



Location of classes unless noted otherwise:

4747 Troost, Basement Level
Kansas City, MO 64110
(Direct Entrance off of Forest Ave)
816-235-2870
Email: spark@umkc.edu
<https://LifelongSpark.org>

WINTER 2026 JAN. 12 – FEB. 25 CLASSES

Use this QR code
for more detailed class
descriptions. →



Chopin the Émigré: Establishing a Life in Paris

We'll track Chopin's departure from Poland, the steps he took to establish himself in the cultural life of Paris, the music that helped him gain popularity in the new musical capital of Europe, and his many personal relationships with artists in Paris in his first decade there.

Dr. Jeffrey Savage – MS and PhD, The Juilliard School; UMKC faculty

Jan. 12, 26 and Feb. 9

10 am–Noon

UMKC Diastole Scholars' Center

2501 Holmes (Free parking behind the building through the gate on Holmes)

In Person Only – **\$30**



Tai Chi for Arthritis (TCA)

This safe, effective exercise program was designed by Dr. Paul Lam, a team of medical experts and Tai Chi masters. The Arthritis Foundation adopted it for anyone with arthritis or similar chronic pain. Also good for balance and fall prevention.

Sarah Stanmorr – Nurse and Certified Tai Chi for Arthritis Instructor

Both levels meet twice weekly:

**Mon (Jan. 12–Feb. 16) and
Wed (Jan. 14–Feb. 18)**

Beginners: 10–11 am \$40

Advanced Beginners:

11 am–Noon \$40

Both Sessions – In Person Only



Art and U.S. History 1929–1960

Through the study of painting, photography, film, architecture, and emerging modernist movements, we will explore how visual culture reflected national identity, social struggles, and political ideologies.

Key topics will include the New Deal art programs, Regionalism and Social Realism, Abstract Expressionism, wartime propaganda, and Pop Art.

Doug Sheer – SUNY (New Platz NY)

Educator in mathematics and complex computational systems

Jan. 12–Feb. 16 (No class Jan. 19)

10 am–Noon

Zoom Only at home or SPARK – **\$40**



Journaling in the Second Half: A Path to Renewal

Writing is a powerful tool for considering your life course and agenda for the "next chapter". Supported by adult development models and writing research, this workshop promotes personal awareness and insights. After considering the power of personal writing, participants will respond in brief writing activities to several life event prompts and share insights. Bring writing paper and pen to class.

Ellen Lavelle – PhD Educational Psychology, Southern Illinois University

Jan. 12 1:30–3:30 pm

Class size limit: 12. Enroll online or call 816-235-2870



Understanding Movies

Our film series continues with an autobiographical theme for the Winter quarter. The films are *Stand By Me*, *Lady Bird*, *Cowtown Ballroom: Sweet Jesus*, *Annie Hall*, *Dallas Buyers Club* and *Spotlight*. Each class begins with a short talk with insightful information about the film, followed by a discussion after the movie.

Joe Heyen – Professor, Film Production and Editing, Maple Woods Community College; Documentary filmmaker; past president of the Independent Filmmakers Coalition and MOMMA

Jan. 26–March 2 (Six weeks)

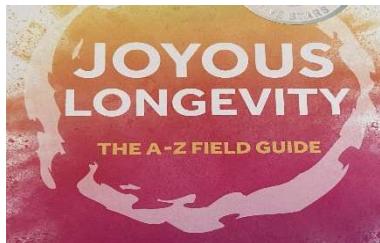
1–4 pm (Class is 3 hours long)

In Person Only – **\$40**

Mondays

Tuesday GEMs

2



Joyous Longevity: A-Z Field Guide

Introduction to lifestyles that inspire, motivate and empower persons of any age to live life with more JOY! There are 26 simple tips to cheer you up and brighten your soul. Sieglinde will encourage you to look at habits that support healthy longevity and inspire you to be more active.
Sieglinde Othmer – Author; PhD Social Sciences, University of Hamburg, Germany
Jan. 13 1:30 pm
In Person or Online



Be a Smarter Citizen: Online Media Literacy

This class will instruct voters how to navigate online media and explain how to investigate sources of information and claims made online. It will also include hands-on exercises so class members can apply the skills they learn.
Greg Woodhams – Voter Education Chair: League of Women Voters of Kansas City
Jan. 20 1:30 pm
In Person Only



Internet, Text and Phone SCAMs

Protect yourself from being a target and victim of theft. Those 70 years old and older are the ones being targeted. Jane will explain many types of SCAMs to be wary of including tech support, government impersonation, romance, financial services, and Grandparents SCAMs. Learn what to do and what to say to be savvy and wise.
Hon. Jane Pansing Brown – Retired State of Missouri Judge; Trial Attorney; Motivational Speaker
Jan. 27 1:30 pm
In Person or Online

\$10 each - or all 6 for \$40 - GEMs last 1-2 hours depending on the topic and presenter.



