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REFLECTIONS ON PROVIDING HUMANITARIAN AID IN NORTH KOREA

BY
Christy Gavitt
Global Health Consultant

I. The Food-for-Work Project

A. Private Voluntary Organization
- Consortium (PVO/C)

- Made up of 5 US private non-profit relief and development organizations (CARE, World Vision, Catholic Relief Services...)
- Was part of Phase III (June-October 1998) and Phase IV (February-July 1999).
- 8 members on team in each phase (8 full-time monitors)

B. AMOUNT OF FOOD AID (US MAZE)

Phase	Quantity	Value
Phase III	15,000	15,720
Phase IV	200,000	19,000
Phase V	200,000	22,000

C. OBJECTIVE
- Support agricultural rehab. & reconstruction via PFW repairs of food-damaged river and reservoir embankments in provinces.

D. TARGET POPULATION
- Unemployed rural/semi-urban adult industrial/factory workers in 4 provinces.

E. PROCESS

- Assessment (1 visit)
- Monitoring (2-4 visits)
- Final Evaluation (1 visit)

1. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

84 sites - 1988, 83 sites - 1999

- Degree of damage to infrastructure
- Feasibility (can be completed in 4 mos)
- Accessibility for monitoring
- Number of hectares produced

F. THE OTHER ASPECT OF OUR JOB:

1. Person-to-person contact with North Koreans

2. Lunches with county officials

- 300 officials met... "multiplier effect".
- Warm reception → maintain contact repeatedly.
- Many topics "game" (within reason...).

3. Korean Language

- 3 out of 8 PVO/C members spoke Korean... a FIRST among all resident foreigners.
- Helped with relationships
- Built trust for future programs

2. MONITORING VISITS 29 sites - 1998, 178 sites - 1999

- Visit warehouse
- Look at distribution lists
- Evaluate work progress in proportion to food distributed
- Public Distribution System. Means through which state food provided to population.
- Photos of key areas for future visit comparison.
- Worker interview

88% One designated team member returned to same site during future visits. Essential for developing good relations.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF SOME OF MORE SUCCESSFUL NGOS IN DPRK (see attachments)

- Small, nimble, limited funding from feasible funding sources
- Focused on capacity building, education, training. Aimed for TECHNICALLY-ORIENTED projects.
- Operated in low-key manner, not "flying their NGO flag". Limited media
- Didn't push for long-term presence in DPRK.

Characteristics of successful NGOs (see attachments)

- Content with slower pace of engagement with DPRK. No "benchmarks from above"
- Had built up relationship over time with BOTH central AND (very important) LOCAL authorities.

Challenges:
Enlightened DPRK authorities vs. authorities with entrenched political interests... (who are the "advocates"?)

"These [local] watchers and technocrats [e.g. "minders"] who have had practical experience with outsiders and who have some measure of understanding of the outside world are the persons most likely to be able to shepherd real change inside North Korea. If the leadership structure and environment ever gives them a chance to do so"

Scott Snider
(Author of *Organizing in the DPRK*)

Christy Gavitt, Global Health Consultant, Discussed Providing Humanitarian Aid in North Korea and Other Authoritarian Settings, February 3

February 7, 2025

Editor of the Week: Sheri Siesseger

Table of Contents

- [Alerts & Notices](#)
- [Notes From the Nominating Committee](#)

- [Photography Club: Award-winning Photographer to Speak](#)
- [WANTED: Poetry and Prose for OLLI Ink 2025](#)
- [Computer Club](#)
- [Creative Cauldron Opens with Steel Magnolias in its New Home](#)
- [Poet's Corner](#)
- [Arts & Music at George Mason](#)
- [Meetings & Clubs](#)
- [About OLLI E-News](#)

Alerts & Notices

- Nominations are open for Board of Directors candidates for the 2025 election (see article below).
- The next issue of *OLLI E-News* will be published Friday, February 14; the regular deadline for submission of items is Tuesday, February 11, at 6:00.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

