

the mpass

Winter 2011/2012

A Quarterly Publication of the Explorers Lifelong Learning Institute of Salem State University



Tom Gale

President's Column

Where does the time go? It's another New Year and a new semester already.

I hope your Holidays were happy ones. Now it's time to make course choices that will stimulate your brain. Forty-three courses: so many choices, so little time.

Intersession looks exciting. **Frank Hawke** and crew have put together a great selection of people who will keep us stimulated during the cold weather. It has taken a lot of volunteer hours to make Explorer LLI—Salem a happening place in which to learn new things and meet new people. Our membership has grown and we have doubled our courses from 20 to 40 in 6 years.

I want to thank the Curriculum Committee and Dawn for doing such a fine job organizing the courses and meeting so many

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Annual Holiday Luncheon

by **Bernice Nowack**

The Christmas trees are sparkling, the wreaths are all hung, and Santa is trying to fill the wishes of all the girls and boys.

Explorers always get us in the holiday spirit with our own personal comic "Georgie" who each year brings us wonderful jokes. Georgie said "I am getting smaller and smaller," but

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Georgie Sawyer, Ted Novakowski, Earl Garber, and members enjoying the event.

President *(continued)*

presenter requests. We have a special community here at Explorers, as expressed by **Meridy Giles'** poster in the office, with its numerous ideas on how "to build community," many of which were new to me.

2012 will be a big year, 366 days of opportunities to change the world. We've learned from our experiences and are ready to face new challenges. Occupy Salem is still very much alive as is the whole Occupy movement. It has stirred passions and has brought change. If you are part of the 99%, you know what I mean. We are in the midst of an educational evolution that has made people around the world more aware of their human and civil rights. Great change is coming. How will we embrace it? Do you recall 'Network?' Go to your window and shout "I'm not going to take it any more!" Then do the right thing.

President Meservy gave a great presentation at the Explorers' Luncheon about what is ahead for Salem State University. It has certainly come a long way in a short time. I would love to see that happen at Explorers.

We all bring something unique to Explorers and we can all pitch in and help Explorers grow in stature—to be the best LLI, to have course presenters and volunteers who make it enjoyable to come to class and participate, to discuss issues and spread the word. Who will volunteer? Remember, many hands make light work. If you see that something needs doing, please take a moment to do it (Meridy's poster says "Fix it even when you didn't break it.") You could pitch in with coffee and house-keeping! You could become a media expert and/or assistant! You could serve on one of our volunteer committees! The need is great.

I feel so creative after attending a course. It stimulates the blood in my brain. One of my passions is "Nonviolent Communication." It is also controversial because it is so simple to explain, yet so hard to accomplish. It is about love and empathy. It recognizes that our "feelings and needs" are universal! It asks two questions: What is alive in you and in me? And, what can I do to make life more wonderful for the other person?

Sounds simple, eh? Well, I've been trying to do it for five years and I still have a long way to go (I'm a guy, remember!). If you want to know more, please contact me. Perhaps it will become your passion. Maybe we can start a discussion group.

Have a great time in your new courses. And let's all have a Great New Year!
— Tom

Holiday Luncheon *(continued)*

in our hearts and minds, she is getting bigger and bigger.

Then our President, **Tom Gale**, gave us a more serious speech on peace, and most of all "love" and thanked all of our Explorer Volunteers for their unselfish service. Without them, there would be no Explorers.

We then had the privilege of the President of Salem State University, **Patricia Maguire Meservy**, showing us a video of just how far Salem State has progressed in the last few years. Besides becoming a University, she showcased the professors, the students from around the world, new buildings being erected and so much more. She also told us how happy she is to be affiliated with the Explorers and we are very proud to be affiliated with Salem State University, thanking our liaison, **Connie Nielson**.

We too have certainly advanced in the last twenty years and now offer 40 courses in our spring term... That is an all-time record. We sat around the table having a superb lunch, greeting old friends and meeting new ones, **Ted Novakowski** serenaded us at the piano. Not only is he a fine piano player, but one can see his works of photography and artwork on the Explorers Wall.

I also want to thank **Earl Garber** for stepping in at the last minute to be our Master of Ceremonies. And so another year is coming to a close and we all look forward to 2012.

