Italia!

By Mike Van Denend, director of alumni and parent relations at Calvin and CALL board member

My wife Loni and I had the privilege to go on one of CALL’s delightful extended trip options this summer—to Italy, led by Calvin professor of classics emeritus, Ken Bratt (who is also the new president of CALL).

We were in a group of over 30 eager learners, and together we saw the amazing sights of Rome, Pompeii, Capri, Florence, Pisa, Venice and other historic sites.

Ken offered valued insights at every location and our tour guide, Marianne, displayed her gifts for organization and hospitality at every stop along the way.

It is impossible to put into the words how wonderful the trip was—educationally, culturally and spiritually.

All of us on the tour will remember the sight of Pope Francis welcoming persons with disabilities on the steps of St. Peter’s, the grandeur of the Colosseum, the sun-splashed five villages of Cinque Terre and the architectural miracle of that leaning tower.

But what was truly the heart and soul of this trip—and I am sure this is also true of the other travel that CALL sponsors—is the uncommon care and kindness that developed among tour-goers, as modeled by our tour leader and guide and filtered throughout the group.

In Sorrento, the evening before we sailed off the coast to Capri, Marianne arranged for a special dessert and celebration for all of the marriages with anniversaries in June. There were seven of them—highlighted by the 54th wedding anniversary of Lam and Kay Van Poolen. What a special joy for them and for us as we witnessed their delight.

Later in the trip, one of our group members suffered a painful fall and spent the last few days in a cast and wheelchair. Again, the compassion of the leaders and group members enabled our traveling colleague to participate in most of the experiences remaining.

We gathered together as Italian explorers a number of weeks after we returned to the States, to share stories, pictures and further reflections.

While we recounted in awe the many amazing things we saw and experienced, it was clear that the kindness offered and the lives shared meant more than any cathedral, artwork or historic site. We had, in a little less than two weeks, become family.

One can travel the globe and learn much. Or one can travel near and far with kind-hearted people—such as those who lead and register for our CALL excursions—and do more than learn. Maybe that should be in our extended trips publicity. Warning: You will be overwhelmed by gracious travel partners, share your life stories with one another and, perhaps, become lifelong friends.
What If.

*Last month we shared the first part of a CALL memoir interest group story. You may remember the story was set in the early 1900’s with her grandfather, the foreman of a railroad “gang” of hard-working Turks. Her grandpa had signed the paychecks (of which he was not authorized to do) when the paymaster didn’t arrive to prevent a volatile situation from escalating. Here is the rest of the story:*

Grandpa was sure the paymaster would understand. Not so.

The following week my grandfather was arrested for forgery. He was sentenced for this crime. The judge was lenient. Grandpa was assigned foreman of the “chain gang,” the name given to prisoners who served their jail time working on the railroads. The length of time required for grandpa to repay his debt to society is vague. To a child this period of time seemed endless, but in reality it was just a few months.

My dad was seven years old at the time. The youngest child. He remembers the kids at school pointing at him saying, “That’s the Stevens kid. His dad is in jail.” A difficult time for my dad. As an adult, hearing this story for the first time, I could feel the pain he must have felt.

Grandpa was allowed visits by his family. Grandma and dad would travel by train from Wauseon to Lima, Ohio, always by themselves. The older siblings, three brothers and a sister, refused to go and visit; too embarrassing for them. Dad was the youngest, hence the decision was made for him to accompany his mom. There was great anticipation traveling to the prison since they were allowed to bring food and other items to grandpa. However, the return trips seemed longer, very few spoken words, just the rumble of the train wheels on the tracks taking them back home. After serving his time, grandpa resumed his position with the railroad in his home town, not as paymaster, but as foreman until he retired.

Some good usually arises from the worst of circumstances. The long train rides to and from prison gave mother and son bonding time. This my dad would cherish....his mom, my grandma, passed away ten years later. He was 17. I know my grandma through stories and pictures, but I remember my grandpa as an old man, visiting him as a youngster at his home in Ohio several times before he died.

