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Photos by Susan Van Hemel

Summer at Tallwood, July 2026

July 31, 2026

Editor of the Week: Chitra Mohla

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Alerts & Notices

- Reminder: OLLI Mason office and campus will be closed for summer break from August 3-14.
- The next issue of *OLLI E-News* will be published Friday, August 14; the regular deadline for submission of items is Tuesday, August 11, at 6:00.

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OLLI President's Message July 31

Help Shape the Social Heart of OLLI Mason Diversions Committee Chair Opportunity



By Steve Rose, President

OLLI Mason is seeking one or two friendly, organized volunteers to serve as chair or co-chairs of the Diversions Committee, the group that plans and supports the social events that bring members together throughout the year. Some examples of these events are the trivia party, Octoberfest, annual picnic, and St. Patrick's Day.

The diversions chair works with a committee of dedicated volunteers to develop a 10–12-month calendar of social events, gather members' ideas, coordinate with OLLI staff, publicize upcoming activities, and ensure that events run smoothly. This is a meaningful opportunity for someone who enjoys teamwork, planning, communication, and helping members connect beyond the classroom.

The role includes recruiting and supporting committee members, leading occasional planning meetings, coordinating event details with OLLI staff and local venues, preparing brief reports and event proposals, and overseeing selected events with help from committee volunteers. Time commitments vary by season and event, with many tasks taking about 30 minutes to an hour, and committee meetings are typically held every two months or as needed.

Why consider serving? The Diversions Chair has a direct hand in strengthening the OLLI Mason community—creating welcoming events, encouraging member participation, and working with a supportive team of volunteers and staff. If you like bringing people together and turning good

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Interested? Please consider volunteering—or recommending someone who would be a good fit. OLLI Mason's social life depends on members who are willing to share their energy, creativity, and organizational skills. The current diversions chairperson, Marilyn Harriman, is looking to transition into new roles in the June 2027 timeframe. We would like to have someone move into this role while we have plenty of time for Marilyn to train and support the transition. Please Contact Steve Rose, OLLI President, at roseshouse26@hotmail.com or Marilyn Harriman at mlwharriman74@gmail.com.

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Highlights of the July 17 Board Meeting



By Tim Harwarth, Secretary

President Steve Rose called the meeting at Tallwood to order at 10:00; Executive Director Lisa Mariam, 14 Board members, and several guests were present. Board minutes of the 7 June 2026 meeting were approved. The president reported initiation of work on renewal of affiliation documents with George Mason University, grant application activities, *OLLI Policies and Procedures Manual* updates, and efforts to recruit new chairpersons for Outreach and Diversions committees.

Michele Romano, chair of the Healthcare Advisory Work Group, reminded members of the importance of monitoring for ticks, remaining hydrated, and being aware of air quality threats. Executive Director Lisa Mariam reported on membership, facilities, finance, and programs.

The Treasurer's report covering the first six months of the year noted that the Osher endowment is in good shape and providing much needed income.

In old business, two resolutions postponed from last meeting were discussed. One was approved to update and clarify procedures for reporting and investigating potential conflicts of interest within OLLI. The other resolution updated policy and procedures for the OLLI Mason fund. Both resolutions were approved.

New Business approved categories for designated contributions to OLLI, and approved the implementation of a limited, Mason Alumni discount pilot program for OLLI membership.

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How much is too much? It all comes down to portion sizes. The hungrier you are, the more likely you are to underestimate the amount of any given serving size. Use this handy guide to help you do just that: [Serving Size Hand Guide Condensed.pdf](#)

From the Healthcare Advisory Workgroup

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By Camille Hodges, HSS/CE Planning Team Chair

OLLI is known for its great course ideas. In case you were unaware... many of these ideas come directly from you! We at OLLI need to know what courses/topics strongly reflect your interest and/or your desire to know more about. Also, let us know of any topics you would be willing to teach at OLLI. Our members are our strength when it comes to course proposals.

Check out the current catalog and decide which category might best support your area of expertise. Also, if you have personal contact with people who would be great OLLI instructors, please invite them to present as well.

The Humanities and Social Sciences/Current Events (HSS/CE) team is committed to inviting presentations that support many areas including psychology, politics, cultural interests, inter- and intrapersonal interactions, human culture, ethics, and cultural awareness. Our team meets virtually three or four times per year and communicates continuously.

To join the HSS/CE programming team, here's the link: program@gmu.edu.
Got course ideas? Here's the link: <https://olli.gmu.edu/olli-course-proposal-form/>.

Editor's Note: This article appeared in earlier E-News editions. It is repeated here to encourage member participation in program planning for HSS/CE.

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Join the Theater Lovers' for a Summer Cultural Medley this August



By Norma Jean Reck, Coordinator, Theater Lovers' Group

We, who are fortunate enough to live in the DMV area, luxuriate in a wealth of cultural events from which to choose. So, this August, the Theater Lovers' Group (TLG) will spread its wings and savor a few of them: an opera known for its beautiful arias, a musical day trip through the rolling hills of Virginia, a sophisticated but hilarious play, and a luncheon where the conversation is always titillating.



On Friday, August 7 at 8 p.m., TLG will attend a performance of Puccini's *Tosca* at Wolf Trap. There will be dinner beforehand at Pazzo Pomodoro in Vienna, followed by a pre-performance talk at 7 p.m. at Wolf Trap. *Tosca* is in Italian with English subtitles. Go to

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Welcome to the **Castleton Festival**

On Saturday, August 15, TLG will carpool to Castleton, Va., for a 2 p.m. performance of "Towards a Common Horizon" by the talented staff and students that will include selections from composers such as Dvorak, Rachmaninoff, and Stravinsky. Tickets are \$27.50 and can be purchased by phoning 540-937-3454. We will have dinner at 5:30 p.m. in Warrenton at Claire at the Depot, a converted historical railroad depot. Email njreck@cs.com if interested.



