

SEPTEMBER 2022 ISSUE

THE OLLI INSIDER

News for the members of OLLI at The University of Alabama in Huntsville



EXPLORATION, ADVENTURE IN SUMMER AND FALL

Top: A roadside moose and Denali National Park drew the attention of 25 OLLI members traveling through Alaska. Left: Tours through the Severe Weather Institute and Radar & Lightning Laboratories (SWIRLL) and the National Weather Service in Huntsville. Below: Open house previewed fall semester courses; a free summer course taught watercolors.



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Lifelong Learning
Institute at UAH



EDUCATION HELPS US KNOW SELVES, OTHERS



A successful professor who is also a popular speaker grew up poor, but he says that “I never knew I was poor until I studied poverty in college.”

Well, I never knew I was rich until I studied poverty in college.

Don’t misunderstand. I have never been part of “the Grey Poupon crowd” (a quote from the late

Howell Heflin, a U.S. senator from Alabama). But read on.

When I was an undergraduate at the University of Georgia about 1970, Charles Bullock assigned us to read “Tally’s Corner” for his political science course. That book — a firsthand description of life on urban streets by sociologist Elliot Liebow — opened my eyes about financial insecurity, hopelessness and homelessness, about inability to find a good or permanent job, about fractured families and children who see nothing ahead but more of the same.

Much later, I read what Jimmy Carter told Baptist seminary graduates in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1992. He gave them something to pray about and work against: discrimination against the poor by the rich.

“Who are the rich people?” the former president said.
“Everyone in this room is a rich person.

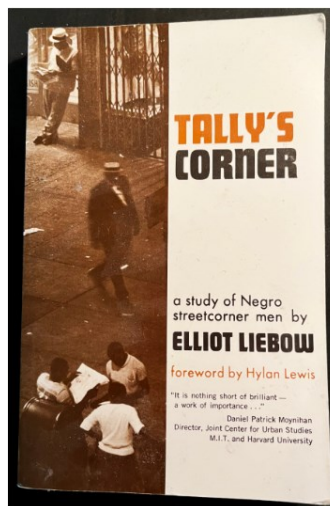
“A rich person is one who has a home, who has a family and you know where they are, who has a modicum of education, a decent chance for a job, enough to eat, some degree of health care, some hope for the future. You believe that the police are on your side. You believe that if you plan, it will make a difference, at least in your own life.

“Many people have none of those things. They are the poor.”

“Tally’s Corner” and Dr. Bullock’s course permanently changed my outlook on poverty. President Carter’s commencement address clarified for me what poverty is.

A good education makes us both self-aware and aware of others, their circumstances and their perspectives. If it also makes us grateful and generous — more inclined to help and less inclined to judge — then so much the better.

Welcome to this month’s *Insider*! In her column, Jill Stewart reflects that travel teaches us history and psychology, among other subjects, while boosting morale.



A college reading assignment and an ex-president’s commencement address clarified what it means to be poor.

Betty Koval describes coming travel opportunities, and we have photos from our members’ most recent travel, in Alaska. We also have pictures of other OLLI activities and classes.

Chris Stuhlinger tells about local tours, hikes, bicycle rides and even a scavenger hunt being offered to OLLI members.

Irene Garappo describes the OLLI office as a perfect place to help out and make friends, and Clay Williams writes about the relationships that we form by participating in OLLI.

In his curriculum column, John Mason writes about myths and advantages of online learning and its vast potential; in his history column, John notes that the name “United States of America” dates from September, not July.

Glen Adams profiles OLLI volunteer Jane McBride. Richard Brooks reflects on four different types of truth.

With the end of the calendar year approaching, Janet Reville discusses timely strategies that enable us to give money to worthy causes such as OLLI while saving on taxes.

Steve Stewart
Public Relations Committee Chair

WHAT I LEARNED ON MY SUMMER VACATION



In September of years gone by, the first writing assignment of the new school year was often the unoriginal “What I Did on My Summer Vacation.” But now that we are older and wiser and lifelong learners in OLLI, our perspective on such experiences may have shifted to the takeaway: “What Did I Learn Here?”



The ruins of the 12th-century Hinterhaus Castle in Austria's Wachau Valley, taken from a cruise ship on the Danube. (Photo by Jill Stewart)

My summer adventure took me, along with some good friends who are new OLLI members, to destinations in Europe. Recent *Insider* columns have discussed the hopeful goal of regaining our confidence in travel opportunities after the limitations of the pandemic. With all that in mind, we took a deep breath, grabbed our vaccine cards and masks, and took off across the pond.

Some lessons I learned on our itinerary:

The remarkable history and endurance of a community tradition

In 1632 the small Bavarian village of Oberammergau lost over 80 residents to the Black Plague in a few short weeks. The dire situation led the devout Catholic city leaders to meet in the parish church where they “vowed to perform the Passion Play every ten years; and from this time on not a single person more died.”

Thus began a tradition that has continued every decade with very few interruptions for almost 400 years. That is, until 2020 and another plague.

So in June 2022 we attended the postponed 2020 Passion Play — six hours long, entirely in German. Oberammergau now has a population of about 5,000. Almost 2,000 of those people are directly involved in the production and performances of the play. Traditionally only those who were born in the town or have lived there at least 20 years are allowed to perform.

For centuries the play reflected a mostly conservative Catholic outlook. But this production was updated, becoming more reflective of Germany's diverse society with a cast that included refugee children and non-Christian actors. With Russia's invasion of nearby Ukraine still underway, the play's prominent themes of war, persecution and displacement showed the timelessness of human suffering from 2,000 years ago and from today. We were left with much to think about.

A study in social psychology

Our tour guide in Innsbruck described a transplant surgery that was pioneered at the medical school there. She then mentioned that the default rule in Austria is that all citizens are considered organ donors, but they may opt out by completing paperwork. Even so, less than 10% of the population ever opts out. In neighboring Germany (and in the U.S.), the default rule is that a citizen has to opt in to be an organ donor. There, only about 12-15% of the population ever chooses to opt in.

Most interestingly, Germans and those in other opt-in countries view organ donation as a philanthropic and sacrificial act. In Austria and other opt-out countries, citizens do not see the decision as particularly meaningful, but more like fulfilling your work obligations.

