



Enrichment Opportunities
for those 55 or Older

Roberta Kuhn Center

Program Offerings
Fall 2025



SISTERS OF CHARITY
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Sponsored by Sisters of Charity, BVM | 1100 Carmel Drive | Dubuque, IA 52003

Roberta Kuhn Center (RKC)

Sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the RKC is a gathering place open to all interested women and men 55 years of age or greater. There are no restrictions as to religious or national background. The center is located in the lower level of the Motherhouse on the campus of Mount Carmel Bluffs (MCB), 1100 Carmel Dr., Dubuque, Iowa.

Director: Karen Kane-Herber
Phone: 563-582-4155
Email: kkane-herber@bvmsisters.org
Website: bvmsisters.org/roberta-kuhn-center

Goals To create a warm, loving atmosphere for participants to feel welcome; to provide a place to socialize, develop interests, enrich the mind, body, and spirit; and to foster the belief that growing older means growing better.

History Sister Roberta Kuhn, BVM, for whom the center is named, was president of the BVM Congregation from 1967 to 1972. As a congregational leader, she was a remarkable woman for a remarkable time. The congregation, founded in Philadelphia in 1833, moved to Dubuque in 1843, and anticipated its 150th Jubilee celebration with the establishment of the center in 1982. This service provided for older adults is a “thank you” to the citizens of the city and the surrounding area. The BVM sisters have been part of Dubuque for over 180 years.

Our Mission The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a community of women religious whose members, in response to a personal call from God, have chosen a vowed life of prayer, ministry, and community. BVMs express their mission of being freed and helping others enjoy freedom in service to God’s people through their core values of freedom, education, charity, and justice.

Program The majority of our classes are offered in-person. We do offer a limited number of classes over Zoom. Because of our Zoom classes, our community has grown to include participants from across the United States. Classes meet weekly unless otherwise indicated in class descriptions.

Fees The BVM Congregation offers RKC classes free of charge. This program is a gift to those 55 and greater. Thank you for making a commitment to attend the class(es) you select. Regular attendance is affirmation to the instructors for the time and energy they spend preparing and teaching their classes. If you’d like to learn more about the BVM sisters and the ministries in which they engage, please visit: bvmsisters.org.

Registration You will automatically be placed in the classes you request, and you will only be notified if a class is full and you are *not* enrolled. Registration is processed on a first-come, first-served basis, and some classes fill quickly.

Please note:

- The most direct way to register is by mailing your completed form.
- All registrations must be submitted on paper. Phone registrations are not accepted.
- Late registrations cannot be accepted due to the short window between the deadline and the start of classes.
- The RKC office is staffed most days, but if you would like to speak to someone in person, an appointment must be made.

To register:

- Complete the registration form. Be sure to include your email address if you have one as it is the primary mode of communication utilized by the RKC office and instructors.
- Details for the first day of class will be emailed the week before classes begin.
- The current brochure can also be found as a printable PDF at bvmsisters.org/roberta-kuhn-center. The registration form is on the last page.
- Mail your registration form to:
Roberta Kuhn Center, 1100 Carmel Dr., Dubuque, IA 52003.

Instructors Our instructors volunteer to share their expertise and knowledge with you and are a mixture of talented and enthusiastic retired teachers, college/university faculty, administrators, other professionals, and experienced crafters. We are deeply grateful for their time and talent in our program.

Parking/Access to the Building Parking is available in the Motherhouse lot, which is the second lot on the left as one travels along the drive. There are four accessible parking spaces available. If the lot is full, additional parking is available in lots nearby. Class sizes, days, and times have been considered in terms of available parking spaces. The entrance door is accessible by steps or ramp. The outside door is locked and accessed by key fob, which will be distributed to non-residents at the first meeting of each class. If you cannot attend the first class, please call the RKC office at 563-582-4155 to set up an appointment with Karen to receive yours. Residents of MCB can access the RKC classrooms by walking through the building to the lower level of the Motherhouse.

