Due to Social Distancing necessary to reduce the risk of COVID-19, the 2020 SPARK Summer Quarter will be held online via Zoom. The online classes are available for free to SPARK members who have paid their 2020 Annual Dues.

To enroll in one or more of the following classes during our Summer Quarter, email ldwilliams@umkc.edu with the name of the class(es) you will to enroll in. Instructions will be sent to you via email.

We plan to return to face to face classes once these restrictions are no longer necessary. If you need to pay your annual dues, click HERE to download a membership form.

During our Summer Quarter, we will be employing a BYOS (Bring your own snack) policy rather than providing virtual snacks. 😊

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**Music Inspired by the Natural World**
**Presenter Don Dagenais**
**Mondays for six weeks starting May 11 at 10:00am on Zoom**

Classical music composers have found inspiration in many different places. In this six-class course you will explore classical music inspired by works of nature. The first two classes will focus on music inspired by the wonders of the earth, such as mountains, valleys, oceans, and natural occurrences such as rain and volcanoes. The third and fourth classes will explore music inspired by the plant kingdom such as trees, flowers and forests. The fifth and sixth classes will be devoted to music representing the animal kingdom, such as birds, swans, fish, bears, elephants, monkeys and even whales. Come prepared to look at classical music from a whole new perspective!

**Instructor: Don Dagenais** is a longtime classical music and opera aficionado. He has served on the boards of many local music organizations and has been president of most of them, including the Lyric Opera, Summerfest, Kansas City Symphony Alliance, Kansas City Chamber Orchestra and UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance. He is also on the board of an opera training program in Arkansas. He has written several books of history about local music groups, including the 60th anniversary of the Lyric Opera in 2019. He has served as an unpaid consultant to performing arts groups around the country, and he was president of Opera Volunteers International. For over ten years he has chaired the Lyric Opera Guild travel program. He is semi-retired as a real estate attorney from Lathrop Gage and lives in Kansas City with his wife Patricia, also a classical music fan. They have two grown daughters and two grandchildren.
North American Indigenous People and the European Invasion to 1815: Part 1
Presenter Alan Perry
Tuesdays for six weeks starting May 19 at 10:00am on Zoom

This course considers the history of the Indigenous People living within what are now the United States, Canada and Greenland, and the "fatal impact" of Western European expansion on their worlds in the years from the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th Century through what is variously known as the War of 1812, the Napoleonic Wars -- or Tecumseh’s Campaign.

It will examine the nature of some of the native societies that experienced their first interaction with Europeans in those years, primarily (but not exclusively) the Pueblo people of the US Southwest, the horticultural tribes and confederations of the Eastern woodlands, the Northwest Coast people, and the Inuit (Eskimo).

The course will concentrate on such themes as varying Indigenous and contrasting European religious beliefs, and some of the important tribal social, economic, political, and foreign policy arrangements. Several themes will rear their heads regularly throughout the course: the people, the world and the divine (religions); the questions of varying tribal, as opposed to varying European, social arrangements and economies; and "the white man's Indian" (Europeans' perceptions of Native Americans). There will also be much discussion of the evolution of official and unofficial British, French, Spanish, and American Indian policy, its implementation, and its significance for the subsequent development of the United States and Canada.

Throughout, the course will recognize European behavior in North America as an element in the expansion of Western Europe around the world, and will emphasize the distinctiveness, as well as the unifying elements, on the part of the various native cultures, the British, the Spanish, and the French.

Instructor: Dr. Alan Perry shares with us his knowledge, experience and a lifelong enthusiasm for history. Dr. Perry graduated from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri and Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand with degrees in History. He served over 15 years as Adjunct Professor at the University of Missouri Kansas City and taught History at Park University in Kansas City. He also served as an Archivist for the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington D.C., the Virgin Islands and Kansas City.
The Axial Age: A historic paradigm
Presenter Gil Nichols

Wednesdays for six weeks starting May 20 at 10:00am on Zoom

History may not repeat itself exactly, but historic patterns do! Unlike traditional history classes, which study specific geographic areas at specific times, this class will explore the qualities that have emerged across continents and centuries over the past 5,000 years. Dipping into different eras and parts of the world (ancient Greece, India and Australia, Africa and Native America), we'll identify predictable - and apparently inevitable - patterns that develop as a state form of organization emerges. And we'll consider how these patterns continue to affect us today.

Instructor Gil Nichols is a lifelong student of history and North American Indian cultures. He has participated in Dakota and Lakota ceremonies for more than 35 years. He taught high school Social Sciences for 30 years and then American Indian studies at William Jewel and UMKC for 14 years. He has also taught for the KU Osher program and has served as a Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art Tour Guide for nine years. Gil is also Chair of the Thidaware Native American Garden Project at Line Creek Park in Kansas City.

Harry S. Truman: 33rd President of the United States
Presenter David Jeter

Thursdays for six weeks starting May 21 at 10:00am on Zoom

The year was 1948. A Presidential election was scheduled for November 2nd. President Truman had to decide if he would seek the Presidency in his own right – having acceded to the Presidency from the Vice-Presidency upon FDR’s death on April 12th, 1945. In the spring of 1948, Truman's public approval rating stood at 36%, and almost everyone wrote off Truman’s chances of winning the presidential election. Nevertheless, Harry Truman concluded that he would seek the Democratic nomination in July and the Presidency in November. That decision would lead to perhaps the greatest election upset in the history of the Presidency.


But wait, there will be more (I hope)! Come join us as we continue our study of the Presidency of Harry S. Truman; “The Man from Independence”
David Jeter is a retired attorney, who practiced in Blue Springs for nearly 35 years. He received his undergraduate degree in history and his law degree from the University of Missouri Columbia, receiving his J.D. in 1973. He’s been interested in and considers himself an amateur historian with interests wide ranging. He is a docent at the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum and has undertaken to continue to learn as much as he can about the life and times of President Truman and those forces which influenced him as he served as the 33rd President of the United States from 1945 – 1953. He hopes to share some of his discoveries in this course.