My uncles and aunt never spoke of this. I’m sure they considered this a skeleton in their closet. Most families have at least one. Can skeletons be inherited? Pondering the circumstances leading to grandpa’s incarceration, I wonder, what if grandpa had used one more pen stroke to record his initials “JS” after signing the Paymaster’s name. Would the judge have looked at this differently, maybe understanding his intent to care for his crew? Perhaps things would have been different and if so, I wouldn’t have a skeleton or a story to tell. - Gladys Fletcher, CALL Memoir Interest Group

Not everyone has a colorful story nor what they might consider a memory with high suspense and drama, but everyone has a past and story to share. The task of writing the story of a life may feel overwhelming. But a memoir does not have to be the entire story of a life. It can be focused on a particular time or event, or on a particular relationship. Some topics to start include: Birth, parents, grandparents and great-grandparents, brothers and sisters, other relatives, neighbors and the neighborhood, toys, first memories, etc., illnesses and remedies, places you and/or your family have lived, how you survived the Depression, poverty, etc., children, turning points in your life, hobbies, pets and other animals, family feuds, gifts – special gifts you have given or received, food, brushes with physical danger, lessons you have learned, natural disasters: blizzards, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, etc., tears you have shed, and vacations and other trips.

This spring Carol Rottman will teach again her Memoir Writing class. Consider joining her class and learn how to write that first memory and then continue on with our memoir interest group that meets on Thursday afternoons from 1:00-3:00 pm in Hiemenga Hall 468.
Passport to Adventure
by Henry Baron

Route 66, Exploring the Mother Road, Tuesday, February 7, 7:00 pm, with John Holod.

When Route 66 was commissioned in 1926, it soon became America's "Main Street." Now, replaced by interstates, it remains a nostalgic ribbon of mostly two-lane highway that reveals an America of yesteryear.

Join John on this 2,000 mile RV journey as he explores classic drive-ins, gas stations and kitschy roadside attractions, all from the perspective of an RVer.

Accompany John as he visits museums along the way and explores this fascinating highway.

Noontime Series
by Henry Baron, Chair

Thursday, Oct. 27, Neil Carlson, A Transformative Reading of James

Carlson believes that our model for leadership is a pagan prostitute, and that a serious re-reading of the biblical book of James as a prophetic voice from God's Word will change the way we see our ethical obligations as Christians in an era of fiercely finger-pointing political rhetoric.

Thursday, Nov. 10, Muaz Redzic, Religion, burden or blessing?: The quest of three continents, two centuries, and one life

Dr. Muaz Redzic serves as an Imam at Bosnian Cultural Center in Grand Rapids. In this lecture, he will share his thoughts and experiences about a relationship between one’s religious identity and personal life. How does a religion shape somebody’s identity? What does it mean to be religious today? Is Islam compatible with modernity?

Thursday, November 17, Renee Aupperlee, Donkey Carts and Starbucks: Raising Disciples in a Changing China

One generation ago Chinese families were loaded with children, but now they live in the land of one child, “the little emperor.” In 1997, university students had never actually touched a computer with their own hands. Now, China is overrun by iPads and iPhones. This presentation tells about the challenges and humorous adventures of raising a family, held by the unrelenting presence of Christ, in a nation of unparalleled change, atheism, communism, and constant transition.

Visit the Noontime link online to watch the lectures you missed!

These free lectures are scheduled at noon on Thursdays and have moved back to the Calvin Chapel except for the November 17 lecture. Parking is best in parking lots 1 and 2 off the Burton Street Entrance.

Come with us for our third new and high definition film of the season and rediscover America’s unique treasure, Route 66. Read more about each of these films under the travel films tab of our website.

Tickets are $6 each online at www.calvin.edu/boxoffice or you can call the box office at 526-6282. Season tickets are no longer cost advantageous so only individual tickets are available for purchase and all seats are reserved.
Interest Groups Underway
CALL has four interest groups meeting this fall. Join as you are available and read our interest group link online for additional details:

- **Brass Ensemble**: Monday afternoons in the Seminary Chapel.
- **Knitting**: Wednesdays from 1:30-3:30 in the Youngsma second floor conference room.
- **Memoir Writing**: Thursdays from 1:00-3:00 in Hiemenga Hall 468.
- **Dementia Support and Eldercare Planning** – for men only; Wednesdays till November 16 from 3:15-4:30 at the Calvin Rehabilitation Center at 1310 East Beltline, Suite 230.

The Final Chapter of WWII
CALL is pleased to co-sponsor, along with the Restorative Justice Coalition of W. Michigan and Grand Rapids Sister Cities International, a special lecture on Tuesday, October 25 at 7:00 pm at Eastern Avenue Church, 514 Eastern Ave. SE.