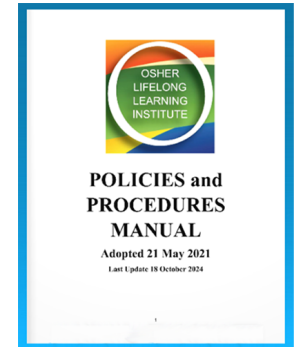
Notes From the Nominating Committee



By Norma Jean Reck, Chairperson, Nominating Committee

Members of OLLI's Nominating Committee have begun identifying candidates for the Board of Directors and verifying that they are interested in being a candidate for Director. All qualified OLLI members interested in being a candidate must notify the Nominating Committee of your interest by emailing Chairperson Norma Jean Reck at njreck@cs.com no later than Friday, March 7. The qualifications for being a Director can be found in Section B of Appendix A. Director Nomination and Election Procedures of OLLI's *Policies and Procedures Manual*, which you can find online at olli.gmu.edu, under Documents on the Main Menu.

[Back to Top of Page](#)



Photography Club: Award-winning Photographer to Speak



By John Nash, Photography Club Member

Bill Mugg, a local photographer who has garnered many awards, will speak on macro photography at the February 14 OLLI Photography Club (OPC) meeting. In addition to macro photography—or the art of photographing small—Mugg, an accomplished wildlife photographer, will talk about some of his other photographic adventures, including his trip to Brazil's amazing Pantanal area. His photos can be viewed on his website at [this link](#). Mugg, a former Navy officer, resides in Vienna.



Ed Marion, one of the coordinators of the OPC, encourages all members of OLLI to attend this presentation, noting "It's not often that we get speakers of this quality with this broad of a photographic background who can explain his photographic journey and answer questions."



Photos by Bill Mugg



The OPC meeting begins at 9:30 in person at Tallwood or on Zoom (Zoom codes are available each day in the OLLI daily schedule email.)

The OLLI Photography Club meets twice a month at Tallwood or by Zoom: the second Friday of each month is for photo competitions and presentations, while the fourth Friday is for review and discussion of OPC galleries. All members of OLLI are invited to attend either in person or by Zoom. It's part of your OLLI membership!

[Back to Top of Page](#)

WANTED: Poetry and Prose for OLLI Ink 2025



By Margie Wildblood and Sophia Elberti, OLLI Ink Co-Editors

OLLI writers—beginners and experienced—take note: *OLLI Ink* is now accepting submissions, including poems, fiction, personal essays, and memoirs, for its 2025 edition.

Now moving into its 15th year, *OLLI Ink* is a well-established publication whose contributors come from a wide spectrum of OLLI members, including, but not limited to, those enrolled in writing classes and workshops.

How to Submit: Please send your entries and any questions to both Margie Wildwood at mwildblood@gmail.com and Sophia Elberti at selberti@icloud.com.

Guidelines:

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

Contributions are welcome through the end of March.

Editor's Note: This article appeared in a recent issue. It is repeated here to encourage submissions to OLLI Ink.

[Back to Top of Page](#)



Computer Club

3rd Saturday, February 15

History of Unix

Learn in 30: KVM Switches & Computer Speakers



By Paul Howard, OPCUG Program Chair

The Computer Club (OLLI Personal Computer User Group, or OPCUG) will meet with its partner, the Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society (PATACS), on Saturday, February 15, in person and via Zoom. The Zoom session opens at 12:45.

History of Unix—Presented by Lorrin Garson

Unix is a family of multitasking, multi-user computer operating systems that come from the original AT&T Unix. Initially it was intended to be used within the Bell System itself, but it was licensed to outside parties in the late 1970s, which resulted in numerous variants, such as University of California at Berkeley (BSD), Microsoft (Xenix), Sun Microsystems (SunOS/Solaris), IBM (AIX) and others. Arguably, it is the most influential operating system to date.

Lorrin Garson had a long career in technical publishing of chemical information. His previous presentation topics included cryptography, encryption of personal data, cloud storage, and the origins of personal computers.

Learn in 30: KVM Switches & Computer Speakers—Presented by John Krout

A KVM switch is a valuable accessory when you have more than one computer on a desk or table.

A keyboard, video monitor, and mouse (KVM) are connected to the switch, and computers are connected also. The KVM switch allows the user to choose a computer to connect to those three desktop peripherals. This can make a huge difference in an apartment or townhouse where space is limited, or whenever a budget prevents purchasing multiple monitors.

The presenter connected his computer speakers to the KVM switch so that those, too, were used by each one of the three computers. In this presentation, you will see a modern KVM switch, the unusual cables to connect the KVM switch to computers, and how to connect a typical analog 3.5mm diameter cylindrical audio plug for speakers to a USB port. His KVM switch has become a KVMS switch.

