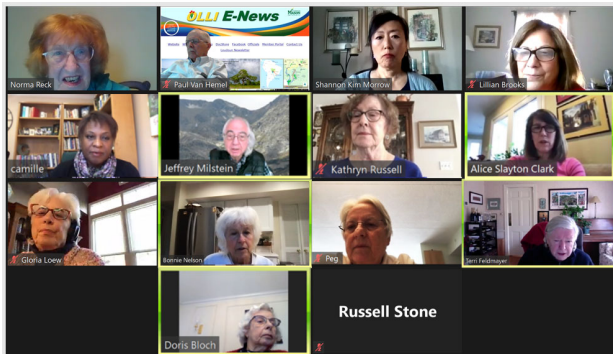


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**Meeting of the Humanities and Social Sciences Program Planning Group, January 14**

## January 29, 2021

Editor of the Week: Paul Van Hemel

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### Alerts & Notices

- The winter term is under way; registration continues on a space-available basis. The winter-term catalog is available online at [this link](#).
- Since winter catalog production, a few classes have been added, changed, or canceled. [Click here](#) for a full listing.
- The next issue of *OLLI E-News* will be published Friday, February 5; regular deadline for submission of items is Tuesday, February 2, at 6:00.

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### Fun Facts for OLLI's 30-Year Anniversary



By Ray Beery, OLLI Member and Former President

*In 2021, OLLI celebrates its 30th year of classes for seniors. This feature provides fun facts and interesting milestones about our institute each week that E-News is published throughout the year.*

#### January 29

During our anniversary years, we have traditionally made an additional donation to Mason. Our goal for the 30th anniversary is to raise an additional \$30,000.00. We hope you will help us achieve this goal. Remember, if every OLLI member gave "\$30.00 for the 30th," we will meet our anniversary goal.

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### Board of Directors January 16 Meeting Summary





**By Marguerite Johnson, Secretary**

President Paul Howard opened the meeting by noting all the good news regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. He thanked the people who are working to keep OLLI a vibrant organization at this time. Specifically noted were Loudoun Site Assistant Leigh Knox and Governance Committee chair Lillian Brooks whose committee is revising the OLLI Handbook.

Leigh Knox will be retiring during the spring term. It is hoped she will then become an OLLI member. Julija Pivo has been selected as her replacement. She is a Mason BFA graduate and is well versed in the technology OLLI uses. She is skilled in program design and classroom support.

The 2021 budget was unanimously approved by the Board. Board members will now be considering a report by the Finance Committee on the challenges resulting from revenue shortfalls related to reduced membership and the impact of increased staff costs required to support OLLI's online programming. Discussions about catalog costs have already resulted in the selection of a new vendor at a significant reduction in printing costs.

The Board has begun considering a COVID vaccine policy in the event we can safely return to in-person activities in the fall. An advisory committee of members with medical backgrounds will be formed to research this issue.

Executive Director Jennifer Disano reported that current total OLLI membership is 1,036—1,019 annual members (862 annual and 157 promo), 12 introductory members, and five lifetime members. She noted that construction and repairs at Tallwood will continue until September 2021. For safety concerns please do not visit the property.

The Nominating Committee is seeking candidates to fill five Board of Director slots for the May 2021 election. Contact chair Rita Way (see article below) if you have any questions or wish to be a Board member.

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## Board of Directors Election Recruiting



**By Rita Way, Board Member and Nominating Committee Chair**

The OLLI Board of Directors Nominating Committee is starting to recruit members to serve on the Board of Directors. Being a Board member is a good way to learn more about the inner workings of OLLI, meet other members, and play an active role in helping to make OLLI the wonderful institute that it is.

The Board meets 10 months during the year (no meetings in December and August). There is no prerequisite to become a Board member, just the desire to contribute ideas and enjoy volunteering.

If you are interested in being a Board member, want further information, or would like to nominate another OLLI member to the Board, please contact:

Rita Way, Chair  
[Ritaway27@gmail.com](mailto:Ritaway27@gmail.com).

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## Wanted: Teachers and Speakers for OLLI Classes



**By Jeffrey Milstein, Humanities and Social Sciences Program Planning Group Member**

*(Editor's Note: This article is based in part on an item published in the December 18, 2020 E-News; this update reflects discussion at a recent meeting and planning by the Humanities and Social Sciences Planning Group.)*

Memo to OLLI Members: As you know, OLLI is a *volunteer* organization. That includes our volunteer teachers and speakers, all of whom are unpaid. As a member of OLLI, you have enjoyed the varied classes that OLLI has offered on many interesting subjects. Every OLLI class needs a teacher or speaker. Getting knowledgeable teachers and speakers for OLLI classes is a major challenge for us all.