May it bring us peace, a better economy, less foreclosures, and a brighter outlook for the future.

SO TO ALL A GOODNIGHT... AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR!





Salem State University President Patricia Maguire Meservy

Behind The Scenes In Iraq – An Army Reserve Soldier’s Perspective

by Ann Whittemore

The final Friday Coffee of the Fall semester was **Patricia Chisholm’s** sharing of her personal experiences during her 2004 tour of duty in Tikrit and Mosul. Her presentation probed key questions: What was the purpose of sending military forces to Iraq? What language did politicians, press and Pentagon use to influence public opinion and to raise soldier morale? What was the mission of Pat’s New England army reserve unit? How did comrades cope with hardship away from home during holidays? How did war fighters deal with danger in the desert? What was the cost of Operation Iraqi Freedom?

Pat is a member of Explorers, studied at Salem State and Boston College and recently retired from a rewarding career teaching English at Danvers High School. She is a

graduate of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, El Paso, Texas.

Pat illustrated her presentation with many of the photographs she took while in Iraq and included in her presentation poetry written during and after World War I and written by an Iraq War veteran. We even sang a few songs associated with WWI.

She began with her background: growing up in



Visiting villages and meeting Iraqi children provided a delightful diversion from dusty, dreary, dangerous patrols. Soldiers directly delivered supplies to students. Pat Chisholm hopes that Tikrit kids will remember the kindness of American troops.



Pat listened to students read from English text.

Everett, MA and joining the Army Reserve while in college. Her unit was activated at 9/11 and went to New York. Her unit was activated on December 7, 2003 and trained at Ft. Drum in New York State where they lived in World War II barracks. While there they had their shots, various tests, PE, practiced marksmanship and weapons maintenance and prepared for weapons of mass destruction.

Pat trained as an Army journalist and worked in public affairs briefing soldiers and journalists. She learned to get along and respect others’ preferences and habits when the entire unit lived together in a hangar. Army reservists also have to catch up with the regular army systems. She also worked as a Chaplain’s Assistant.

In Kuwait they all lived together in tents for 3 weeks. While there they noticed that the Japanese soldiers



Pat walks down Saddam's palace marble staircase.

living next door had great new equipment but we did not.

In Iraq they lived in a building they made out of plywood on Saddam's air force base which they also repaired.

She was responsible for writing the Unit's history.

They also went to schools, delivered supplies and helped refugees in a village.

Pat's presentation was full of details of the daily life of a soldier in Iraq. It wasn't all work; they even held their own "Olympics" which were good for morale. There were also memorial services.

Her pictures of life in the desert and some of Saddam's elegant residences were, as they say, worth a thousand words. We were indeed fortunate to have a fellow Explorer share her experiences with us.



Pat taught songs such as Inky Dinky Spider.

Maril Collins and the Creative Writing Class

by Bernice Nowack

"It is good to have an end to journey towards; but it is the journey that matters, in the end."

Maril Collins was born in Yonkers N.Y. and was editor of her high school newspaper. She loved reading, digesting every book she could get on hands on.

Her first job was as advertising copywriter for *Cosmopolitan* magazine with Helen Gurley Brown. She was quite an activist back then and marched along with Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem. After *Cosmopolitan*, she went free lance, her first job writing for the only hospital to offer alcohol treatment at that time. This job was very rewarding for her and

put her on a new career track. After one year of training, she became a counselor there.

Maril went on to University of Hartford to do her undergraduate work, then on to Smith College in Northampton, MA. to get her Masters Degree in Psychology and Sociology. During her years working in both New York and Connecticut, her warm, caring and compassionate personality helped many people find the courage to help themselves.

Upon retiring, she moved to Massachusetts to be near her daughter and her grandchildren. She also has a son who lives in California. They both have inherited her talents as the son is a songwriter and musician, the

daughter owning an advertising agency in Marblehead.

Her class in Creative Writing is more than simply learning how to write. We create more than words, putting heart and soul into our stories. I can feel her "caring" as she smiles with her eyes, encouraging each of us to move forward, word by word.

I asked Maril why she decided to teach this class. Her reply was, "I love people and I love writing. This offers me a chance to learn from all of you and experience the warmth the class gives to me."

