Friends of the Eldredge Public Library
564 Main Street
Chatham, MA 02633
Telephone: 508-945-5170 Fax: 508-945-5173



Spring 2026 Learning Series

- A $10 donation per course is suggested. *All net proceeds are used by the Friends of the EPL to support the Library.* No refunds unless the class is cancelled.
- Registration and payment forms are available at the Library front desk and online at www.eldredgelibrary.org/learning-series/. An online payment link is also available on the website.
- Most programs will take place at the Eldredge Public Library.
- The two exceptions are Joe Marchio's program on Bach and Christopher McMahon's program on world religions which will be at the Fellowship Hall at the Congregational Church in Chatham.
- The Marchio and McMahon programs will be offered in person and on zoom. An accurate email address is required.

The Life and Music of Johann Sebastian Bach

Four Sessions: 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Wednesdays March 11,18, 25 and April 1
At the Chatham Congregational Church - Fellowship Hall (in person or zoom)

There is no question that the music of Johann Sebastian Bach is timeless. His melodies and lasting harmonies paint beautiful and vivid pictures for our ears to savor. In Leipzig Bach was employed to compose music for both church and civic functions throughout the year, requiring him to write for many occasions using a variety of themes. From inaugurations to ordinations, weddings and funerals, dance and liturgical music, Bach even wrote a cantata to celebrate a favorite drink of the day–coffee! In these four sessions Joe Marchio will guide you through the life and times of J. S. Bach and the musical world of the Baroque. In honor of Bach's birthday, Joe will perform several works on the 1,501 pipes of First Congregational Church's magnificent organ following the presentation on April 1.

Joe Marchio currently serves as music director of the Chatham Chorale, Assistant Director of the Cape Cod Symphony and pastor and music director of First Congregational Church in Chatham. He has two bachelor's degrees from the College of Wooster in organ performance and religious studies. He earned a Master of Divinity degree at the Yale University Institute of Sacred Music and a Master of Music degree in choral conducting at the Boston Conservatory.

A Look at World Religions

Three Sessions: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Fridays March 20, April 17 and May1
At the Chatham Congregational Church - Fellowship Hall (in person or zoom)

Since humans first evolved on earth, there is archeological evidence that we have always believed and practiced religion, a quest to answer life's ultimate questions. How did the universe come to be? Who or what created it? What is the meaning and purpose of existence?

Rev. Chris McMahon will ponder these questions and the answers according to some of the key major religions of the world. In addition to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the class will discuss Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Taoism. The goal is to try to understand each of them, respectfully and without judgement, from an historical, not theological basis.

Rev. Chris McMahon is a professor of Leadership and World Religions at Nichols College and minister of the Chatham Unitarian Universalist Meeting House. He retired from the United States Maritime Service with the rank of Rear Admiral (upper half) in 2021.

The Hydrangea Guy

One Session: 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday March 23

Did you know that the major species of the hydrangea genus have significant distinctive traits? **Mal Condon, the Curator of Hydrangeas at Heritage Museums & Gardens in Sandwich, MA** says that knowing the species in your garden will guide your positive approach to selective and definitive pruning. A lifelong gardener and educator, Mal has been collecting, propagating, and growing hydrangeas for more than 50 years. His Hydrangea Farm Nursery on Nantucket was a well-known specialty nursery featuring one of the largest hydrangea collections in the Northeast. Since relocating to Cape Cod in 2014, he has focused on the expansion of the Garden's major collections, including the North American Hydrangea Test Garden and The Cape Cod Hydrangea Society's Display Garden. This class will focus on key ideas to help the gardener achieve measurable results in late winter and early spring.

Show Stoppers of Broadway

Three Sessions: 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Mondays March 30, April 6 and April 13

Guys and Dolls…. get ready for John Whelan's upcoming Learning Series. This course will feature songs that literally "stopped the show" from a variety of Broadway Musicals. Many of these songs became standards in The Great American Songbook.

We will show films of the songs and describe the significance of those songs in the musicals. You will be singing along with Peter Gaines on the piano. From "Oklahoma" and "South Pacific" to "Chicago" and "42nd Street", this three-week session will have you saying, "I Could Have Danced All Night."

