

# YOUR SECOND HALF LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE HAND-e-BOOK

(Revised July 2015)

## Welcome to The Second Half

The Board of Directors welcomes you as a new member of The Second Half Life Long Learning Institute (TSH). We are delighted that you have chosen to join our organization and hope you will enjoy your experiences with us.

Our mission is to provide intellectually stimulating learning experiences and to create a welcoming ambiance which encourages mutual respect, intellectual inquiry, and social interaction.

Groups are small, informal, and provide an atmosphere in which ideas are freely expressed and debated. Members may have an opportunity to learn new skills such as bridge, gardening, and photography. Members may explore new interests, which include topics political, historical, literary, scientific, and artistic. Study groups meet weekly (or every other week) during daytime hours at our main facility or at satellite locations.

The Second Half is a membership organization open to adults who wish to learn with their peers in a relaxed environment. There are no admission requirements, tests, or grades. The Second Half is a self-supporting, self-governing, non-profit organization. Volunteerism is vital for our continued success.

We look forward to your participation in The Second Half.

## Communicating with The Second Half

**Mailing address:** 205 Bedford Street, Fall River MA 02720

**Phone number:** 508-677-4694 (Monday-Thursday, 9AM-3PM)

**EMAIL:** [office@secondhalflli.org](mailto:office@secondhalflli.org) Contact us to help us help you get the most from TSH. This is a quick and efficient two-way path for communication between the staff and the members.

**WEBSITE:** [www.secondhalflli.org](http://www.secondhalflli.org) This is your main source of information about TSH. It contains the most recent catalogue, registration forms, details about special events, the history and mission of TSH, and time sensitive information. Other special sites are also listed online after this main site.

**FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/shlearning> This page is the institutional equivalent of a Facebook personal profile page. Visit the page, click on the “like” button at the top of the page. As a friend of TSH, you will receive notifications from us, and items posted to our page will appear in your Facebook newsfeed.

**TSH CAFÉ:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SecondHalfCafe/> A closed Facebook group who welcomes anyone, member or not, who is seriously interested in TSH. Users can discuss things of interest, learn more about TSH, and keep in touch with each other wherever they may be.

## **Basic Principles and Responsibilities of Second Half members**

The basic principles of TSH are peer learning, active participation and volunteering. Peer learning implies that everyone in a group has something to offer and that attendees' contributions are respected by others. The group leaders create and organize the study group content. Members of the group are encouraged to share their personal experiences relevant to the topics and to offer related experiences or materials to the group discussions. Field trips may be an added activity.

Active participation includes regular attendance, focused and active listening, participation in discussions, and completion of an evaluation form.

Volunteering is a crucial component of TSH. The Director and Office Assistant are the only paid positions. The Board of Directors, group leaders, and committee members are volunteers. TSH relies on its members to join committees that plan the curriculum, organize special events, communicate with the public and the membership, and increase our membership. The Board of Directors may create committees on *ad hoc* basis. Volunteering may also include leading a group, assisting in the office, acting as a study group assistant, and speaking to community organizations about the benefits of joining TSH.

## **Fees, Benefits, Tuition, Refunds**

Membership is on an annual basis, September 1 through August 31. An annual membership of \$35 makes members eligible to enroll in both semesters' offerings. Members may attend guest lectures and go on membership-only field trips. Members have the right to vote at annual meeting held each spring. Members receive the newsletter, catalogue, and important information online (or by mail if necessary).

The tuition fee for one or two study groups is \$150 EACH semester. Each additional study group is \$30. The tuition fee for group leaders is waived. Study groups are usually two hours in length with a short break in the middle, Monday through Friday, 9:30-4:30. Study groups usually involve 5-8 sessions.

Full refunds, less an administrative fee, are made for members who withdraw from study groups by the end of the first week of each semester. For all other cases the Director and President of the Board will address each situation on an individual basis.

## **Registration and Scheduling**

TSH offers study groups twice each year. Fall semester is from mid-September to early December. Spring semester begins in late February and ends in June. Each study group is scheduled within these time frames, but dates may vary. The catalogue is made available online to everyone on the mailing list (or mailed if need be), and the study groups are advertised in the local media. Well before the groups meet, TSH hosts an open house at

which leaders describe their study groups for the semester. Members may register at the open house.

When filling out the registration form, members are asked to list their choices in order of preference. We endeavor to meet your requests. Registration begins when the catalogue becomes available. At the present time, registration can be done by check or cash along with the registration form. All registrations received before the Open House are considered to be received as of the date of the Open House. Registration may also be done at the Open House. Those registering are assigned to study groups by a lottery. Members may ask for priority status the next semester if they do not get into their study group of choice.