The “Queen” of the Negro Baseball Leagues

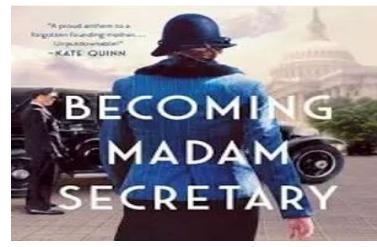
Come meet Toni Stone, the first woman to play in the American Negro Baseball League. She was a natural athlete. We'll take a journey from Toni's upbringing in Minneapolis to signing with the Indianapolis Clowns and the Kansas City Monarchs. Sandra writes and performs fascinating monologues that portray famous African American women.
Rev. Sandra Campbell – Associate Minister Unity Temple on the Plaza; Writer; Re-Enactor
Feb. 3 1:30 pm
In Person or Online



Byzantium: Architecture, Aesthetics and Icons

After the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, the Byzantine Empire, also known as the Eastern Roman Empire, continued for another millennium until Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Empire in 1453. We'll look at Byzantine history, architecture, and art beginning in the sixth century, and we'll also learn about Eastern Orthodox churches and icons.

Martha Breckenridge – PhD Art History Medieval French manuscripts, KU; Northwest Missouri State University
Feb. 10 1:30 pm
In Person or Online



Frances Perkins: The First Female Cabinet Member

How did Frances Perkins become one of the most significant persons for social change in the 20th century, and what were the challenges she overcame? Her key achievements included the Social Security Act of 1935 and playing a crucial role in crafting New Deal legislation. Jane's talk is based on Stephanie Dray's book *Becoming Madame Secretary*.

Jane McClain – Creator of the *Wall of Women's Achievement*, a 13-panel photomontage covering American women's journey toward equality from 1900 to 2024
Feb. 17 1:30 pm
In Person Only

Tuesday or Wednesday



Western Civilization The Age of Louis XIV

We'll analyze how the Sun King, Louis XIV, gained control over law-making, the church and the military, declaring "l'État, c'est moi." At war most of his reign, the War of Spanish Succession was the most significant because it determined the future of the Spanish empire in Europe and abroad.

Carol McCavitt - MS Queens College; Carnegie-Mellon University PhD Studies

Choose class:

Tuesday Jan. 13–Feb. 17

10 am–Noon In Person Only – \$40

Wednesday Jan. 14–Feb. 18

10 am–Noon

In Person or Online – \$40

Wednesdays



The End of the Civil War in Missouri

In autumn 1864, Confederate Major General Sterling Price (former Governor of Missouri) invaded Missouri with 12,000 cavalry troops. When the Confederates reached northwestern Jackson County, they encountered two Union armies and fought seven times in three days during the Westport Campaign right here in our backyard. There will be an additional week of class with an optional trip to Big Blue Battlefield.

Dick Titterington – Historian and Author; Civil War Round Table of Kansas; Monnett Battle of Westport Fund

Jan. 14–Feb. 25 (Seven weeks)

1:30–3:30 pm

In Person or Online – \$40

Thursdays



Civil Rights in America: Part XIV

David Jeter continues his popular series on The Evolution of Civil Rights in America. This semester resumes the study of the Modern Civil Rights Period during the 1960s, with the actions of African Americans in their quest for equal rights as American citizens. Don't hesitate to sign up even if you haven't attended any of the previous classes in the series.

David Jeter – Attorney; Docent, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum

Jan. 15–Feb. 19 10 am–Noon
In Person Only or Online – \$40



History of the Korean War

This history of "The Forgotten War" will chronologically examine key diplomatic and military events. This first hot war of the cold war was called a police action but quickly expanded into a limited war between the forces of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the United Nations, vs the Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea), the USSR, and China.

