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OLLI's Own Dr. Catherine Weir: Artists, Infants, and Scientists On Vision; Tallwood, Winter 2020

February 14, 2020

Editor of the Week: Paul Van Hemel

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Alerts & Notices

- *Reminder:* Personal Computer User Group meeting, Saturday, February 15 (tomorrow), 1:00, in TA-1. Social activities at 12:30 in the Annex.
- Brunch treats, spring courses preview, and conversation, Thursday, February 20, coffee room at United Christian Parish, 11:05-11:50.
- Board of Directors meeting, Friday, February 21, 10:00, in TA-1. All members welcome.
- The next issue of *OLLI E-News* will be published Friday, February 21; regular deadline for submission of items is Tuesday, February 18, at 6:00.

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OLLI President's Message February 14



By Bill Taylor, President

We're coming up on the final week of our Spring 2020 Outreach Program, put together by the Outreach Committee and Rosemary Lubinski, chair. I hope you've been able to make some good contacts who might like to join us at OLLI. In Week 2 I invited someone from my church to attend one of our free classes. In week 3 I'm taking flyers to my local library. Here's the **Fourth Week of Four Things YOU can do to increase OLLI membership in the 2020 Outreach Campaign:**

Week 4, February 17: Pass on the OLLI Mason website address to friends

who are in the area. Just say... Thought you might be interested in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Please check out this address: <https://olli.gmu.edu>.

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From the Desk of the Executive Director



By Jennifer Disano, Executive Director

As you are aware, the Outreach Committee is concluding an effort to provide ideas about how to share the news about OLLI with your friends and neighbors (see President’s Message above). As members, you know OLLI is a great place to be for intellectual stimulation and to make new friends. You know firsthand the many wonderful ways OLLI enriches lives. So, when it comes to sharing the word about OLLI, you are OLLI’s best advocates. Let’s continue to work together to welcome others to the joys of OLLI membership! I hope you will join me in this effort to recruit OLLI members for the spring term as well as the remainder of this year. In the spirit of the campaign designed by the Outreach Committee, here are just a few ways to do so:

- Invite a friend to sit in on a class. Check with the office at olli@gmu.edu to verify that extra seats are available.
- Give catalogs and flyers to your friends. There’s so much going on at OLLI. Share information on all our classes and activities.
- Get coffee with friends and chat about your OLLI membership. Your experiences at OLLI are our best advertisement.
- Have an OLLI-themed dinner or lunch with friends. Invite OLLI members to your home for a party or meet at a restaurant. Ask each member bring a friend who might want to join.

Thank you for stepping up to help OLLI thrive by bringing more people to enjoy the program. Keep me up to date on your efforts—jdisano@gmu.edu!

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Join the Fun and Create a Favorite Class!

Become an OLLI Program Planner

2/27/2020



By Alice Slayton Clark, Communications and Program Associate

Have you thought about becoming a program planner but were afraid to ask? Not sure about the commitment in terms of time, what it entails, level of expertise? Come join us for a pizza lunch and overview session to meet members of the team who will show you just how much fun and easy OLLI program planning can be!

Program planning is the backbone of OLLI. You would not enjoy the fabulous classes you do today without the dedication of dozens of member-volunteers. They are not experts in curriculum development or education management; they are retirees like you who have an interest in developing classes in subject areas they like most.

There is a program planning group for each campus and for every subject – arts, economics, history, literature, language, humanities, religion, science, current events, special events (field trips and one-timers), and more. The groups meet intermittently – at OLLI, coffee shops, homes - to brainstorm on topics of interest, course ideas, and potential teachers. They give as much or as little time as they can, as we all know OLLI members keep busy schedules that may take them out of town. But together they always develop a first-rate curriculum, the model of learning in retirement communities throughout the region. And they make great friendships along the way.

So what are you waiting for? Join us at the program planning overview/pizza lunch on Thursday, March 26, from 10:00 to noon at Tallwood. There is no commitment required to attend and perhaps you will find a program planning opportunity that is perfect for you. Questions? Contact the OLLI office at 703-503-3384.

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Payment Options at OLLI – Which One is Right for You?



By Susan Job, Registrar

2/27/2020



With spring term registration just days away, did you know that OLLI has several payment options for renewing your annual \$450.00 membership fee?