Registrations received after the deadline are subject to availability. Members are notified confirming their study group registrations.

A study group will be canceled if the enrollment is fewer than five people.

Provided there is room and the group leader agrees, a member may transfer to another study group. The director must be notified of all changes.

## **Locations Where Study Groups Meet**

Our office and the majority of study groups are located at 205 Bedford Street, Fall River MA. Satellite locations vary and may include, but are not limited to, the following facilities:

Autumn Glen at Dartmouth

Bay View Retirement Community, Fall River

Dartmouth Building Supply

Dartmouth COA

Dartmouth Southworth Library

Fairhaven COA

Mattapoisett Public Library

Ships Watch

Sakonnet Bay Manor, Tiverton, RI

Somerset Public Library

Westport COA

Whaling Museum, New Bedford

## **Information and Policies**

**PARKING is FREE** in two fenced lots on Bedford Street across the street from our main facility. It is a high traffic street; caution is advised when crossing the street. Ask us for assistance if you have mobility issues.

**Name tags** are distributed to new members during the first week of meetings and are permanent. If it is misplaced, our office will replace it. Please wear your name tag in study group. It enhances communication and community.

**Hearing or vision problems?** Socialization in TSH is important. Please let us know if we can enhance your experience by providing you with some assistance.

**Cell phones** should be off or on mute during sessions out of consideration for fellow students.

**Attendance** that is consistent is strongly encouraged. It improves the quality of participation in meetings. If you will be absent, please notify your group leader.

**Smoking is prohibited** at the Bedford Street facility and in all satellite locations.

**Bad weather policy** is as follows: If the Fall River Public Schools close due to inclement weather, ALL TSH groups, at ALL SITES, will be canceled as well. A group leader may decide to cancel if he/she feels the weather is a safety factor and will notify the group members (and reschedule the missed session).

## **Governance of The Second Half Lifelong Learning Institute**

The executive authority for TSH is held by the Board of Directors which is composed of members who serve on a volunteer basis. The Board consists of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer who constitute the Executive Committee. In addition, the Board includes the Chairs of the Curriculum, Communications, Special Events, and Membership Committees, as well as three Members-at-Large, and the Past President. The Director is a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Board.

Elections to the Board are held at the Annual Meeting during the spring luncheon in May. (See By-Laws for more details.)

## **Descriptions of the Standing Committees**

### **Curriculum Committee**

This committee develops the academic program for TSH. It recruits group leaders, reviews and approves group proposals, and works closely with the director to organize the curriculum each semester. In an attempt to achieve a balanced program which reflects the members' interests, the committee reviews feedback from the evaluation forms filled out by study group members. The committee organizes the fall and spring

**open houses to provide an opportunity for members and members-to-be to meet group leaders and receive information about study group offerings.**

### **Membership Committee**

The goals of this group are to recruit new members and to help them successfully integrate into TSH. A reception is held at the start of each semester to give the new members an opportunity to meet the Board members, and each other, and to ask questions about TSH. This committee also contacts members who are inactive to better meet the needs of TSH members. This group also works closely with the Communications Committee to publicize and inform our South Coast area about TSH.

### **Communications Committee**

The chief responsibilities of this committee are to inform members about TSH activities and special events, to help members communicate with each other, and to spread the word about TSH throughout our South Coast area and Rhode Island. Our main tools are attractive and current websites, social media, traditional public media (radio, TV, newspapers), and our own publications. These activities support our recruitment efforts and build a vibrant, connected community.

### **Special Events Committee**

This committee organizes and oversees lectures, demonstrations, workshops, and other events which supplement the curriculum. The group is responsible for organizing a holiday luncheon in December and another luncheon in May at which TSH holds its annual meeting and elections. Field trips to museums, theatrical production and the like, are handled by this committee.

### **Services Available to Study Group Leaders**

The Second Half office provides black and white/color copying service to group leaders, and they are encouraged to take advantage of this service for their convenience.

Each group leader may ask for an assistant who takes attendance, delivers material for copying, and contacts attendees who have missed two or more meetings.

The by-laws of The Second Half are sent to you in advance of the May meeting. It is helpful if you keep the by-laws for future reference.

Remember that our greatest source of new members is you! Encouraging others you know to join TSH will insure our success and viability.

*Your Second Half Board of Directors*