**Fall semester begins the week of September 8–12
and ends the week of November 10–14.**

**Exact starting and ending dates depend
on the day of the week your class/es are held.**

Aging Faithfully (Zoom)

Does the thought of aging faithfully sound inviting? Are you trying to understand the concerns of loved ones as they age? Join us for this seven-week exploration of God's purpose for our aging. We will journey through losses and riches experienced as we age; letting go, facing fears, and finding peace. Author and spiritual director, Alice Fryling's book *Aging Faithfully: The Holy Invitation of Growing Older*, will guide our discussions using a Christian lens. Participants should secure a copy of the book before the first meeting. Sharing in the experience will be beneficial to those finding themselves in the reality of aging, and for those accompanying loved ones. Facilitated by Heidi Wiese, educator and certified spiritual director. Monday, Sept. 8, 15, 22, 29, and Oct. 6, 13, 20, 9–10 a.m.

Aquatic Exercise

Using recommended exercises from the Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program, instructors guide a small group of participants through a series of gentle movements. The exercises are designed to decrease pain and stiffness, improve mobility and flexibility, and aid with balance and coordination. Class takes place in chest high 89-degree water. Each class meets twice a week for 45 minutes. A commitment to regular attendance is expected. Occasional absences are fine, but no spots will be held for people on vacation or gone for extended periods. Please clearly indicate which class you desire on the registration form.

Tuesday/Thursday class: 1–1:45 p.m.,
instructors Jan Thyne and Ann Seamer; Sept. 9–Nov. 13.

Wednesday/Friday class: 9–9:45 a.m.,
instructors Elaine Droessler and Bettie MacVey; Sept. 10–Nov. 14.

Required paperwork will be sent as registrations are received and must be completed before the first day of class.

Art of the Renaissance (Zoom)

The period in western history known as the Renaissance was a complicated time when many influences contributed to a period of change, celebrating both ancient knowledge and new innovations. Much can be discovered and understood through a study of its artists and the art they created. Join us to discover what the art of this time says about the unique conflux of ideas, culture, inventions and economic systems that characterize the Renaissance. The focus of the fall class will be on the early Renaissance, mainly in Tuscany, especially the city of Florence. Instructor Joan Lingen, BVM; Monday, 1–2 p.m.

Card Maker's Work Time

The making and giving of homemade cards provides two-fold joy for the creator/giver and for the receiver. This weekly meeting time does not include card making instruction, but time and space are provided to work independently or to collaborate with others. Please bring your own supplies and in addition, feel free to use the rubber stamps, some inks and papers, and the tools that are kept in the classroom. Thursday, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Chair Yoga

This class offers modified yoga poses that are done while seated in a chair. Many of the basic body mechanics of traditional yoga poses are retained, while offering improved muscle tone, better breathing habits, reduced stress, better sleep, and a sense of well-being. Each session meets for five weeks. Please indicate which session/s you would like on the registration form. Instructor Nancy Thompson; Friday, 10:30–11:15 a.m.; Session 1: Sept. 12–Oct. 10; Session 2: Oct. 17–Nov. 14.

Crochet

This class welcomes crocheters of all skill levels, from advanced to beginners. Participants work independently on their own creations, supported by the instructor and encouraged by classmates. Pattern reading assistance is provided. Talents and ideas are shared among participants while enjoying good company. Instructor Julie Wessels; Thursday, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Death & Dying: A Person-Centered Approach

Grief, loss, and dying are common experiences over the course of life. We will use Atul Gawande's book, *Being Mortal*, as a framework for discussion. In addition to the book, we will explore end-of-life topics, moving away from the concept of "stages" of grief and moving toward thinking about the work of grieving and making peace with this natural universal process. This class will meet four times in person and will include an introductory class, discussions on readings from the book, and time in between to complete the reading. Our work will focus on Gawande's idea that a "good life" is just as important as a "good death." Participants are asked to purchase their own copy of the book. New students only please. Instructor Mary Johnson; Thursday, Sept. 11, 25, and Oct. 9, 23, 1–2:15 p.m.