Here are some important topics proposed by the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Program Planning Group, for which we need teachers and speakers for the coming summer and fall terms:

Humanities and Social Sciences OLLI Class Topics, Summer & Fall, 2021	
1	The Biden Administration's Domestic and Foreign Policy Agenda, 2021-2024
2	US, China, and Russia Great Power Competition in the 21st Century
3	Threats to Democracy in America
4	Climate change: Domestic and International Efforts to Avoid Disaster
5	Comparing America's and Other Nations' Educational Systems

If you would like to be a teacher or speaker on one of these or another topic of interest to you, or if you know someone who is knowledgeable about a topic that interests you or that you think would interest other OLLI members, please send the name and contact information for that person, along with the topic and your name to the following OLLI staff and program planning group members:

- Shannon Kim Morrow ([smorrow4@gmu.edu](mailto:smorrow4@gmu.edu)) (for all topics);
- Alice Slayton Clark ([aclark24@gmu.edu](mailto:aclark24@gmu.edu)) (for all topics);
- Camille Hodges ([mimihodges4@gmail.com](mailto:mimihodges4@gmail.com)) and Peg O'Brien ([mazob@live.com](mailto:mazob@live.com)) (for Humanities, Social Sciences, and Current Events topics).

A more extensive list of class topics under consideration by the HSS Program Planning Group is available at [this link](#). The group members are working to find speakers for topics on the list, which therefore is subject to revision. You are encouraged to propose other topics, too.

Also, please go to the following link for further instructions for teachers and speakers: [Suggest a Course \(auqusoft.net\)](#)

We are currently accepting proposals for 2021 summer and fall terms. Share your expertise—teach for OLLI! To teach a course for OLLI, please complete the online course proposal form at [this link](#).

Please note that OLLI classes are planned six months in advance. Thus, the deadline for a teacher proposing a class for summer term 2021 is January 29 and for fall term 2021 is April 12.

Remember, we are all in this volunteer organization of OLLI together! Thank you very much for your contribution.

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## Change Is in the Air – OLLI Staff Updates



**By Alice Slayton Clark, Communications and Program Associate**

Join us in bidding a very fond farewell to Leigh Knox, our Loudoun site assistant and catalog associate, who will depart OLLI at the end of winter term to enjoy retirement. A beloved stalwart at the Loudoun campus for the past six years, Leigh plans to use her well-earned free time to enjoy travel with her husband, visit family in Alabama, and keep her homestead in order. We will deeply miss her camaraderie, cheery demeanor, and capable management at Signal Hill.

We are pleased to announce that Leigh will hand the baton over to Julija Pivo (right), a George Mason University graduate who interned with Mason’s Fall for the Book (FFTB) program. At FFTB, she honed her information technology, communications, design, and classroom support skills, a perfect fit for the OLLI Mason job. A gifted writer, Julija recently earned a BFA in creative writing, with a concentration in fiction; she is also an eager singer and video gamer in her free time. Last year she became a US citizen, emigrating from her birth country of Lithuania.



Please extend a warm goodbye to Leigh and hearty welcome to Julija as they support your OLLI classes over winter term.

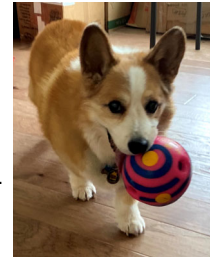
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## Why I Choose OLLI Mason



**By Deborah Engleson, OLLI Member**

My corgi Max and I were about to escape the miserable heat and humidity of Florida. Greater Washington, DC, with more civilized weather, hills, real trees and flowers, and near my two children, here I came!



In at least a dozen moves, I have relied on two strategies to choose a home and make new friends. I’m a charter member of the Crusader Rabbit club! Perhaps I could do some community service and advocacy. I turned first to the National Council of Jewish Women, to which I have belonged for over 40 years. I also wanted to participate in adult education. Familiarity with Osher organizations led me to OLLIs at American University and George Mason University. I was impressed by the number and variety of courses offered by OLLI Mason. Within one day after I contacted OLLI, Toni Acton called. We had a great conversation about OLLI and many other things. The interesting and diverse courses and the welcoming attitude were key factors in my decision to settle here.

OLLI Mason proved to be a great choice, despite COVID-19. I indulged my wide-ranging interests with literature and economics classes, current events discussions, and even the OLLI Players. I thoroughly enjoyed classes on two Dickens novels (*Great Expectations* and *Tale of Two Cities*) taught by Kay Menchel. “Outside the Box Economics” on issues surrounding the pandemic was extremely well presented. Another good choice, “What’s the Difference Between Liberal and Conservative Judges?” allowed me to explore an unfamiliar topic. “Issues, Complex Challenges, and No Simple Solutions,” with its smaller class and true discussion, was most enjoyable. “History of an American Department Store” was totally eclectic and a lot of fun! Doing OLLI Players performances via Zoom is challenging, but Kathie West has made an incredible adaptation to a unique situation. I’ve also participated in the Outreach Committee, the Zoom Help Committee, and found Paul Howard receptive to my suggestions. I could go on, but suffice it to say, OLLI Mason is like a candy store for me!