It makes one realize the power of the status quo, the default position. If the U.S. changed to the opt-out position, would fewer people die waiting for organs?

Some researchers have suggested that we should never underestimate the power of inertia. How many of us have ever changed the default settings on our cellphones?

Travel therapy is a real thing

Some psychologists have recommended travel as a form of therapy. New sights, smells, sounds and conversations can stimulate our senses in a refreshing way and give us a mental health boost.

For this traveler, the sights of the moon on the Danube at night, the rising sun on the mountain peaks in the Tyrol, the rich taste of a Sacher torte at a cafe, music from a string quartet on a street corner were all huge morale boosters. And sharing them with good travel companions made even our misadventures of delayed flights, lost luggage, and a souvenir case of COVID all just parts of living and learning.

I'm looking forward to another year of living and learning with all of you

Jill Stewart
President, OLLI at UAH Board of Directors

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2022

Sign up for each event by clicking "Online/In Person." All bonuses/events with online option are through Zoom video conferencing. You will receive an email with the Zoom meeting invitation one business day prior. There is a limited capacity for in-person events.

**Sept 7 | Wed | 2:00 pm or
Sept 8 | Thu | 10:00 am [Online](#)
Free Google Classroom Training**

To learn more about how to navigate Google Classroom, join one of our training sessions using Zoom. Sign up at [Osher.uah.edu/GoogleClassroom](https://osher.uah.edu/GoogleClassroom)

**Sept 15 | Thu | 5:30 pm | [In-Person](#)
Event: Dine Out Mig**

Dine Out MIG returns for the Fall! After visiting a few restaurants last Spring, Dine Out MIG chose J. Alexander's as its September venue. J. Alexander's is a contemporary American restaurant known for its wood-fired cuisine. Join your OLLI friends for great food and even better conversation. The cost of food is the responsibility of the participant. Reservations are required. Sign up [online](#).

Coordinated by Sandra Dabrowski.

**Sept 16 | Fri | 11:00 am | [Online/In-Person](#)
Bonus: Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theatre and Academy Presents SENIOR STARS!**

Join us in a preview of one of Huntsville's newest programs, perfect for those ages 55+ looking to hone their craft or learn something new! In this preview, attendees will learn a song, do a little dancing, and read some scenes from famous plays and musicals!

Sign up [online](#).

Presented by Jacinda Swinehart, Education Coordinator at Fantasy Playhouse, and a professional actress, singer, director, and choreographer.

**Sept 30 | Fri | 11:00 am | [Online/In-Person](#)
Bonus: Meet the Harp!**

Learn the history and science of the harp and enjoy a short concert which will include works by Debussy, Turlough O'Carolan, Bach, as well as contemporary favorites.

Sign up [online](#).

Presented by Steven Todd Miller, full-time musician and retired teacher/curriculum specialist for Huntsville City Schools.

**Oct 14 | Fri | 11:00 am | [Online/In-Person](#)
Bonus: Aging in Place with CASA**

Learn new ways to age gracefully in the comfort of your own home. Care Assurance System for the Aging and Homebound (CASA) of Madison County is a local, volunteer-driven, nonprofit agency which provides services that enable individuals 60 and older and homebound (those persons of all ages who are wheelchair or bed bound) to live safely, independently, and with dignity in their homes; thereby, aging in place. CASA's aging in place core services include: transportation; wheelchair ramp building/repairing; handrails, grab bars installation; and weatherization. Learn how you can take advantage of these services that are provided at no cost to the client or their family.

Sign up [online](#).

Presented by Dr. Jacqueline Horton, Safety Net Health Care Services Manager for CASA of Madison County.

**Oct 28 | Fri | 11:00 am | [Online/In-Person](#)
Bonus: Ukraine & Russia: Nationalism, Empire & War**

This lecture will discuss the complex history between Ukraine and Russia from the 19th century to the present. It will explore the geopolitical and cultural goals of the Russian, Soviet, and post-Soviet Russian empires, as well as the emergence of Ukrainian nationalism and the development of the Ukrainian nation-state.

Event is open to the public. Sign up [online](#).

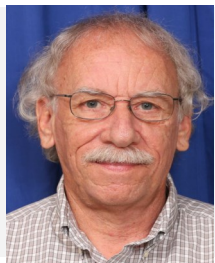
Presented by Dr. Molly Wilkinson Johnson, associate professor of history at UAH

**Note: Fall Semester Courses
start September 12.**

**KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST
EVENTS AT
[OSHER.UAH.EDU/OLLIEVENTS](https://osher.uah.edu/ollievents)**

EVENTS COMMITTEE

TOURS, HIKES, SCAVENGER HUNT, BIKE RIDE



Welcome to the fall semester at OLLI! Not only is a full slate of fascinating courses offered to members this semester, but the Events Committee has also been busy planning a variety of activities to help you get outside and be active.

See the list below of tours, trail hikes, an art-themed scavenger hunt, and a bike ride for your selection. Mark your calendars, and join your fellow OLLI members as we learn and socialize.

Many thanks to committee members Michelle Lavery and Val Seaquist for helping to put together a full and varied schedule of fall events!

Recap of recent event

- **National Weather Service tour** — On Aug. 5, 40 OLLI members toured the National Weather Service's Huntsville facility, the newest of the service's 122 offices nationwide. The office provides weather forecasts and warnings for 14 counties in northern Alabama and southern Tennessee. As a bonus, members also toured the nearby SWIRLL (Severe Weather Institute and Radar & Lightning Laboratories) facility, which is operated by UAH.

