



In This Issue:

Eight Student Scholarships Awarded	Pg. 3
Book & Author Luncheon Success	Pg. 4
Volunteer Leader Profile: Edie Newman	Pg. 5
A Look at ILR's Very First Newsletter	Pg. 6

President's Message

By Doug Imhoff, ILR President



Our annual membership renewal process began July 1, and **if you have not already done so, you can register now for the coming year.** Please also let your friends know about ILR and its rewards and experiences. The 2026 fall catalog is posted on the ilrbw.org website and **online registration for fall courses starts Aug. 16 and runs for two weeks.** You can also register in person at the ILR Office during this two-week period (see the ILR Office schedule on page 8 of this newsletter). **Remember, the fall course registration deadline is Sunday, Aug. 30.**

On another note, many people have asked us who is eligible to join ILR, so please review – and share with your friends – the information below.

WHO CAN JOIN ILR: ILR at Baldwin Wallace welcomes active adults age 50 and older who are curious, engaged and eager to continue learning throughout life. **Our members share a passion for lifelong learning, personal growth and meaningful social interaction.** Whether you're retired, semi-retired or simply seeking enriching experiences, ILR offers a vibrant community where you can explore new ideas, connect with others and enjoy a variety of educational, cultural and social opportunities.

I hope this answers that question, and **I would like to wish all of our current and soon-to-be members a fun and productive year with ILR!**

ILR Adopts Strategic Action Plan for 2026-2028

The Institute for Learning in Retirement at Baldwin Wallace University (ILR) has formally adopted its 2026-2028 Action Plan. This establishes **a comprehensive roadmap to guide our organization's growth, innovation and service to lifelong learners** over the next two years.

Approved by the ILR Governing Board in July, the Action Plan represents **the culmination of a six-month strategic planning effort** involving the Governing Board, Executive Council, program committees, administrative committees and volunteer leadership. The process engaged dozens of volunteers who examined current operations, identified future opportunities and developed goals designed to strengthen the organization while enhancing member experiences.

The Action Plan focuses on advancing our mission of providing intellectually stimulating educational, cultural, social and travel opportunities for adults who embrace lifelong learning. The plan establishes strategic goals in six key operational areas: Curriculum, Cultural and Travel Programs, Social Programs, Marketing, Information Technology, Finance and Development.

Among the plan's priorities are:

- Expanding and enhancing educational programming opportunities
- Increasing member engagement and participation
- Strengthening marketing and communications efforts
- Leveraging technology to improve operational effectiveness and member services



Governing Board members discuss the planning process at 2025 retreat.

- Supporting financial sustainability and long-term organizational growth
- Enhancing collaboration among committees and volunteers
- Continuing to strengthen ILR's partnership with Baldwin Wallace University

"The adoption of this Action Plan represents an important milestone for ILR," says **President Doug Imhoff**. "It reflects the collective wisdom, dedication and vision of our volunteers and leaders. More importantly, it **provides a clear framework for ensuring that ILR continues to thrive and serve our members well into the future.**"

The Action Plan **establishes measurable goals and implementation strategies** while maintaining flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and member needs. Progress toward these goals will be regularly reviewed and reported to the Governing Board and membership.

Gary A. Erlinger, Ph.D., who coordinated the planning process, noted that the Action Plan reflects ILR's commitment to thoughtful stewardship and continuous improvement.

"This plan is more than a document," he says. **"It is a commitment to our members, our volunteers and Baldwin Wallace University.** It charts a course for strengthening ILR's programs, enhancing the member experience, and ensuring the organization remains vibrant and sustainable for years to come."

[Click here](#) for more information about the strategic planning process.

Fall Course Season is Fast Approaching

By Pam McConnell, VP of Curriculum

Why is it that summer seems to move slowly in the beginning and then rushes to its conclusion? Could it be our excitement to return to a new offering of courses with ILR?

