

The OLLI Insider

News for OLLI members at The University of Alabama in Huntsville

September 2024



LEARNING TOGETHER ON LIFE'S JOURNEY(S)

Top: Promoting a Shakespeare course and shooting a promotional photo for social media during open house for fall semester. Middle: Lining up to ride the rails in Alabama and practicing footwork in Ireland. Bottom: Jessica Taylor with husband Donald and daughter Clara. Jessica, who teaches mindfulness and positive psychology, is the subject of this month's OLLI Insider profile.

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From the Editor

AVOID HOOTERS AND CLIMBING BALCONIES



My master's education required commuting weekly from Decatur to The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. But longer trips to Panama City Beach, Florida, New Orleans and Richmond, Virginia, were more fun and possibly more educational.

Patrice and I traveled to conferences where students and professors shared their research papers. My memory is foggy about those

papers, but I easily recall good and valuable times with my professors and fellow students. (Almost everyone was younger than me. I was in my mid-50s.)

In Panama City Beach, we stayed high in a hotel where a sign warned not to climb the balconies — a lesson presumably learned from spring breaks. A student's husband explained to a professor (this one slightly older than me) why the Hooters next door might not be the best place to eat lunch.

In New Orleans, we spent hours, shall we say, *studying* the French Quarter. In Richmond, we toured the Capitol building that once served as headquarters for the Confederacy.

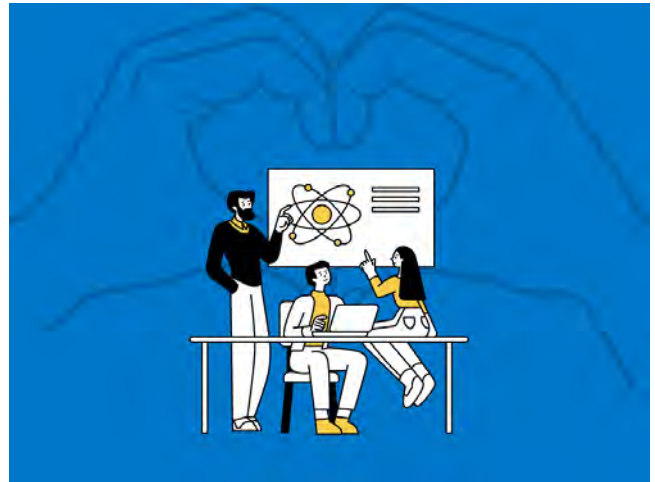
Richmond is where I learned lessons about teaching when professors from several states got together for brainstorming.

My Alabama professor David Sloan said we teachers and aspiring teachers should be concerned about students as individuals. He advised that although we should enforce standards, we should not take ourselves too seriously. And we should always end class on time! (A wise retired preacher once made a related point: "I never heard anybody complain that a sermon was too short.")

Wally Eberhard from the University of Georgia, who had taught Patrice and me there about 35 years earlier, shared his tips: Be prepared. Be flexible. Have standards. Be sympathetic, but don't let the students jack you around. You need a B.S. filter. (A decade later when I felt ill-prepared to teach an assigned course, he assured me that I could do it by staying a chapter or two ahead of the students.)

Other professors in Richmond said: Students will read assignments only if you hold them accountable, perhaps by asking questions or requiring summaries. Don't be afraid to steal or borrow ideas. It's OK to admit you don't know it all, but remember that you know more than the students. Listen to the students, and learn from them. Enjoy yourself; being goofy is OK. Never let them see you sweat.

One professor recommended shooting video as a memory aid while students introduce themselves during the first class. (I later learned that, if I still couldn't remember a student's name, I could ask for her email address as a clue.)



(Illustration by Susan Lucille Davis)

In grad school as in OLLI, you learn a lot of things outside the classroom. That's why I always end my OLLI classes on time, never climb balconies, and usually avoid Hooters.

Inside The Insider: In a vein similar to my comments above, Clay Williams emphasizes the value of not just OLLI classes, but also opportunities to socialize and volunteer. One place you can help is the volunteer office, as explained by Irene Garoppo. One place you can socialize is the OLLI lounge, where free breakfasts will soon be available. See Marilyn Szecholda's column.

Glen Adams profiles Jessica Taylor, who has taught mindfulness and will be teaching positive psychology this semester.

David Sayre, new chair of the Travel Committee, shares worldwide plans and encourages you to participate as a traveler and/or organizer. Even if you cannot travel to Egypt, you can attend the bonus that Betty Koval describes. Chris Stuhlinger includes four local September opportunities in his events column.

John Mason explains the intricate history of something we take for granted: calendars. And did you know that Thomas Edison wanted the Statue of Liberty to speak its welcoming message to immigrants? John covers that in his president's column.

Leah Black notes that we have a new member interest group for book readers. Jean Krieger and Chris Stuhlinger give reports from the art and hiking MIGs.

Do you remember the technology meltdown in the air travel system during July? Bob Carroll experienced it and found silver linings, as explained in his column.

Steve Stewart
Editor, The OLLI Insider

From the President

THOMAS EDISON HELPS OLLI SEE THE LIGHT



Picture this. You're an immigrant, packed like a sardine into the hold of a ship full of other sardines crossing the Atlantic in search of a better life. As your journey nears its end, you and your friends and family force your way onto the deck to be greeted by what those who made the journey before you view as *the* beacon of freedom — the Statue of Liberty, welcoming you to her shores.

Then, as you sail into earshot, she begins to speak: "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" Can you imagine the emotions you might have felt?

Well, if Thomas Edison had had his way, that could well have been exactly the welcome many of our immigrant forebears heard. What?

We might remember that Thomas Edison revolutionized the world in 1878 when he obtained a patent for the phonograph. The audio player (I like "record player," but I suppose that's a more recent moniker) was basically designed for at-home use, and I think we can agree it was modestly successful.

But did you know that Edison actually had a much larger goal in mind? He dreamt of placing a massive phonograph inside the Statue of Liberty, making her capable of speech.

Edison believed he could make a "monster disc" on which he could record those famous words to make it sound as if the statue were uttering them herself. He thought that if amplified properly, he could create a sound loud enough to be heard as far as northern Manhattan and across New York Harbor — and onto the decks of those vessels arriving with the very people for whom the words were written.

Alas, despite Edison's optimistic and ambitious ideas, the project never came to fruition, and the statue remained silent.

It's kind of a shame, really, that we lost that chance.

In the intervening 150 years, we seem to have forgotten that at some point, the ancestors of virtually all Americans came here *because* that message, that ideal, beckoned. But now it seems we've lost the very thing that led to our becoming that shining beacon the rest of the world tried so hard to emulate.



The Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor is a beacon welcomed by generations of immigrants, including the ancestors of millions of today's Americans. (National Park Service photo)

But have we really? Our return to greatness seems to be hampered only by ourselves. The kinds of baseball caps or lapel pins or T-shirts we wear, or the kinds of flags and bumper stickers we display, used to be the things that opened conversations, not prohibited them. We need to reverse that trend, and we can start by making a commitment to the very thing that makes us in the nationwide OLLI communities so important: a willingness to listen, to learn and to communicate!

I've written about this — the need to think critically, to listen and to learn — repeatedly over the past few months. And today, and especially in the coming months, those skills will be ever more important. But I know we already share those traits, and that puts us ahead of the game. I've seen it in action, and I'll bet you have, too.

I have a lot of good friends in our family, and their thoughts, interests and backgrounds cover the entire spectrum of diversity that makes us great. I've seen some of those friends go toe to toe, arguing with extreme vehemence, over some topic on which they disagree.

But when the "discussion" is over, whether they've come to an agreement or simply agreed to disagree, it's over. It didn't portend the end of a friendship or the beginning of a lifelong feud; it simply ended that particular exchange of ideas. And, often as not, the parties then adjourned from wherever the discussion took place and ended up in the lounge to share a coffee, talk about other things, and enjoy the relationships OLLI has brought to them.

(continued on the next page)

From the President

THOMAS EDISON HELPS OLLI SEE THE LIGHT, CONT

That's the point, my friends. We in OLLI are a family, and in a sense, we're just a small microcosm of the family that is America. We can succeed so long as we continue to think. We can solve seemingly insurmountable issues so long as we listen. And we can continue to be a family so long as we talk. And there's no better place to hone those skills than in our own OLLI community, enjoying how the experience forever enriches our lives.

Edison's idea for a talking Lady Liberty may have flopped, but the lesson it leaves us is that like the Lady's welcoming words, continued open communication can inspire both us

and future generations to levels of greatness never considered. And that, at least in my humble opinion, is the real "lamp beside the golden door"!

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

John Mason
President, OLLI at UAH
Board of Directors

OLLI Life

UAH MEMBERS GO TO AUBURN FOR ALABAMA OLLI DAY



Sue Chatham
University of Alabama in Huntsville



UAH OLLI members mingled with those from Auburn University and The University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa) during the fifth annual Alabama OLLI Day, held Aug. 7 in Auburn. The three campuses share online courses each semester. Sue Chatham was one of the "OLLI Trailblazers" recognized. Attending from UAH were (from left) Clay Williams, Jill Stewart, John Mason, Lisa Brunegraff, Michelle Harrell, Nancy Darnall, Bob Darnall and Bob Carroll. The group photo was taken by Royrickers Cook, Auburn University vice president for outreach and associate provost. (Photos from Jill Stewart)

Calendar

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2024

September 11 | Wed | 11:00 am - 1:00 pm | [In-Person](#)
Event: New Member Social
Wilson Hall

Enjoy tasty treats and meet other new members of OLLI. Learn more about OLLI with a Q&A with staff and veteran members. Open to any OLLI member who has joined in the last year.

Presented by OLLI Board of Directors
Free for OLLI members. Sign-up is required.

September 19 | Thu | 5:30 pm | [In-Person](#)
Event: Dine Out MIG—Back Forty Beer Company
Off Campus

Join the Dine Out MIG and enjoy dining out with OLLI friends. This month, we're heading to **Back Forty Beer Company**.

"At Back Forty Huntsville, innovation is our cornerstone, pulsating through both our brewhouse and kitchen alike. Delve into a world of American and European craft beer styles, meticulously brewed on-site and delivered fresh to your glass. With a repertoire boasting over 50 new beers yearly and a rotating selection of up to 20 taps at any moment, finding your perfect pint is inevitable. To elevate your experience, indulge in our imaginative menu of gourmet pub fare, featuring signature delights such as the Back 40 Cheeseburger, tantalizing Neopolitan-inspired pizzas, and the refreshing crunch of our kale salad." Visit <https://www.backfortybeer.com/huntsville> for a menu preview.

Presented by the Dining Out MIG
Members responsible for food cost. Sign-up required.

September 20 | Fri | 11:00 am | [In-Person](#)
Bonus: Ancient Egypt and the Nile
Wilson Hall

Immerse yourself in ancient Egyptian culture. Discover incredible sites such as the Pyramids of Giza, Abu Simbel, the Valley of the Kings, and King Tut's tomb on this photographic journey through Egypt. See all this and more as you sail down the historic Nile River on a dahabiyah, a traditional Nile River boat.

Presented by Tom Ress, avid adventure traveler.
Free for OLLI members. Sign-up is required.

October 3 | Thu | 4:30 - 7:30 pm | [In-Person](#)
Event: Biergarten Charity Fundraiser for OLLI
Off Campus

Bring your family and friends to an evening of good food, live music, and fun under the Saturn V rocket at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. The beneficiary of this evening's charity fundraiser will be OLLI at UAH! Admission charge to be determined.

Sign-up will be available the first week of September.

October 4 | Fri | 11:00 am | [In-Person](#)
Bonus: A Presidential Election Like No Other
Wilson Hall

With the 2024 presidential election on the horizon and with the 2020 election still in our rearview mirror, it may be surprising to learn that we've been through all this before! In the presidential election of 1876, there were voting fraud claims and chaos in the electoral college. Congress eventually chose the president, Rutherford B. Hayes, who was secretly sworn in to avoid a possible overthrow of the government. It's the perfect time to reflect on a similar yet often forgotten period in our nation's history.

Presented by Tom Borchert, a retired trial attorney and White House historian.

Free for OLLI members. Sign-up is required

October 18 | Fri | 11:00 am | [In-Person](#)
Bonus: Huntsville Revisited
Wilson Hall

Local historian and founder of the Huntsville Revisited Museum, William Hampton, will present Huntsville and Madison history. The museum houses a wide range of unique artifacts, photos, and stories of the places and families that make up the fabric of our history.

Presented by William H. Hampton, founder and creator of Huntsville Revisited Museum.

Free for OLLI members. Sign-up is required

Events Committee

SEPTEMBER AND EARLY OCTOBER EVENTS



Our committee members have organized several interesting events for the next six weeks, so be sure to sign up early to reserve your spot!

