

BC3 course examines rise, fall of steel industry

Feb. 11, 2021



Dale Perelman is shown Feb. 6, 2021, at his home in New Castle. Perelman is the author of nine books, including “Road to Rust: The Disintegration of the Steel Industry in Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio” and “Steel: The Story of Pittsburgh’s Iron & Steel Industry: 1852-1902.” He will instruct The Birth and Death of Steel in Western Pennsylvania, one of 47 noncredit courses this spring on Butler County Community College’s menu of Lifelong Learning classes in Lawrence and Mercer counties.

(New Castle, PA) It lifted a region, provided livelihoods to hundreds of thousands, forged secondary and tertiary commerce up and down and across western Pennsylvania.

It fed, it housed and it clothed, financed births and weddings and funerals, empowered its sometimes poorly educated immigrant workers to patronize main streets for a century.

And then the steel industry collapsed.

“Life changed dramatically,” said author Dale Perelman, a New Castle resident whose course titled The Birth and Death of Steel in Western Pennsylvania is one of 47 classes this spring on Butler County Community College’s menu of Lifelong Learning opportunities in Lawrence and Mercer counties.

The Birth and Death of Steel in Western Pennsylvania will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. April 14 and April 19 at BC3 @ Lawrence Crossing, 2849 W. State St., New Castle.

BC3's Lifelong Learning this spring in Lawrence and Mercer counties will offer noncredit courses in the areas of computers and technology; fine arts and crafts; history; language and travel; personal and professional development; outdoor adventure; special interests; and yoga, Pilates and fitness.

The college's spring lineup concludes with Kayaking Rescue Technique at Moraine State Park on June 12.

BC3 Lifelong Learning courses will also be offered this spring at BC3 @ LindenPointe, 3182 Innovation Way, Hermitage. Classes include Introduction to Basic Computer Skills, Facebook for Beginners and Let's Learn Spanish.

Beginning Italian will be offered at BC3 @ Lawrence Crossing, as will Watercolor Painting-Beginners to Intermediate; The 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement and Today's World; and Understanding your Bible.

Excel-An Introduction, U Podcast and First-Time Home Buyer and Seller will be offered at BC3 @ Lawrence Crossing and at BC3 @ LindenPointe.

BC3's Lifelong Learning program offers participants an opportunity to develop or increase skills, or to explore new hobbies and new experiences "for a very affordable price," said Paul Lucas, director of BC3's Lifelong Learning program.

The Birth and Death of Steel in Western Pennsylvania, to be offered for the first time, costs \$29. Life changed dramatically in Ellwood City, New Castle, Sharon and across the state line in Youngstown beginning in the early 1970s, said Perelman, who earned a bachelor's degree in English literature at Brown University in Providence, R.I., and a master's degree from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Perelman has written nine books, including "Road to Rust: The Disintegration of the Steel Industry in Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio," and "Steel: The Story of Pittsburgh's Iron & Steel Industry: 1852-1902." Each was published by The History Press, in 2018 and in 2016, respectively.

His discussion will appeal to former steelworkers and history buffs, Perelman said, and conclude with labor union, corporate and governmental missteps that culminated 40 years ago.

"My story," Perelman said, "is that all three made errors, and it became a perfect storm, and it destroyed the steel industry."

Physical distancing measures will be enforced to maintain a safe environment at all BC3 facilities. Additionally, face coverings, such as a face mask or face shield, must be worn in

shared spaces inside BC3 facilities and cover the nose and mouth. Face masks are preferred, but face shields are acceptable.

For more information about BC3's spring 2021 Lifelong Learning courses, visit bc3.edu/lifelong or call 724-284-8504.