Our fall session begins on Sept. 14. There are more than 40 courses from which to choose and we are introducing four new instructors to ILR:

- **Julie Friedman** will teach eco-printing, in which participants create their own patterned cloth with flowers and leaves.
- **Len Muni** is a former teacher with the Berea School District who brings his background in the sciences.
- **Anne Cole** is a former art teacher from the Berea schools as well as Baldwin Wallace.
- **Jim Shelley** brings his knowledge of architectural Intelligence to our program.



On Aug. 11 we hosted our fourth Meet the Teachers Open House. **More than 175 lifelong learners had an opportunity to meet 12 of our instructors who will teach in the fall.** We plan to offer similar events going forward, and they are open to current and prospective ILR members, or for those who are curious about our program. **As always, we welcome everyone.**



*(Photos by
Paula Gustin
and Karl
Keller)*

2026 Scholarship Recipients Exemplify Lifelong Learning

By Nancy Jirousek, ILR Scholarship Committee

The ILR Scholarship Program goes to the heart of what ILR stands for: promoting lifelong learning. ILR is indeed fortunate that, since its inception in 1992, the organization acquired the means to provide this opportunity to BW students. **Over the past three decades, more than \$516,000 in scholarships and grants have been provided by ILR members to students at Baldwin Wallace University.**

Criteria for the **undergraduate scholarships** include the following:

- Students age 24 or older
- Minimum 2.75 GPA
- Preference for veteran or military-dependent
- Financial need

Additionally, the **Louise Kiefer Graduate Education scholarship** is awarded to a student enrolled in BW's graduate education program.

Seven non-traditional undergraduate students will each receive a \$3,000 scholarship for the coming academic year and **one graduate education student was selected to receive the \$3,000 Louise Kiefer scholarship.**

This year's recipients are:

Recipient	Hometown	Major	Class Year
Louise Kiefer Graduate Education Scholarship			
Erin Larsen	Parma Heights, OH	Master of Education	
ILR Undergraduate Scholarship			
Jeffrey Bohnert	Lakewood, OH	English and Adolescent/Young Adult Education	Senior
Tiajuana Christian	Parma, OH	Management	Senior
Leah Etzler	North Olmsted, OH	Organizational Leadership	Senior
Shawanay Kirksey	Garfield Heights, OH	Management	Senior
Jennifer Lavelle	Strongsville, OH	Human Resources	Senior
Olivia Morgenroth	Pleasanton, CA	Nursing	Senior
Jason Skory	Painesville, OH	Management	Junior

Congratulations to all of these deserving students!

Book and Author Luncheon is a Big Success

The Aug. 5 Book and Author Luncheon **featured three local authors** who introduced their books to members and guests.

We also **collected 467 children's books** for the Cleveland Kids' Book Bank. **Thank you to attendees** for their generous donations, and **thanks to Sherri Denish** for coordinating the collections!

(Photos by Paula Gustin and Elaine Joseph)



Whether collecting book donations (above), enjoying lunch or posing for a quick photo (below), luncheon attendees were in good spirits.



From left to right, authors/presenters Susan Petrone, Wendy Koile and Deanna Adams share a moment on stage with ILR VP of Administration Maria Phillips.



Several carloads of donated books make their way to the Cleveland Kids' Book Bank.

Your ILR Membership Card Authorizes BW Bookstore Discount

After renewing your ILR membership for the 2026-2027 academic year, **you received (or will receive) an email confirming you are a member in good standing.**

The email includes an image of a printable membership card (sample below), which **can be used to obtain a 10% discount at the Baldwin Wallace University Bookstore.** You do not need to carry it with you for ILR classes, events or trips.

In addition to the bookstore discount, your ILR membership benefits include:

- **Registration** for fall, winter and spring classes
- **Early access** to travel programs
- **Advance notice** to social events
- Engaging **volunteer opportunities**
- **Voting privileges** and an invitation to our annual meeting
- **Access** to the Baldwin Wallace Ritter Library
- Eligibility to serve in **ILR Leadership roles**



We look forward to seeing you soon at one or all of the above!

The ILR Registration Team Needs You!

