

A FEW MINUTES WITH MARK BRESEMAN



This summer marks the 28th year that Lawrence University will welcome visitors to Björklunden, its picturesque seminar center in Door County, Wis. With the much-anticipated 2008 adult-education schedule in place, *Lawrence Today* caught up with

Björklunden director Mark Breseman and asked him about this year's "vacation with a focus."

LT: Describe what the collection of seminars represents.

MB: Every year we like to have an eclectic mix of core courses that are stimulating academically and mirror the liberal arts education that Lawrence University offers its students. So you'll find opportunities in art, music, religion, nature, politics, and international relations. We also like to include a few "how-to" courses, which are always very popular. It's really a continual quest to get people from all walks of life to attend seminars here. Once they visit for any reason, they're hooked and they'll be coming back.

LT: Are there any particular seminars you'd like to highlight?

MB: Campbell Scott '83 is coming to teach a class on *Nature in Film*. While he's been back to campus, this is his first time teaching at Björklunden. Having Dale Duesing '67 back is a big deal. He doesn't teach every summer and he is by far our most popular instructor. I'm also excited to have pianist Michael Kim teaching his first seminar at Björklunden. Michael has a number of fans throughout the Fox Valley and I'm hoping it's a popular class.

The most-anticipated seminar is the week dedicated to animal artists. It's a unique opportunity to interact with leading animal artists from around the world. It's the third time we've been able to offer it. Their visit is in conjunction with the Society of Animal Artists annual exhibition taking place this year at the Neville Public Museum in Green Bay. The artists come in early, spend a week with us, then go on to the exhibition.

LT: When it comes to the seminars, are the favorites offered every year?

MB: Very rarely is a class repeated. We find instructors who are popular and have different things to teach and bring them back when their schedules allow. Dan Taylor, for example, is teaching his 19th seminar. Rabbi Jay Brickman comes every year. So while you may see a nature class offered every year, they go to different places and see different things. A water-color class is offered every year, but it's not the same content. We've been lucky to find faculty that love teaching here and love the challenge of teaching something different every year.

LT: How do you go about selecting the mix of seminars to offer?

MB: It's a juggling act to get the right mix of classes. I always take into consideration what Lawrence University faculty members want to teach. I also like to bring in Lawrence graduates to teach classes. There is a long list of people who want to teach here, I just can't squeeze them all in.

LT: Can you provide a "snapshot" of the Björklunden summer seminar participant?

MB: A typical attendee is retired, interested in lifelong learning, and most likely from the Midwest. We're also trying to attract slightly younger participants; working to entice more people in their '50s. We want people to take a weeklong vacation and spend time with us. The way our seminars are structured, they can do something intellectually stimulating in the morning, then enjoy Door County in the afternoon.

BJÖRKLUNDEN INTERNATIONAL SEMINARS HEADING TO PATAGONIA DATE: LATE JANUARY OR EARLY FEBRUARY, 2009

Join Mark for an amazing adventure that includes stops in Buenos Aires, Santiago, and Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world. The group will cruise the Beagle Channel, explore Tierra del Fuego, Argentina's southernmost national park, visit a penguin rookery, and gaze at the magnificent snow-capped peaks of the Andes. For more information visit www.lawrence.edu/dept/bjork/



LT: *How many participants are repeat customers?*

MB: At least half that attend are returning. We even have some people that date back to the '80s. Why? It's a combination of many things — they're interested in intellectual stimulation and being lifelong learners, so it's part of their mindset. The classes, the instructors, are all very good and challenge the participants. Plus, the classes themselves are just plain fun. It's also the Björklunden experience. We offer a beautiful location, a beautiful building, fantastic food, and wonderful hospitality. The Lawrence students working here in the summer are outgoing, fun, and very talented. Once participants get on site, whatever was happening in their lives just melts away. They can learn a little, then relax.

LT: *What do seminar participants share with you about their Björklunden experience?*

MB: There's something special about the feeling they get when they're here. Just sitting on the deck, being relaxed by the sound of the waves and the warm sun, something you just don't get everywhere. It's a stress-free atmosphere where people feel like it's their place. People

often hear that Door County is packed with tourists all summer. Well, when you come to Björklunden, it's quiet here. You can have the best of both worlds — strolling in silence on one of the Björklunden trails, or shopping, enjoying nature, local theatre, and that's just the beginning.

