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Photos by Paul Van Hemel, January 30, 2026

OLLI is grateful for support from Mason Facilities staff, who cleared snow at the Tallwood Campus after the late January snowstorm.

February 6, 2026

Editor of the Week: David Gundry

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Alerts & Notices

- OLLI Mason guest passes are now available in the main office. You can help us encourage others to try our program by handing them out in your local community.
- Remember to check the [catalog updates list](#) on the OLLI website.
- The next issue of *OLLI E-News* will be published Friday, February 13; the regular deadline for submission of items is Tuesday, February 10, at 6:00.

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OLLI President's Message February 6

Note: 2026 OLLI Member Survey



By Deborah Engleson, President

All OLLI members should have received a link to the 2026 OLLI Member Survey via email on Monday, February 2. If you did not receive the survey email, please contact the office at olli@gmu.edu.

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Welcome to Our New OLLI Staff Members!

By Lisa Mariam, Executive Director

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We are delighted to welcome three new colleagues to the OLLI Mason staff. Each brings valuable experience, fresh perspectives, and a shared commitment to supporting lifelong learning and member engagement.

Please join us in extending a warm OLLI welcome when you see them at Tallwood, at Reston, and online. We are excited to have them as part of the OLLI team and look forward to the energy and ideas they will bring in the months ahead.

Kieran (Kip) Schomber is our newest site assistant to support classroom technology and smooth instructional delivery for in-person, hybrid, and online programs. Kip's first day was February 2. He worked previously as an elementary-level classroom teacher in Fairfax County. Kip is an active member at Church of the Good Shepherd in Burke, assisting with audio mixing for the Sunday livestream and The Good Shepherd Players' upcoming production of *Something Rotten*. Kip holds a BA in communication from Hope College.



Rachel Dixon brings her passion for healthy aging, learner centered operations, and community building to support members and programs to the role of Operations Manager. She's starting remotely on February 17 and her first day in the office will be on March 2. A lifelong learner, her international study and travel experiences continue to shape her belief in curiosity, cultural exchange, and learning across the lifespan. An active member of her community, Rachel volunteers with organizations including Meals on Wheels, the Little Theatre of Alexandria, and her local school district. She serves on the Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities and champions inclusion and accessibility in all spaces.



Rachel holds degrees from Rutgers University and Temple University, along with several professional certificates. She is an alumna of Leadership Alexandria and a proud recipient of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce 40/40 Award. Her dedication to lifelong well-being and inclusive engagement guides her connections with learners of all ages. She is a certified 200-hour Yoga Teacher Training (YTT) yoga instructor and is currently pursuing graduate studies in educational leadership at Virginia Commonwealth University. Outside of work, Rachel enjoys traveling—especially cruising—discovering new cultures, and attending live theatre.

Sri Shriya Challapuram will also be joining the team as a site assistant. She is a recent Master's graduate in computer science from George Mason University and holds a Bachelor's degree in computer science and engineering. She has worked in software engineering, research, and applied AI. Shriya enjoys working in collaborative learning environments and has a strong interest in using technology to make learning more accessible. Outside of work, she enjoys attending idea-driven talks and events, going on hikes and urban walks, and engaging in conversations around technology, creativity, and learning.


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New Next Spring – Sports Talk Club: Game On!



By Dennis VanLangen, Sports Talk Club Co-Coordinator

Love sports? Want to connect with fellow fans? OLLI members Steve Greenhouse and Dennis VanLangen are excited to launch a brand-new club where you can talk about everything sports!

What we'll discuss: All sports are welcome—pro and college, national and local, current games and legendary moments. Football, baseball, basketball, hockey, women's sports, and more. If it's sports, it's on the table!

When we meet: First and third Fridays of each month via Zoom, year-round (both in and out of term).

Kickoff session: Friday, April 3, 2026, at 10:00.

How to join: Official registration opens in late February when spring 2026 registration begins.

Want to express early interest? Email olliclub@gmu.edu with 1. Subject line: "Game On: Talking Sports" and 2. Message: "I am interested in joining this new club."

Whether you're a die-hard fan or just enjoy a good game, Steve and Dennis would love to have you join the conversation. See you in April!

Editor's Note: This article appeared in the E-News for the issue of December 12, 2025. It is repeated here to encourage your participation in a new Sports Talk Club planned to begin in the spring term. If you are interested, plan to register for the club during registration for the spring term.

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Poet's Corner

Courtesy of the Poetry Workshop

untitled

flame of red leaves
against cobalt sky
burns through winter

—Ed Sadtler

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By Shelly Gersten, OLLI E-News Staff Writer

The College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) has several web sites of performances, talks etc. For tickets for either Center for the Arts Concert Hall (CFA) or Hylton Center, call 1-888-945-2468.