John Whelan is a retired stockbroker, writes a monthly column for the Cape Cod Chronicle, and is the author of several books, including *I am of Cape Cod*. **Peter Gaines** has been entertaining Library fans at the piano for the last three years.

Memento Morrie: Images of Love and Loss

One Session: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Wednesday April 1

Many of you are familiar with Morrie Schwartz through the memoir by Mitch Albom, "Tuesdays with Morrie" and the televised news program about his life and death on Nightline with Ted Koppel. This program features photographs by Heather Pillar, who collaborated with Morrie during the last six months of his struggle with ALS to put together a show before he died in 1995. Her photographs illustrate Morrie's philosophies and aphorisms about the themes of what makes life worth living. Morrie's warmth and vitality come through in each photograph to illustrate love and loss and the power of community. As Morrie eloquently said, "Learn how to live and you'll know how to die." Heather will share her photographs, insights and relationship with Morrie Schwartz and will welcome your questions.

Heather Pillar is a photographer and teacher, who has taught and photographed in seven countries over four continents during the past 25 years. She has been published in The Boston

Globe, People magazine and has appeared on television and online. Her photography projects reveal her ongoing interest in women, girls, education, and aging.

Celebrating the 250th: The Revolutionary War on Cape Cod

Four Sessions: 1:30 p m. .to 3:00 p.m. Thursdays April 9, 16, 23, 30

A program celebrating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence will explore the role the people of Cape Cod played in the American Revolution by drawing upon historians who wrote articles in the newly published work, T*he Revolutionary War on Cape Cod and the Islands.* On April 9, **David Martin,** the Chair of the Cape and Islands Historians Committee, leads off with an overview of the Revolutionary period on the Cape and Islands. **Ron Petersen,** former chair of the Orléans Historical Commission**,** will examine the events that led up to the Revolution. On April 16, **Nancy Shoemaker o**f the Barnstable Historical Commission will relate the story of the Otis family of Barnstable, heroes of the Revolution, and the special role of women on the home front. On April 23, Ron Petersen returns to tell the story of major shipwrecks on the Cape during the Revolution, including one related to the Boston Tea Party. The final day, April 30, will tell the tale of two villages, Harwich and Chatham. **Lynne Zalesak,** educator and member of the Harwich Historical Commissio**n**, will draw upon her research to tell the story of Harwich's role. **Bob Noonan,** retired educator and chair of the Learning Series, will follow by highlighting tales of Chatham's role in the Revolutionary War.

Henri de Toulouse Lautrec: Artistic Pioneer

One Session: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 Tuesday April 28

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, painter and printmaker, is among the best- known artists of the Post-Impressionist period. His immersion in the colorful and theatrical life of Paris in the late 19th century enabled him to produce a collection of enticing, elegant and provocative images of the modern yet decadent life of that era. His influence on future art movements is undeniable. Join **Beth Stein** as she explores the tragic life and iconic works of this incredibly fascinating artist.

Beth Stein has been educating adult audiences on the lives and works of famous artists for the past fifteen years on Cape Cod and in New Jersey. She received her BS in education from Indiana University, MA in history from Seton Hall University and MA in administration from Montclair State University.

Why Birds Sing

Two Sessions: 10:30 a.m.to 12:00 Tuesday May 5, 8:00 a.m. Wednesday May 6 field trip at Fort Hill

Spring season has an ambience about it that includes bird song. There are many reasons why birds sing. First it is part of the breeding process and a security system- a surprise to most. Second the other noises birds make also have meaning. In this course Phil Kyle on the first day will explore the different sounds backyard birds make and their meaning. On the second day, we will join him at 8:00 a.m. at Fort Hill for a field trip to observe and hear bird songs in the wild.

Naturalist **Phil Kyle** has dedicated his life to the study and public education of the natural world, especially birds. He is a past president of the Cape Cod Bird Club and wrote a weekly column about birds for the Cape Cod Times**.** He went on to work at a number of organizations focusing on natural history: Cape Cod Museum of Natural History in Brewster (Head Naturalist) and the Cape Cod National Seashore (Interpretive Park Ranger).