Discovering St. Clare of Assisi

While St. Francis was basically illiterate, Clare and many of her sisters at the Monastery of San Damiano came from the noble class and were able to write concerning their own experiences. Several examples of Clare's writing exist including the actual text of *Process of Canonization*, letters written to St. Anges of Prague, and *The Rule of St. Clare*. This class will focus on Clare and her writings, engaging participants in history, discussion, and the deep spirituality at the core of the Poor Clare tradition. Instructor Sister Joan Mueller; Monday, 2–3:30 p.m.

Exploring French

Our emphasis will be on conversational French, developing travel survival and social skills, and also on practical topics related to daily life in France. We will engage in guided dialogues based on cultural stories. Grammar will be used only to clarify concepts as needed. Returning and new students are welcome. Some experience in learning a non-native language is helpful. Students are encouraged to purchase *French in 10 Minutes a Day–8th edition* by Kristine Kershul, ISBN 978–1–931873–29–1. Instructor Lorrie Etheredge; Tuesday, 11 a.m.–noon.

Great Discussions: World Issues Today (Zoom)

This class focuses on important foreign policy issues facing our nation. Using the *Great Decisions 2025 Manual* prepared by the Foreign Policy Association, participants discuss topics in a balanced, civil, and educative setting. Topics that will be covered this semester include “International Cooperation on Climate Change,” “The Future of NATO and European Security,” “AI and American National Security,” and “American Policy in the Middle East.” Class discussions are supplemented with guest speakers and media presentations. Facilitated by Ron Burds and Jim Herring; Wednesday, 11 a.m.–noon.

* Suggested, but optional, *2025 Great Decisions Book of Issues*.

Copies of this book can be purchased through the Foreign Policy Association’s website **fpa.org/bookstore**. An eBook version is also available on Kindle, iBook, Nook, and Kobo.

* Join us early each week for an optional pre-class discussion on current events if you’d like from 10:30–10:55 a.m.

A History of American Music

We will follow the threads of American Music from its early reliance on British and European classical, folk music, and church hymns in the 18th century, to finding its own voice in the 19th century with various immigrant groups and regions of the country lending their songs and styles to the American music mosaic. The instructor will use brief presentations and written outlines for students but will rely heavily on audio recordings and videos to illustrate these various musical genres, their evolution, and contribution to “our” American music. The spring semester will continue the journey onto 20th and 21st century additions and developments and will be open to fall semester participants and to new people. Instructor Bob Dunn; Wednesday, 12:30–1:40 p.m.

Information, Misinformation, and Propaganda

We are bombarded with information from newspapers, magazines, radio, television, podcasts, and social media. When we are told the news from a variety of sources is “fake news” and that much of what we see online is

misinformation sent by bots and trolls, what are we to believe? This class will define propaganda and describe how it has been used over the centuries to influence thoughts and behavior. We will discuss modern propaganda, how, and by whom it is distributed, and learn some tools that can help us determine if our information sources can be trusted. Come to class prepared to participate, there will be exercises and opportunities to share your own discoveries. Facilitator Ron Burds; Friday, 10:15–11:15 a.m.

Junk Journal/Altered Book Work Time

Join us for this informal (no instruction included) time to work on junk journal/altered book projects. This time is for those who have already had a class on how to construct a junk journal and wish to create, embellish or revise on their own, but in the company of like-minded and like-skilled creators. Participants should bring their own tools and supplies. Friday, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

The Just War: Viable Theory or Moral Anachronism?

This course explores the Western analysis of just versus unjust wars. Beginning with the Greek philosophers, proceeding through the early and Medieval Christian analysis of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, and culminating in contemporary analysis and application, participants will consider if, when, and under what circumstances, war could be just. Instructor Norm Freund; Wednesday, 2:15–3:30 p.m.

Mat Yoga

Try this gentle yoga class designed for people over 55 and great for the 60+ set! Yoga stretches and breathing build strength, flexibility, focus, and balance. Relaxation practices relieve tension and stress. Pick the level that fits your needs. Each session meets for five weeks. Instructor Deb May with co-instructor Nancy Thompson. Please clearly indicate which level, day (in the case of Intermediate) and which session(s) you'd like on the registration form.

