



4747 Troost, Basement Level
Kansas City, MO 64110
(Direct Entrance off of Forest Ave)
816-235-2870

Email: spark@umkc.edu
<https://LifelongSpark.org>

FALL 2026 SEPT. 14 – OCT. 23 CLASSES

Lifelong Learning Classes For Seniors

*SPARK membership is required
for all classes, tours, and clubs.*

Use this QR code
for more detailed class
descriptions online.



Friday Mah Jongg Club



If you already know how to play, join us for our on-going Mah Jongg games each week. The version of Mah

Jongg we play has games created by the National Mah Jongg League in New York, which changes them annually.

SPARK membership required.

Fridays, Set. 18 – Oct. 23

10 am–Noon In person only

\$20 per quarter or \$60 per year

SAVE THE DATES!

SPARK Winter Quarter

Jan. 11 – Feb. 19, 2027

Mondays



Tai Chi for Arthritis (TCA)

This safe, effective exercise program was designed by Dr. Paul Lam, with 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 (Sept. 14–Oct. 19) and

Wed (Sept. 16–Oct. 21)

Beginners: **10–11 am** **\$40**

Advanced: **11 am–Noon** **\$40**

In Person Only



Behind the Scenes in the KC Rep Theater

KC Rep professionals will give us a behind-the-scenes look at all of the components that must come together for an amazing theater performance. We'll explore general management, technical elements and everything in between. Newbies and experienced theater buffs will enjoy experiential opportunities to observe, practice, and learn the trades behind the curtain. Wear comfortable clothing and shoes. No previous experience or preparation necessary, just an openness and willingness to learn and explore.

Dionna Ndlovu and other KC Rep professionals show us the aspects rarely seen by audiences.

Sep. 14 – Oct. 19 1:30 – 3:30 pm

KC Rep Green Room #211

In Person Only – **\$40**



Color-Coded Health Care: A History of KC's Segregated Health Care System

We'll explore the people who provided care, the places it was provided, the differences in care, the resistance to change by both black and white citizens, and how a young accountant in KC's 1950s budget department triggered dramatic social change in the city's provision of medical services.

Deborah Keating – PhD History, UMKC; Research Assistant

Sept. 14–Oct. 19 10 am – Noon

In Person or Online – **\$40**



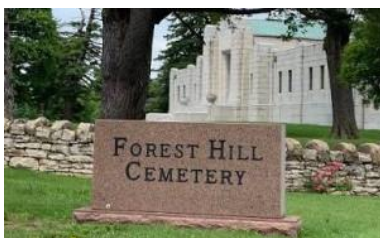
The Crusades (1095-1291)

This course will focus on European military, political, and religious history in the Near East, including crusading preludes and spirituality, the Christian Just War theory, the military history of the First through Eighth Crusades, the Crusader States, medieval Judaism, medieval Islam, Muslim responses to the Crusades, Jihad, and the life and career of Kurdish commander Saladin.

John D. Hosler – Professor of Military History, Command and General Staff College in Leavenworth, Kansas, specializing in the history of medieval warfare in Europe and the Near East.

Sep. 14 – Oct. 19 2 – 4 pm

In Person or Online – **\$40**



Forest Hill & Calvary Cemetery

Learn more about the history of Forest Hill & Calvary cemetery and the notable names buried at the cemetery.

Jamie Oberfoell – Owner, Forest Hill & Calvary Cemetery complex and **Tina Sladek**, cemetery archivist

Sept. 15 1:30 pm

In Person Only

***See Also: companion tour three days later on Friday, Sep. 18.**



The Sutton Museum Archivists of Earth's History

Join us for an introduction to the geological information found in rocks, minerals and fossils, and the role of museums in preserving and protecting geologic specimens.

James Murowchick, PhD – Professor Emeritus in Geology, UMKC and Curator of the Sutton Geosciences Museum.

Sept. 22 1:30 pm

In Person Only

***See Also: companion tour three days later on Friday, Sep. 25.**



Educating Financially Literate Students

The School of Economics (SOE) delivers hands-on financial literacy education to students across Eastern and Suburban Jackson County, equipping the next generation with the knowledge and skills they need to make sound financial decisions over a lifetime.

Sam Cook – Translates organizational goals into compelling campaigns, stories, and materials that connect with donors, sponsors, volunteers, and the communities SOE serves.

