Jean Martin and SAIL: 2000 - 2017

From the very beginning of SAIL in 1996, our goal has been academic excellence in Lifelong Learning. In 2000, when Jean Martin came on board as Administrator, we found an individual whose sole purpose was to help accomplish those goals. When she first came, we had about 127 members and offered some 23 classes in the spring and again in the fall.

For a few years our growth was not robust, but steady and we knew that we had a great program. Then!! The Baby Boomers started to retire and word of mouth spread about our program and membership has exploded. Thankfully, when the campus underwent a remodel in 2010, room 122 was designed to accommodate large classes, and has been made available to SAIL for scheduling many of our classes. Our SAIL office was moved to the first floor so it is closer to the action.

SAIL has reached the point where the registration process that Jean developed is not up to handling the increased number of SAIL members who want to enroll. The college is now developing an online registration process that will take on that task.

So now, Jean has decided that she has organized us enough and it is time for her to take some time to spend with family and maybe take a SAIL class now and then.

We will miss you, Jean.

. . . . . Sue Bailey

Our New Program Manager

Sherry Scamardo

Sherry is a graduate of Sam Houston State University, the “Fighting Bearcats.” Upon graduation she utilized her degree as a women’s clothing buyer for a major retailer in Houston, Texas. Traveling to New York every month was fun and exciting, but finally took a back seat to (continued on page 2)
and you are committed to continue to learn and grow as long as you live. You are my kind of people. You are also unusually kind and gracious.

When my husband passed away in 2005, the SAIL members and college staff rallied around me. When my family arrived from St. Louis, my mother was prepared to stay awhile, thinking I would be all alone. When she saw everyone at the visitation and funeral and realized the support group that I had, she was immensely gratified and knew that I was not going to be alone.

In the years since then, I have gained a beautiful daughter-in-law and a handsome son-in-law and two exquisite grandchildren who call me Genie. That's Genie with a “G”. There was a legend in ancient Greece -- it said that everyone had their own personal Genie -- a supernatural spirit, assigned at birth, to nurture and protect. Hence, a guardian angel. Or, as Shellie pointed out to me, I already have my job assignment for the next life.

One thing that all these years has taught me is this--- the best things in life really are free, after all. Thank you for your love and support.

First I want to thank Shellie Lewis. For the past several years she has been my right hand, and more recently, my left hand too. When I was out for a month, she not only kept the lights on and the door open, but she also kept the program running full steam ahead. She called up the volunteer army and they came out to help and SAIL didn’t miss a lick. I can never thank her enough for her many years of service to SAIL. And that goes for all the volunteers. If I start naming names I will forget someone, so I won’t do that.

When I discovered the SAIL program back in the year 2000, I knew I had found my dream job. Most of all, as my children pointed out to me, I found my “tribe.” Now . . . you are not all eccentric like me -- but you have an abundance of intellectual curiosity. You are open to new ideas and you are committed to continue to learn and grow as long as you live. You are my kind of people. You are also unusually kind and gracious.

In the years since then, I have gained a beautiful daughter-in-law and a handsome son-in-law and two exquisite grandchildren who call me Genie. That’s Genie with a “G”. There was a legend in ancient Greece -- it said that everyone had their own personal Genie -- a supernatural spirit, assigned at birth, to nurture and protect. Hence, a guardian angel. Or, as Shellie pointed out to me, I already have my job assignment for the next life.

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First things first: I thought you wouldn’t mind if I used a photograph that is 15 years old . . .

I want to share with you my message to the SAIL members and instructors at the recent luncheon.

(Sherry Scamardo, continued from page 1)

starting a family. She was a stay-at-home mom for many years and re-entered the job force working for a family law attorney in New Braunfels, Texas for almost 10 years (She can tell you some stories!) She moved to this area in 2014 to help care for her elderly parents who live in McKinney. Sherry worked under Dr. John Hardesty on the credit side of Collin College at the Preston Ridge campus and then was fortunate to move to Courtyard Center, acting as the Executive Assistant to Dr. Jennifer Blalock. She has two incredible sons, one soon to graduate from veterinary school in May 2018 and one who will graduate from Collin College in May 2018. One of her favorite quotes is: “I am still learning.” (Michelangelo, age 87.) It is inspiration for us all and she looks forward to being part of our fantastic group!