Beginner level for those who are new to yoga.

This class focuses on the fundamentals.

Monday, 11–11:45 a.m.

Session 1: Sept. 8–Oct. 6

Session 2: Oct. 13–Nov. 10

Intermediate level for those with intermediate to advanced experience.

Monday, 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Session 1: Sept. 8–Oct. 6

Session 2: Oct. 13–Nov. 10

Tuesday, 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Session 1: Sept. 9–Oct. 7

Session 2: Oct. 14–Nov. 11

Music Medley

Prerequisite: Desire to explore and enjoy music! Selected symphonic, keyboard, and choral works, as well as popular music styles will be explored. Each semester will include the study of an opera and a musical. Pertinent music topics are also included. Guest performers and/or lecturers may be invited to share their expertise. Instructor Nancy Lease; Thursday, 11 a.m.–noon.

The Nature of Nature in Ireland

This class explores Neolithic, Celtic (pre-Christian and Christian), colonial, and modern Irish history and mythology as viewed through creative nonfiction authors encountering the past in Irish landscape. Class sessions will include discussion of weekly creative nonfiction readings and some informational presentations by the instructor. Please secure a copy of *The Red-Haired Girl from the Bog: The Landscape of Celtic Myth and Spirit* by Patricia Monaghan. Other shorter readings will be made available as pdf files emailed prior to discussions. Instructor Kevin Koch; Tuesday, 11 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Painter's Work Time

Join us for this informal (no instruction included) time to paint in a group setting. This opportunity for focused uninterrupted creative time is for those who have some experience with painting and wish to create in the company of others who also enjoy the art. Fellow painters might offer each other reciprocal encouragement and feedback. Participants should bring their own supplies. Unfortunately, due to ventilation issues, we cannot accommodate oil paints. Facilitator Barbra Ilten; Tuesday, 12:30–2:30 p.m.

Quilter's Circle

While there is no formal instruction or teacher, open sewing time is provided weekly for participants to bring machines or work on handwork of their choice. Some experience with quilt making is required. Participants often provide help and encouragement to each other on projects and techniques. Occasional topics may be covered by the group or guest speakers. Thursday, 1–3 p.m.

RKC Book Club

We will meet every other week to discuss a book. Five titles will be read over the 10-week semester. Discussion leaders for each book will be members of the class. Participants secure copies of their own books; newcomers are welcome. Books and discussion leaders were picked in April for the fall semester. Monday, 10:30 a.m.–noon.

Sept. 15: *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon

Sept. 29: *The Golden Spruce* by John Vaillant

Oct. 13: *The Measure* by Nikki Erlick

Oct. 27: *The Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters

Nov. 10: *James* by Percival Everett

The Serviceberry Book Discussion

Join us as we embark on a 5-week study and discussion of Robin Wall Kimmerer's latest book, *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*. This book uses the example of a serviceberry plant to focus on larger questions about how we humans relate to the natural world and to each other. Topics explored include gift economics, reciprocity, connection, and appreciation. The lessons of the natural world will teach us. Facilitator Marci Blum, OSF; Tuesday, Sept. 9, 16, 23, 30, and Oct. 7, 1–2:15 p.m.

Symbols, Songs, and Ceremonies

In this five-week class, we'll explore the meanings of some common Native American symbols and ceremonies such as totems and vision quests. Some of our time will be spent outdoors, weather permitting. We will reconnect with nature through music and meditation and make a simple take-home reminder of our connection with the natural world and all our relations. The instructor has been a student of Native American spirituality for more than 30 years. She has been privileged to learn from teachers and elders representing several Native traditions. She is currently a member of the Miniss Kitigan Drum, a group of Native and non-Native people dedicated to learning, practicing, and sharing the Native worldview. Instructor Nancy Thompson; Friday, Sept. 12, 19, 26, and Oct. 3, 10, 9–10 a.m.

