Center.

She tells tall tales, folklore, historical and personal stories told as only a Texan could — or would.

“The best lies start as the truth,” Ingham said.

As a storyteller, she has appeared at conferences across the U.S. and even swapped a yarn or two in Ireland. A former college professor with a Ph.D. in English, she retired from teaching university students and, as she said, “discovered a second career of turning to lying for fun and profit.”

Her reputation as a humorist makes her a popular presenter, and her accolades include being named the “Biggest Liar in Austin” seven times and the “Biggest Liar

in Texas” three times. She is a recipient of the John Henry Faulk Award for “outstanding contributions to the art of storytelling” and a National Storytelling Oracle Regional Excellence Award for “exceptional commitment and exemplary contributions to the art of storytelling.”

Perhaps the best way to share a greater understanding of Ingham’s class is to share quotes from participants in her previous programs: “masterful style of oral storytelling,” Marble Falls; “impressive, funny, a virtuoso,” California; “You’ll have to decide what is true and what is, well, maybe almost true, sure to entertain,” Abilene Reporter-New; “Donna Ingham deserves all the awards she has received. Her delivery and content were extraordinary; and Donna Ingham was a great storyteller. Could listen to her for hours. Her stories gave a great insight into Texas life,” Road Scholar commentaries.

Ingham will renew your appreciation for the oral tradition and maybe stimulate you to collect, preserve and pass on your own stories.

“When an older person dies, it is as if a whole library just burned down if we don’t get his/her stories,” Ingham said.

An energetic proponent of lifelong learning, Ingham shared this quote from Mahatma Gandhi, “Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.”

DLI board hosts for this class will be JoAnne and Ralph English.

Cost of the class is \$20 per person. To register, call [792-4044](tel:792-4044) during business hours Mondays through Fridays or register anytime online at www.clubed.net.

Just a note

DLI’s Feb. 15 “Pluto and Friends” class is nearing capacity, so those interested in attending are encouraged to sign up ASAP.

Dynamic Learning Institute

DLI is a Kerrville community partnership between the Dietert Center’s Club Ed, Schreiner University, SERV Kerrville and the Dynamic Learning Institute Board of Directors.

Dynamic Learning aims to provide the Kerrville area with fun, interactive and stimulating learning experiences.

The DLI board hopes many community residents will join it in discovering the joy of learning from dynamic instructors with a lifetime of subject experiences to share. There are no tests, no grades and no papers — just the opportunity to explore interesting topics and develop new interests.

About Anderson

DLI Chairman Jeff Anderson is servant pastor of SERV Kerrville, a nonprofit collaborating with community partners to empower lifelong learning.