Upcoming events

- **Saturday, Sept. 10 — Cold Spring Nature Trail hike**, 10 a.m.-noon, Monte Sano Nature Preserve. Meet at the trailhead at the intersection of Bankhead Parkway and Fearn Street (hairpin turn on the north end of Monte Sano). Join us for this relatively easy 1.3-mile nature and history hike through a hardwood forest with many big trees (including the state champion basswood) and by Cold Spring, which fed the USA's first indoor bathtub. Parts of the trail may be muddy; wear appropriate clothing for the weather (hike will be canceled if there is inclement weather). Bring water and snacks. Requires pre-registration and waiver/release form. Bring your OLLI name tag. forms.gle/LA9tqCFcwUYzYWzy8
- **Friday, Sept. 23 — The Orion Amphitheater tour**, 11 a.m.-noon, Mid-City area; 701 Amphitheater Drive NW, Huntsville. Park at the Ford-branded lot adjacent to the TARCOC (Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments) building, then meet at the south box office (red building). Join us for an official tour of

Huntsville's newest event venue — The Orion Amphitheater. We will learn about the origin of The Orion, experience the beauty and depth of the amphitheater (including the concourses and bowl), and see the community programming areas. The 30-minute tour can accommodate up to 30 guests. Bring your OLLI name tag. This tour is free, but pre-registration and a waiver/release form are required. Registration deadline is Tuesday, Sept. 20, at 4 p.m. forms.gle/NDX4cFrBfuubmZ8o6

- **Friday, Oct. 7 — Cathedral Caverns tour**, 2-3 p.m., Cathedral Caverns State Park, northeast of Grant, Alabama (637 Cave Road, Woodville, Alabama). Please arrive at least 20 minutes early (1:40 p.m.). Experience the grandeur of Cathedral Caverns, with its massive entrance (a possible world record for commercial caves), beautiful stalagmites (including one of the largest in the world), a "frozen" waterfall, and a 58- to 60-degree temperature year-round. The 90-minute guided tour requires walking for about 1.5 miles on a smooth concrete pathway with several steep inclines and handrails. No seats are available during the tour. Cost is \$10 per person. Bring your OLLI name tag. Pre-registration and prepayment are required at tinyurl.com/cathedral-caverns (you must be logged in). Registration and payment deadline is Tuesday, Oct. 4, at 4 p.m. Waiver/release form is required.
- **Saturday, Oct. 8 — Flint Creek Nature Trail hike**, 2-4 p.m., Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in southeast Decatur. Meet in the Flint Creek parking lot on the north side of Highway 67 (Point Mallard Parkway), across the highway from the visitors' center. Join us for this easy 1.2-mile nature hike through a lakeside pine/hardwood forest. The footbridges have recently been renovated, and hikers will have the opportunity to observe a variety of natural features with occasional glimpses of nearby Flint Creek. Parts of the trail may be muddy; wear appropriate clothing for the weather (hike will be canceled if there is inclement weather). Bring water and snacks. Requires pre-registration and a waiver/release form. Bring your OLLI name tag. forms.gle/nmx6NbcijGCfCps8

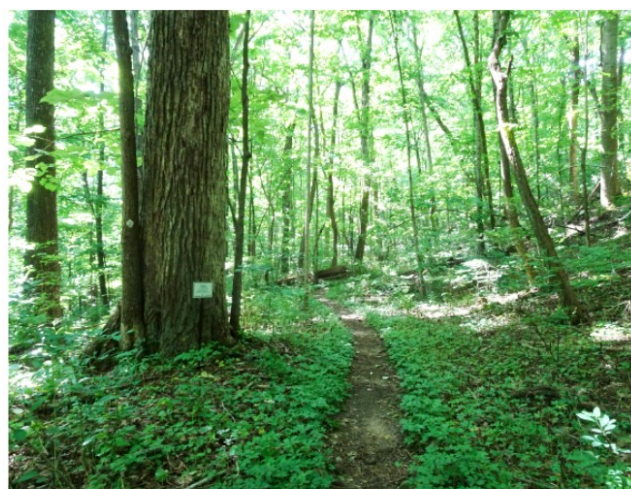
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TOURS, HIKES, HUNT, BIKE RIDE, CONT.

Check the fall semester course guide or the OLLI website for more details about these events, scheduled for later in the semester:

- **Friday, Oct. 21 — Downtown Huntsville Secret Art Trail**, 2-4 p.m., BeeZr Gastropub + Social Exchange, North Side Square, Huntsville. Each member can bring two guests.
- **Friday, Nov. 12 — Beaverdam Boardwalk/Blackwell Swamp hike**, 10 a.m.-noon, Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge near Huntsville Airport. Each member can bring two guests.
- **Friday, Nov. 18 — Burritt on the Mountain Tour**, 1:15-3:15 p.m., Burritt Drive, south end of Monte Sano
- **Friday, Dec. 2 — U.S. Veterans Memorial Museum tour**, 1:15-2:45 p.m., Alex McAllister Drive in John Hunt Park, Huntsville

Chris Stuhlinger
Events Committee Chair

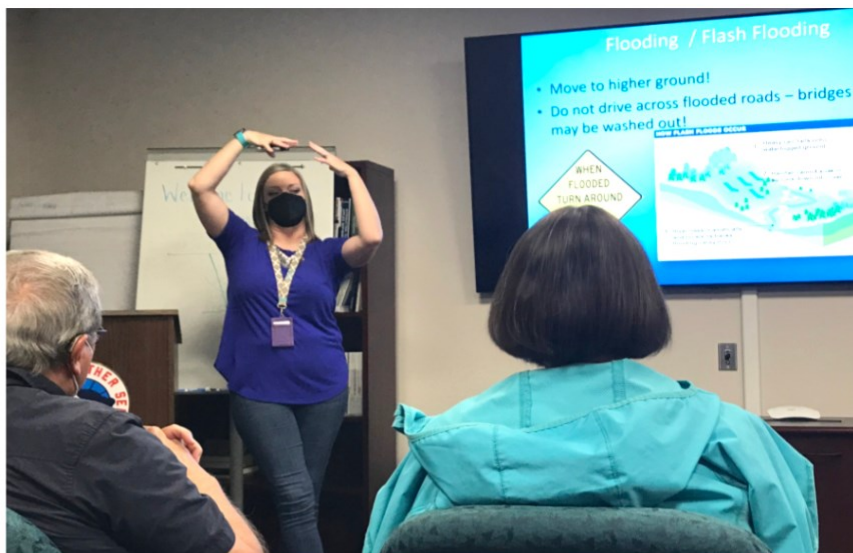


Coming soon (clockwise from top left): Cathedral Caverns, Cold Spring, Flint Creek, Orion Amphitheater.
(Photos from Chris Stuhlinger and venues)



INSIDE LOOK AT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Forty OLLI members took part in two weather-related tours Aug. 5. This one was at the National Weather Service's Huntsville facility, which is the newest of 122 in the nation. See the next page for photos of the other tour, the Severe Weather Institute and Radar & Lightning Laboratories.