Important: If you sign up for an event and later realize that you cannot attend, please tell me or OLLI staff as soon as possible to cancel your event registration. Many events reach capacity, and we start waiting lists. By notifying us that you cannot attend, you give another OLLI member the opportunity to attend in your place.

Also, when you sign up to attend an event, make sure your name is spelled correctly, your email address is correct, you agree to the release/waiver form, and you enter your emergency contact information.

We look forward to seeing you at our fall events!

Recap of recent events

Lowe Mill tour, July 26 — Fifteen OLLI members participated in a tour of Lowe Mill and were given a history of the mill. Our group learned that it was started as a cotton mill by Arthur Lowe in 1900 and is now one of the South's largest collaborate art centers, thanks to Jim Hudson. We were given tours by Lowe Mill artists and learned about their specialties and more historic details of the mill.

North Alabama Railroad Museum and train ride, July 27 — Almost 40 OLLI members enjoyed a 10-mile round-trip excursion on the Mercury & Chase Railroad, whose 75- to 90-year-old diesel engines and passenger cars have been carefully restored by volunteers. Afterward, our group toured the small museum and visited some of the static railroad cars on display.

Coming events preview

Mark your calendars and watch the weekly *eNews* for more details about these fall events, including registration and payment details.



Events in late July included a tour of Lowe Mill (left) and a train ride from the North Alabama Railroad Museum. (Photos by Patricia Haag and Marsha Langlois)

- Friday, Sept. 20 — **Huntsville Museum of Art** (downtown Huntsville), 2-3 p.m. Attend a docent-led tour of the exhibit "A Journey into Imagination: 100 Years of Animation Artwork." The exhibit will feature cartoons such as Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Mighty Mouse, Tom & Jerry, Woody Woodpecker and much more.
- Sunday, Sept. 22 — **Huntsville Football Club soccer game** (Huntsville). Game time 6 p.m. Watch the Huntsville FC versus Cincinnati at the recently renovated Joe Davis Stadium. The Huntsville FC, our professional soccer club, is in its second season.
- Friday, Sept. 27 — **Historic Decatur Train Depot tour** (Decatur), 2:30-4 p.m. Learn about the long history of the train depot and railroading in Decatur. Inside, see several exhibits and model train layouts.
- Saturday, Sept. 28 — **Mosaic art class** (Huntsville), 10 a.m.-noon. Come design a work of art using the tiles from the famous historic refinished tile mosaic at First Baptist Church on Governors Drive. Bring your own item to decorate, or you can purchase a jewelry mold or other decorative items to create.
- Friday, Oct. 4 — **Downtown Huntsville Secret Art Trail**, 2:30-4:30 p.m. Have your cellphones charged and your walking shoes on for a bit of competitive fun with the Downtown Huntsville Secret Art Trail Scavenger Hunt. We will pair up at Moe's Original BBQ downtown and receive the clue map for the 21 outdoor artworks the Arts Council has currently included on the trail. Each team will have one hour to photograph as many of the items as you can find.
- Friday, Oct. 11 — **VBAS Planetarium and Observatory tour** (Monte Sano), 5:30-7:30 p.m. Join us for a fascinating tour of the Von Braun Astronomical Society's facility in Monte Sano State Park. Participate in a brief planetarium show, and tour the observatory with its 21-inch reflecting telescope (telescope gazing included if skies are clear).

Chris Stuhlinger
Events Committee Chair

JULY 26: LOWE MILL'S HISTORY, ART, SHOPS



(Photos by Patricia Haag)

JULY 27: RIDING THE TRAIN FROM RAIL MUSEUM



(Photos by Marsha Langlois, Patricia Haag, Patrice Stewart, Steve Stewart and Chris Stuhlinger)

FEAR AND LOATHING IN THE LAS VEGAS AIRPORT



It was supposed to be bro' time for three days in California. My brother, John, had invited me to Sacramento for a long weekend. At first, I expressed regrets after investigating airline ticket prices.

But then Google notified of a \$220 round trip out of Nashville. I booked the flight.

Early Thursday, July 18, I drove up to Nashville. Little did I know what was ahead of me and the scores preparing to fly to Las Vegas, where many had connecting flights.

The first leg was uneventful. We landed at Harry Reid International Airport, Las Vegas, just past 3 p.m. without incident, and taxied to the terminal. The pilot announced that our gate was occupied by another craft and there would be a 10-minute delay. That should have been a portent. But, just as foretold, we pulled into our gate 10 minutes later.

Upon exiting the jetway, we saw the second portent: This terminal arm had six gates in a circular open structure and was wall-to-wall people, standing room only. The middle of the huge room contained gambling machines, but no one was playing them. People were frustrated and agitated.

Many departures had been canceled. Gate attendants were clueless about reasons and were just as frustrated as passengers. One outbound flight had returned to the gate and was disgorging passengers. This was a perfect storm, but no one knew why.

My connection to Sacramento was on the departure board and showed as DELAYED by about an hour. The departure time was moved back twice more. I was texting my brother with updates. I was also getting a gut feeling that all was not well in aviation. At a gate desk, I politely and gently inquired. The agent confirmed the cancellation of the last two flights out to Sacramento but showed a seat to San Jose.

The conundrum was that I had to leave the departure terminal and return past the security checkpoint to the main ticketing area to rebook the flight. At one point, I had an overhead view of the ticketing area. It was a sea of humanity (see photo) with no discernible queues.

I joined the crowd. A woman in front of me announced the news from her smartphone. A computer glitch had resulted in a nationwide, nay, worldwide, shutdown of terminal systems, leaving hundreds of thousands stranded, including moi!

After three hours of inching forward, I finally got to the counter and a frazzled ticketing host. I gave her my best smile and encouraging countenance. She smiled. I asked



Airline passengers line up — or gang up — for ticketing during July chaos in Las Vegas. (Photo by Bob Carroll)

to be rebooked to San Jose. She handed me a handwritten ticket. I returned to the gate and found a place to stand in the melee.

After 30 minutes, a gate attendant announced that the flight to San Jose was now canceled. I conceded defeat and went back to the main terminal exhausted. It was now 1 a.m. Propping my head on my carry-on backpack, I passed out.

I reawakened at 4:30, splashed cold water on my face, and applied fresh deodorant. I returned to the queues, which by now were even longer. Three hours later, I was at the counter.

Sometimes calamities bring out the worst in people, tempers flare, harsh words are said, and even physical intimidation occurs. But there are also times when the best comes out. The latter happened in Las Vegas.

We all realized that we were impacted by something totally out of our control. Friendly conversations ensued. We discovered where our neighbor was from or heading to; we held places in line for some to go to the restrooms. Airport employees gave out free water bottles, and we passed them back.