By Karl Keller, Chief Information Officer

Are you interested in learning something new? Do you enjoy working with people? Are you comfortable using a computer? Would you be willing to volunteer two to four hours of your time each month? While **the commitment is typically just a few hours each month**, membership renewal in July and class registration periods require some additional volunteer time.

No registration experience is necessary—**we'll provide all the training you need**, including how to use the administrative version of ProClass for both membership and class registration.

If you'd like to join our team or simply learn more, please **contact the ILR Office** at 440-826-3188 or ilrhelpdeskbwu@gmail.com. We'd love to hear from you!

Volunteer Leader Profile: Edie Newman, Chief Financial Officer

By Dan Bomeli, ILR Today Editor

Shortly after joining ILR in 2021, **Edith (Edie) Newman** volunteered as a Host Coordinator for several courses because, she says, "I enjoy meeting and helping people."



Edie's role within ILR has grown exponentially, serving as Comptroller for the Finance Committee since 2022 and, as of July 1 of this year, accepting an Executive Committee position as Chief Financial Officer. Going forward, the efforts of **Edie and her team will continue to benefit ILR members.**

"Finance is involved in just about all ILR committee activities," Edie says. "We assist with budgeting, planning, deposits, accounts payable and more. Our work often happens in the background, but our primary purpose is to help ILR volunteers get things done and attain their goals through appropriate spending."

In addition to Edie, the Finance Committee includes **Kathy Adams** (Comptroller), **Marilyn Stimpson** (deposits and ILR Reach tracking), **Jean Dockman** (accounts payable), **Sally Condit** and former CFO **Gary Erlinger**, who remains active with risk management and related functions.

Edie, who grew up in Garfield Heights, **intended to major in astronomy and physics when she entered Indiana University** after high school, but shifted her focus after deciding business offered more job opportunities. She then took weekend and evening classes and earned a BS in business administration at BW while working as a bookkeeper, which led to a 45-year career as an accountant and controller for a variety of small- and mid-size companies. **She is a retired certified management accountant**, a discipline that focuses on managerial processes and how businesses can operate most effectively. ILR is now the beneficiary of her expertise.

Edie and her colleagues are committed to ensuring ILR financial processes operate at peak efficiency, bills are paid promptly, monies are allocated accurately and the organization's assets are protected for member programming, student scholarships (see article on page 3) and more.

"We are working more closely than ever with the university," Edie says, citing recent hires in the BW Finance Department, upgraded technology and processes. "I hope to be the person others approach for discussing new ideas to further ILR goals. **It's going to be fun.**"

Witness a Piece of ILR History: Our Very First Newsletter

By Paula Gustin, Historian



While going through early ILR documents, I found **the first newsletter publication from winter 1995**. I thought our members might be interested to see how different it was from our current newsletter, *ILR Today*. [Click Here to peruse the first issue.](#)

* * *

Lost and Found: A silver bracelet was found after the December Holiday Luncheon. We've kept it at the ILR Office hoping someone will claim it. It is quite distinctive so if it's yours, call the office (440-826-3188), describe the item and come get it.

Thoughts of Gratefulness

By Elaine Joseph, ILR Today Staff

Lately, **I have been wondering what makes me happy**. Now that I am a senior—no, not in high school—but a SENIOR CITIZEN...

Many of the articles I've read focus on staying active by walking, learning new skills, physical exercise, social connections, nutritious eating, emotional wellness, **plus embracing technology, which I love**. We now have Zoom calls and FaceTime to communicate with friends and family, near or far. I am sure you remember telecommunications in the bygone days with party lines and 75 cents a minute for long-distance calls, compared with today when the cost is almost nothing and connections are private. However, **these articles sometimes leave out giving and caring about each other**. I don't know about you, but for me these things make me happy. When I do these, I feel happy inside, my heart fills with joy and I feel good about myself.