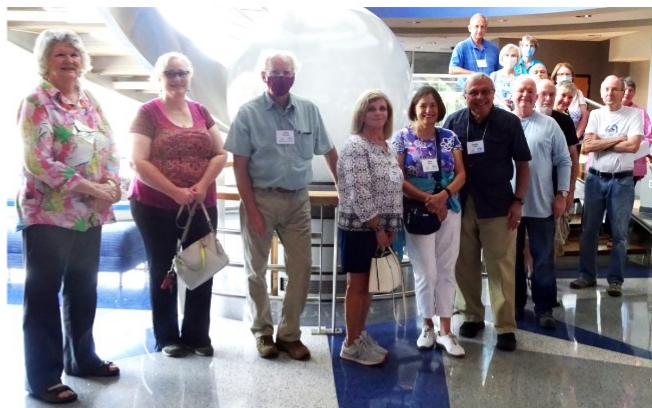


(Photos by Patrice Stewart and Steve Stewart)



TOUR OF UAH'S WEATHER RESEARCH FACILITY

On Aug. 5, the same day as their National Weather Service tour, members saw the Severe Weather Institute and Radar & Lightning Laboratories (SWIRLL) facility, operated by UAH. Both facilities are across Sparkman Drive from the UAH campus.



(Photos by Chris Stuhlinger and Steve Stewart)

DECATUR TOUR FOCUS IS SCOTTSBORO BOYS

A walking tour in Decatur on July 29 covered sites and archives related to the Scottsboro boys trials of the 1930s, which became notorious in U.S. civil rights history. Peggy Towns, author and OLLI instructor, led the tour.



(Peggy Towns and Betty Koval provided photos)

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME IN MADISON

OLLI members attended a baseball game July 22 between the Rocket City Trash Pandas and the Birmingham Barons. The Trash Pandas won 7-2 at Toyota Field in Madison.



(Clay Williams provided photos)



ONLINE LEARNING: UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITY



On Aug. 5, we celebrated the opening of a new academic year with our fall open house, and it was quite an experience.

For those of you who attended, I think you got to see a completely revitalized OLLI full of opportunities for learning

and looking forward with open arms to future possibilities. To those of you who didn't attend, we missed you. But don't stay away for long. We're going places.

And now we look forward to the start of classes. As I reported last time, 60 courses are available, offered by some really great instructors, and on a variety of topics sure to please even the most discriminating palate.

As we begin this journey, I start to think about the future of lifelong learning — where it can go and how we can help nudge it along. And that's what I want to talk about and, more importantly, get you to think about. Your input is key to our success because, after all, this is *your* program.

COVID changed the paradigm of education forever. It really affected programs like ours because we are, first and foremost, a family built on camaraderie. And quite frankly, the inability to come together with old friends for a cup of coffee and a bit of conversation in the morning struck us like a dagger.

Thankfully, that time is receding. Now, using precautions and common sense, we *can* safely get together again. We *can* interact with each other again. And we *can* continue to learn. We saw all of that come together on Aug. 5, and it was great!

But the other change was a bit more positive if sublime. Faced with interpersonal limitations, we discovered new ways to reach out; to communicate; and to, dare I say it, improve our educational possibilities. We discovered online learning.

Now, I know (because many of you have told me!) that online learning is hard. It doesn't work. It's impersonal. Folks, it's none of those things; it's just new. And more importantly, it represents nearly unlimited opportunity. And that is something we should embrace and, indeed, clamor for. To coin a phrase, opportunities like these don't knock very often.



Mark Francis checks out fall semester learning possibilities at open house Aug. 5. Classes will start Sept. 12, and there is still time to register. (Photo by Patrice Stewart)

How many of you have taken advantage of the courses that we have been offering under the auspices of the OLLI Alabama Shares program? Our partnering with our peers at Auburn and Tuscaloosa has opened a whole new set of learning opportunities. They have expertise in areas that we don't, and vice versa. And so, by stepping outside the proverbial box that only a couple of years ago would have been thought undoable, we have instead arrived at an entirely new level of lifelong learning right here in Alabama. I think it's been a sea change. COVID gave us that.

Now, since we've already stepped tentatively outside that box, let's take another small step forward. If we can see such obvious improvements and possibilities by partnering with just two other institutions, what could we achieve if we were to expand nationally? How about globally? Why not? We have the technology. And we have the desire. This is a direction we should not only consider taking but be actively striving to achieve.

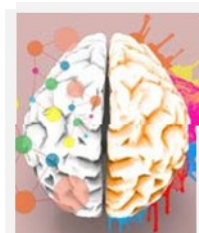
Change is hard, but it is also generally beneficial. You as members should demand that we do all we can to provide you with the educational opportunities that you deserve. It's your program. Together, we can make it so much better.

And with that, I'll bid you adieu. Till next time ...

John Mason
VP of Curriculum, OLLI at UAH Board of Directors

COURSE SPOTLIGHT

Fall 2022 is underway and OLLI is offering an exciting mixture of courses. Tuition is \$20 plus the per-course fee. You can register for courses at [Osher.uah.edu/OLLIRegistration](https://osher.uah.edu/OLLIRegistration).



ARTISTIC SIDE OF SCIENTIFIC IMAGES

9/13 – 10/18 • Tu • 3:15 – 4:45 pm • 6 sessions • In Person • H. Somerville • \$35

Have you considered hanging a CT scan or electron micrograph as art on your wall? Photographic competitions sponsored by scientific societies and equipment manufacturers such as Nikon and Olympus are common events. Native or modified scientific and medical images may be purchased from sites such as Fine Art America and BioArtography. This course will explore the different types of microscopes and medical imaging instruments including the X-ray CT, MRI and ultrasound and illustrate how the images are produced and the information they provide.



SO, YOU WANT TO BE A GENERAL?