Survey Results
CALL recently forwarded a survey on health, fitness, and recreation to all its members with email. We received a very strong response with 430 members completing the survey. Over the next six months our program will evaluate the results and determine how we can respond to your input. Here are some of the responses we received:

- 95% engage in physical activity and of those, 2/3’s expend 3-6 hours of activity per week.
- 70% belong to a health club or organized fitness program with 62% of this group belonging to MVP.
- When exercising, half tend to work out alone but slightly more than half exercise with one or more individuals.

The following are the 12 most popular activities, with the most popular listed first:

- Walking
- Yoga
- Working out in a gym
- Swimming
- Balance Training
- Pilates
- Hiking
- Tai Chi
- Weight Training
- Dancing
- Biking
- Spinning

The following eight activities interest our responders most, with the most popular listed first:

- Book Club (very high interest)
- Movie Club (very high interest)
- Cooking for 1 or 2
- Card Game Club
- Dinner Club
- Coffee/social club
- Board Game Club
- Knitting

Karin Maag January class
CALL had its highest enrollment ever of 1938 classes among 847 members. Our second session is underway and will conclude by Thanksgiving.

Look for signups in the next newsletter for a special January class with Karin Maag titled *Getting the Word Out: Spreading the Message of the Reformation* to be held in the Woodlawn Ministry Center across the street from Calvin. Learn about the impact of the Bible from the time of the Reformation until today. This class will be publicized in advance of the spring curriculum catalog.
Christmas in October, Thursday, October 27.

Invite your friends and share an evening listening to the delightful music of The Voices of Freedom. The Voices of Freedom is West Michigan’s eight-part acapella voice ensemble. They are returning to us by the request of many people who heard them last year at our October event. You will be tapping your toes as you hear the lilting sounds of Carol of the Bells, Deck the Halls, White Christmas and other Christmas classics. You will be inspired by the beautiful sounds of Joy to the World, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, O Come All Ye Faithful and many more Christmas favorites.

Dinner is at 5:30 pm in the Undercroft of the Chapel. The concert will be at 7:00 pm in the college chapel. Invite your friends and enjoy this special evening with delicious food, warm fellowship and music that will entertain and bless.

Cost $30.00 dinner and concert.

January Series Brunch, Friday, January 13.

CALL members and friends are invited to the January Series Brunch featuring Todd Huizinga speaking on “The European Union and Global Governance”.

Todd Huizinga is a senior research fellow at the Paul B. Henry institute for the study of Christianity and Politics at Calvin College. As a U.S. diplomat from 1992-2012, he served as deputy chief of mission at the U.S. embassy in Luxembourg, political counselor at the U.S. mission to the European Union in Brussels, consul for political and economic affairs at the U.S. consulates in Hamburg and Munich, and consul for public affairs at the U.S. Consulate in Monterrey, Mexico. From 2014-2016 he was director of International Outreach for the Acton Institute. He is an author and speaks five languages.

Brunch will begin at 9:30 am at the Prince Center. Bus service is provided to and from the Covenant Fine Arts Center where we will enjoy reserved seating for Mr. Huizinga’s lecture.

Cost: $19.00, includes brunch, speaker, bus service and reserved seating.

Lincoln Legacy Trip, Springfield Illinois, Wednesday-Friday. April 5, 6, and 7.

Our Lincoln Legacy trip is scheduled in response to requests from a number of our CALL members. This will be our fourth trip to Lincoln land. Those who have gone previously are very enthusiastic about the trip and its historic content. A typical comment: “This is a trip every American should take.”

When it comes to historic Lincoln sites, Springfield is clearly the epicenter. Here, Lincoln steps off his marble pedestal and sheds some of his mystical aura. Around town, his memory stays fresh, thanks to preservationists and interested townspeople. Roam around downtown and it appears that Lincoln just closed his kitchen door, stepped away from his law office, or wrapped up a case in court.

In 1863 President Lincoln acknowledged this city when he wrote, “Springfield is my home, and there, more than elsewhere, are my life-long friends.” Local residents still take pride in their famous townsman and make visitors welcome, even the umpteenth tourist or busload of kids.

(Cont., pg.6)
The U.S. has a lot of places named for Lincoln, but only Lincoln, Illinois was named for him during his lifetime. At the 1853 christening, Lincoln saw no champagne on hand, so broke open a watermelon to do the deed – thus the crude watermelon sculpture by the tiny Amtrak station.