Collin County Meals on Wheels

The college is deeply grateful to SAIL members who contributed 45 boxes of groceries and supplies during our campaign supporting Meals on Wheels in Collin County. The value of each box was about $40. Thank you, Sailers, for answering the call.

New Survey

You are encouraged to participate in a short (7 question) survey about SAIL. Questions concern the quality of courses and instructors, how far you commute, what you would change about SAIL, etc.

You can find the survey online at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/collinsail2017
Thanks to the Collin College staff and the SAIL instructors, board members, former board members, and students who responded so expressively when asked to describe a special memory of working with Jean on behalf of SAIL. 

Margaret Redus, Special Projects Chair

Les Lorenzo
Former SAIL Board President

The Founders of SAIL conceived and gave birth to the SAIL idea in 1996. When Jean joined SAIL in 2000, she inherited a cranky four-year old. She went to work applying unconditional love to this precocious child and applied kindness in gigantic amounts to help develop the potential that existed. Jean helped to bring discipline and encouraged new ways of examining problems by using all the talents and skills inherent in SAIL. By the time SAIL reached ten years of age, we reviewed what the program had accomplished and prepared a plan for the next ten years. Jean successfully implemented that plan and the organization benefited. As an active SAILER, my classes and I benefited from her skills, talents, generosity, charm, grace, professionalism, and unconditional love.

Natalie Greenwell
Director, Center for Workforce & Economic Development

As long as I’ve known Jean she has always been just as she is now, thoughtful, insightful and extremely smart, but never one to overly share. So it was such a delight when she told me how she met her dear husband. Arthur Martin was a friend of the family and had come to visit relatives. Jean said the moment she and Art saw each other across the living room, that was it. They fell in love. Of course we know the rest of the story; they married and had two great kids and many wonderful years together. Well, just as Art found Jean, Jean found us at Collin College SAIL. She came at the millennium, and we all soon found ourselves entranced - moving swiftly along with her as she organized us and guided us and made us better than we’d ever imagined we could be. How lucky for us!

Sue Bailey
SAIL Board Treasurer, Former SAIL Board President

I have known Jean since the day she was interviewed for the job with SAIL, as I was on the interview committee. Her credentials were great, but at the time, we could never have imagined what a wonderful person we had selected. Jean has been with us all the way, helping us achieve our goal of a life-long learning program with wonderful and informative classes that have made such an impact on the community. She has been so dedicated and busy that anytime I could have a quiet chat and coax a smile from her, it was a memorable moment. Through the years, Jean has been a good friend to me and a wonderful steward for SAIL. Her dedication to the program has been complete.

Phyllis Martin
Program Manager Assistant
Collin College-Continuing Education

Jean Martin is a very private soul with a heart of gold. She has always been a highly professional, hardworking individual. Throughout the years she has grown the SAIL program by leaps and bounds. Jean has been a part of every aspect of the program and done an exemplary job. Jean can be mild as a kitten but also become a lioness when challenged. Jean is well respected by the people she serves. She will be missed and I’m sure the SAIL program will feel the pain for a while. She will always be remembered as the SAIL Lady by me.

Bernie Kaye
SAIL Instructor

My most memorable memory of Jean Martin is that there is no one most memorable memory; the years have all been so damn good, so good that there is no point in trying to find a most special memory. It is rare indeed to find an administrator who satisfies all needs, all wants and all requirements. Yet, that administrator is Jean. And, she has done all of that with no apparent strain, with consideration for all and their various points of view. It is not a one- or two-time event that we are applauding and praising; it is Jean’s constant attempt to satisfy all of us that is appreciated, and we will, in her honor, help her successor achieve the same.