Each week we look forward to a new and profound experience in our writing, wondering where the next week will take us.

An Afternoon with Betsy Morris

by Ann Whittemore

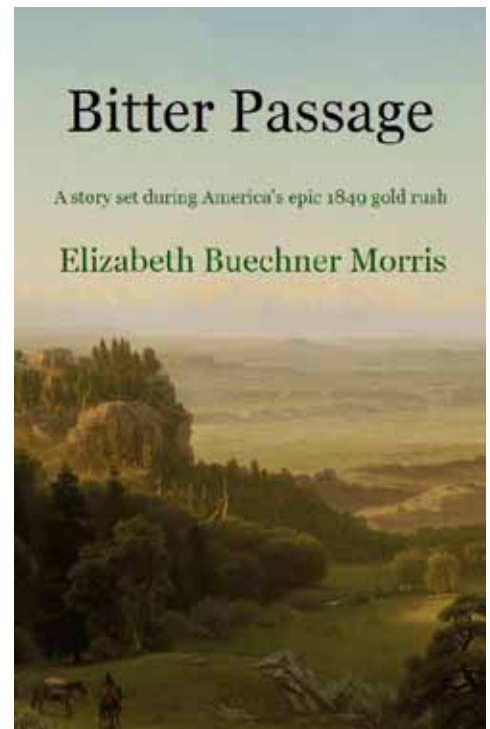


Betsy Morris

Approximately 50 or so Explorers and guests gathered on a Thursday afternoon to hear Explorer Betsy Morris read from her recently published book *Bitter Passage*. Betsy gave us some background on how she came to write the book which is loosely based on her own great-grandfather's and great-grandmother's travel cross country to the gold fields of California during the Gold Rush of 1849. They had emigrated from Germany for political reasons and left New York State to begin their trek.

The book is fiction but the hardships they endured are fact. The family, consisting of mother, father, two sons and a baby daughter, travelled in a wagon train for a good part of the journey but struck off on their own when the father decided the wagon train was too slow and he wanted to get to California sooner. I'm not going to go into detail because you really have to read the book; it's a real page turner.

After the readings, we enjoyed delicious refreshments and coffee and tea organized by Frank Hawke and Kay Piemonte.



Enquiring Minds Want to Know

by Suzanne Kiley

Why would Explorers volunteer to research a subject, collect visuals, practice timing, and commit to eight to twelve hours of presentation, sometimes dealing with technological glitches, when they could just sign up for a class, learn something new, and enjoy socializing? I decided to ask.

Tony Schettino, who recently led discussions on Ideas worth Sharing, has taught Basics of Computers, Introduction to Digital Photography, Backgammon, and even Sudoku for an Intersession presentation. He estimates that he spends at least five hours preparing at home for each hour of class time. For hands-on activities, Tony recruits assistants to work one-on-one with class members following group instruction. He has also helped other presenters, working with them mostly on first-time projects--and still offers this service to anyone interested.

Tony explains, "I enjoy sharing my knowledge and interests with others, and in the process, I learn from them. We are extremely fortunate at Explorers to be able to draw on such a wide range of subjects and expertise. Although not every class interests me, certainly there are more than enough for me to choose from. And don't forget, volunteering to help others is what makes this organization work."

DeWayne Whitehead's interest in cultural anthropology has provided us with fifteen years of courses at the rate of four a year. His voracious reading, which keeps him up to date on recent discoveries, makes it difficult to estimate the time he spends in preparation. In addition, he carefully selects his PowerPoint slides from a variety of sources.

DeWayne points out, "My seven years in a monastery in my youth gave

me a lasting gift—a love of learning. I went to school a long time and averaged 50+ books a year for over 50 years. I know about 60 to 70% of what I teach, but researching and learning that last 25 to 30% is great fun and makes it worthwhile. You can't imagine the high I get from the interest and dynamism of nearly 100 people in the class year after year. I struggle back home after class feeling like a million bucks. I don't know what I could do at any age to give me greater pleasure."

In contrast to DeWayne, **Ted Novakowski** is a first-time presenter. He explains, "This term I decided to "test the waters" and try my first experience at teaching a course at Explorers. My course dealt with the changes that occurred to our society since the Reagan years. I concentrated on the extreme inequalities of income distribution and the challenges to our freedoms that I feel have evolved in the years since the Reagan administration.

