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816-235-2870

Email: [spark@umkc.edu](mailto:spark@umkc.edu)  
<https://LifelongSpark.org>

## SPRING 2026 MARCH 23 – MAY 1 CLASSES

Use this QR code  
for more detailed class  
descriptions.



## Mondays



### Tai Chi for Arthritis (TCA) Advanced Beginners

This Advanced Beginner class builds on skills learned in the Part 1 Beginner class. There are 4 new movements (each done to both sides). Additionally, we will continue discussion and application of the Tai Chi principles, enhancing understanding and application of them.  
**Sarah Stanmorr** – Nurse; Certified Tai Chi for Arthritis Instructor  
**Meets twice weekly 11 am–Noon**  
Mon (March 23–April 27) and  
Wed (March 25–April 29)  
In Person Only **\$40**  
**Please call 816-235-2870 to enroll.**



### Accidental Activism: Integration of KC's Hospitals

In the early days of Kansas City's growth and in keeping with social mores of the time, the city's hospitals were both segregated and separate. Find out how the recommendations of a young accountant in Kansas City's budget department triggered dramatic social change in the city's provision of medical services.  
**Dr. Deborah Keating** – PhD History, UMKC; Research Assistant  
**March 23–April 27**  
**10 am–Noon**  
In Person Only – **\$40**



### Chopin's Maturity and Final Years

This quarter's three sessions will explore the peak of Chopin's reputation and fame and the trials and tribulations of his final years.  
**Dr. Jeffrey Savage** – MS and PhD, The Julliard School; UMKC faculty  
**April 6 and 20, May 4**  
**10 am–Noon**  
**Class Location:**  
**UMKC Diastole Scholars' Center**  
**2501 Holmes**  
Free parking behind the building through the gate on Holmes  
In Person Only – **\$30**



### Ladies, Legends and Lands of Rock 'n Roll

We'll discuss influential female rockers, myths and legends rock has generated, and the regions that spawned distinct rock styles. Participants are urged to share their opinions, observations and experiences.  
**Steve Lopes** – Educator; MS in Education Psychology, Boston State University; MS Political Science, University of Alabama  
**Mar 23–April 27**  
**1:30–3:30 pm**  
In Person or Online – **\$40**



### Greek Islands, French Castles and William The Conqueror

In honor of the 1,000th anniversary of William the Conqueror's birth, we'll tour the cities of Caen and Rouen. Both were major Norman headquarters, so we'll also look at Norman history, the life of William the Conqueror, and helmets, armor and swords!  
**Bob Packett** – MS History, UMKC; High School and Community College instructor  
**Class Location:**  
**Kingswood Senior Living Community**  
**10000 Wornall, Kansas City**  
**March 23–April 27**  
**1:30–3:30**  
In Person Only – **\$40** (For those who are not Kingswood residents)



## An American Journey: 1860-1900

Alexander Brown was born on an Ohio farm, but like many Americans he joined the great migration from rural life to new opportunities. Brown survived two of the deadliest events of the Civil War and supported the great causes of the Freedman's Bureau, the Suffrage and Temperance movements and the efforts of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). This is a human-interest story of perseverance and sacrifice wrapped in the history of American transformation.

**Chris Hodges** – PhD, University of Minnesota; Historian and Author  
**March 24 1:30 pm**  
In Person or Online



## Democracy Needs Journalism

Democracy doesn't just need facts—it needs voices. This lecture zooms in on the opinion section and why it plays such an important (and often misunderstood) role in journalism. From sharp editorials to personal columns, opinion writing helps communities wrestle with big ideas, challenge power, and see issues from new angles.

**Yvette Walker** – Kansas City Star Vice-President and Editorial Page Editor; inducted into the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame  
**March 31 1:30 pm**  
In Person or Online



## Esther Brown's Fight to Integrate Kansas Schools

In 1949, Kansas City-born Esther Brown orchestrated a legal battle that led to the integration of a public school in what is now Merriam, Kansas. Learn about the direct throughline from that case to the Supreme Court's landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision five years later.

**Dan Margolies** – Retired Journalist and Attorney  
**April 7 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.**



## All About Gangs

Detective David Starbuck spent years investigating a variety of cases including those focused on gang activity. Join this free-wheeling discussion on drugs and gangs, their connections and hierarchies. Because of its sensitive nature, this presentation will be in-person only without a Zoom component.

**David Starbuck** – Retired: KCPD; Grain Valley Police Department Chief of Police  
**April 14 1:30 pm**  
In Person Only



## Poster Art In 19<sup>th</sup> Century Paris

Alphonse Mucha created some of the most famous posters in the world. The Nelson-Atkins show of his work opens April 18. This class will explore his art and that of other artists working in Paris at the end of the nineteenth century.

**Elizabeth Darr** – Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art Docent for 16 years  
**April 21 1:30 pm**  
In Person or Online



## Kansas City Women of Independent Minds

Women have influenced the history of Kansas City business, education, medicine, sports, entertainment, etc., but we know very little about them. As early as the mid-19th century, caring and diligent women of independent minds changed their communities. This is an opportunity to learn about their obstacles, triumphs and success.