Dick and Sally Roberts
SAIL Board Members, Former SAIL Board President

Through our years of involvement in SAIL’s leadership and planning committees with Jean, we have felt privileged to be partners in these endeavors. We have witnessed Jean’s leadership skills as she guided our “Ship of Learning” through tempests to doldrums, keeping SAIL on a steady course. And as SAIL’s Helmsperson, her personal traits of wisdom, caring, and determination have kept our ship on calm waters. We join SAIL in thanking Jean for all her years of dedication on behalf of all of us. Jean, may you enjoy your new course in life as Grandmother Extraordinaire!
In serving as an instructor and a board member, I have never ceased to be astonished by Jean’s attention to detail and her administrative focus. While we usually attribute passion to instructors, I believe that administrators can also be endowed with this valuable attribute. And now I am delighted to know that Jean will be free to invest her passion more deeply in her two beautiful grandchildren, those precious gifts that come later in life. I believe I speak for all SAIL members in saying with pride that we have had a great privilege in knowing Jean and in experiencing her remarkable attention to the SAIL goals and objectives.

Barbara Fix  
Former SAIL Board President, SAIL Instructor

Early in my 18 years with SAIL as a past president, instructor, and student, I discovered the reason we had such a successful, well-run organization: the expertise of Jean Martin. She has solved scheduling problems, offered good advice on plans for the future, and smoothed over discordant crises with unfailing compassion, good humor, ease and wisdom. All that is to say that Jean has epitomized the best values that are the foundation of SAIL. Jean, thank you for your legacy in helping make SAIL the outstanding organization it is; we will miss you!

Muriel Dean  
Curriculum Chair, Former SAIL Board President

Of all my memories of Jean, perhaps the most memorable moment is this one. I am driving. Jean and I are on our way to Highland Springs Rehab to see Howard Fields. This is the first time we will see him outside of the hospital as he embarks on his recovery. I am used to Jean being cool, calm and collected because she is always so prepared. However, due to her concern and respect for Howard, she is out of her element. In the passenger seat, she is doing a bit of hand wringing. We enter the lobby and, low and behold, Howard is sitting on a bench awaiting our arrival. I was so touched as I watched Jean’s body relax and her face break into a smile at the sight of her mentor and friend.

James Parker  
SAIL Instructor

For seventeen years I have taught at SAIL and reported to Jean. Besides discussing my curriculum with her, I have enjoyed hearing Jean say, "Boy, would I love to take this course." And now, she can!

Fred Smith  
SAIL Instructor

When I visited SAIL as a prospective student in 2008, I was astonished to find a smooth, well-run organization which quietly achieved its mission. It was a program which functioned with a minimum of academic disorganization such as I had experienced in my time at a local university. The trappings of academia had been streamlined so that there seemed to be no egocentric performance of administrators or teachers. After teaching in the program I soon understood why SAIL was so successful. Jean had developed a model which was well organized and met the needs of potential students. She planned with attention to detail and with knowledge of what the program was supposed to deliver. She facilitated the instructional needs and followed up on results. In short, Jean Martin made the program what it has become by her dedication and selfless managerial talents. My highest respect goes to her.

Howard Fields  
Former SAIL Board President  
Written by Patti Fields on behalf of Howie

Since Howie cannot express himself well, and since I know where and how his relationship with Jean began, I will offer this tribute to Jean for him. When Howie approached Jean about doing a leadership training course to develop future leaders for SAIL, Jean asked Howie to lead it. And the rest is history. To this day, despite his inability to express himself, he maintains a special relationship with Jean. She is the cog in the wheel at SAIL. She will be missed.