This topic was something in which I have been interested for many years, and therefore I wanted to share the information that I had gathered with Explorers who wished to take my class. So many signed up that we had to turn people away!

To date it has been a very rewarding experience and I plan to teach the class again in the spring. I feel that I am reflecting the type of message that the "Occupy" movements around the country and the world are trying to speak about.

I structured my course using PowerPoint slides, but also included video clips, audio segments, graphics and charts. It took quite a few hours to put it all together and I found myself always tweaking the material, even up to the last minute!"

Claire Keyes describes her experience leading classes this way: "Teaching for the Explorers is far different from my teaching role as a Salem State English professor. No tests, no papers, no grades, just the pleasure of the classroom. I don't spend much time preparing; I've prepared all my life. I have shown videos and films but PowerPoint is not my thing. All I need is a good poetry text and a bunch of smart students. The Explorers provide me with fine students indeed."

In case you think that poetry is a mysterious thing with just one meaning that is difficult to figure out, Claire assures us, "I encourage my students to experience poetry on an individual level and allow them to discover the poem without making value judgments as to either the intent of the poet or the interpretation of the reader. The result is always a rich, free-flowing discussion and a greater appreciation of the work than any one of us might achieve on her own. I use the "her" deliberately. Most of my students are women. Why is that? Don't men read poems? They most certainly write them. And need them. I agree with William Carlos Williams who wrote in *Asphodel, That Greeny Flower*:

It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

So consider this a challenge to the males among the Explorers. Come and see what a poetry class is like. You just might find yourself hooked."

We are fortunate to have many presenters like these whose knowledge and enthusiasm offer us a rich variety of formats and subjects to explore.

Joseph A. Sullivan

by Kay & Joe Piemonte

Joe Sullivan, as he was fondly known by all, was a remarkable person. He was a true gentleman, in every sense of the word and those of us who knew him were very appreciative of his many attributes. We remember him as a faithful Explorer who continued to attend classes even though he could only stay for an hour or two this last year. His faithful caregivers brought him to class and then brought him home when he was through. He was most appreciative of anything that anyone did for him and he appreciated his caregivers.

Joe joined Explorers in 1998, and became an extraordinary contributor in courses such as Current Events and Great Decisions. He had a dry wit in dealing with such subjects which was much appreciated by the Explorers!

Joe had been a professor at Salem State since 1952 and was a well-known and well-loved teacher and mentor as head of the Business Education Department. He then became Dean of continuing and Graduate Studies at the college, and remained in that position until he retired. He was remembered for his many years of teaching and his kindness by all who knew him there. His daughter Jo, at the memorial service said, "Salem State grads, who never had him as a teacher, told me that when they were new students at the college he made them feel welcome."

Joe had entered Salem State in 1936, and graduated from there in 1940, with his beloved wife, Ruth Keane Sullivan. After several years in the service during World War II he

returned to being an educator, serving as a principal at first then coming back to Salem State. In 1982 he retired and his first loves were tennis and golf, both of which he played very well. One of his favorite stories was his hole-in-one at the North Conway Golf course several years ago!



Joseph A. Sullivan

He and Ruth had a much loved home there and spent a great deal of time enjoying that area, but he was also a golf companion of Jack Flynn and Joe Piemonte at Olde Salem Green.

His daughter Kathleen spoke of her dad as "first and foremost a husband and family man," and related instances which showed his love for his own family and for another family, the Hogans, who were very close. The father in that family, Al Hogan, was his best friend

and both families stayed in touch throughout the years. Beth Hogan, one of the daughters told of a time when her father "was operated on and diagnosed with cancer, Sully was at our house, just there, steady, supportive, helping us through some very tough moments. That was Sully." His thoughtfulness and compassion were always at the forefront of his actions.

His last years kept him closer to home as he lost most of his hearing and his eyesight, but through the neighbors he found a wonderful and supportive group. Joe had been a good friend to many people along his road in life and they responded in kind when he needed them. His wonderful caregivers were exceptional in caring for him because he had been the kind of person who always cared for others.