John Krout is a frequent presenter at our meetings on a wide range of computer, technology and photography topics, and author of many articles for the PATACS *Posts* newsletter.

See full details on this meeting by [clicking here](#). For information on the Computer Club, see the [OPCUG Website](#). OPCUG dues are \$5 and are now due for 2025 (and 2024, if you didn't get around to paying last year!)—see <http://olligmu.org/opcug/comm.html> for details on making payment.

To attend via Zoom's cloud meeting service, beginning at 12:45, please click [this link](#) to join the meeting and use passcode 952879 (*Note*: enter passcode with NO spaces) or enter meeting ID 8124 5733 563 in the Zoom app and use the above passcode (preferred method), or dial in at 301-715-8592.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

Creative Cauldron Opens with Steel Magnolias in its New Home



By Norma Jean Reck, Coordinator, Theater Lovers' Group

Creative Cauldron is starting the new year in its lovely new home at 127 East Broad Street, Falls Church, with the beloved classic *Steel Magnolias*. A comedy-drama, *Steel Magnolias* was written as a tribute to the playwright's sister. It takes place in Truvy's in-home beauty salon in a fictional northwestern Louisiana parish where the friends meet to bond and help each other cope.

Please join the Theater Lovers' Group (TLG) on Sunday, February 16 to see the 2pm matinee performance. Discount tickets are \$40, with a group of ten people. To date, we need five people. They have reserved a 1st tier section for OLLI, so when you phone 703-436-9948 for tickets, be sure to tell them you are with OLLI to get the discount and be seated with the TLG attendees. Free garage parking is available next to the theater (and Whole Foods). We will have lunch at a close



by restaurant at 12 noon.

TLG has a variety of theater events coming up you won't want to miss: The Immigrant, The Secret Garden, Jesus Christ Superstar, Decision Height, and much more. To receive all TLG emails, join the Theater Lovers' Group by signing up online or phoning the Registrar at 703--503-3384, ext. 221.

Editor's note: At the author's request, all words are published unedited, exactly as submitted.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

Poet's Corner

Courtesy of the Poetry Workshop

The Joy of Potato Soup

Making and eating potato soup remains one of the more satisfying activities as cold days unfold to colder. I can see Mother now standing at our old wood stove stirring somehow I don't remember her doing the requisite peeling and dicing of potatoes and onion, the only real work of the project. But oh, the joy of the result. She never blended the chunks so we could press them to the roofs of our mouths for full flavor and texture...comfort food in every sense.

– Jan Bohall

[Back to Top of Page](#)

Arts & Music at George Mason

Performances, February 8 through February 16



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. You can also 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](#).

Dr. Linda Apple Monson produces a periodic "Notes from the Director." This email is full of information on interesting online performances by the students and faculty of the School of Music. If you would like to receive these bulletins, just sign up at [this link](#) to stay in touch. 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.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

At the Fairfax Campus Venues

Fairfax Symphony: *Love is in the Air*

Sat, Feb 8, 8:00
Harris Theatre
Admission: \$65, \$55, \$40.

Versa-Style Street Dance Company Lecture/Demonstration

Tue, Feb 11, 7:00
Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center
3740 Blenheim Boulevard, Fairfax, VA 22030
Free, registration required.
<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/rnYXxwJ/versastyledemo>

Art x Peace Series with Versa-Style Street Dance Company

Wed, Feb 12, 12:00
Center for the Arts, Monson Grand Tier III
Free, registration required.
<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/5gndXDO/artxpeaceversa>

West Coast Street Dance Fundamentals and Q&A with Versa-Style Street Dance Company

Fri, Feb 14, 7:00
Concert Hall
Free, registration required.
<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/afHpRTx/westcoaststreetdanceversa>

Versa-Style Street Dance Company: *Rooted Rhythms*

Sat, Feb 15, 8:00
A pre-performance discussion will take place in Monson Grand Tier III 45 minutes prior to curtain.
A post-performance open session with members of Versa-Style Street Dance Company will take place in the Center's main lobby. High-energy, low-pressure—all styles welcome. Come get down with us at this celebratory afterparty, DJed by Diyanna Monet!
Concert Hall
Admission: \$50, \$43, \$29.