9/14 – 11/2 • W • 10:30 am – Noon • 8 sessions • In Person • J. Scales • \$35

Do you have what it takes to command an army? In this interactive course, participants are given a situation (specifically the Atlanta Campaign in the American Civil War), instructed on campaign planning, and then work in small groups to make command decisions. Participants learn about military planning in the present day and also the Civil War.



DRAWING IN PEN AND INK

9/19 – 11/3 • Th • 8:30 – 10:00 am • 6 sessions • In Person • N. Rogers • \$35

Improve your drawing skills by learning basic techniques using pen and ink. Members will be taught skills such as crosshatching, stippling and wash. Finally, understand bottled ink and quills as well as self-contained pen usage.



BREATH-CENTERED YOGA

10/18 – 11/8 • Tu • 5:15 – 6:15 pm • 4 sessions • In Person • R. Frank • \$25

Explore a breath-centered yoga practice that is appropriate for beginners and experienced practitioners, tailored to everyone's unique body. Work on uniting your breath with movement in an adaptable environment. Each session explores a different theme that helps connect mind and body. All props are provided, but members are encouraged to bring their own yoga mat, blanket or towel, and wear comfortable clothing.

Save 20%

*When you register for 4 or more
term courses at once.*

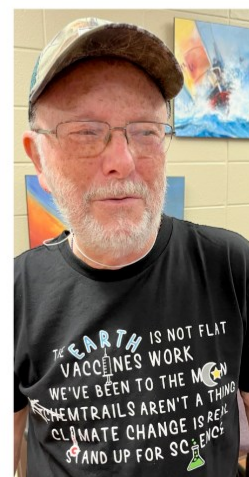
OPEN HOUSE AUG. 5: FALL SEMESTER PREVIEW



(Photos by Glen Adams, Patrice Stewart and Steve Stewart)



SIGNING UP, SEEING FRIENDS AT OPEN HOUSE



(Photos by Glen Adams, Patrice Stewart, Steve Stewart and Rexanne Warfel)

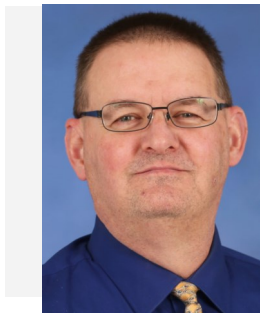


FREE COURSES IN WATERCOLORS AND DRUMS

Free courses named Watercolor Basics and Huntsville Drumline Gran Masters were offered in August through Alabama's Creative Aging Initiative. Jennie Couch taught the watercolors course, which was so popular that a session was added to the schedule. Frederick Walker taught the drums course.



LOOKING BACK AT WHAT REALLY MATTERS



Although the fall semester is less than two weeks away, it is only appropriate to take a look back on our past summer session.

OLLI members took part in over 20 courses, several local field trips, a tour to Alaska and an assortment of special tours and events.

Many of our members take time off from OLLI to spend time with family and do their own traveling, but many continue to participate in OLLI activities.

As still the new kid on the block (I survived my first six months!), I took advantage of the opportunity to meet many of our members and form stronger relationships with those I barely knew. And isn't forming relationships what OLLI is really all about? We don't take tests or get graded for any coursework, so, in reality, it is bonding with our fellow OLLI members where the real benefit of our organization lies.

With that in mind, registration is in full swing for the fall. Besides 60 courses guaranteed to expand your mind, fall also provides plenty of chances to interact and get to better know your fellow OLLI members.



Members bond with one another in the OLLI lounge (pictured), as well as through classes, events and tours. (Photo by Steve Stewart)

There are a host of special events and tours, and I hear the Social Committee will be providing breakfasts once again. Our lounge is a great place to visit between classes for great coffee and conversation.

As we slowly, but surely, recover from this pandemic, I hope everyone takes advantage of the multitude of opportunities that OLLI provides to meet other members and work on the art of relationship building. Now, that is a course we should all take!

Clay Williams
OLLI at UAH Program Manager



Date: Sept. 15
Time: 5:30 p.m.

J. Alexander's

380 Town Madison Blvd., Madison

Sign up:
tinyurl.com/j-alex-mig

Come join us!

NOW IT'S ON TO PHILADELPHIA AND CANADA



Well, here we are again, and another month has passed! *This summer has flown by!* I did not accomplish all I planned to this summer, but it will be there when I do get to it. We did, however, take some courses we enjoyed immensely and made new friends along the way. The wine wasn't bad, either!

I hope many of you took advantage of Alabama OLLI Day in Tuscaloosa on Aug. 22 and the Montgomery trip on Aug. 25. We hated to miss both, but one cannot do everything!

I will report, as I mentioned last month, my packing predicament. I am happy to report Bill and I each managed to get all we felt we would need for the Alaska trip in August into a carry-on and a backpack.

I realized quickly I did not need all I initially laid out. *And* it is not like we are traveling to places where there are no stores. Air travel is so haphazard these days that I want my luggage to reach my destination *with me!*

We have the two upcoming trips for 2023. Look for more information in the weekly *eNews* and in the OLLI volunteer office. I do hope you will consider traveling next year with other OLLI at UAH members.

The trips are:

1. **Philadelphia art trip, May 21-26, 2023** — Barnes Museum, local art displays, and various locations of historic and artistic interest. Attend our Zoom meeting on Friday, Sept. 23, at 2:30 p.m. See tinyurl.com/philly-art.
2. **The Canadian Maritimes: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick & Prince Edward Island, Aug. 17-29, 2023.** Attend our Zoom meeting on Friday, Sept. 30, at 2:30 p.m. See tinyurl.com/Canadian-maritime.

These are both wonderful experiences, and to travel with OLLI at UAH friends is just the best. I cannot stress enough how much fun it can be.

There may be people on the trip whom you have never met, yet they become friends before the end of the trip. The course schedules are such that we may not ever cross paths with other OLLI at UAH members, but traveling is how you form a mutual bond for learning and adventure. Some trips are more adventurous than others, but you get my gist.