Generally, OLLI encourages members to pay membership dues in full at the time of registration. However, for those who would like the financial benefit of spreading out payment over the course of a year, OLLI offers two types of convenient installment plan agreements: monthly and quarterly. If interested, please fill out and submit to the Tallwood office the installment plan agreement form, which can be downloaded from the OLLI website (click [here](#)) or picked up at the Tallwood office. Once the agreement is signed and approved, OLLI will automatically deduct \$37.50 a month or \$112.50 a quarter (depending on the plan you chose) from your debit or credit card. Members who take advantage of the installment payment option certify their obligation to pay within the terms of the agreement for the full \$450.00 value of annual dues. Installment plans must be renewed annually. An installment plan agreement form can be submitted at any time, but we urge you to act now, so your membership is renewed in time for priority registration beginning on February 25.

Separately, members with a financial hardship may be eligible for financial assistance from OLLI to cover a portion of the cost of membership. The financial assistance application can be downloaded from the OLLI website (click [here](#)) or visit the Tallwood office for an application. All financial assistance inquiries are confidential.

If you have any questions about payment plans, please reach out to the OLLI registrar, who is happy to assist: OLLIreg@gmu.edu or 703-503-3384 ext. 221. Enjoy spring term!

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Inside OLLI Mason

On Being a Board Member



2/27/2020



By Paul Howard, Vice President

I joined OLLI in the summer of 2006, thoroughly enjoying history classes and the atmosphere of the Investment Forum. I began attending Board meetings, wanting to learn more about the organization. President Debbie Halverson suggested I fill an open director's slot by appointment, but I anticipated time pressure from other commitments, and joined the finance committee instead. However, Debbie was persistent, and I did fill an appointed slot from July to the following May, having to drop out of OLLI for a term to deal with family health issues.

But OLLI service beckoned—classes at the Loudoun campus were getting established, many challenges were before the Board and staff, and I wanted to help an organization I was enjoying tremendously. Running for an elected seat on the Board in 2009 became a pattern, which I've followed twice more, and expect to do again.

OLLI at core is a cooperative, and only succeeds through the volunteer efforts of our program planning groups, the instructors they bring us, and the work of the myriad committees that make the organization an important part of all our lives. Board service uses the skills acquired through our career and life experiences, and different viewpoints strengthen the possibility of success by widening the field of consideration. Our Board weaves the fabric together, deciding on budget priorities, policies and future planning. OLLI needs your help to get us there!

Editor's Note: This is one of a series of articles by current Board members to give readers some insight into what is involved in serving on the Board.

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The Mystery of the Centerville Six



By Charles Silver, Board Member

2/27/2020

The Mystery of the Centerville Six would be a good title for a novel, but it was the subject of a recent lecture delivered by local historian Jim Lewis at OLLI.

Decades ago, six bodies were discovered on land soon to be the parking lot of a McDonalds. Who were they? How did they get there? As Mr. Lewis unwound the tale, it had something for everyone—local history (“I think I ate there”), the Civil War (this part of Northern Virginia saw epic battles and small skirmishes; local historians and civil war buffs helped solve the mystery), and forensic anthropology (including the Smithsonian).

When a local relic hunter uncovered the graves, questions immediately arose. A crime scene? No, brass buttons and musket balls suggested the Civil War. Were they North or South soldiers? When were they killed? What were their units? After several years, and with the help of Fairfax County, the Smithsonian’s forensic anthropologists, many volunteers, and dedicated researchers, they were answered.

The men belonged to a Massachusetts militia unit. On the eve of the First Battle of Manassas, July 1861, in a skirmish, they became some of the first Union troops to die in the Civil War. Their remains are now interred in a US military cemetery in their home state, and a Civil War Trails memorial plaque now sits in the McDonalds parking lot.

Those in this area literally live on the memories of the War Between the States. Indeed, Jim Lewis became interested in the war history of the region when he found the remains of a Confederate breastwork (a defense fortification) in his backyard. He currently leads local tours of Civil War sites in the Oakton area and is a frequent lecturer at OLLI Mason.

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Outreach Committee Meeting February 24



By Rosemary Lubinski, Board Member and Outreach Committee Chair

There will be a meeting of the Outreach Committee on Monday, February 24, at

10:00 in the Annex. We will be discussing and planning for outreach events and activities for the coming year. Please join us to help keep OLLI strong and growing. Thanks!

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American Shakespeare Center Blackfriars Playhouse Headlines Theater Lovers' Group Activities



By Norma Jean Reck, Theater Lovers' Group Coordinator

On Tuesday, February 18, Director of Education at American Shakespeare Center (ASC), Sarah Enloe, shown at right, will be in TA-3 at 2:15 to tell OLLI members all about Shakespeare’s English renaissance stage. At ASC, located in Staunton, VA, Sarah directs programming in the areas of college prep, research and scholarship, lifelong learning, and educational research. You are invited to join the class: go online to the OLLI web site and add class #973.