His children Jo, Kathleen and John, and grandsons Colin and Peter, worked diligently to keep him in his home, where he stayed, until the last week, when he was moved to the Kaplan Hospice Center in Danvers. With their thoughtful procedures and the dedication of loving caregivers he spent his last years as he would have liked, in his own home in familiar surroundings.

His many Explorer friends will remember him for his quiet demeanor, his gentle ways, his love of opera and his ready wit and humor! Joe always enjoyed bringing in flowers from his garden to decorate the tables at the Explorers. On the back of the program at his memorial service was this poem, chosen by his family in his memory.

Over the Bounding Main

by Betsy Morris

An Irish Funeral Prayer

*Death is nothing at all.
It does not count.
I have only slipped away into the next
room.
Everything remains as it was.
The old life that we lived so fondly
together is untouched, unchanged.
Whatever we were to each other,
that we are still.
Call me by the old familiar name.
Speak of me in the easy way which
you always used.
Put no sorrow in your tone.
Laugh as we always laughed at the
little jokes that we enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.
Let my name be ever the household
word that it always was.
Let it be spoken without effort.
Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same as it ever was.
There is unbroken continuity.
Why should I be out of mind because
I am out of sight?
I am but waiting for you, for an
interval, somewhere very near,
just around the corner.
All is well. Nothing is hurt; nothing
is lost.
One brief moment and all will be as
it was before.
How we shall laugh at the trouble of
parting, when we meet again.*

When Monty and I were young – 60 for Monty, 55 for me—we retired from our lives as architect and banker and sailed out of Marblehead Harbor. Five years later, we sailed back in, and, by the way, joined Explorers.

Those five years were indescribable! But, let me try:

We lived in the weather. Not in observation, but in it. On a boat, weather most often translates as wind. Sometimes it came sweetly down our forward hatch to awaken us at dawn, other times two anchors and three lines to onshore trees held us fast in furious gales. Sometimes it was too windy to make a passage or even to row ashore. Then we'd bake cookies, play Scrabble, write letters, and lose ourselves in books. Other times it would be just right, perfect for an exploration by dingy into a Caribbean island lagoon, then a walk on a lonely beach—the one without a single footprint—then a swim, never worrying about the boat, tending itself at anchor.

We also lived self-sufficiently. If we ran out of bread, I baked it. If the sails needed mending, I got out my bosun's palm or sewing machine and made the repair. If the engine/autohelm/bathroom head/etc. needed repairs, Monty made them. We carried the book *Where There is No Doctor* (written for Peace Corps volunteers), and if we were sick or injured, we took care of ourselves. When we were lonely, we had the community of sailors to turn to, and when we were sad or mad or frightened or happy, we had each other.

Our travels took us from Newfoundland, down the east coast, through the Bahamas, then down the Leeward and Windward Islands to



Betsy Morris

Venezuela and Colombia, where the wind came down off the high Andes, bringing with it the crisp smell of snow to our hot tropical bay. Next came Panama and a canal transit on a friend's boat as line handlers. Slowly we started north, loving all of Central America. In fact, we spent a year up a jungle river in Guatemala as volunteers in a *projecto* building a school and part of a clinic, alongside the local community of Maya.

We ate exotic fruit, spear fished all our fish and lobster, shopped at open stalls in tiny waterfront towns, and even ate *tepisquitli* (jungle rat) in Guatemala, and were glad for the meat in our diet.

Our senses were always on overload: fourteen sweating Maya fishermen on our boat in Belize during a downpour watching the Holyfield-Tyson prizefight on our video player; bitter orange to marinate fish; the delicious feel of the tropical sun on our scantily-clad bodies; rainbows, double rainbows, moonbows, and the intense green clouds over the shallow Caicos banks; and the sounds that some tropical fish make – *grunt, grunt!*

When the wind whistled for us, I'm so glad we heeded its call.

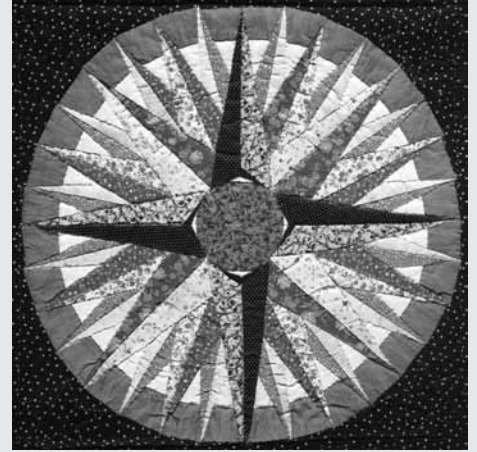
From the Editor

FROM THE EDITOR...