Babies and toddlers were entertained and distracted so parents could relax. We commiserated about missed agendas, and we all pitched in to keep the queues in motion. My faith in the goodness of fellow humans was pleasantly renewed.

(continued on the next page)

Curriculum Committee

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS AIRPORT, CONT

It was now 8 o'clock Friday morning, and I got a seat on the second of four flights to Sacramento with a printed ticket! Once again, I fist-bumped the agent and profusely thanked her; she returned a beaming smile, and I stepped away to once again endure the Transportation Security Administration, grab breakfast, and get to the gate.

Later in the morning, boarding began and with a silent prayer of thanks, I took my seat. I got to Sacramento and my brother and a good night's rest.

One day was lost, but not totally. I made the acquaintance of dozens of people, and it was encouraging. The next day, John and I made a beautiful drive up Mount Hamilton to Lick Observatory and a 19th-century telescope (still utilized) and dome.

Driving along the coast, we arrived at the Golden Gate

bridge, crossed, and pulled out at the observation point. It was what photographers refer to as the blue hour, and a beautiful full moon was rising above the San Francisco skyline across the bay! We took pictures of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

The visit to the redwoods will have to wait for another pilgrimage.

What's the expression? When life gives you lemons, make lemonade? Well, in this case it was already made and waiting for us to drink. Keep calm and carry on!

Veni, vidi, vici.

Bob Carroll
Vice President of Curriculum
OLLI at UAH Board of Directors

Upcoming Bonus

OUR NEXT FRIDAY BONUS: EGYPT AND THE NILE



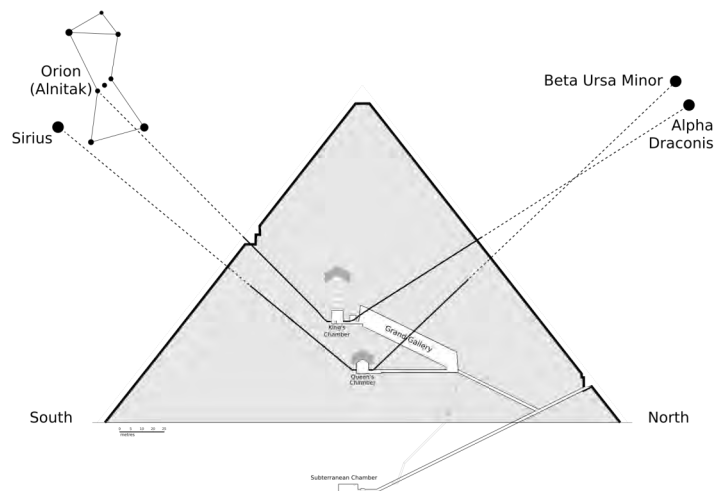
Here we go on another adventure in learning. I am always awestruck by the number and variety of classes from which we mere mortals may choose each year. The very number of events and socials planned every term means we have some worker bees busy planning all year.

As for bonuses, I only hope the selections this term intrigue you enough to come and listen to those who offer their time to introduce us to a subject matter about which we have no knowledge or to extend the knowledge we have on a subject.

This month we have a very nice one on Sept. 20. Tom Ress will introduce us to his adventures of traveling in Egypt and sailing the Nile. Ah, remnants of Cleopatra's flotilla spring to mind — just imagine what it must have been like in her day versus the travel accommodations Tom experienced.

When I consider the pyramids and the engineering it took to build these spectacles. I often wonder if it took them so long because some "engineer" type, using rope, twine or string, measured everything to such a degree that they would last for centuries. I am OK with that.

I am an eclectic picture hanger, and to achieve more precise measurements for the selections I hang on my walls, I have invested in one of those handy dandy techy tools that align so easily and even find the wall studs. Just think of what those guys back then could have done with one of those!



The Great Pyramid of Giza includes air shafts or "star shafts" that may point toward certain stars that were important to ancient Egyptians. (Image from [Wikimedia Commons](#))

Hope to see you at Tom's bonus on Friday, Sept. 20, at 11 a.m. in Room 168!

Be the sun, not the salt.

Betty Koval
Bonus Coordinator

READY FOR FALL



It's almost "go time" for our fall semester of classes. We kick off things on campus the week of Sept. 16. (Some Alabama Shares courses start the week prior.)

There is still time to sign up for the courses that you want. Staff is anxious to get things started as we make final preparations for a successful semester.

One of our first events of the fall is our new-member social, set for Wednesday, Sept. 11, at 11 a.m. in the OLLI lounge (152D Wilson Hall). This is a great time for recent members of the OLLI family to learn all about our great organization. Meet OLLI staff and board members and ask questions while enjoying tasty treats.

I also want to highlight two programs that allow us and OLLI members to be better-prepared for the semester. Both are scheduled for Friday, Sept. 13 (eek!). First, we have facilitator training at 9 a.m. for those new to facilitating our classes. Secondly, we have computer and audio-visual orientation for instructors at 9:30 a.m. These programs will be in 152 Wilson Hall.

These upcoming programs also speak to the need for members to take a more active role in the organization. While we are proud of our curriculum and the variety of educational opportunities that we offer at OLLI, we encourage members to get more involved. When members

simply attend courses and then head home and don't participate in other activities, they are not taking full advantage of all the benefits that OLLI offers.

Whether it is volunteering to be a facilitator or taking shifts in the volunteer office, get involved. It's a great way to meet people. Research shows the more one gets involved with an organization, the more likely they are to stay. This involvement also enhances one's experience with OLLI.

Also, don't underestimate the value of meeting other members. Take advantage of the OLLI lounge to get a cup of coffee or take part in the Early Bird breakfasts to engage with fellow members. Attend our Friday bonuses, and sign up for special events and tours.

Building relationships is another crucial component to the OLLI experience. Many of our members have formed lasting bonds that are important to long-term mental and physical health.

Finally, don't hesitate to reach out to me or other OLLI staff. We are here to help and make your OLLI experience as rewarding as possible. Some of us are pretty nice people, as well.

A reminder: OLLI offices will close for Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 2.

Clay Williams
OLLI at UAH Program Manager

The bulletin board outside the OLLI volunteer office (151 Wilson Hall) helps inform members about a wealth of opportunities for education, socializing and volunteer service.
(Photo by Patricia Haag)



Course Spotlight

It is time to register for Fall 2024 courses. You can register for courses at uah.edu/olli/term-registration.