On Saturday, August 29, at 2 p.m., TLG goes to The Little Theatre in Alexandria for a performance of Neil Simon's *Blithe Spirit*, followed by dinner at a nearby restaurant TBD. Purchase tickets for \$30 at thelittletheatre.com or phone 703-683-5778. Email njreck@cs.com if interested.



On Thursday, August 27 at 12 noon, TLG will have a luncheon meeting at Hamrock's in Fairfax City. We will continue planning outings and, of course, chat a lot. Every OLLI member is welcome to join us for the lunch as well as all our other events. Lunch is a fun way to meet TLG members and find out what is being planned. Email njreck@cs.com if you plan to join us.

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

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A Week of Eating Through Italian History



By Kristina M. Olson, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Italian, George Mason University

In Emilia-Romagna, food is an argument. Neighboring cities have spent centuries disputing who owns the *tortellino* and which province produces the real balsamic vinegar.

This January I am leading a week inside those arguments. From January 6 to 12, 2027, participants go behind the scenes at a Parmigiano Reggiano dairy and a Prosciutto di Parma curing facility, taste traditional balsamic aged in wooden casks at a Modena *acetaia*, and learn to roll pasta by hand with a Bolognese *sfoglina*. We finish in Forlimpopoli at Casa Artusi, the museum and working culinary school devoted to Pellegrino Artusi, whose 1891 cookbook did more to invent a national Italian culinary identity than any politician of his generation.



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ITALY

Italian Food Cultures: Tradition, Production, and Heritage in Emilia-Romagna



Highlights

- Visit the farms, acetate, and market streets of Emilia-Romagna — Italy's most celebrated food region — and discover why every product tells a story about identity, rivalry, and tradition.
- Go behind the scenes at Parmigiano Reggiano and Prosciutto di Parma production facilities, taste traditional balsamic vinegar at a Modena acetate, and make pasta by hand with a Bologna-style recipe.
- End the week at Casa Artusi in Forlì, the living museum and culinary school dedicated to the man who invented Italian national cuisine.

Program Details

Type

Faculty

Scholarships

Options

Apply by

Faculty-led and embedded with ITAL 420

Kristine H. Olson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Italian
kolson4@gnu.edu

Available deadline Oct. 1

October 1, 2026

SCAN ME



Education Office (GEO) alongside my fall course on food, literature, and power in Italy (ITAL 420: Global and Local Italy). The program is also open to community members as a stand-alone experience. **No Italian is required.** We will stay in central hotels in Parma and Bologna. Expect several hours of walking most days, much of it on cobblestones, in weather that might be cold and damp.

Applications are run through the GEO office and close October 1, 2026. Full details about the program and a link to apply can be found on the program brochure (see poster), or write to me at kolson4@gnu.edu.

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Poet's Corner

Courtesy of the Poetry Workshop

Reflection

The reflection in the mirror is a testament to my youthful appearance at 80. I am Berry Awesome dressed in Millennium Gold. They call me the apricot lady with a crystal blush and garnet glow. I am the queen of the prairie resplendent like the calla lily Frozen queen.

My gait is upright like an *Allium* 'Purple Sensation'. When draped in Dior, I am a cascade of violet velvet. I sway and strut like a snow goose on a snowy blanket. My cheeks are a strawberry misty pink. They tell me I am as fresh as a daisy at 80.

Wait, was that a fun mirror playing with my mind...

- Chitra Mohla

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At this time, there are no performances scheduled for Arts & Music at Mason

Meetings & Clubs

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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.. The OLLI office has sent (or will send) emails with links and meeting passwords to club members.*

Sat Aug 1	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club – online
Mon Aug 3	9:30 am	What's in the Daily News? – online
	10:00 am	Board Game Club – online
	11:00 am	Poetry Reading Club – online
	4:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
Tue Aug 4	2:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
	3:45 pm	Caregivers Support Group – online
	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club – online
Wed Aug 5	12:00 noon	Chair Yoga and More – online
	2:00 pm	Memoir and More Writing Group – online
	4:00 pm	Spanish Club – online
Thu Aug 6	11:50 am	All the News – online
	3:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club – online
Fri Aug 7	9:30 am	Crafts and Conversation - Location TBD
	11:00 am	Homer, etc. – online
	12:00 noon	Chair Yoga and More – online
Sat Aug 8	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club – online
Mon Aug 10	9:30 am	What's in the Daily News? – online
	10:00 am	Board Game Club – online
	4:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
Tue Aug 11	2:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club – online
Wed Aug 12	12:00 noon	Chair Yoga and More – online
	4:00 pm	Spanish Page Turner Club – online
Thu Aug 13	11:50 am	All the News – online
	3:00 pm	Chair Yoga and More – online
	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club – online
Fri Aug 14	9:30 am	Photography Club – online
	9:30 am	Crafts and Conversation- Location TBD
	11:00 am	Homer, etc. – online
	11:30 am	Cooking Club - Location TBD
	12:00 noon	Chair Yoga and More – online
	1:30 pm	French Conversation and Happy Hour – online
	2:30 pm	Tallwood Book Club – online

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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 Editors: David Gundry, Deborah Kruesi

Weekly Editor Team: Chloe DiStaso, David Gundry, Deborah Kruesi, Chitra Mohla, John Nash,
Paul Van Hemel

Proofreaders: Rebecca Jann, Susan Van Hemel, Thomas Appich, 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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