Practical Philosophy: Navigating Life's Big Questions

Three Sessions 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Wednesdays May 6, 20, 27

Name the crisis: Climate change. Challenges to our democracy. Increasing social isolation and loneliness. The term "existential crisis" is used everywhere, from headlines to daily conversations, to describe these and other complex problems begging for solutions. But what is an existential crisis – and how can we distinguish it from everyday stress? And, more importantly, how can we address the feelings of dread, alienation and fear that these crises often raise in order to move to action?

In this engaging series, Professor Swan will introduce approaches, based upon practical philosophical principles, drawn from the ideas of philosophers from the stoics to the existentialists, which can empower attendees in making independent choices and determining an authentic, courageous, and effective path forward.

With over a decade as an adjunct philosophy professor at Cape Cod Community College, Swan, a.k.a. Keli A. Gates teaches core subjects including Logic, Introduction to Philosophy, Existentialism, and Moral Philosophy/Ethics. Professor Swan has a BA in Philosophy and a Master of Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

An Introduction to Artificial Intelligence

One Session: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Thursday May 7

This course will first give participants a general knowledge of the current power, pitfalls, and ease of use of AI. Who is using it and why? This will be followed by a demo on how to install an AI system on your device, and how to ask effective questions. Based on participants' interest, an opportunity for a lab follow up to explore the use of AI will be offered at a future date.

Mark McGrath has a BS in Electrical Engineering from Northeastern University and 30 years of experience working with large computer systems at IBM.

The Beauty of Beowulf

Two Sessions: 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Mondays May 11, 18

When we hear the name *Beowulf*, many of us think of bloody swords, drunken warriors, and long speeches - or worse, an interminable interlude near the beginning of our English class. In this course, Mike McCartney will help to show us the beauty, glory, and deep relatability in this most ancient of English stories. Rather than a long poem about a bunch of macho Vikings fighting dragons, *Beowulf* is a gorgeous song that explores a culture in transition from one age, one value system, one culture to another.

Mike McCartney is the Circulation Supervisor at the Eldredge Public Library. He earned his undergraduate degree at Moravian University in Pennsylvania and his MA from Middlebury College's Bread Loaf School of English. He also spent considerable time studying at Oxford, particularly at the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. He was Chair of English and Fine Arts at the Maine School of Science and Mathematics and was recognized as both a County Teacher of the Year and a Maine State Teacher of the Year Semifinalist.

The Legacy of The Cape Playhouse

One Session: 1:30p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tuesday May 12.

The Cape Playhouse, established in 1927, is the longest continuously operating summer theater in America. Its first production featured Basil Rathbone and the theater became the launching pad for many stars including Henry Fonda, Bette Davis, John Barrymore and Julie Andrews. In this program Nora Carey, Executive Director of the Cape Playhouse, traces its history and relates backstage stories of this iconic part of Cape Cod summers. The theater was key in the creation of the legacy of Cape Cod summer stock.

Nora Carey has over 30 years of management experience in non-profit, corporate, and public/private sectors with leadership roles in Business Development, Marketing & Communications, and Project Management. A long-term resident in Europe, yet a Massachusetts native, she was part of the opening team for Disneyland Resort Paris and later served as Communications and Marketing Director of the Hotel Ritz in Paris.

Shakespeare Festival Preview: Macbeth and Our Town

One Session: 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday June 1

The Cape Cod Shakespeare Festival in Chatham is heading into its Fifth season in Kate Gould Park this summer. The festival will present Shakespeare's classic tragedy MACBETH, a haunting ever-relevant story of power and villainy. Company regular Reid Williams will play the title role. Terry Layman will direct.

To celebrate the Country's 250th birthday CCSFC will, for the first time, veer from Shakespeare by presenting the classic American play: Thorton Wilder's OUR TOWN. It is a simple story of American life at the very beginning of the 20th Century with a profound and universal impact. Francesca James will direct and Alan Rust will play the "Stage Manager".