TWENTIETH CENTURY AMERICAN POETRY

9/16 - 10/21 • M • 10:30 am - Noon • 6 sessions • In Person • W. Thames • \$40

Explore the work of important American poets working in the early part of the century: Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Edgar Lee Masters, Carl Sandburg, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, E. E. Cummings and others. Examine significant poems from these artists as they confront the world wars, economic tumult and dramatic technological changes of the period.



LET'S TANGO

9/17 - 10/8 • Tu • 6:00 - 7:00 pm • 4 sessions • In Person • T. Romine • \$40

It's never too late to learn to dance! American style Tango has dramatic music, steps and style. Feel confident learning several Tango steps, regardless of your level of dance experience. It is helpful to sign up with a partner, but is not required.



OCTOGENARIAN & NONAGENARIAN 101

9/18 - 10/9 • W • 10:30 am - Noon • 4 sessions • In Person • B. Rice • \$40

Have you already turned 80 or 90 or is it just around the corner? The later years of life are a gift to be treasured. We will take a pause and reflect on our accomplishments to date, and explore some planning to make our future years as interesting, trouble-free and enjoyable as possible.



INTERMEDIATE GENEALOGY RESEARCH

9/23 - 10/28 • M • 8:30 - 10:00 am • 6 sessions • In Person • C. Lanham • \$40

This intermediate genealogy offering will concentrate toward on-line research from America's Colonial Period to 1900. A participant will need a laptop or tablet in class and an account with Ancestry.com or FamilySearch.org or MyHeritage.com. To derive the most benefit, a participant should be working with a four-generation family tree (i.e., eight sets of great-grandparents). This is a hands-on course designed to identify repositories and provide tips on how to research beyond internet-based resources.

Save 20%

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

People of OLLI

JESSICA TAYLOR: MINDFULNESS AND HAPPINESS

In the spring semester, OLLI students were introduced to mindfulness, a way of dealing with our everyday problems. Or, as the course teacher, Jessica Taylor, better describes it:

“Mindfulness and breathwork help us center our attention on the present when our minds are fixating on the past or future — both things we cannot *control*. Mindfulness can be used for dealing with stress, chronic pain, sleep, anxiety and so much more!”

Jessica, who will soon be teaching a course on positive psychology, is the subject of this month’s *Insider* profile.

Jessica grew up in Huntsville, along with a younger brother. Her father was a nuclear pharmacist — he made radioactive medicines for hospitals. Her mother was a nuclear medicine technologist. “We had a running joke that it was surprising that we didn’t glow in the dark,” Jessica recalled.

As a girl, Jessica wanted to be an entomologist or a lawyer or a ballerina. And in school she was very interested in music.

“I played the French horn from middle school all the way through college,” said Jessica. “I even played at Carnegie Hall with my high school band. I have also played piano since I was little bitty.”

Jessica went to college at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee. It was there she discovered a fascination with psychology.

“I’d been interested in psychology for a while, but it was my abnormal psychology class that really sealed the deal,” said Jessica. “I love mysteries, and psychology is all about the mystery of how brains work.”

After graduating from Union, Jessica set out for a Ph.D. in clinical psychology in Missouri. But after earning her master’s at Valdosta State University in Georgia, she decided this was not



Jessica Taylor with husband Donald and daughter Clara; Jessica promoting her fall semester course at open house on Aug. 16.



what she wanted: “I am a Ph.D. dropout, which was a difficult but rewarding decision ultimately,” she said.

In grad school, Jessica had worked as a psychometrist (someone who administers and scores psychological tests). She taught in grad school and was a dance teacher and choreographer as well. “I guess I am drawn to jobs where I can teach others,” said Jessica.

After leaving academia, Jessica was hired as a community support specialist for a mental health agency outside St. Louis.

“This position was a hybrid of social work and psychology,” said Jessica. “I worked with people with severe mental illness who were under the poverty level. I got a lot of experience helping people learn to cope with mental illness, such as learning how to communicate with doctors, manage finances, practice mindfulness and coping skills, and access resources.”

Jessica found she needed those coping skills herself: “The job was very rewarding but also incredibly stressful. I learned how to be calm in a crisis because I dealt with them frequently. I learned how strong and resilient people can be.”

Eventually, Jessica decided to return to psychometry. It was during this time she met and married her husband, Donald. Then in 2018 when they had their daughter, Clara, Jessica made a major decision: “I became a stay-at-home mom. It was, honestly, a tough transition from being career-minded to not having a ‘career.’ ”

The Taylors moved back to Huntsville in 2021.

Jessica is home-schooling her daughter and also singing with her church’s band. She has put the theater skills she has gained over the years to use by directing the children’s musical at the church and is already planning next year’s.

(continued on the next page)

Social Committee

FREE WEEKLY BREAKFASTS WILL START SEPT. 24



What a great success open house 2024 was! It was so much fun being back with OLLI friends and seeing many new people checking out OLLI opportunities.

The Social Committee has exciting plans for fall term. If you are a new member, join us on Sept. 11 at 11 a.m. in the lounge (152D Wilson Hall) to learn more about what OLLI has to offer and to enjoy a delicious lunch.

Free Early Bird breakfasts will be served every Tuesday at 7:45, beginning Sept. 24. We will have casseroles, fruit and pastries for members who have morning classes.

Come and meet friends in the lounge and share information about your classes.

Teacher appreciation is scheduled for 11 to 1 on Nov. 8 at Trinity United Methodist Church. This is our opportunity to thank our instructors for the



The Social Committee's selection of foods helped attract members to the OLLI lounge during open house Aug. 16. (Photo by Marsha Langlois)

fall term of interesting classes. The Social Committee will be serving lunch.

Our holiday party will be on Dec. 3 at the Conference Training Center on campus. We will be having a buffet dinner and dancing to the music of our favorite DJ, Ted Cannon.

Enjoy our OLLI classes, meet your friends, and become lifelong learners.

Marilynn Szecholda
Social Committee Chair

People of OLLI

JESSICA TAYLOR: CONT

So how did she make the OLLI connection? "I spoke at a church women's conference about mindfulness, breath and faith," said Jessica. "I was reminded how much I enjoy teaching. I mentioned this to my pastor, and she introduced me to Jill Stewart [OLLI past president], who told me about OLLI. The rest is history."

Jessica's husband, Donald, is an anesthesiologist. He loves reading — and curling. He belongs to a local curling league. Clara is now in the first

grade. She loves swimming, playing outside and glitter — "So. Much. Glitter," said Jessica. They are all avid travelers. They have already taken Clara to three foreign countries and many states, including a recent trip to Alaska. Their next goal is Finland.