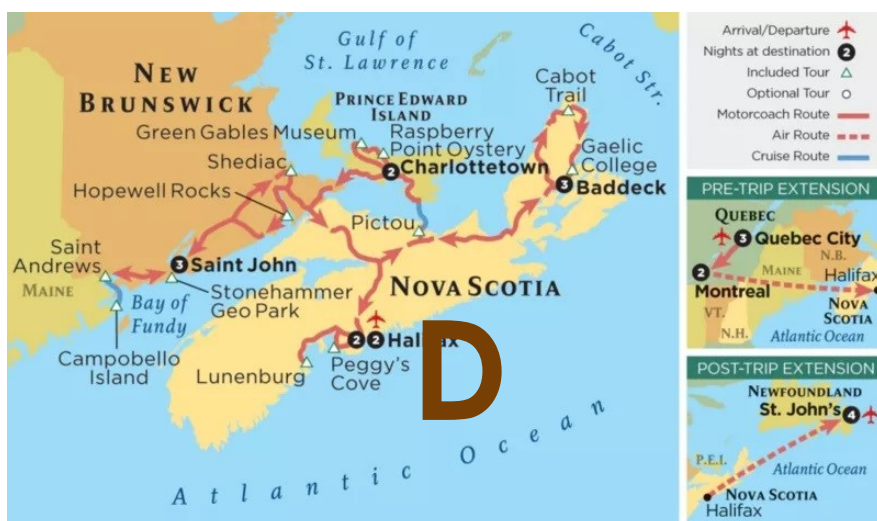
Next month, I plan to bombard you with photos of the great outdoors from Alaska — so be prepared!

Safe and happy travels to all who are still on the road.

All who wander are not lost.

Betty Koval
Travel Committee Chair

The Canadian Maritimes:
Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and
Prince Edward Island



SIGHTSEEING AND ADVENTURES IN ALASKA

Twenty-five members of OLLI at UAH traveled together in “An Alaskan Adventure” Aug. 12-23. They saw wildlife beside public highways and toured Denali National Park. They rode a train pulled by a coal-fired locomotive, strolled through a craft show, toasted each other in an ice museum, mingled with sled dogs and puppies, learned history of the 49th state, and basked in hot springs. More pictures are on the next page.



ALASKA: ANIMALS, A PIPELINE, A RIVERBOAT

OLLI's Alaska tourists started in downtown Fairbanks and traveled toward Anchorage. They saw a whale skeleton in a museum, encountered real and stuffed wild animals, visited the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline, and cruised on a riverboat. Some made side trips to the town of North Pole, Alaska, and the Arctic Circle. Watch for more photos and details in the Oct. 1 Insider.



LOOKING FOR A WAY TO MEET OLLI MEMBERS?



Are you looking for opportunities to meet OLLI members and don't want to join a committee? Try volunteering.

One of the best opportunities to meet people and know what's going on is to volunteer in the OLLI office each week. If you have a morning class on campus and another in the afternoon and are trying to figure out a way to

kill time, the office is a great place to do it.

Becoming an office volunteer is one of the *best* ways to meet OLLI members outside the classroom environment. You get acquainted with the UAH staff, teachers, facilitators and students who stop by for information. You have occasions just to chat.

This opportunity is very easy. We make sure coffee is available in the lounge, usually making it first thing in the morning, then others make it as it's consumed. A big part is answering questions, especially during the first couple of weeks of each term — things like the location of classes, how to use the repro equipment (copier), how to register and how to get a new/updated parking pass.

For registration and parking, all you have to do is refer students to the registration office. If something is asked you don't know, you can check our handbook or contact an OLLI at UAH staff person. Easy stuff.

The first week of classes is pretty typical — answer questions about where classes are meeting (we have the room numbers in the office), where to go to get new parking permits, how to get a name badge to replace one that was lost; *and, of course*, chat with fellow members. If you're inquisitive (my new word for nosy), this is the place to be.

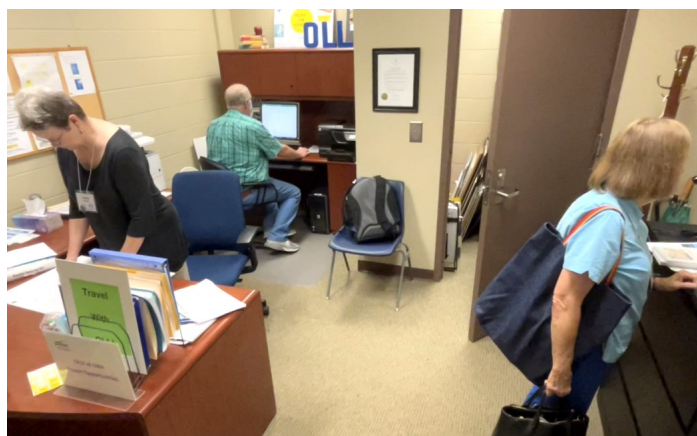
Our volunteer office is located in Wilson Hall, Room 151, and sometimes is a bustle of activity with people dropping in to get information, kill time before going to class, or stopping in to chat with other members. There are many times you'll find three or four people just chatting.

There will be many shifts available in the fall — just watch the weekly *eNews* for information. Training is provided if required, and there is a handbook in case something comes up you're not sure about.

If you think you may be interested in this opportunity or would like additional information, please contact [Irene Garoppo](#) or OLLI.info@uah.edu, for available shifts and/or information.

Remember, it's never too late to volunteer!

Irene Garoppo
Volunteer Support Committee Chair



In the OLLI office — Room 151 of Wilson Hall — volunteers help OLLI members and get to know them.
(Photo by Steve Stewart)

72 IS THE NEW 70½: RETIREE FINANCIAL UPDATE



Is it too early to start talking about our financial decisions for the end of the year?

The heat of summer is still blasting, but with some of the changes in our retirement finances made by the government in the last couple of years, our thoughts need to look forward to Dec. 31.

If you have already started taking your required minimum distribution (RMD) or if you've turned 70 in the last two years, you should be researching the latest changes made by the SECURE Act and further changes proposed in the SECURE Act 2.0.

I've found a few tidbits of information to get you started, but please be sure to consult with your tax and financial advisers for your specific information. I do not qualify as either of those specialists.