[CFA ticket purchase page](#)

[Center for the Arts YouTube channel](#)

[Hylton ticket purchase page](#)

[The new https://masonartsimplified.gmu.edu/](https://masonartsimplified.gmu.edu/)

music.calendar.gmu.edu/

theater.calendar.gmu.edu/

dance.calendar.gmu.edu

masonexhibitions.org/

and if you miss a live performance, there is a pay-per-view for many:

<https://cfa.gmu.edu/events/paid-digital-performances>

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.

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At the Fairfax Campus Venues

Mark Morris Dance Group and Music Ensemble

Sat, Feb 7, 8:00

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

Concert Hall

Admission: \$81, \$71, \$55.

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra: *The Soul of Tango* with Berta Rojas

Sat, Feb 7, 8:00

Harris Theatre

Admission: \$75, \$64, \$54.

Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel: *Poetic Tone Pictures*

Sun, Feb 8, 7:00

Concert Hall

Admission: \$60, \$52, \$38.

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Sat, Feb 14, 7:30

Sun, Feb 15, 2:00

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

Concert Hall

Admission: \$116, \$76, \$45.

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Fairfax Campus Visual Arts

(details can be found at <https://www.masonexhibitions.org/>)

The Mirage of Ancient Egypt: Exploring Ancient Egypt's Legacy in Popular Culture

Through February 13, 2026

Fenwick Gallery

The Prescription is Home

January 23 - April 18, 2026

Mason Exhibitions, Arlington Campus

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Mason Student and Faculty Performances

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

Mason Jazz Festival

Sat, Feb 14, 10:00 to 8:30

Harris Theatre

Admission: Free.

Pathos Trio Residency: Pathos Trio Performance

Mon, Feb 16, 8:00

deLaski Performing Arts Bldg., 3001

Admission: Free.

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At the Hylton Center (Manassas Campus)

Mason Cabaret: *Heart and Music*, the songs of William Finn

Fri, Feb 6, 7:30

Gregory Family Theater

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Cirque Mechanics

Sat, Feb 7, 2:00 and 8:00

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

Merchant Hall

Admission: \$60, \$52, \$38.

American Youth Philharmonic Orchestras:**Harp Ensemble, Concert Orchestra and Symphonic Orchestra in Concert**

Sun, Feb 8, 3:00

Merchant Hall

Admission: \$14.

Visual Arts: OFFERINGS TO THE POTOMAC**ACKNOWLEDGING INDIGENOUS PLACE**

February 24 - May 15, 2026

Buchanan Hall Atrium Gallery, Manassas Campus

[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).

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. *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.*

Sat Feb 7	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club – online
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	4:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
Tue Feb 10	2:00 pm 4:00 pm 4:30 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online Mah Jongg Club – online Tai Chi Club – online
Wed Feb 11	11:50 am 11:50 am 12:00 noon 1:30 pm 1:30 pm 4:00 pm	Investment Forum Literary Roundtable – online Chair Yoga and More – online Board Game Club Bridge Club Spanish Page Turner Club – online
Thu Feb 12	11:50 am 3:00 pm 4:30 pm	All the News Chair Yoga and More – online Tai Chi Club – online
Fri Feb 13	9:30 am 9:30 am 11:00 am 11:30 am 12:00 noon 2:00 pm 2:30 pm 4:00 pm	Photography Club Crafts and Conversation Homer, etc. Cooking Club Chair Yoga and More – online Classic Literature Club – online Tallwood Book Club – online French Conversation and Happy Hour – online
Sat Feb 14	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club – online
Mon Feb 16	9:30 am 11:00 am 4:00 pm	What's in the Daily News? – online Poetry Writing Club – online Chair Yoga and More – online
Tue Feb 17	2:00 pm 3:45 pm 4:30 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online Caregivers Support Group – online Tai Chi Club – online
Wed Feb 18	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:30 am 12:00 noon 1:30 pm 2:00 pm 4:00 pm	Board Game Club Bridge Club Investment Forum Chair Yoga and More – online Dabbling Artists Club – online Memoir and More Writing Group – online Spanish Club – online
Thu Feb 19	11:50 am 3:00 pm 4:30 pm	All the News – online Chair Yoga and More – online Tai Chi Club – online
Fri Feb 20	9:30 am 9:45 am 10:00 am 11:00 am 12:00 noon	Crafts and Conversation Board of Directors Meeting Mah Jongg Club Homer, etc. – online Chair Yoga and More – online
Sat Feb 21	10:30 am 1:00 pm	Tai Chi Club – online Personal Computer User Group

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 Editors: David Gundry, Deborah Kruesi

Weekly Editor Team: David Gundry, Deborah Kruesi, Chitra Mohla, John Nash, Paul Van Hemel
Proofreaders: Rebecca Jann, Susan Van Hemel, Thomas 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.

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