If you missed Jessica's mindfulness course, you will soon have another chance to benefit from her teaching. You need to sign up now. Her new four-week fall course on positive psychology will start Sept. 19.

"Positive psychology is a refreshing topic because it is so different from the usual deficit-based slant psychology can take," said Jessica. "It is the study of how our brains experience and are affected by happiness, joy, compassion, peace and other good things in life. We are going to learn practical ways to use it in everyday life."

Thanks, Jessica, for all you do for OLLI.

By Glen Adams

Volunteer Opportunities

LET'S PLAY 'WHAT IF'



What if you start classes and forget what room your class is in? *What if* you have a room number that you're unfamiliar with? *What if* you haven't gotten a name tag or parking pass? What do you do?

The answer to those three things is simple — check with the OLLI volunteer office.

Now, *what if* you have a morning class and an afternoon class but you really don't want to leave the campus? *What if* you have a 10:30 class, but you don't want to fight the parking problems? The answer to these two things is as simple — volunteer in the OLLI volunteer office.

Sound like an option for you? Volunteering is easy.

You volunteer for at least one day a week (except Friday) for a two-hour shift. The office is 151 Wilson Hall. You answer the phone, which rarely rings; answer questions from fellow students (a user's guide is available for your assistance, and room numbers for classes are available); assist with odd tasks for the UAH OLLI staff, usually calling students to let them know about last-minute schedule changes; talk, talk, talk to whoever drops by just to chat; learn some of the ins and outs of OLLI; and enjoy a multitude of other opportunities.

You'll have some down time, so you will have a perfect opportunity to catch up on reading or class prep.

Now that the class schedule has been published, you pretty much have an idea of what your schedule is going to look like, so why not consider this volunteer opportunity? If this sounds like an option, send an email to olli.info@UAH.edu with the subject line "Office volunteer opportunity." Give your name, email address and preferred shift.



Volunteer Jane McBride has a pleasant place to sit, serve and socialize in the OLLI volunteer office, 151 Wilson Hall. The Volunteer Support Committee needs more volunteers to take shifts of about two hours. (Photo by Steve Stewart)

Shifts are 8:15-10:30 (the only one that's over two hours), 10:30-12:30, 12:30-2:30 and 2:30-4:30, Monday through Thursday. We're flexible, and you're not tied to every week. If you have an appointment or can't make it for some reason, there's no problem.

The volunteer office has been short-handed since we've returned from the COVID break, and we're trying to ramp back up to full staffing. Please consider this option as you select classes and choose other extracurricular activities.

Irene Garoppo
Volunteer Support Committee Chair

People of OLLI

UAH PROMOTES DAVID MOORE



David Moore, director of the Louis Salmon Library at UAH, has been promoted to Librarian IV. OLLI falls under the library in the UAH organizational structure. David oversees OLLI, supports it, and serves on its board of directors.

He is the first UAH librarian to achieve Librarian IV designation, which signifies a high level of professional achievement, leadership and commitment to library science.

A graduate of The University of Alabama, he has worked at the Salmon Library for 26 years and served as director for the past 14 years.

"Our librarian ranking system reflects positively on the quality of the UAH Salmon Library by promoting professional growth, ensuring high standards, fostering leadership and enhancing user satisfaction within the library," David said.

Travel Committee

TRAVEL THE WORLD, AND HELP OTHERS TRAVEL



First, I would like to thank all the OLLI members who provided inputs at the open house. We are always looking to see where the wanderlust of our members is pointing.

All members, new and returning, are encouraged to think about your own wish lists for travel. Make your ideas known to OLLI's Travel Committee —

join it, in fact.

We need trip coordinators to make any trip come to fruition, and we need your ideas and experience with traveling to make OLLI travel even better!

Summer 2024 adventures abroad

Wonderful adventure of traveling Ireland. OLLI members enjoyed a two-week trip in the Republic of Ireland. Grand Circle provided excellent educational insights into the history and culture of their featured stops, including home-hosted meals with Irish families. We look forward to more snapshots from Dublin, Kilkenny, Cork, Killarney, Ring of Kerry and Galway.

A large contingent of OLLI folks will travel to Iceland in September. Chris Stuhlinger worked with Nanda Journeys to flesh out the itinerary and accommodations on this exciting 10-day tour of the island. The trip has reached maximum capacity, having 30 OLLI members registered.

New travel opportunities in 2025

(Some of the dates may be subject to slight changes. We will keep you updated.)

- **Two Worlds of Peru: The Inca Highlands & the Amazon** — Friday, June 13, to Friday, June 27, 2025 (note the change of dates from first announcement). One journey, one country, two amazing worlds. Embark on a private riverboat voyage into the Peruvian Amazon — one of the most biodiverse regions on earth — to discover its incredible natural beauty, intriguing wildlife and tribal villages. Soak up the ancient history of Machu Picchu, once an epicenter for the Inca, and absorb the thrilling beauty. Investigate this exciting adventure at tinyurl.com/olli-peru2025. Contact Bob Darnall at olli.info@uah.edu if you have questions.
- **Signature City Pittsburgh** — Sunday, May 25, to Friday, May 30, 2025, with OLLI at UAH-planned options for pre- and post-extensions. Learn how Pittsburgh grew from its humble origins to the great city of today. Why Pittsburgh? Well, perhaps it's the arts. Not just world-renowned collections on walls, but also the public art of huge stained-glass windows in a train station, cathedral-worthy rotundas in office buildings, the gravity-defying cathedrals themselves. Or the culinary arts of fine dining in Gilded Age opulence, ethnic family dishes, quirky regional specialties. Find out what



Exploring Ireland's history and culture in July was neither the beginning nor the end of OLLI's travel opportunities. The Travel Committee welcomes suggestions and new members, and needs trip coordinators. See additional Ireland photos on the following pages. (Photo by Glen Adams)

makes it "America's Most Livable City." See details at tinyurl.com/olli-pittsburgh2025. Please contact Michelle Laverty for more information at olli.info@uah.edu.

OLLI Travel Committee — continuing to explore

Several venues have been on the drawing boards for a couple of years now, just waiting for the right trip leader to step forward and search out our best options. We have had good feedback about several of these ideas:

- Northern Italy, Malta, Sicily, Portugal and Spain. Get lost in the romance of sun, beaches and crystal blue water.
- New Mexico, visiting Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Taos, Ghost Ranch and Los Alamos in late fall.
- Western Adriatic Sea by small ship with ports of call in Croatia and neighboring countries or land excursion, in late summer or early fall.
- New Orleans, Acadiana (Cajun Country) or Dauphin Island, Mobile Bay area, spring or fall. Other regional, close-by destinations such as historic and cultural sites in Arkansas, Kentucky and Mississippi, spring or fall.
- Pacific Northwest, combining northern California, Oregon and Washington state via coastal ship or inland coach travel.