Dr. Geoff Babb – MA East Asian Languages and Cultures; Ph.D. China History, KU; Instructor, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth

Jan. 15–Feb. 19 2–4 pm

In Person or Online – \$40

Fridays

These two classes will be held at:
[Kingswood Senior Living Community](#)

10000 Wornall, KCMO 64114

Open to all SPARK members

Free to Kingswood residents



Android Classes

Class 1: Introduces Android phone basics: Settings, Quick Settings, Navigation, Gestures, Play Store, Managing Pages.

Class 2: Will respond to the needs of the students.

Carol Meyer – KC Digital Drive: Digital Literacy Trainer and Instructor; Computer Lab Manager

Class 1: Jan. 16 10 am–Noon

Class 2: Jan. 23 10 am–Noon

Class size limit: 15

Enroll online or call 816-235-2870

Take one or take both classes

In Person Only – **\$10 per class**



Basic iPhone Class

For those with a basic knowledge of their iPhone. We will cover iOS26, Calendars, Advanced Messaging, Family Sharing, Emergency Contacts, Clock app, Passwords, iCloud, Screen Customizing and issues you want more info on. Must know your Apple ID and password and update your phone to iOS 26.

Bud Nolker – SPARK Board; Master of Public Administration, UMKC; self-taught iPhone expert

Feb. 6 and 13 10 am–Noon

Class size limit: 15

Enroll online or call 816-235-2870

In Person Only – **\$20**

Fridays



Advanced iPhone Class

For those with a basic knowledge of their iPhone. We will cover iOS26, Calendars, Advanced Messaging, Family Sharing, Emergency Contacts, Clock App, Passwords, iCloud, Screen Customizing and any issues you want more info on. Come to class knowing your Apple ID and password and be sure to update your phone to iOS 26. **Bud Nolker** – SPARK Board; Master of Public Administration, UMKC; self-taught iPhone expert **Jan. 16, 23 and 30 at SPARK** 10 am–Noon Class size limit 15. Enroll online or call 816-235-2870 In Person Only – \$30



Arvin Gottlieb Planetarium

Union Station
30 Pershing Rd., KCMO

Since opening in 1999, the Arvin Gottlieb Planetarium has been Kansas City's connection to the universe. Experience the night sky in a refreshed and remastered live seasonal star tour: *Stargaze Kansas City*. Join expert Science City educators as they guide us on a one-of-a-kind journey and experience new discoveries revealed by cutting-edge science and the James Webb Space Telescope. Please arrive at 11:45 as the program begins promptly at noon.

Jan. 16 11:45–1 pm
Tour Limit: 20 – \$15

Friday Tours



TWA Museum

10 Richards Road #110
KCMO 64116

Trans World Airlines (TWA) was Kansas City's hometown airline for 75 years. The first corporate headquarters of the airline was built in 1931 at 10 Richards Road. Come, walk the halls and re-live the glory days and history of the airline. The museum is run by deeply knowledgeable volunteers, most of whom were TWA employees or devoted TWA history buffs.

Jan. 30 1:30–3 pm
Tour Limit: 20 – \$15



Nerman Museum JoCo Community College

12345 College Blvd.,
Overland Park, KS 66210

The Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art has one of the top internationally acclaimed collections of emerging and established artists today. Join us for a docent guided tour of the museum's featured exhibitions including *Linda Lighton: Love & War, a Fifty-Year Survey, 1975–2025* and *Visionary: The Work of Michael Brantley*, plus paintings by Angeline Rivas.

Feb. 13 1:30–3 pm
Tour Limit: 20 – \$15

Check the online catalog for detailed parking info.

For Tours: Please enroll online – or call 816-235-2870 – or use this QR code.



NEW: Special Saturday Workshop

Looking for a crash course in gardening that covers all the essentials? Join us for the Extension Garden Steward: Green Thumb Bootcamp, a one-day seminar packed with gardening know-how and practical skills. With both presentations and activities, you will gain the tools you need to grow healthy plants, create beautiful landscapes, and support pollinators and beneficial insects.

BONUS - Learn how to become a Senior AmeriCorp volunteer supporting this and other Master Gardener classes in the KC region.

Damian Fluharty – Program Associate for Extension Garden Steward Program of MU

Saturday, Jan. 24 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
In Person Only at SPARK – \$30