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## Mason Cabaret’s Sing Happy! With Kander & Ebb Is Coming to your Home Soon



**By Norma Jean Reck, Theater Lovers’ Group Coordinator**



Do you love musicals? Are you ready to dance and sing your favorite show tunes in the privacy of your own home—New York, New York, anyone? Then mark your calendar for Sunday, February 14, 2021, at 4:00. Be there when the Mason Cabaret, Mason’s musical ambassadors, perform memorable show tunes from Kander & Ebbs’ Broadway hits such as *Cabaret*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Curtains*, and more.



Friends of Theater at Mason (FOTM) invite all OLLI members and their guests to join them in sharing this lovely musical valentine. They are also providing two additional treats: First, a 3:30 pre-performance discussion – Kander & Ebb Up Close – with creators of the show James and Erin Gardner, and musical director, Joe Walsh. You will get an insight into the creative process and how music is made "separately together," a technical miracle. Second, at 4:45, you will be treated to a brief post-performance program – Meet the Artists – when you will meet the talented cast and band members of *Sing Happy!*

To RSVP for this free virtual performance of *Sing Happy!*, email Alice at [amagelss@gmu.com](mailto:amagelss@gmu.com) or phone her at 703-993-1593 by Wednesday, February 10, 2021. She will email you the Zoom link with your registration confirmation.

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## Tallwood Book Club February 12



**By Betty Ellerbee, Tallwood Book Club Coordinator**

The February selection for the Tallwood Book club is *The House by the Lake* by Thomas Harding.

The Zoom meeting will occur at 2:30 on Friday, February 12. Refer to the daily schedule sent by the OLLI office with the link and meeting password for club members; you may also log in at the [member portal](#) and click on ZOOM CLASS LINKS for meeting information.

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## History Club Meeting: February 3



**By Elizabeth Lambert, History Club Coordinator**

The first meeting of the History Club for the winter/spring term will be this coming **Wednesday, February 3 at 4:00**. Stephen Waldman, OLLI member and previous presenter, will be speaking on "Famous Women I Wish I Had Known." While women have always had a place in history, their personalities and propensities frequently are left unexplored. Steve will introduce, or perhaps reintroduce, us to some of them. Among those on his list, some were queens, some were wives, some were mistresses, but all are worth getting to know.

We are looking forward to getting together this coming Wednesday. Please note the time—4:00—and it will, of course, be a Zoom production. Remember, all OLLI members are welcome to attend History Club meetings. You can obtain the link and meeting password from the daily schedule sent by the office, or log in at the [member portal](#) and click on ZOOM CLASS LINKS for meeting information.

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## Advantages of OLLI Online or Why Zoom Is a Boon *Besides Keeping Us All Safe and Healthy During a Pandemic*



**By Doris Bloch, Program Committee Co-chair**

- Geographical location is not an issue; Fairfax/Loudoun/Reston courses are available to all members, regardless of place of residence, without need for driving to a distant site.
- Winter weather (snow, sleet, ice) or rainstorms are no longer a concern.
- For winter term, there is no need to don jackets, mittens, mufflers, hats or scrape icy windshields.
- Online classes have eliminated parking issues.
- Members who are confined to home can still participate in OLLI activities.
- Members also need not be discomfited about ventilation and temperature controls in OLLI classrooms.
- We are safer from attacks of flu and cold viruses as we stay in our homes.
- OLLI courses have significantly fewer waitlists, as limits on classroom size are irrelevant.
- Members who have external conflicts can still view recorded course videos at their own convenience. Recorded courses will be accessible for at least two subsequent terms, so schedule conflicts are minimized.
- Class participants can be located anywhere in the world, e.g., winter snowbirding or traveling members can still participate.
- New members could be recruited from anywhere in the world where there is no local OLLI.
- Our online format still affords opportunities for asking questions, clarifications, and discussion.



- We can participate in a meeting format, where we can see other parties and talk to them. We also can discuss subjects in smaller groups by means of breakout sessions.
- The technology is generally on a par with on-site courses; all instructors are supported by experienced OLLI site assistants.
- Instructors can use their personal equipment at home or in their offices and not stress out about finding us or using unfamiliar computers at OLLI sites.
- Instructors can be located anywhere in the world and still teach, significantly widening our recruiting pool.

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## I Attended My First Death Cafe



**By Brenda Bloch-Young, Economics and Finance Program Planning Group Co-chair**

On Saturday January 16th, I attended my first Death Cafe via Zoom hosted by the Alexandria Library. It was a very interesting and pleasant experience. The attendees were of all ages and from across the country. The event is offered monthly and you must register on the library website.