Let us hear from you about any of these ideas.

Did you know that traveling with OLLI means big adventures abroad and nearby excursions on weekends, too? Please, bring your suggestions to the OLLI Travel Committee.

Contact David Sayre or other members of the OLLI Travel Committee at olli.info@uah.edu.

All who wander are not lost!

David Sayre
Travel Committee Chair

Travel Committee

JULY 13-27: OLLI TRAVELERS EXPLORE IRELAND



(Photos from Glen Adams, Sam Campbell, Nancy Darnall, Caroline Earhart and Sue Farbman)

Travel Committee

IRELAND OFFERS NATURAL, MAN-MADE BEAUTY



(Photos from Glen Adams, Sam Campbell, Nancy Darnall, Caroline Earhart and Sue Farbman)

Member Services Committee

NEW MEMBER INTEREST GROUP IS FOR READERS



As we approach the beginning of fall term OLLI classes, I have been so delighted to see the enthusiasm and energy shown by current and new OLLI members.

How lucky we are to have such a place as OLLI — a place to continue learning, share interests, and just get together with other adults and share interesting conversations. We are of

generations who value face-to-face contact with others and understand the importance of keeping active both physically and mentally.

The Member Services Committee oversees some of the ways to take part in these important activities. We provide coffee and “fixin’s,” and we provide tasty snacks before and after the bonus events.

We hope to entice members to chat and socialize in the OLLI lounge, both to keep up connections with others and maybe to make some new ones. It’s so great to see members enjoying each other’s company and having interesting conversations.

The MIGs (member interest groups) offer more opportunities to enjoy activities or crafts with others who have similar interests. Want an enjoyable physical activity? There is Hiking or Tai Chi. How about games? There is Bridge or Mah-Jongg.

Enjoy discussing books? There is the new OLLI Reads MIG. How about exploring the many dining venues of Huntsville? There is the Dine Out MIG.

If you have a talent or interest in art, there is the Artist Studio MIG. You can bring whatever you enjoy working on and spend some quiet time doing that or get inspired by the work of others. Check with the office or online for information on joining.



John Syster explains the new OLLI Reads Member Interest Group during open house Sept. 16.
(Photo by Steve Stewart)

Technology has moved along at a great pace and has made some things outdated, but OLLI does have an extensive and excellent Great Courses DVD collection available to members. It might be fun to come to the OLLI volunteer office (151 Wilson Hall) sometime to look through the collection and see what is available. It is housed in the black cabinets there, and a folder on top contains a list of what is available. Just ask the volunteer on duty for access.

Another special activity we oversee is the annual OLLI photo contest. The current topic is “Contrasts.” The deadline for submitting photos is April 1, 2025, so there is plenty of time to take that winning shot. The particulars are on the website.

Looking forward to seeing you soon in the OLLI lounge.

Leah Black
Member Services Committee Chair

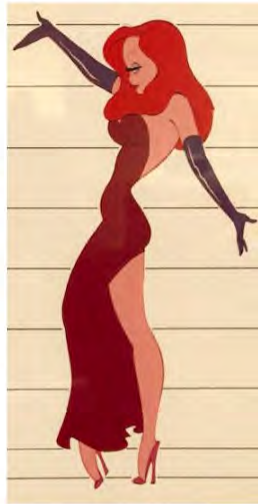
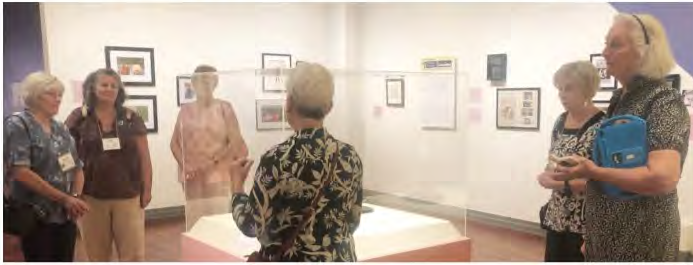
Donating appreciated stock is one of the easiest ways to support OLLI!

You can give more.
You can potentially reduce capital gains tax.
You can donate stocks without headaches.

For more info, contact
tammy.eskridge@uah.edu

Member Interest Groups

ART MIG PLANS FIELD TRIP AND HISTORY STUDY



NEXT FIELD TRIP: MONTE SANO ART FESTIVAL

On or about the third Friday of every month, the Artist Studio Member Interest Group has a field trip. We meet at 11 a.m. off campus, have our tour and have lunch. Our field trip for September will be on Saturday, Sept. 21, to the Monte Sano Art Festival. Any OLLI member is welcome to join us that day. In July, our field trip was a docent-led tour of the Huntsville Museum of Art Exhibition "A Journey into Imagination: Over 100 Years of Animation Art from Around the World." The show celebrated the history of animation with over 140 rare and recognizable objects, including original cels, drawings and models. Featured were the amazing animators Lotte Reiniger, George Pal, Willis O'Brien, Chuck Jones and Walt Disney, among others.



NEXT ART HISTORY PRESENTATION: SYMBOLISM AND SYNTHETICISM

On the fourth Friday of every month, our MIG has an art history presentation. Join us at noon on Sept. 27 in Wilson Hall to learn about late 19th century symbolism and synthetism, including the early works of Hieronymus Bosch, Giuseppe Arcimboldo and Gustave Moreau. We

will offer a 30-minute PowerPoint with discussion on the artistic style. Any OLLI member is welcome to attend and learn about Les Nabis artists such as Bonnard, Denis, Serusier, Ranson and Vuillard.

Text and photos from Jean Krieger, leader of the Artist Studio MIG (most art images were cropped)

Member Interest Groups



On Aug. 2, MIG members witnessed the emergence at dusk of thousands of endangered gray bats from Sauta Cave. (Photos by Chris Stuhlinger)



MIG PLANS NATURE WALKS, HIKES AND BIKE RIDE

Many of you have joined our Hiking & Biking Member Interest Group and participated in our hikes, nature walks and bike rides in the greater Huntsville area.

If you have not yet joined this MIG and want to receive details about coming activities, sign up at the link below and agree to the blanket release/waiver form. You must have an OLLI membership to join the MIG and participate in MIG activities.