Sept. 29 1:30 pm

In Person Only

\$10 each or all 6 for \$40

GEMs last 1-2 hours depending on the topic and presenter.



Rosa Parks and Esther Brown

Learn how two courageous women broke the law to make the world a better place. One defied the Jim Crow racial segregation laws when she refused to move from her seat on an Alabama bus. The other, who became known as "the white Mrs. Brown" successfully fought to desegregate the South Park schools of Merriam, Kansas.

Marlene Katz – MA, History and English. Taught for 28 years and then became a storyteller and historic impersonator of Women in History.

Oct. 6 1:30 pm

In Person Only



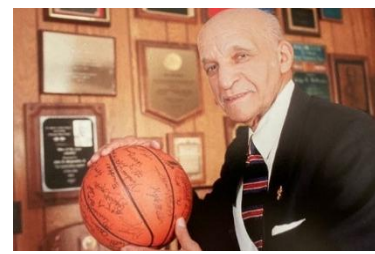
A KC History of the Oregon-California Trails

We'll learn how descendants of the Civil War soldiers buried in Jackson County went on to play significant roles in the development of the Santa Fe, Oregon, and California Trails.

Travis Boley – Manager, Oregon-California Trails Association

Oct. 13 1:30 pm

In Person or Online



Breaking Through The story of John B. McLendon

Coach and Kansas native John B. McLendon fought for equality in basketball in post-World War II America. As a coach and civil rights pioneer, he broke through the bonds of institutional racism for the rights of his players and African Americans everywhere.

Dr. Milton Katz – Professor Emeritus of Humanities, KC Art Institute. His book *Breaking Through: John B. McLendon, Basketball Legend and Civil Rights Pioneer*, won the William Rockhill Nelson Award for non-fiction in 2008.

Oct. 20 1:30 pm

In Person or Online

Tuesdays



Keyboard Music for Modern Piano Predecessors

Pianists commonly borrow music not originally written for the modern piano. This quarter, we'll explore music written for keyboard in the Baroque period, focusing on the unique aspects of the Baroque's three most important keyboard composers – George Frideric Handel, Domenico Scarlatti, and Johann Sebastian Bach. Dr. Savage will play the pieces we discuss each week.

Dr. Jeffrey Savage – MS and PhD, the Julliard School; UMKC faculty

Three sessions:

Sep. 15, 29 and Oct. 13

10:00–Noon

UMKC Diastole Scholar's Center

2501 Holmes, KCMO

Free parking in back.

In Person Only – **\$30**

Tuesday or Wednesday



Western Civilization: The Rise of Science

With the birth of the scientific method and the institutionalization of scientific thought in the 16th and 17th centuries, remarkable strides occurred in the mathematical sciences like physics and astronomy. Learn how Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Newton unlocked the natural laws governing the universe.

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

Choose class:

Tuesday Sept. 15–Oct. 20

10 am–Noon

In Person Only – **\$40**

Wednesday Sept. 16–Oct. 21

10 am–Noon

In Person or Online – **\$40**

Wednesdays 3



Understanding Movies: The 1970s

Each week includes a 15-minute pre-film discussion followed by insights gained while viewing the film. Our films will include *The Conversation*, *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, *Straight Time*, *Being There*, *Two-Lane Blacktop* and *Blazing Saddles*. Join us as we explore drama, action and comedy from our younger years!

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

Sept. 16–Oct. 21 1-4 pm

In Person Only – **\$40**

Thursdays



Civil Rights in America: The 1964 Civil Rights Act

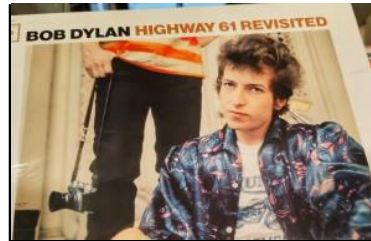
1963 moved the nation closer to Federal action to end segregation in public accommodations and ban discrimination in employment based upon race (and other things).

Alabama and Birmingham were in the news as forces intent on maintaining the status quo clashed publicly with those seeking to end segregation. We will study the history that led up to the 1964 Civil Rights Act and its landmark impact upon the American story.

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

Sept. 17–Oct. 22 10 am–Noon

In Person or Online – **\$40**



Bobby Dylan: The Boy From the North Country

We will explore the music and life of this enigmatic troubadour. As usual, participants will be encouraged to promote stimulating conversation in these sessions. Steve Lopes, our instructor, would like to thank previous participants (rockers) in SPARK rock classes for suggesting this topic.