A Death Cafe is a group-directed discussion of death with no agenda, objectives, or themes. It is a discussion group rather than a grief support or counseling session. Death Cafes are offered on a nonprofit basis, in a respectful space, with no intention of leading people to any conclusion, product, or course of action.

The concept began with "cafe mortels," created in 2004 by Swiss sociologist and anthropologist Bernard Crettaz. The events were adapted and popularized as "Death Cafes" by Jon Underwood, who held the first one in the basement of his London home. Pre-COVID, the events were in person, always including a beverage and cake. In the age of Zoom, it is possible to attend a Death Cafe across the country or around the world by merely registering online.

Many of us have gone through the process of completing health directives and end-of-life plans, but how often do we revisit them or actually consider the options available today? Do you actually remember what you signed? COVID has forced us all to consider our mortality. A Death Cafe is a safe space to discuss our options.

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## Poet's Corner

*Courtesy of the Poetry Workshop*

### Zen of Knitting

Stitch by stitch

Knit, Purl, Knit Purl  
Meditative silence  
Broken by the click, click of needles

Stitch by stitch  
Gently a pattern emerges  
I weave a map of conciliation  
Our hearts are one

Stitch by stitch  
My garment grows  
Rose colored, flecked with silver  
A map of unity emerges

*Chitra Mohla*

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## Galileo's Science Cafe–The Neuroscience of Trust



**By Andrea Cobb, Director of Student Research and Internships at Mason College of Science**

Hello!

You're invited to the upcoming Galileo's Science Cafe–The Neuroscience of Trust on Thursday, February 4, 7:00 by Associate Professor Frank Krueger of the School of Systems Biology at Mason College of Science. This free event will be interactive and held live, remotely by Mason's secure Zoom webinar platform. To maintain security, pre-registration is required; click on the announcement at right to register.

We hope you will join us for this timely, important, and fascinating information! Please forward this invitation to your colleagues, family members, and neighbors.

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## Arts & Music at George Mason



By Shelly Gersten, OLLI E-News Staff Writer

### Virtual Performances

Although Mason’s campus is shut down, online entertainment continues for us to access and enjoy. Dr. Linda Apple Monson produces a periodic “Notes from the Director.” This email is full of interesting online performances by the students and faculty of the School of Music. If you would like to receive these bulletins, just send an email to Brianna Schoen at [bschoen@gmu.edu](mailto:bschoen@gmu.edu). Also, the Center for the Arts has a website [Mason Arts at Home](#), which has a calendar of online events and access to many past performances. Information can also be found at [CFA ticket purchase page](#) or the [Hylton ticket purchase page](#).

No performances are scheduled at Mason venues during January 29-February 15.

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## Meetings & Clubs

**Please note:** Physical meetings for clubs and activities are canceled until further notice in accordance with Mason’s guidelines. OLLI is conducting its classes and activities online. Refer to the university’s [coronavirus website](#) for official university updates and check the [OLLI calendar](#) for revised information.

The following list covering the next two weeks is extracted for your convenience from the master online calendar maintained by the office. 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).* The OLLI office has sent (or will send) emails with links and meeting passwords to club members; you may also log in at the [member portal](#) and click on ZOOM CLASS LINKS.

Sat Jan 30	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club
Tue Feb 2	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club
Wed Feb 3	2:00 pm 4:00 pm 4:00 pm	Memoir and More Writing Group Mah Jongg Club History Club
Thu Feb 4	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club
Fri Feb 5	9:30 am 11:00 am 11:00 am	Craft & Conversation Classic Literature Club Homer, etc.
Sat Feb 6	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club
Tue Feb 9	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club
Wed Feb 10	4:00 pm 6:00 pm	Spanish Club Ethnic Eats Club
Thu Feb 11	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club
Fri Feb 12	9:30 am 9:30 am 10:00 am 11:00 am 11:00 am 2:30 pm	Photography Club Craft & Conversation <b>Grab 'n' Gab Coffee Klatch</b> Classic Literature Club Homer, etc. Tallwood Book Club
Sat Feb 13	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club

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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

Marian Drohan, 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](mailto: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.

**Search E-News:** You can view past issues of OLLI E-News at [ENews Archives](#). To search the content within issues, use [Search](#) or enter your search term(s) in [Google](#) followed by “site:olligmu.edu/” without the quotes.

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Notice: You received this newsletter because either you are a current OLLI member or you have been provided a courtesy copy. If you are an OLLI member who did not renew your membership, you can continue to receive our newsletter by emailing the office at [olli@gmu.edu](mailto:olli@gmu.edu) with your request. If someone forwarded this newsletter to you and you'd like to receive it each week, please email the office and ask to be added to the courtesy-copy list.

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