LT: *What else makes a Björklunden experience unique?*

MB: I think it is the mingling with other participants, the sharing and camaraderie. Table partners might be world travelers, really well-read, or enjoy talking politics. Participants also love that the instructors are eating meals with them. They can pick their brains and have some pretty stimulating discussions. They might not know anyone when they arrive, but by the end of the seminar they're fast friends, planning to return next summer with the same people.

The food at Björklunden also plays a part, as does the hospitality from the Lawrence students on staff. The students are so nice and interactive with the guests. I encourage students (who are not serving the meal) to sit down and have dinner with participants and share stories with people who haven't been in college for 40 or 50 years. They even put on a talent show and the guests love it!

LT: *How would you complete this sentence: "A summer seminar at Björklunden ...?"*

MB: A summer seminar at Björklunden provides a stimulating intellectual experience wrapped in a completely relaxing vacation package.

It's not just a beach, nor is it just a place with great food, or a place that has challenging intellectual courses — it combines everything.

LT: *Is there anything else you'd like to add?*

MB: I just want to encourage all Lawrence alumni to stop in for a tour. They should always feel welcome here. The door is never closed. Sign up for a seminar. Bring a friend. It's a wonderful experience. ■

BJÖRKLUNDEN SEMINARS 2008

JUNE 15-20

Jay Brickman, *A Jew Looks at Jesus*
Don Quintenz, *Bird Ecology of Door County*
Michael Kim, *Great Pianists of the 20th Century: A Discussion and Analysis of Their Interpretive Traditions, Personalities, and Style*

JUNE 22-27

Phil Krejcarek, *Enhancing Your Digital Photographs with Photoshop®*

JULY 6-11

David Stokes and Tom Gill, *Natural Rhythms: Bells, Shakers, Drums, and Percussion in Nature*

JULY 13-18

Michael Desch, *Israel and America*
Nick Maravolo, *Woods in the Morning, Wine in the Afternoon*
Campbell Scott '83, *Nature in Film: Landscape as Character*

JULY 27-AUGUST 2

Dale Duesing '67, *Performances to Remember*
Paul McComas '83, *Writing Our Lives Through Fact and Fiction*

AUGUST 3-8

Bill Urbrock, *Inanna, Queen of Heaven and Earth*
Tim Crain, *Baseball and American Society*

AUGUST 3-9

Helen Klebesadel, *Watercolor: The Expressive Medium*

AUGUST 10-16

Fred Sturm '73, *Tritone Jazz Fantasy Camp*
(Note: special registration information)

AUGUST 17-22

Tim Crain, *World War II: Allies on the Offensive, 1942-45*
Eileen Hoft-March and Judy Sarnecki, *Our Favorite French Flicks*
Sheila McGuire, *Radicals, Realists, Regionalists, and Reactionaries: American Art from 1915 to 1945*

RECONNECT.
REUNITE.
RELAX.
AT BJÖRKLUNDEN

If you're planning a summer get-together with a small group of Lawrence classmates, consider a weekend at Björklunden. In addition to spectacular facilities and warm hospitality, you can also enjoy all that Door County, Wisconsin has to offer.

AUGUST 24-29

Dave Wagner, *Animal Artists of the World*

SEPTEMBER 14-19

Charlotte and Roy Lukes, *Mushrooms, Ferns, Lichens, and Mosses: The World of Non-flowering Plants*
Jim Grine, *Super Conductors: The "Beat" Generations*
Sandra Wagner '65, *Sketching/Painting the Portrait and Figure*

SEPTEMBER 21-26

Carolyn Kimbell, *Improve Your Bridge*
Charlie Schudson, *Tippecanoe and Who? Looking Through the Lens of History/Seeing the 2008 Presidential Election*
Marilyn Taylor, *Getting a Word in Edgewise: A Poetry Workshop*

OCTOBER 5-10

Don Quintenz, *The Nature of Door County (Elderhostel)*

OCTOBER 12-17

Norma Hammerberg, *Play Better Bridge: Lessons for the Intermediate and Advanced*
Liz Pfeifer, *Winter Warmers! Knitting Hats and Scarves*

OCTOBER 19-24

Dan Taylor '63, *Mysteries of the Middle Ages*
Christina Keune, *Dalmalning — Björklunden's Swedish Accent*
Marge Graham, *Watching Women Change Politics*

DOOR SHAKESPEARE

July 10-August 24, 7:30 p.m.

Door Shakespeare presents Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*. For more information visit www.doorshakespeare.com.

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