The most wonderful gifts you can give are your time, your caring and your sharing. For example, one year at Christmas my neighbor left, in my mailbox, one of the most wonderful gifts I have ever received. It still resonates with me to this day. It is a small wooden plaque, something like 2x4 inches, lightly painted and stamped on the top, which she made herself. **It said "Grateful."**



(AI-generated image)

I smiled to myself and put it in my kitchen. I look at it every day and it makes me think of all the wonderful things I have experienced and accomplished in my life. These thoughts make me feel happy and grateful. **Ladies and gentlemen, I DARE YOU—give it a try.**

Another thing I have decided to do: **When I look at someone, I focus on something nice about them**. Years ago, I noticed some people being critical of each other. I then decided in my own small way, I would see

something nice about people I encounter every day and give them a compliment. We never know what people are going through. **We just might make someone's day.** MOST PEOPLE APPRECIATE IT, including me.

ILR has provided me with ALL of the above, including opportunities to volunteer, travel and make new friends. **I have met so many wonderful people, likely including you. I appreciate what ILR has done for my happiness.**

I hope to see you soon by traveling together, attending classes or volunteering with ILR. **We are grateful to have you with us!**

2026 Travel Schedule Update

By Maria Phillips and Tom Brennan, Travel Committee Co-Chairs

The following trips will be offered for ILR members and guests in 2026 based on our member survey results. Specific information for each trip will also be posted on ilrbw.org.

Trips are **filling quickly** and some already have waiting lists, so **call the travel company to register** if you are interested in a particular destination.



Single-Day Trips

- Glass, Glamour and Good Times in Tiffin on Sept. 3 (Great Day)
- Mystery Treasure Bag Tour on Oct. 13 (Great Day)
- Autumn Wine Tasting on Nov. 5 (JKL)
- Pittsburgh Holiday Lights on Dec. 3 (Great Day)

Multi-Day Trips

- Canadian Theater Adventure (JKL) on Sept. 10-12 – **CLOSED**
- Traverse City and the Sleeping Bear Dunes on Sept. 29-Oct. 2 (Great Day)
- Fall into the Finger Lakes on Oct. 13-16 (Nowak)
- Niagara Winter Festival of Lights on Nov. 17-18 (Great Day)
- Williamsburg at Christmas on Dec. 27-29 (JKL)

Foreign Trips

- Montreal Christmas Market on Dec. 2-6...**no minimum** (Great Day)

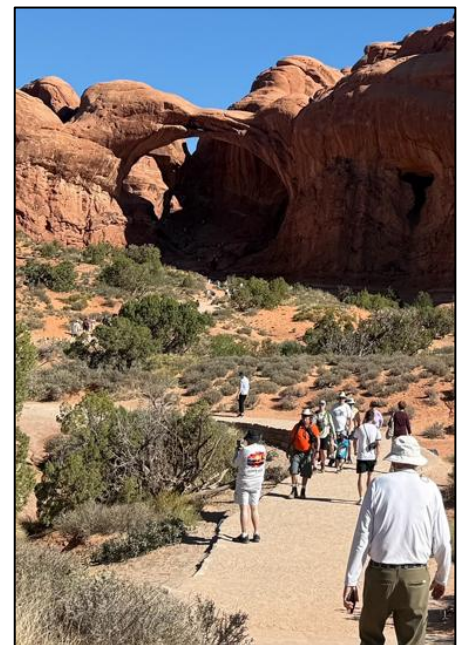
JKL Tours: 440-942-5350 (John Lakovich)

Nowak Tours: 330-483-4900 (Wendy Skettle)

Great Day Tours: 440-526-5350 (Ryan Popovic)

Questions about travel can be referred to Maria Phillips and Tom Brennan, Travel Committee Co-Chairs, at ilrhelpdeskbwu@gmail.com.

Images from "Rockies to the Red Rocks" ILR trip:



(Photos provided by Maria Phillips)

Cultural Events Update

By Pat Giblin and Penny Jeffrey, Cultural Committee Co-Chairs

The following events have been selected as a result of our member Cultural Events Survey. An event-specific flyer will be emailed to you for reservation information before each event. Any member may invite a guest. Some dates are tentative at this time.