On Sunday, March 22, we will follow up Sarah’s class by attending a 1:00-4:00 matinee performance of ASC’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* at Old Town Hall on University Drive in Fairfax City. This very entertaining tale, perfect for children and adults, features some of Shakespeare’s most beloved and iconic characters. Who can forget oblivious Bottom, plucky Helena, or mischievous Puck? The Theater Lovers’ Group (TLG) will organize a post-theater dinner at a nearby restaurant. Go online to Old Town Hall for more information.

On Friday, June 19, TLG members and guests will head to Staunton for an overnight trip to ASC Blackfriars Playhouse. We will begin our visit with an afternoon class on *Othello*, followed by dinner at a nearby restaurant and attending a 7:30 performance of *Othello* at the Blackfriars Playhouse. *Othello* features two main characters—Othello, a Moorish general in the Venetian army, and his treacherous ensign, Iago. The play treats such themes as racism, love,

jealousy, betrayal, revenge, and repentance. Saturday morning, we will tour the Playhouse, the world's only re-creation of Shakespeare's indoor playhouse. Details, including lodging in a hotel within walking distance of the playhouse, are being worked out and will be shared as soon as possible.

For more information, please email njreck@cs.com and come to the TLG meeting on Wednesday, February 26, at 2:00 in TA-1. Everyone is welcome.

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Don't Forget *OLLI Ink!*



By Caroline McNeil, OLLI Ink Coordinator

February 27 is the deadline for sending your creative writing—poems, stories, personal essays, and memoirs—to OLLI's literary journal, *OLLI Ink*.

As short as the three brief lines of a haiku or as long as a short story, essay, or memoir, the writing published in *OLLI Ink* comes from a wide spectrum of OLLI members, including, **but by no means limited to**, those in writing workshops. Now moving into its tenth year, *OLLI Ink* is a well-established publication here at OLLI/Mason and a great way to share your work with other writers and all OLLI members.

How to submit: Please send your entries and/or any questions to Caroline McNeil at caromcneil@gmail.com. Entries may be sent in the body of the email or as an attachment.

Guidelines:

- Poems—limit number of lines to 30
- Prose—limit number of words to 2,500; please single-space and indent the first sentence of paragraphs.

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Poet's Corner

Courtesy of the Poetry Workshop

In the Secret Gardens of the Night

In the secret gardens of the night
A thousand flower children lie asleep
Waiting to burst forth
When blessed by the warming sun
And be plucked
By the patient gardener
Or eaten by the doe and her fauns.

Is there some great creative spark
Waiting to be ignited into flame?
Is there some new insight for life?
Or are they random firings in
A brain overloaded with impressions
That lack form and meaning?

Is there some higher or inner
Being sending these messages?
Are they a song waiting to be sung?
Nightly messages are being sent
But in a language we do not understand.

Some seeds lie in slumber
For a thousand years
And yet have the little spark
To spring to life with water and warmth

Might the poet whose
Best words are yet to be born
Find the spark to ignite
Words of fire to warm the world?

Jack Arthur Underhill

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Arts & Music at George Mason

Performances, February 14 through February 24



By Shelly Gersten, OLLI E-News Staff Writer

For tickets for either Center for the Arts Concert Hall (CFA) or Hylton Center, call 1-888-945-2468, buy tickets online through the event calendar (see links below), or visit the venue's box office. For more information, see the [CFA ticket page](#) or the Hylton Center [ticket purchase page](#).

At the Fairfax Campus Venues

Virginia Opera: *Cinderella*

Sat, Feb 15, 8:00

Sun, Feb 16, 2:00

Center for the Arts

A pre-performance discussion begins on Monson Grand Tier 45 minutes prior to the performance.

Admission: \$110, \$70, \$40.

National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine

Sat, Feb 22, 8:00

Concert Hall

A pre-performance discussion begins on Monson Grand Tier 45 minutes prior to the performance.

Admission: \$60, \$51, \$36.