The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (SECURE) Act was signed into law in December 2019. The far-reaching bill includes several provisions aimed at increasing access to tax-advantaged accounts and preventing older Americans from outliving their assets. Among other things, it raised the age requirement to start RMDs from a traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) from 70½ to 72. If you don't need your IRA money to finance your retirement, the delay allows your funds to remain invested longer.

Another facet of the SECURE Act was the elimination of stretch IRAs. If you are planning on leaving your IRA or 401(k) funds to a nonspouse beneficiary, they will have to completely withdraw the funds within 10 years. The stretch IRA previously allowed the beneficiary to calculate their withdrawals based on their lifetime IRS actuary tables. Therefore, you may need to reassess your plans to pass on funds from these accounts to your heirs.

The SECURE Act 2.0 has not yet been approved by Congress, but many financial analysts believe it will be passed into law this year. The primary impact on those already in retirement will be the gradual extension of RMD

How a qualified charitable distribution works



age requirements. Depending on which version of the bill is approved, by 2032 or 2033 you won't have to start taking RMDs until age 75.

Qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) may help lessen the impact of RMDs on your finances, especially if your income level is on the cusp of moving into a higher tax bracket. If you take all or part of your required distribution and donate it to charity, the IRS does not include the amount as income. You can even contribute more than the amount of your RMD if you want to reduce your IRA balance in order to lower future minimum distributions or to reduce your beneficiary's tax consequences from an inherited IRA.

Normally, charitable gifts that can be deducted from a tax return are limited to a percentage of the donor's adjusted gross income. This limit does not apply to QCDs, which may allow for larger gifts in addition to the RMD qualification.

In order to qualify, the IRA distribution must be coded specifically and usually paid directly to the charity from the IRA custodian. If you would like to make your QCD in support of OLLI at UAH, or any qualified charity, be sure to discuss the decision with your CPA and financial adviser. Most financial firms will have a specific form for you to complete to satisfy the IRS requirements, and the UAH Office of Development (www.uah.edu/giving) can help answer questions.

Janet Reville
VP of Administration and Finance
OLLI at UAH Board of Directors

‘OLLI WAS A NATURAL FIT’ FOR JANE McBRIDE



Jane McBride is one of the mainstays of OLLI. She has chaired several OLLI committees, taken numerous OLLI courses and organized a number of OLLI trips. She is the subject of this month's *Insider* profile.

Jane Alford was raised about an hour's drive north in Lewisburg, Tennessee, where her father, Bill, owned a drugstore on the square.

"It was the proverbial small town where everyone gathered on the square," Jane remembered. "I worked at the soda fountain and got a lot of reprimands for visiting instead of serving the customers. I graduated from Marshall County High School, where I lettered in girls basketball for four years. I had to get contact lenses so my glasses weren't broken in every game — I guess I thought it was a contact sport."

Jane's mother and namesake, Jane, foreshadowed her daughter's whirlwind of activity. She was a genealogist and a volunteer for everything from the PTA to the Daughters of the American Revolution to the Red Cross and was a member of the garden, book and bridge clubs. She also found time to write articles for the local newspaper.

Jane graduated from Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, Virginia, in the '60s, about the time of the British Invasion — the Beatles. She majored in economics with a minor in political science and won the Wall Street Journal Award for Outstanding Senior in Economics.

After college, it was off to New York City, where she had a job waiting in marketing research.

"I lived in a fifth-floor walkup apartment of a brownstone on East 71st Street between Fifth and Madison avenues," Jane recalled. "It was a swank address but a tiny flat that I shared with two friends. I sometimes walked to work all the way down Fifth Avenue to Rockefeller Center in high heels before it was smart to wear walking shoes." Jane was lucky enough then to see Bob Dylan, Woody Allen, Lenny Bruce and Harry Chapin early in their careers.

Jane also took advantage of the bargain-basement matinee prices of those days to see a number of first-run Broadway shows, including "Fiddler on the Roof," "Hello, Dolly!" and "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" with the original cast.

While living in NYC, Jane met and married Paul McBride, and a few months after their marriage, they moved to Chicago because of Paul's job. Jane worked for Northwestern University and took graduate courses, including one taught by J. Allen Hynek, who authored the Air Force Blue Book on the UFO phenomenon.

Even after having four children, Jane managed to get out of the house through volunteer activities and taking up golf.

"There was a steady stream of high-quality babysitters," Jane said, "because we provided room and board for unwed pregnant teenage girls through a charity there, and in the summer farm girls from Michigan and Wisconsin who were willing to work for room and board and spending money in the city."

Eventually they tired of the Chicago winters and moved to Huntsville in 1977.

"We rented a house in Mooresville, stored our furniture, enrolled our children in four different schools from Decatur to Huntsville, and settled into two beautiful and restful years there," said Jane. "Nearby Wheeler Wildlife Refuge was a blessing for hiking, picnicking and my serious birding."

They built a home on the hillside of Monte Sano, and Jane became active in First Presbyterian Church, as well as continuing her volunteer work with other organizations.

When Jane's marriage ended, she went to work as an analyst for Teledyne Brown Engineering in the strategic studies branch, where she spent a 25-year career before retiring. About halfway through that career, her last child graduated from college.

(continued on the next page)

‘OLLI WAS A NATURAL FIT,’ CONT.

Her children are Amy, a preschool teacher living in Huntsville whose daughter and granddaughter live nearby; Paul and his wife and 10 children, who live in Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Will and his wife and three children, who live in Washington, D.C.; and Sarah and her husband, who have three children in Lexington, Kentucky.

It was immediately after retirement that Jane discovered OLLI.

“OLLI was a natural fit for me,” said Jane. “My good friend Linda McAllister and Betty Carlton were persuasive in extolling the benefits of OLLI. I served on the Board of Directors for six years, during which time we celebrated our 20th and 25th anniversaries with lauded speakers and experts in various fields, all open to the public. I also chaired the Cultural Events and Administration and

Finance committees. We organized wonderful excursions to Northport, Alabama, Memphis, Atlanta and Cartersville, Georgia, for unique adventures. It was also during this time that we rekindled the distance travel program.”

Summing up, Jane said, “I have made forever friends in this invigorating ecosystem called OLLI.”

Jane continues to be an active birder and gardener (with lots of help). But her principal interest remains lifelong learning.