The places we will visit include: The Lincoln Museum, New Salem Village with Lincoln’s only home he owned, Lincoln tomb which features a 117-foot monument that serves as the final resting place for Lincoln, Mary, and three of their four sons, the railroad station where Lincoln gave his farewell speech, the Capitol Building and the church the Lincoln family attended. The three-day trip will begin Wednesday, April 5, at 6:30 am and will conclude on Friday, April 7, around 9:00 pm.

This trip is open to CALL members and their friends. Cost - $399.00 per person (double occupancy). Single room supplement $100.00 ($50 per night). Send your reservation with a $50.00 deposit to the CALL office. $200.00 due January 1 with the balance due March 1.

Cost includes: deluxe bus, lodging (double occupancy), meals (one dinner on your own) and all admission fees.

Questions - Call Don Lautenbach - 901-2170.

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**Member Events Registration**

Two ways to register:

1. Online: [www.calvin.edu/CALL](http://www.calvin.edu/CALL) > Member Events
2. Complete this form (make checks payable to CALL) and send to CALL, Youngsma Center, 3201 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546. Event fees are per person. CALL will notify you if an event has filled.

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Oct 27</td>
<td>Christmas in October</td>
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<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>January Series Brunch</td>
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<td>Apr 5-7</td>
<td>Lincoln Legacy deposit</td>
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Name: ____________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________________________
Email: Confirm by email? □ Yes □ No, I don’t use email

Contact Shirley with questions: 299-3584 or lautenshirley@gmail.com

The cancellation policy is posted on the CALL website
Extended Trips
by John Apol

Registration is expanding for our 2017 extended trip schedule. Israel is our first destination in March. Tourists and pilgrims from each corner of the world are visiting the region because this place is rich in history, religion and architecture. The tour leaders, Bill and Lynn Vanden Bosch call this a “pilgrimage,” rather than a “trip.” You will never read the Bible the same again!

In May we offer our members and friends an opportunity to travel close to the Arctic circle to Iceland. Iceland is expect Cuba to fill quickly and interested persons should not delay in their registration. If you want to see Cuba before the influx of American capitalism, travel experts recommend that you travel now to this previously forbidden island.

Guests will explore Old Havana, visit the National Art Museum and Museum of the Revolution, tour a tobacco farm and Viñales National Park, worship at the Jagüey Grande Christian Reformed Church, take a walking tour of the “crown jewel of architecture” in Trinidad, and a visit to Ernest Hemingway’s former home and the small fishing village that inspired his Nobel prize-winning work, The Old Man and the Sea.

Three additional trips are planned for 2017 with registration to open later this fall: Stratford Festival, American Southwest, and The Protestant Reformation. Potential travelers may place their names on an interest list for the 2017 trips not yet open for registration with the CALL office or the Calvin Alumni at call@calvin.edu. See our website for more information.

Israel - March 20-April 1, 2017 Registration Open
Iceland - May 19-31, 2017 Registration Open
Cuba - May 9-19, 2017 Registration Open
American Southwest - September 7-18, 2017
The Protestant Reformation, Germany, and Switzerland - September 12-22, 2017
Stratford Festival, a repeat from 2016 - details later this fall

not just a sprawling vista of untouched majesty; It’s a place with the population of a small town—315,000 citizens—that’s an actual country. What encapsulates the pure spirit of all Icelanders? an all-encompassing passion that permeates everything they do. They have an unrivaled warmth, according to Lonely Planet writer Kevin Fallon. Kevin goes on to say that it’s a whole nation like the Cheers bar where everyone knows everyone’s name.

From the charming capitol city of Reykjavik, the geothermal spa Blue Lagoon, Snæfellsnes peninsula, or the raw beauty of aurora borealis, Iceland is a fascinating travel adventure.

The long-awaited registration for the Cuba trip in May is now open. With over 40 persons on the interest list, we

Old Havana, Cuba

Iceland fishing village in Shaky Bay off the coast of Husavik
Calvin Christmas Concert

Calvin’s Advancement division is hosting a special Christmas evening with guest performer Kathy Troccoli on Tuesday, December 13, at 7:00 pm. Celebrate the birth of Christ with one of Christian music’s biggest stars during the 1980’s.

Tickets are $25 through the box office at 526-6282 and seats are reserved. Guests have the option to purchase dinner tickets at the Prince Conference Center for an additional $28. Doors open for dinner at 5:15 pm. For more information, visit www.calvin.edu/go/troccoli.