Alan Rust, Terry Layman, Bernard Cornwell, Ellen Fiske and Francesca James will share scenes from both plays as they go behind the scenes of this beloved Chatham tradition.

Alan Rust is a professional actor and theatre educator. He was artistic director of the Monomoy Theatre in Chatham for 39 years, directing and acting in many of the 300 productions under his leadership. **Terry Layman** has acted On Broadway, Off -Broadway, and at theatres from Florida to Alaska. He acted and directed at the Monomoy Theatre in Chatham for 20 summers. **Bernard Cornwell** appeared on the Monomoy Theatre stage in Chatham for over a decade. Born in London, he had a career in British television before Judy lured him to the States where, to keep the wolf from the door, he began writing and is now the author of over fifty novels. **Ellen Fiske**'s career spanned five decades, beginning on radio, on to Broadway and playing a swath of roles at noted theaters throughout the US and Europe, including 25 years as a guest artist at Monomoy Theatre in Chatham. **Francesca James** is a five-time Emmy winning actress, director and producer. She directed *Much Ado about Nothing* for CCSFC and several memorable shows at the Monomoy Theatre.

Friends of the Eldredge Public Library
564 Main Street
Chatham, MA 02633
Telephone: 508-945-5170 Fax: 508-945-5173



Spring 2026 Learning Series

- A $10 donation per course is suggested. *All net proceeds are used by the Friends of the EPL to support the Library.* No refunds unless the class is cancelled.
- Submit this form to the Eldredge Public Library front desk or mail your payment and registration to: **Learning Series at the Eldredge, PO Box 70, Chatham MA 02633.**
- Most classes will be held at the Eldredge Public Library. The two exceptions are the Joseph Marchio program on Bach and the Christopher McMahon program on World Religions at the Congregational Church - Fellowship Hall in Chatham. These two programs only offer an in person or zoom choice.
- Additional registration forms are available at the Library and online at www.eldredgelibrary.org/learning-series/. An online payment link is also available on the website.

Please CIRCLE your class choices

The Life and Music of Johann Sebastian Bach
by Joseph Marchio
at Fellowship Hall at the Congregational Church
Wednesdays 3/11 3/18, 3/25,4/1 (1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

A Look at World Religions
By Christopher McMahon
at Fellowship Hall at the Congregational Church
Fridays 3/20, 4/17, 5/1 (10:30 a.m.to 12:00 p.m.)

The Hydrangea Guy
by Mal Condon Monday 3/23 (1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Show Stoppers of Broadway
by John Whelan and Peter Gaines
Mondays 3/30, 4/6, 4/13 (1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Memento Morrie: Images of Love and Loss
by Heather Pillar
Wednesday 4/1 10:30 a.m.to 12:00 p.m.)

Celebrating the 250th: The Revolutionary War on Cape Cod
by David Martin, Ron Petersen, Nancy Shoemaker, Lynne Zalesak, Bob Noonan
Thursdays 4/9,4/16, 4/23, 4/30 (1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Toulouse Lautrec: Artistic Pioneer by Beth Stein
Tuesday 4/28 (10:30 a.m. to 12:00)

Why Birds Sing by Phil Kyle
Tuesday 5/5 (10:30 -12:00)
Wednesday 5/6 in field 8:00 a.m.

Practical Philosophy: Navigating Life's Big Questions by Keli Gates
Wednesday 5/6, 5/20, 5/27 (1:30 p.m. to 3:00)

Introduction to Artificial Intelligence
by Mark McGrath
Thursday 5/7 (10:30 a.m.to 12:00 p.m.)

The Beauty of Beowulf by Mike McCartney
Mondays 5/11, 5/18 (1:30 p.m. to 3:00)

The Legacy of The Cape Playhouse: by Nora Carey
Tuesday 5/12 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Shakespeare Festival Preview
by Alan Rust, Terry Layman, Bernard Cornwell et al Monday June 1 (1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Name (Last): _____ (First) _____

Email address (PRINT): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Town or City: _____State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Number of Courses: _____ Remittance: $ _____