Steve Lopes – Educator; MS, Education Psychology, Boston State University; MS Political Science, University of Alabama; Union organizer

Sept. 17–Oct. 22 1:30 – 3:30 pm

In Person Only – **\$40**



Dynastic China: From the Qin to the Qing

We'll begin in 260 BCE with the diplomatic and military activities that resulted in China's first dynasty. The very short period of rule by the Qin emperor was followed by the long founding Han Dynasty. We will focus on the Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming, and finally the Qing, which ended with the 1911 Revolution. We'll also discuss the geography, art, and cultural highlights of each era.

Col. Geoff Babb – Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth; MS Asian Languages and Cultures; Doctorate in History.

Sept. 17–Oct. 22 2-4 pm

In Person or Online – **\$40**

Friday Tours

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Forest Hill & Calvary Cemetery 6901 Troost, Kansas City, MO 64131

Established in 1888, Forest Hill & Calvary Cemetery spans 160 acres of winding tree-lined roads. There are many unique artistic monuments, and the grave markers read as a Who's Who of Kansas City history. George Kessler, credited with creating Kansas City's parks and boulevard system, was the landscape architect. Notable burials include Satchel Paige, Kate Spade, Joyce Hall and many more.

Our Guide: **Jamie Oberfoell** – Owner, Forest Hill & Calvary Cemetery and **Tina Sladek**, cemetery archivist.

Meeting Place: Outside the cemetery office, which is located near the entrance to Forest Hill Cemetery.

Parking: By the cemetery office, near the cemetery entrance.

Sept. 18 1:30–2:30 pm

Tour Size Limit: 20 – \$15

***SEE ALSO: Sept. 15 Cemetery GEM on page 2.**



Richard L. Sutton Jr. Museum of Geosciences Miller Nichols Library 800 E. 51st St., KCMO

Join us to see the thousands of rock, mineral, gem and fossil specimens featured in the Richard L. Sutton Jr. Museum of Geosciences, located in the UMKC Miller Nichols Library. The museum was founded by Richard L. Sutton Jr., M.D., a renowned dermatologist with an avid interest in geology, mineralogy and fossils, especially ammonites.

Our Guide: **James Murowchick**, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus in Geology at UMKC and Curator of the Geosciences Museum.

Meeting Place: Richard L. Sutton Jr. Museum on the third floor of Miller Nichols Library - UMKC Campus

Parking: Library Parking Lot

Sept. 25 1:30–2:30 pm

Tour Size Limit: 20 – \$15

***SEE ALSO: Sept. 22 Sutton Museum GEM on page 2.**



UMKC Volker Campus Art Walk Atterbury Success Center 1204 W. 27th Street, KCMO

Ever wonder about the amazing pieces of public art at UMKC? On this hour-long, 1/2-mile art walk, we'll learn the history of the sculptures, murals and architectural oddities that help make the Volker Campus one of the most beautiful spots in the city. From masterpieces of European painters to works by contemporary Kansas City artists, UMKC has art that can rival any campus in the country.

Our Guide: **Chris Wolff** (M.A. '12) Author of *A Pearl of Great Value: The History of UMKC, Kansas City's University* and General Merchandise Manager at the UMKC Bookstore.

Chris has created a campus history tour video series and gives campus walking tours to the UMKC Alumni, SPARK and other UMKC stakeholders.

Parking: Lot north of the Center.

Oct. 16 1:30–2:30 pm

Tour Size Limit: 20 – \$15

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



Check the online catalog for
detailed parking info.
Or ask when you call.

SPARK Satellite Classes

(Details on Calendar Page)

We offer classes at other locations. Priority is given to location residents but is also open to SPARK members if space allows.

Tour of the Holy Land and History of the Crusades

Kingswood Senior Living Community

10000 Wornall Road, KCMO 64114

Mondays, Sept. 14–Oct. 19

Abandoned KC

Mission Chateau Senior Living Community

4100 E. 85th Street, Prairie Village, KS 66206

Mondays, Sept. 14–Oct. 19

iPhone Basics

Tallgrass Senior Living Community

13800 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park, KS 66223

3 Weeks – Wednesday, Sept. 23–Oct. 7

The Case that Led to Public School Integration in Kansas: Esther Brown

Jewish Community Center

5801 W 115th St., Overland Park, KS 66211

Wednesday, October 7