Thanks, Jane, for all you do for OLLI.

By Glen Adams



Jane Alford McBride with family members.

DID YOU KNOW ...? AN INSIDER'S LOOK AT MILITARY HISTORY

September: Happy birthday, United States!

This is, I think, a very timely article for this month because it has such a historical significance that I'll bet most of us didn't know. So let me be the first, on Friday, Sept. 9, to say, "Happy birthday, United States of America!"

Yes, you read that correctly. I did indeed say, "Happy birthday, United States of America." And, yes, I know I said Sept. 9 and not July 4. But the fact is, it was on Sept. 9 — 246 years ago this month — that our country was officially named.

As it turns out, once we had declared our intention to free ourselves of British rule, but before Sept. 9, our would-be country was known as the "the United Colonies." And that's the name that was still in use when the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

It's true. Now some of you might say that the Declaration as signed on July 4 actually refers to the "united States of America." And it does. But look closely at a copy of the original document. In fact, if you zoom in to the last paragraph, five lines above John Hancock's famously humongous signature, you'll note that the "u" in "united" is lower-case.

That's because, in the Declaration, the word "united" was being used as an adjective. The founders were making the point that the "States of America" (which were not quite states in the current sense yet) were *united* in pursuing independence from King George and Britain.

But, and thankfully for the course of our history, the Founding Fathers apparently noticed that the phrase "united States of America" had a certain *je ne sais quoi* about it. So shortly after the Declaration was officially signed, they prepared a draft of the Articles of Confederation that would govern the nascent nation. And it was that draft that stated: "The name of this Confederacy shall be 'the United States of America.' "

Well, as things turned out, the Articles of Confederation got sidetracked and weren't officially adopted until 1781. (It appears that Congress was as efficient then as it is now,



Fireworks at Big Spring International Park in Huntsville after an Army band concert on June 27, 2022, celebrating Armed Forces Week.
(Photo by Steve Stewart)

but in fairness to the founders, I suppose they deserve some latitude — they were in the midst of creating a new country *and* a totally new form of government with which to run it at the time!)

However, in the fall of 1776, while waiting for the Articles to be approved, the Congress decided to pass a resolution to make the name official.

Here's how it was recorded by John Adams for the Journal of Congress:

"Monday September 9, 1776. Resolved, that in all Continental Commissions, and other Instruments where heretofore the Words, 'United Colonies,' have been used, the Stile [sic] be altered for the future to the United States."

And that, to coin a phrase, is the rest of the story.

Break out the firecrackers!

By John Mason

FOUR TYPES OF 'TRUTH'



Adapted from Andrew Bernardin

If a truth is the perception that "it is so," there are different types and perhaps levels of truth.

1. **PERSONAL TRUTH:** A personal truth is what is true for an individual. For example, one person may believe that chocolate ice cream is the best. Nothing said

could alter his or her perception that "it is so." He or she may consider your own favorite, strawberry, to be inedible. Personal truths reflect physiological attributes, psychological tendencies, and the learning and experiences of an individual.

2. **SOCIAL TRUTH:** A social truth is what a distinct group perceives to "be so." Social truths reflect group history, customs and values. For example, to Group A, it may be true that the neighboring group, Group B, is the enemy and thus a threat. But Group C might not find this to be so. Or Group A may believe that Saturday is the holy day, while Group B claims it is Sunday.

3. **HUMAN TRUTH:** A human truth reflects and pertains to the universal dispositions and abilities of our species, Homo sapiens. Many things that we consider to be inherently true probably reflect distinctive features of human psychology. For instance, because human beings are primates who readily establish and acknowledge dominance hierarchies, the human individual may be predisposed to feeling that there is or could be some entity "greater than me," whether or not that happens to be true.

4. **UNIVERSAL TRUTH:** A universal truth is one that all sufficiently intelligent and educated observers, from this planet or any other (should they exist), would conclude to "be so." For instance, the proportion of a circle's circumference to its diameter is 3.141592 (...). This is a universal truth. Any capable, unbiased individual could verify that truth. Similarly, that energy is equivalent to rest mass times the speed of light squared is also a universal truth.

A universal truth is the only type of truth that is not relative to the person or group making the claim. Religion and faith seek to determine a glimpse of this truth as a guide toward a life of discovery and goodness.

By Richard H. Brooks

Anchor of Truth

By Richard H. Brooks

Anchor your life and ship so tight,
In the harbor of the truth and right.
Be careful not to lose your slip,
With mooring lines that fail to grip.

Let not your anchor get away,
Lest your ship begin to stray,
Untethered and casting adrift,
In the ocean's merciless, perilous swift.

What gets us in trouble is not what we do not know, but what we know that just ain't so. — Mark Twain

OLLI AT UAH BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2022-23



Jill Stewart
President



Janet Reville
VP, admin. & finance



John Mason
VP, curriculum



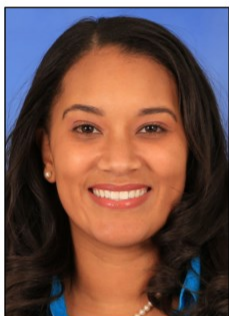
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Irene Garoppo



Rick Heeth



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Barbara Johnson



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Hilda Lee



Kristi Parker



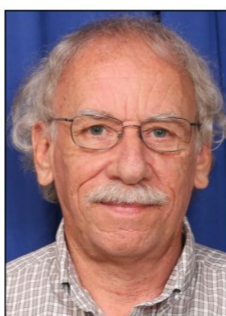
Valerie Seaquist



Harriett Somerville



Steve Stewart



Chris Stuhlinger



Marilynn Szecholda



Rexanne Warfel



Photo Contest

LIGHT & SHADOW

Showcase your mastery of light and shadow in photographs.

2023 OLLI PHOTO CONTEST

- The topic for this year is “Light and Shadow.”
- Photos must be taken from April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023.
- The photographer must be a current OLLI member.
- Gentle photo editing is permitted, but keep the original photo.
- Submit the named photo in a standard digital jpg format — at least a 2MP final pixel size is recommended.
- Photographers may submit photos anytime until the April 1, 2023, deadline.
- Submit photos to OLLIPhotoContest@uah.edu.