

100th Renaissance Weekend Convenes for New Year's in Charleston

Written by Australian Business

CHARLESTON, S.C., Dec. 27, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Renaissance Weekend, the non-partisan retreat founded in 1981 to build bridges among innovative leaders from diverse fields, tomorrow brings 1,200 participants to Charleston, South Carolina, for 631 lectures, seminars, discussions, and performances concluding with their traditional singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and "God Bless America" at the stroke of the New Year.

The tradition was founded and is hosted by the former US Ambassador to the Court of St. James's Philip Lader, who is chairman of WPP plc, the world's largest advertising/marketing company, and his wife, Linda Lader, a Presbyterian minister. This New Year's gathering is the 100th

Renaissance Weekend, which has been called "the grand-daddy of ideas festivals."

"For 33 years," Ambassador Lader said, "Renaissance Weekend has continued to be a cross-generational conversation among accomplished individuals with widely divergent perspectives. Civility prevails, partisanship is frowned upon, and commercialism is banned."

"Though strikingly different views of religion, politics, media, science, and every other field are represented, there is more light than heat," Lader added.

Originally an annual New Year's event, the Laders have increasingly organized additional retreats each year with the same objectives and format. Other Renaissance Weekends in 2014

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will be over Presidents' Day Weekend in California
Weekend on Monterey Bay, California
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Labor Day Weekend in Aspen, Colorado
; and Autumn Harvest Weekend in the Hudson River Valley, New York
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Laguna Niguel,
; July 4th

"Each Renaissance Weekend has sought, with equally distinguished participants, to build bridges across traditional divides of religion, politics, and philosophies, generations, geography and personal backgrounds." Mrs. Lader explained.

The meetings are likened to the reunion of "an extended family" of prominent leaders in business and finance, education, religion, law, medicine, government, the media, science, technology, sports, non-profits and the arts. This year's gathering includes CEOs, venture capitalists and entrepreneurs, Nobel laureates and Pulitzer Prize-winning authors, artists and scientists, astronauts, athletes and university presidents, judges, journalists and diplomats, as well as government, non-profit, and religious leaders.

The preponderance of participants have attended regularly throughout Renaissance's 33-year history. Among those coming this New Year's will be families who have been attending since the early 1980's and several third-generation participants.

In response to three decades of Renaissance ideas and challenges, hundreds of participants entered public service, started businesses, founded non-profit organizations, and established private foundations. Also, some two dozen marriages resulted from couples meeting at these Weekends.

The discussions' breadth is illustrated by this partial list of this New Year's participants:

- Retired US Army General Stanley McChrystal

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- Economics Nobel Laureate Roger Myerson
- Internet guru Esther Dyson
- Physics Nobel Laureates William Phillips, Murray Gell-Mann & Wolfgang Ketterle
- US Senate Chaplain Reverend Patrick Conroy
- 4-time Guinness World Record-holder Roz Savage (1st Woman to Row Solo across 3 Oceans)
- US Agency for International Development Director Rajiv Shah
- Oscar-winning Actress Estelle Parsons
- *Passages* Author Gail Sheehy
- Washington, DC, Police Chief Cathy Lanier
- MacArthur "Genius Prize"-winner Amory Lovins
- Evangelist Leighton Ford
- Conservative direct mail guru Richard Viguerie
- Former Brooks Brothers CEO William Roberti
- Financial writer Andrew Tobias
- Getting Things Done Author David Allen
- MacArthur Prize-winners Howard Gardner
- Prize-winning Physicist-Astronomer Lawrence Krauss
- Lehigh University President Alice Gast
- Former NBC Medical Commentator Dr. Art Ulene
- 4-time Emmy-winning Former ABC & CBS Foreign Correspondent Terry McCarthy
- US Coast Guard Deputy Commandant-Former Cmdr.-Deepwater Oil Spill Peter Neffenger

