

The Senior College That Keeps Going and Going



The Sunrise Senior College is able to offer programming year round through its “Summer Shorts” and “Winter Warm-ups”, which supplement the regular fall and spring course offerings. The supplemental programs are typically one day events, with several being open to the community and many having a strong emphasis on having fun. Most of the programs are free.

Summer Shorts and Winter Warm-ups serve several purposes, including maintaining connections during long, cold, dark winters and during prime vacation time. A large number of SSC members are part-time residents so opportunities to get together with other members is especially important. The events also highlight natural features of the area and explore local businesses. The events that are open to the public represent SSC’s commitment to contributing to the larger community, as well as increasing awareness of its regular course offerings.

Sunrise Senior College just completed this year’s Summer Shorts program. The senior college offered 19 programs over the summer. Programs included touring area businesses, including Lunaform, Dennis Kings Granite Works, and the Tunk Mountain Art Gallery. There was also a wonderful tea and tour of the Talbot House Inn in East Machias. Other programs included Container Gardening, the Evolution of Zoos, presented by Anne Baker, a retired zoo keeper, the

History of the Sawyer Store/family in Jonesport by a favorite presenter, Bill Plaskon, and three offerings about ocean-going vessels and oceanography showcasing the history of sea going vessels, life under the sea, and the effects of global warming and pollution on the ocean, presented by another favorite, Al Saffer. Al has lectured in many countries around the world, and currently lectures on various cruise ships during the winter months.

Sunrise Senior College also offered three programs that were free and open to the public. "Going Blind" presented by Yelena Koslova an Ophthalmology Technician, and Susan Summers, who represented the Iris Foundation of Maine. The presenters discussed various eye diseases which may result in blindness, and explained many assistive devices that are helpful for persons who are losing their sight.

"Boating in the Cold Waters of Down East Maine" was presented by Dr. Kenneth Mirman, a retired physician who is a member of the National Water Safety Congress and the National Center for Cold Water Safety. He stated that the greatest risk in cold water immersion was drowning and not hypothermia. He provided invaluable information about preventing cold water accidents as well as what to do if you do end up in the water. Dr. Mirman's lecture was very well received, and several boaters commented that they never realized how dangerous the cold waters are, and said they would take appropriate measures. This was an excellent program to open to the public!

Geology of Glacier National Park was presented by Dr. Richard Gilman, a geologist who summers in Washington County. His was an overview of the composition of the mountains and glaciers in the park, stressing that some of the formations were billions of years old, some as young as 20 million years old. He also noted that the glaciers are rapidly melting, as a result of global warming. Perhaps in just thirty more years, the glaciers in Glacier National Park will be gone!

Our Summer Shorts programs were well attended, and we look forward to providing another very interesting program next summer! Right after we finish our fall courses and our wonderful Winter Warm-Ups!

We were pleased at the public's response to our free programs, and hope to attract more members to Sunrise Senior College.