A new year is like a blank page—what are we going to write on it? What do we *want* to write on it? We Explorers have a multitude of choices thanks to **Jeanne Louizos** and her Curriculum Committee. There is something for everyone—the news and politics junkies, the literature mavens, the music lovers, those wanting to brush up on or learn a new language. In addition there are the Intersession speakers with wide ranging topics to stimulate the “little grey cells.” There is no excuse to be bored during the dreary winter months and there is certainly enough to keep us entertained and insulate us from the political blather that will be assaulting us during the coming months.

One thing Explorers is desperately in need of is a Volunteers Chairman. This is a volunteer organization and we need someone to organize and train volunteers to be class assistants and coffee assistants. Class assistants take attendance and assist the presenter as needed. The audio/visual component has been made much easier thanks to **Elliot Wyner** and his committee. The coffee assistants make sure that there is hot water, instant coffee, tea and all things needed for a cup of coffee or tea during class break and to clean up at the end of the day. The Volunteer Chairman makes sure there are enough people to fill the positions for each class. If you think you would like to do this, please let **Tom Gale** know.

—*Ann Whittemore, Editor*



REMEMBER:

Remembrance Fund Contributions

In honor of Earl Garber's 80th Birthday

From Phyllis Ponty

To Explorers

From Norty Halber

Those remembered are promptly informed of your thoughtfulness. Donations may be made at the Explorer office.

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Thank you.



WORKING TOGETHER:

Lifelong Learning Institutes & the Elderhostel Institute Network

December, 2011

Dear Members,

It has been 23 years since the Elderhostel Institute Network first began working with lifelong learning institutes (LLIs) like yours, all across the country. To date, we have helped more than 200 new programs get started. EIN is a free, voluntary association of affiliated lifelong learning institutes, funded by Elderhostel Inc. Elderhostel is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing educational opportunities for older adults through their Road Scholar programming (www.roadscholar.org). EIN does not prescribe LLI fees or approve curriculum; those decisions are made independently by each program. Because LLI's are for local participants, all advertising and registration are also handled locally.

Early every month EIN posts a newsletter and several new columns on our web site www.roadscholar.org/ein/intro.asp. As a central resource and communications network, the material we post is taken from your program's course catalogs, newsletters, and other materials, and keeps all the LLIs up-to-date on what's happening in the world of lifelong learning. At the same time, we also provide resources for new courses and other events. **So be sure EIN is on your LLI's mailing list.** We read everything we receive and love to highlight unique program offerings in the monthly newsletter.

From time-to-time, EIN also offers its affiliated LLIs special opportunities. For instance, the Road Scholar

Ambassador program, with 300 ambassadors across the country, can send a free speaker to your LLI to talk about Road Scholar and its vast array of educational travel programs. These programs can round out your curriculum, complementing existing courses and activities. Road Scholar can offer LLIs some very attractive programs and pricing. For instance, we have just secured the necessary government permissions to travel to Cuba. For more information about Road Scholar, watch their new DVD at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5E8rnTiESI>

We encourage you to visit our web site – www.roadscholar.org/ein/intro.asp to learn more. If you would like to keep up with the world of lifelong learning, we would be happy to add you to our email distribution list. We try to keep emails to a minimum, usually just one per month. Your email address, safe in our database, is never rented, sold or given away. **Please be sure, though, to let us know if your email address changes.** If you have any questions or would like to join our email list, send an email to network@roadscholar.org.

So welcome to the world of lifelong learning where millions of people just like you are creating fulfilling lives for themselves thanks to the benefits and joys of continuing to learn, no matter what our age!

Thank you.

Nancy Merz Nordstrom, M.Ed.
Director, Elderhostel Institute Network

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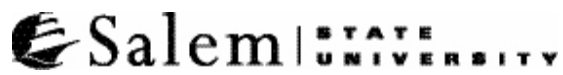
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