- **Blossom Music Festival with the Cleveland Orchestra: Cole Porter's "Let's Misbehave"** – Aug. 23 – CLOSED
- **Cleveland Guardians Game** – Sept. 5
- **"Clue" at Playhouse Square** – November 2026
- **Christmas Holiday Concert at Severance Center** – Dec. 13
- **Cleveland Pops Orchestra: "Stage to Screen: Broadway Movie Hits"** – Jan. 30, 2027
- **Cleveland Botanical Garden Orchid Show** – February/March 2027
- **"Phantom of the Opera" at Playhouse Square** – April 14 – May 9, 2027
- **Cleveland Pops Orchestra: "Symphony of Stars"** – June 5, 2027

Any questions about these cultural events can be referred to Maria Phillips at ilrhelpdeskbwu@gmail.com.

Upcoming Special Events

An event-specific flyer will be emailed to you for reservation information before each of the following:

Aug. 24 – Women in History Speaker Event at the Berea Library at 7 p.m.

"1776 Power, Pen and Petticoats: Abigail and Mercy Spill the Tea"

Abigail Adams and Mercy Otis Warren were friends, then frenemies, then friends again, but never wavered in their support for the new nation. Reservation forms will be emailed to members. Cost is \$5.

February 2027 – Carl Fernstrum Concert

"Music of Neil Diamond"

Dec. 16 – Holiday Luncheon

The Amethyst Strings from the Cleveland Pops Orchestra will provide entertainment.

Watch your email for other upcoming speaker, concert and special events!

ILR Calendar 2026-2027

Aug. 16	Fall 2026 course registration begins (In-person registration from 10 a.m. - noon at ILR Office on Aug. 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 26 & 28)
Aug. 17	Host Coordinator meeting
Aug. 23	Blossom Music Festival with the Cleveland Orchestra: Cole Porter
Aug. 24	Women in History Speaker Series
Aug. 30	Fall 2026 course registration ends
Sept. 5	Cleveland Guardians Game
Sept. 14	Fall 2026 classes begin
November TBD	"Clue" at Playhouse Square
Nov. 9	Zoom update and training
Nov. 16	Winter 2027 course catalog posted on ilrbw.org

Nov. 29	Winter 2027 course registration begins
Dec. 13	Christmas Holiday Concert at Severance Hall
Dec. 13	Winter 2027 course registration ends
Dec. 16	Holiday Luncheon
Dec. 17	Host Coordinator meeting
Jan. 4, 2027	Winter 2027 classes begin
Jan. 30, 2027	Cleveland Pops Orchestra "Stage to Screen: Broadway Movie Hits"
February/March	Cleveland Botanical Garden Orchid Show
Feb. 23, 2027	Carl Fernstrum Concert
March 7, 2027	Spring 2027 course registration begins
March 10, 2027	Spring Luncheon
March 21, 2027	Spring 2027 course registration ends
April 5, 2027	Spring 2027 classes begin
April 14 - May 9	"Phantom of the Opera" at Playhouse Square

** Dates are subject to change*

In Memoriam



ILR member and dedicated BW alum Ralph E. Moody passed away on June 21. Ralph, a resident of Brook Park, was a history buff and worked diligently on his family genealogy as well as a book about Cleveland's Hough Bakery. His quick smile and positive attitude will be greatly missed.

*Ralph
Moody*



Quick Hits

ILR Office and Help Desk – The ILR Office in **the Bonds Administration Building, 275 Eastland Road, Berea**, is open every **Monday and Friday** from **10 a.m. to 12 p.m.** Feel free to stop in or call 440-826-3188 with questions. The phone line will be monitored on Mondays and Fridays. Also, the ILR Help Desk email address is ilrhelppdeskbwu@gmail.com for questions.

Connect with ILR and Share with Others --

Website:
ilrbw.org

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61573120002865>

ILR Today is published and distributed four times each year by the Institute for Learning in Retirement at Baldwin Wallace University. The newsletter team includes Paula Gustin, Elaine Joseph and Dan Bomeli. Send your feedback, questions or ideas to ilrhelppdeskbwu@gmail.com. If you send photos, be sure all identifiable people have given their permission to publish.