The Acting Company: *August Wilson's Two Trains Running*

Sun, Feb 16, 7:00

A pre-performance discussion will take place in Monson Grand Tier III 45 minutes prior to curtain.
Concert Hall
Admission: \$50, \$43, \$29.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

Mason Student and Faculty Performances

Faculty Artist Series: *Spheres Project*

Sun, Feb 16, 3:00
Performers include:
June Huang and Suyuan Carrasco, violin
Alyssa Cabassa, viola
Gerald Fowkes, cello
Taylor Fleshman, harp
Thomas J. Wible, flute
Harris Theatre
Admission: Free.

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

[Back to Top of Page](#)

At the Hylton Center (Manassas Campus)

Elena Moon Park & Friends

Sat, Feb 8, 11:00
Gregory Family Theater
Admission: \$15.

Dylan Triplett: *Blues and Soul*

Sat, Feb 8, 5:00
Gregory Family Theater
Admission: \$30.

Robinson Secondary Gala Concert with Vienna Choral Society

Sun, Feb 9, 4:00
Merchant Hall
Admission: \$25 Adult, \$20 Senior.

Virginia National Ballet: *Snow White*

Fri, Feb 14, 7:00
Merchant Hall

Admission: \$55.

The Acting Company: *The Comedy of Errors*

Sat, Feb 15, 8:00

A pre-performance discussion begins one hour prior to the performance.

Merchant Hall

Admission: \$50, \$43, \$29.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

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

[Back to Top of Page](#)

Meetings & Clubs

Please note: OLLI Meetings and Clubs may currently take place in several formats: some are in person only, some are online only, and some are hybrid, meaning that they take place in person and are accessible online simultaneously. OLLI events and activities meeting online bear the identification "Z" in their course or event number (except clubs; you may need to check the [OLLI calendar](#) and daily schedule email for location and other event information). Refer to the university's [coronavirus website](#) for official university updates.

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 Feb 8	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club – online
Mon Feb 10	9:30 am	What’s in the Daily News? – online
	4:00 pm	Family History/Genealogy Club – online
Tue Feb 11	4:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
	1:00 pm	Stay Active and Independent for Life – online
	2:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
Wed Feb 12	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club – online
	11:50 am	Investment Forum
	12:00 noon	Chair Yoga and More – online

	1:30 pm	Bridge Club
	1:45 pm	Spanish Club
Thu Feb 13	11:50 am	All the News
	1:00 pm	Stay Active and Independent for Life – online
	3:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club – online
Fri Feb 14	9:30 am	Photography Club
	9:30 am	Crafts and Conversation
	11:00 am	Homer, etc. – online
	11:30 am	Cooking Club
	12:00 noon	Chair Yoga and More – online
	2:00 pm	Classic Literature Club – online
Sat Feb 15	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club – online
	1:00 pm	Personal Computer User Group
Mon Feb 17	9:30 am	What’s in the Daily News? – online
	11:00 am	Poetry Writing Club – online
	4:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
Tue Feb 18	1:00 pm	Stay Active and Independent for Life – online
	2:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
	3:45 pm	Caregivers Support Group – online
	4:00 pm	Mah Jongg Club – online
	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club – online
Wed Feb 19	10:00 am	Board Game Club
	10:00 am	Bridge Club
	10:30 am	Investment Forum
	12:00 noon	Chair Yoga and More – online
	1:30 pm	Dabbling Artists Club – online
	2:00 pm	Memoir and More Writing Group – online
	4:00 pm	Spanish Club – online
	4:00 pm	Conversation with Team Bloch – online
Thu Feb 20	1:00 pm	Stay Active and Independent for Life – online
	3:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club – online
Fri Feb 21	9:30 am	Crafts and Conversation
	10:00 am	Board of Directors Meeting
	10:00 am	Mah Jongg Club
	11:00 am	Homer, etc. – online
	12:00 noon	Chair Yoga and More – online
Sat Feb 22	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club – online

[Back to Top of Page](#)

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, Paul Van Hemel

Proofreaders: Rebecca Jann, Susan Van Hemel, Tom Appich, Martha Kossoff, Anne Hartshorn, Bonnie Becker, Carol McManus

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: ollienewseditor@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.

[Back to Top of Page](#)