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Mason Student and Faculty Performances

(see music.gmu.edu for additional student recitals)

Faculty Artist Series

Sat, Feb 15, 8:00, Ensemble de Camera of Washington (piano, violin, clarinet)

Sun, Feb 16, 7:00, The Artemis Trio (flute, horn, piano)

Fri, Feb 21, 8:00, Prof. Jewell (bassoon)

Sat, Feb 22, 8:00, Dr. Mirtcheva Blevins, Dr. Kim, and Dr. Yi (piano)

Sun, Feb 23, 3:00, Dr. Mulcahy (clarinet)

Sun, Feb 23, 7:00, Dr. Han (piano)

Sun, Mar 1, 3:00, Dr. Porter (tuba)

Sun, Mar 1, 7:00, Dr. Anna Balakerskaia and Friends (piano)

Harris Theatre

Admission: Free.

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At the Hylton Center (Manassas Campus)

Gallery Exhibition: *9th Annual Prince William County Public Schools Student Exhibition*

Through Feb 29

Buchanan Partners Art Gallery

The Buchanan Partners Art Gallery is open to the public Tue-Sat, 10:00-6:00.

Admission: Free.

Virginia National Ballet: *Cinderella*

Sat, Feb 15, 2:00 and 6:30

Merchant Hall

Admission: \$40.

Youth Orchestras of Prince William: *A February Festival*

Sun, Feb 16, 12:00

Merchant Hall

Admission: \$10.

Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists: *The Consul*

Sun, Feb 16, 4:00

Gregory Family Theater

Admission: Free.

Kevin Burt and Big Medicine

Sat, Feb 22, 8:00

Gregory Family Theater

Admission: \$30.

National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine

Sun, Feb 23, 2:00

Merchant Hall
 A pre-performance discussion begins in Merchant Hall one hour prior to the performance.
 Admission: \$55, \$47, \$33.

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For further details on any of the above events, see the [CFA event calendar](#) and the [Hylton Center event calendar](#).

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Meetings & Clubs

The following list covering the next two weeks is extracted for your convenience from the master online calendar maintained by the office, with direct web links added when available. The list is accurate as of mid-week but for the most up-to-date information, please view the latest forecast of coming events on our website ([News/OLLI Calendar](#)). *Note: All OLLI members are welcome at, and encouraged to attend, meetings of the Board of Directors, committees and resource groups, kick-off coffees, etc. (bolded below).*

Sat Feb 15	10:30am	Tai Chi Club–TA-3 Personal Computer User Group–TA-1
Wed Feb 19	1:30pm 1:45pm 2:00pm	Mah Jongg Club–Annex Bridge Club–TA-3 Audiovisual Committee Meeting–TA-1
Fri Feb 21	9:15am 9:30am 10:00am 11:00am 11:00am 11:30am 12:30pm 1:00pm	Recorder Consort–TA-3 Craft and Conversation Group–Annex Board of Directors Meeting–TA-1 Classic Literature Club–TA-2 Homer, etc.–Annex Cooking Club–Home of Toni Acton Dr. Who Club–TA-3 Canceled 30th Anniversary Committee Meeting–TA-1
Sat Feb 22	10:30am	Tai Chi Club–TA-3

Mon Feb 24	9:30am 10:00am	What's in the Daily News–TA-1 Outreach Committee–Annex
Tue Feb 25	11:00am	Spanish Club–TA-2
Wed Feb 26	10:00am 10:30am	Bridge Club–TA-3 Tom Crooker Investment Forum–TA-1
Fri Feb 28	9:15am 9:30am 11:00am 12:00noon	Recorder Consort–TA-3 Craft and Conversation Group–Annex Homer, etc.–Annex Photography Club–TA-3
Sat Feb 29	10:30am	Tai Chi Club–TA-2

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About OLLI E-News

OLLI E-News was created by Rod Zumbro, who served as its editor from 2005 to 2013.

Editorial Staff

Chief Editor: Paul Van Hemel

Associate Editor: David Gundry

Weekly Editor Team: David Gundry, John Nash, Sheri Siesseger, Leslie Vandivere, Paul Van Hemel

Proofreaders: Rebecca Jann, Susan Van Hemel, Linda Randall, Tom Appich, Roz Stark, Jane Hassell

Backup Chief Editor: Alice Slayton Clark

Submissions: Members are encouraged to submit letters to the editor, letters to Ms. Ollie Ettakit (on etiquette matters), OLLI-related news items, articles, and photos. Submit material to: ollinewseditor@gmail.com.

Deadline: Tuesday, 6:00, for that week's issue (Monday, 6:00, for letters to the editor); early submissions are greatly appreciated. Please limit articles to about 250 words.

Note: You can view past issues of OLLI E-News on the DocStore. To search the content of issues, use Search Our Site or put your search term in Google followed by "site:olli.gmu.edu/" without the quotes.

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