**Jane Harrell** – Long-time member and Board Member of SPARK  
**April 28 1:30 pm**  
In Person or Online

## Tuesdays



### World War II Clubmobiles

American Red Cross clubmobiles were mobile kitchens staffed by a thousand or more "clubmobile girls" who played an integral role in maintaining the morale of thousands of American GIs during World War II. Some of them served closer to the front lines than almost any other American women.

**Robert Gangwere** – BA and MA, American History, University of Missouri; Law, UMKC; Author

**Two weeks only:**

**March 24 and March 31**

**10 am–Noon**

In Person or Online - \$20



### Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

Prime Minister Winston Churchill is well-regarded across the world for his long-reigning influence in British Parliament. But did you know he had ties to Missouri and the Kansas City area? We'll delve into his professional and personal life and discover this famous Brit's unique impact in the Midwest.

**Anita Tebbe** – Retired Director, Legal Studies Department and Professor of Law at Johnson County Community College

**Two weeks only:**

**April 7 and 14**

**10 am–Noon**

In Person or Online – \$20

## Tuesday or Wednesday



### Western Civilization: The Rise of Prussia and Russia In the Age of Louis XIV

Following the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, Prussia began its rise along the Baltic shore to become one of the continent's pre-eminent military powers. Meanwhile, farther to the East, Peter the Great modernized Russia following the model of Louis XIV.

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

Choose class:

**Tuesday March 24–April 28**

**10 am–Noon** In Person Only – \$40

**Wednesday March 25–April 29**

**10 am–Noon**

In Person or Online – \$40

## Wednesdays



### Understanding Movies

This quarter's theme will be psychology. Our movies will include *Ordinary People*, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's nest*, *Good Will Hunting*, and *Girl Interrupted*.

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

**March 25–April 29**

**1:00–4:00 pm** (Class is 3 hours long)

In Person Only – \$40

## Thursdays



### Civil Rights in America: Part XV

This popular class resumes the study of the 1960s Modern Civil Rights Period and 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

**March 26–April 30**

**10 am–Noon**

In Person or Online – \$40



### The Cold War 1945-1991

Come learn about the diplomatic, informational, military, and economic actions that shaped history as the U.S. and the Soviet Union engaged in an ideological global struggle to gain and influence allies. We'll also provide a detailed discussion on actions taken by the United States and the Soviet Union as they sought strategic advantage, the withering of the Soviet Union, and the end of the Cold War.

**Command and General Staff College Instructors** – Dr. Dave Mills, Dr. Gates Brown and Dr. Sean Kalic

**March 26–April 30** 2–4 pm

In Person or Online – \$40

## Fridays



### Gmail on Android Phones

Learn the ins and outs of using Gmail on your Android smartphone. We'll cover writing, editing, attaching pictures and sending emails, with some tips to make it a seamless process.

**Carol Meyers** – KC Digital Drive Digital Literacy Trainer and Instructor; Computer Lab Manager

**May 1 10 am–Noon**  
In Person Only – \$10

**Class size limit 15. Enroll online or call 816-235-2870**



### Mah Jongg Club

Members who already know how to play are welcome to join us for our on-going Mah Jongg games each week. We play the New York National Mah Jongg League version, which is changed annually. SPARK membership is required

**March 27–May 1**  
**10 am–Noon**

In Person Only

**\$20 for this quarter or \$60 per year**

## Friday Tours



### Art and Architecture at Diastole Scholars' Center

2501 Holmes  
Kansas City, MO 64108

What do art collections and a kiva have in common in Kansas City? They are part of Diastole, Dr. E. Grey Dimond's former home which he donated to UMKC for use as an event space. We will have a guided tour to learn about Dr. Dimond and discover the original art, fascinating memorabilia, and collectibles that line the walls and fill the rooms in this special facility.

**April 10 1:30–2:30 pm**  
Tour Limit: 15 – \$15



### Elmwood Cemetery Walking Tour

4900 East Truman Road  
Kansas City, MO 64127

This guided tour of Elmwood Cemetery, the second oldest cemetery in Kansas City and dating from 1872, will concentrate on lesser-known residents who were well regarded/famous during their lifetimes but are virtually unknown today. These personalities were important to our region and instrumental nationally and internationally to events in their lifetimes and beyond.

**April 24 1:30–3 pm**  
Tour Limit: 30 – \$15

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



Check the online catalog for detailed parking info.

## Come Have Fun and Make Some New Friends



### Friday Lunch Club

11:30 Fridays at local restaurants. Contact **Lynn Lieberman**, 816-223-1658 or [lynnlee2001@yahoo.com](mailto:lynnlee2001@yahoo.com)

### Margaret Sturges Book Club

Third Monday of each month. Contact **Barbara Phillips**, 417-860-5070 or [barbaraphillips66@gmail.com](mailto:barbaraphillips66@gmail.com)

### Thursday Book Club

Fourth Thursday of each month. Contact **Sue Habiger**, 816-616-2636 or [shabiger22@gmail.com](mailto:shabiger22@gmail.com)