- Emmy-winning Pixar Animation inventor Rob Cook
- Former CIA Operations Officer Valerie Plame
- Former Automatic Data Processing CEO Josh Weston
- US Pension Benefit Guaranty Fund Chairman Josh Gotbaum
- Yale University theologian Lamin Sanneh
- Sex therapist Ruth Westheimer
- MIT Center on Bits & Atoms Director Neil Gershenfeld
- Political Commentator Eleanor Clift
- *You Just Don't Understand & Talking 9-5* Author Deborah Tannen
- Metamaterials Authority & Rice University Engineering Dean Edwin Thomas
- M.D. Anderson Cancer Center Cardiology Chief Edward Yeh
- Former CNN Business Anchor Myron Kandel
- *If Mayors Ruled the World* Author Benjamin Barber
- Norton Utilities developer & arts patron Peter Norton
- "Washington's Most Quoted Pundit"-American Enterprise Institute Fellow Norm Ornstein
- Former UN Assistant Secretary-General Gillian Sorensen
- Biotech & Cloning Authority David Sadava
- *Archie* Comics Owner/CEO Nancy Silberkleit
- Thinking Robots President Matthias Scheutz
- Disciples of Christ/Christian Church National President Sharon Watkins
- Harvard University China Authority Ezra Vogel
- Harvard Medical School Chief of Pharmacology & Epidemiology Jerome Avorn
- USA Network Founder Kay Koplovitz

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- UK Queen's Counsel Hilary Heilbron
- Retired Admiral & Commanding Officer-Middle East Forces Harold Bernsen
- Former Federal Reserve Board Vice Chairman Alan Blinder
- Former International Herald-Tribune Publisher Lee Huebner
- Chinese Philosophy Professor & Competitive Poker Player Bryan van Norden
- Stanford University Philosophy Professor Joshua Landy
- City College of New York President Lisa Staiano-Coico
- Yale University Cognitive Scientist Paul Bloom
- Former International Trade Commission Chair Paula Stern

The New Year's Weekend's 631 programs will address a broad spectrum of public policy and personal issues, such as:

- Edward Snowden – Traitor or Whistleblower?
- Typhoon Haiyan & the Capacity for International Disaster Relief
- Tapering Trembling & Tantrums – Investors' Perspectives
- The Internet of Things – Digital Fabrication
- Dangerous Liaisons? – The Great Thaw in US-Iran Relations
- Politics Aside – What Makes a Difference in Our Communities?
- If Mayors Ruled the World
- What Healthcare Really Costs
- The Consequences of Moods
- The Future of Manufacturing
- Where's Media Heading?
- Why Teach?
- What Difference Will Pope Francis Make?
- Restoring Trust in Institutions
- How Do People Fall In – and Out of – Love?
- Are the Quants Taking Over the Ad Business?
- Faith in Action
- Digital Device Detox – Decoupling from Technology
- Magical Power in Harry Potter
- So Now What Do I Do with My Money?
- The Transformation of China
- What's Behind Extreme Weather?
- Who Needs Hollywood (or Traditional Media) Anymore?
- When Women Don't Know about Men that Men Don't Know about Themselves
- The Art of Aging
- Zombie Stars & Dark Energy
- Sacred Cows that Aren't Milking Anymore
- The Foundations of Moral Cognition
- Medicine's New Age
- The Cultivation of Virtue

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- Accelerating the Advance of Women
- The Habits of Highly Effective Sleepers
- Securing Stability in the Middle East
- Whatever Happened to "the Common Good"?
- The Cure for the Common Medical Practice
- How Music Affects the Brain
- Is Privacy a Thing of the Past?
- The Pulse of Pop Culture

Past participants have regularly included former US Presidents Gerald R. Ford and Bill Clinton, as well as more than 18 past candidates for President and scores of Cabinet members, Governors, & US Senators, Nobel laureates and MacArthur "Genius" Award-, Pulitzer Prize-, Oscar- and Emmy-winners, Olympic champions and astronauts, best-selling authors, celebrated CEOs and investment managers, Internet pioneers and entrepreneurs, and leaders in education, non-profits, social services, law and medicine. Illustrative lists of past participants, the history of the programs, information about the founders, and other details may be found at www.RenaissanceWeekend.org

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