Steve Lund  
SAIL Instructor

Jean is one of the most amazing administrators I have ever seen. She runs SAIL like a master watchmaker, or perhaps I should say like a master ship captain—that’s a better expression for SAIL. She leaves nothing to chance, no details untouched, and she knows exactly what she’s doing and doesn’t even care if it looks like she’s in charge. I loved the old-style get-acquainted sessions in the fall, where everyone was charging around trying to line up with this class or that class, and teachers were hawking their wares. What was Jean doing? She was quietly keeping watch over everything in the corner! Don’t be fooled—Jean knows what classes she needs to offer and she knows the best people to teach them; whether it’s metaphysics or music or cooking with mustard seeds! Thanks, Jean for creating first caliber, exciting learning for grown-ups.
In January of 2001, I was newly retired from AT&T and wanted something to fill my first free time since 1963. So, I went to the SAIL office to register for a SAIL class. Jean helped me get registered--but then she asked the most magical question anyone had ever asked me: "Would you be interested in teaching a class?" From the age of six, I had dreamt of being a teacher, but a career got in the way. Fortunately, though, that career included teaching employees, so I did have some experience to help me get started on what I truly love--teaching literature. In the fall of 2001, I began teaching at SAIL, and I still enjoy every single class I teach. Thank you, Jean, for making my dream come true!

**Anne Royer**
*SAIL Instructor*

It has been a privilege to work with Jean Martin. She exhibits an unflappable cool that I envy; it’s as if she wears nothing but the breeze on her sleeves. One day she quietly mentioned she was having a "terrible, horrible, very bad day." Of course I never asked what was going on, and she never would have shared. But, Jean can handle just about anything, and always with her quiet, gentle smile that belies a strong back and a thick skin. She should be assigned to Middle East peace negotiations, or some other such quagmire that needs her sane, cooling approach.

**Madeline van der Ziel**
*SAIL Board Past President*

As a volunteer in the SAIL office for several years, I observed that Jean asked for help proofreading her draft of the upcoming semester schedule. However, in each case, Jean’s draft was already error-free! Attention to details is a hallmark of all Jean’s work and illustrates why the SAIL program has run so smoothly over the years. Thank you, Jean!!

**Richard Cudlipp**
*SAIL Instructor*

The support SAIL instructors get from Jean has been very important to me. Jean makes it easy to propose and schedule classes. In the past, there was a push to have SAIL instructors become adjunct faculty, with the attendant college paperwork and bureaucracy. I was concerned, but Jean advocated for us. I can’t speak for anyone else, but I surely will miss Jean.

**Tony Howard**
*SAIL Instructor*

Jean Martin is truly the college's unsung heroine. First, she is, frankly, synonymous with SAIL, right? What I have loved about working with Jean is that her superpower has made things work smoothly. You name it, from developing a course to arranging an accommodating schedule to handling AV issues, she made it happen. I cannot imagine how SAIL will stay afloat without her indefatigable attention. Whoever takes her place had better be as kind and professional and polished or else!

**Allen Mesch**
*SAIL Instructor*

I enjoy teaching my SAIL classes, with their interested and attentive students participating in a wonderful classroom environment of shared ideas. Jean has facilitated my role as instructor through her organizational and communication skills. She has quietly and seamlessly guided SAIL into a highly-regarded component of Collin College's community outreach. Thank you, Jean, for your years of service to senior citizens.

**Phyllis Stoup**
*SAIL Board Curriculum Committee*

Jean has exemplified leadership qualities in so many different ways. Right away, I appreciated the classes she was so instrumental in developing. In the years following, it has been my pleasure to serve on the Curriculum Committee with Jean and to work with her as existing classes were evaluated and new ones introduced. Jean truly has the pulse of the SAIL program, and those of us who have attended its programs are indebted to her for her passion and the hours she has spent making sure everything was in place for SAIL students.

**Paul Tobolowsky**
*SAIL Instructor*

I actually don't have any wild and crazy stories about Jean. Crazy events happen when things go wrong, and Jean was not the kind of person to let things go wrong. No matter what problems I faced at SAIL, I would simply tell Jean, and the problems would disappear. If I had scheduling problems, microphone problems, last-minute handouts to be made, or conflicts of any type, my solution was simple--tell Jean Martin. She would calmly smile, and the problem would vanish. Congratulations to Jean on building such a wonderful program at SAIL, and thanks to Jean for letting me be a part of it!
Pictures From the Past