William Shakespeare: The Inside Scoop, Act V

"Friends, Dubuquers, countrywomen and men, lend me your ears!" As undercover agents, let's dig up the real dirt on the great Bard and his writings. Our class "Shakesperience" will analyze the plots, characters, themes, and literary devices in three plays that show how Shakespeare's writings offer unending connections to American life—still today. This course will continue to explore why English dramatist Ben Jonson was spot on when he said, "Shakespeare was not of an age but for all time." We will dissect *King Lear*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Please secure a copy of each for your reading and reference. New and returning students are welcome. Jim Brimeyer; Monday, 12:30–1:45 p.m.

Women Mystics of Medieval Times

Women's voices have commonly been excluded from the master narrative of history for a variety of reasons including only a small number of women were literate, social norms subordinated women to men, and views that women were emotional, not rational, beings. In spite of these factors, a small number of women did manage to discover and speak through "the voice of transcendence" and their mystical experiences positioned them to express a feminine mysticism that both transcended and embodied their womanhood. This course will examine five such mystics, studying the historical context of each and then discussing her writings and revelations. We will begin with St. Matrona of Byzantium. Instructor Carmen Hernandez; Tuesday, 9–10:15 a.m.

Zentangle Basics

Join us for Zentangle: a journey toward a mindful presence, cleansing breath, and perfectly imperfect small design masterpieces. In this class, we will experience the mindful flow of art making that allows us to break from the rush and worry of our day-to-day life. Zentangle was created by Maria Thomas and Rick Roberts for the purpose of entwining artistic and meditative flow into a personal practice that everyone can engage in. No artistic or meditative ability is necessary, but you will be amazed at the artistic and meditative ability we will release in and from you. And remember, "Anything is possible, one stroke at a time."TM Lorilee Hamel; Wednesday, 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Zentangle: Beyond the Basics

"Mandala" is the Sanskrit word for "circle." Mandalas are used for meditation and as a creative outlet. The mandala is therefore a perfect complement to Zentangle art; meditative, patterned, and creative. During this course, you will learn briefly about the history and use of mandalas. Then, you will learn how to design and enhance mandalas using easy geometric tools; ruler and compass and enhance them with Zentangle tangles. Prerequisite: Zentangle Basics. Lorilee Hamel; Wednesday, 11 a.m.–noon.

Zentangle Studio: Project Pack 26

Zentangle Studio was developed for tangle artists to create community and learn together. This studio session will center around one of the Zentangle, Inc. Project Packs. Project Pack 26 uses mandalas to investigate the dynamic between structure/constraint and creativity/freedom. The Project Pack has 9 days of videos that will be the foundation of each class. Each video is 30–45 minutes long. Then the group will engage in the information from the videos. The materials for this class will be given at the first class. Prerequisite: Zentangle Basics. Lorilee Hamel; Wednesday, 1–3 p.m.

**Please retain this portion of the brochure
to refer back to as your class start date approaches.**

Registration Form

Offerings | Fall 2025

Name (please print) _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Emergency Contact and Phone _____

Previous participant? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of class (Indicate level and session for yoga classes and days for Aquatic Exercise.)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

We ask you to kindly limit your choices to three to allow others to have an opportunity to participate as well—thank you!

Video Recordings and Photos: Please indicate below only if you do **NOT** wish to be recorded or photographed for the purposes listed.

Occasionally a recording of a class is requested and shared only with registered participants in that class. Pictures and voices of all class participants could be included in these recordings.
☐ I do **NOT** give permission to Roberta Kuhn Center to digitally record classes I attend.

Photos/videos may be taken for marketing such as printed materials or social media.
☐ I do **NOT** give permission to Roberta Kuhn Center to use my photograph for marketing purposes.

Registration deadline is Monday, Aug. 25, 2025:

Roberta Kuhn Center
1100 Carmel Drive
Dubuque, IA 52003

Questions: call Karen Kane-Herber, RKC director at
563-582-4155 or email: kkane-herber@bvmsisters.org.

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**Enrichment Opportunities
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**Visit us on the web:
bvmsisters.org/roberta-kuhn-center**

Return registration by: Aug. 25, 2025

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