Join the MIG: forms.gle/6M5BoaWX9Z4TLugE9

Below is a listing of planned MIG activities for this fall. Join the MIG, and then mark your calendar for the activities that interest you. Each activity registration link will be sent to MIG members two or three weeks before the activity.

These outings are perfect opportunities to be physically active, enjoy the outdoors, explore and learn about your environment, and interact with your fellow OLLI and MIG members!

Fall semester MIG activities

- Sunday, Sept. 29, 3-5 p.m. — **Nature walk** at Point Mallard Park (Decatur). Walk the Bill Sims/Chief Black

Fox Trail, an easy, flat trail along the Wheeler Lake shoreline (2-3 miles out and back). Watch for waterfowl.

- Sunday, Oct. 13, 1-3 p.m. — **Hike at Rainbow Mountain** (Madison). Hike the Rainbolt Trail and a portion of the Rainbow Loop Trail, about 2 miles round trip. Gain just over 200 feet in elevation (switchbacks) to the top of Rainbow Mountain. See Balanced Rock.
- Saturday, Oct. 26, 10 a.m.-noon — **Bike ride at Bradford Creek and Mill Creek Greenways** (Madison). Ride on paved paths along the creeks. Total ride length is about 7 miles.
- Saturday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m.-noon — **Hike at Hickory Cove Nature Preserve** (Huntsville). Trail length is about 2 miles, with some rocky terrain and an elevation gain of about 200 feet.

See you on the trail!

Chris Stuhlinger and Steve Jones
Co-Leaders, Hiking & Biking MIG



This Moment in History

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

September: Wait! What day was that again?

Everybody knows what learning history's biggest bugaboo is, don't we? Right on the first try! It's the memorization of all those interminable lists of dates when "such-and-such" happened.

Well, this month, to help with that problem, I'm going to tell you the history of calendars and how they've developed just for us — we few, we happy few, we band of historians! This may be the most exciting presentation since Sheldon Cooper first vlogged "Fun with Flags!"

Before we start, though, let me define what we're talking about. The term *calendars* itself is taken from the Roman term for the first day of the month, the *calends*. This is a term related to the verb *calare*, meaning "to call out," referring to the calling or the announcement that the new moon was just seen.

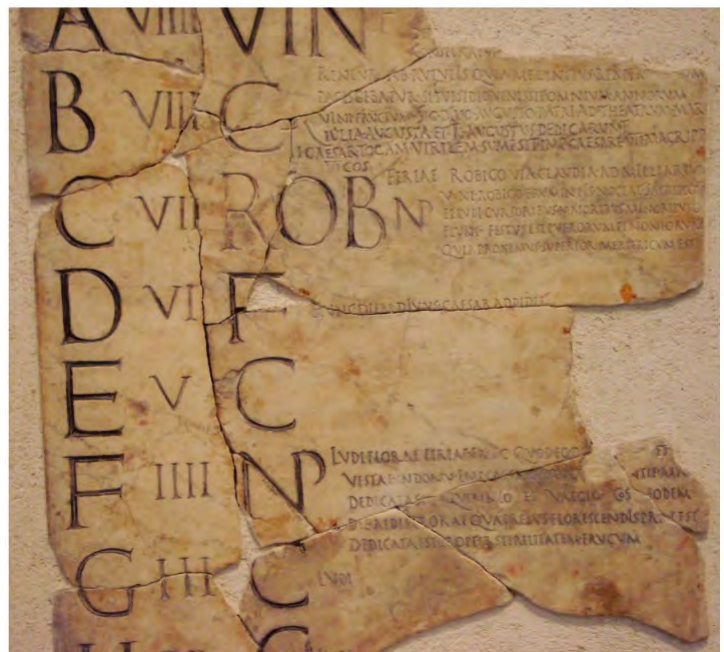
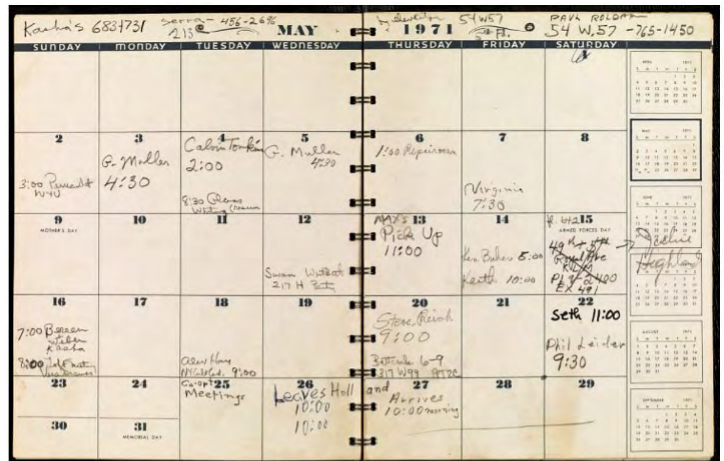
So the Latin word *calendarium* meant "account book, register," as accounts were settled and debts were collected on the calends of each month. As time went by, the Latin term was adopted first in Old French as *calendier*, ultimately being picked up in Middle English as *calender* by the 13th century. The spelling *calendar* is from Early Modern English.

Now back to our story. Did you know that archaeologists have determined that our ancestors kept track of time as early as the Neolithic Period (the New Stone Age dating back to around 10,000 to 2,000 BCE)?

Nearly every culture adopted some form of this "timekeeping," and most of them based their calendariums on the cycles of the moon. They were everywhere from the ancient Middle East to Persia to Greece to China to India to Sub-Saharan Africa, and even to Mesoamerica.

It seems that our ancestors from time immemorial have felt the importance of keeping track of their days. I like to picture Neolithic man staring at an I-stone to see when his next appointment was scheduled, but in truth, I suppose the real reason was some combination of religiosity and agriculture.

Another astonishing fact is that many ancient cultures had a pretty good idea of the solar and lunar cycles. Most cultures that based their timekeeping strictly on the lunar cycle set their year at 354 days. Their calculations were based on the time our moon takes to complete one cycle of phases (from new moon to new moon). Known as a synodic month, this period is about 29.5 days. To make up any differences between that and the sidereal year, 365 days, they simply added an extra, intercalary period when necessary.



Top: Robert Smithson's engagement calendar, 1971. (Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt papers, 1905-1987, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution) Bottom: Detail from a Roman calendar, found at Nero's villa in Anzio and dated 88-55 BCE. It represents the traditional calendar form attributed to King Numa Pompilius, including a list of festivals and also the magistrates from 173 to 63 BCE. (Juliana Bastos Marques, Creative Commons license, Wikimedia Commons)

(continued on the next page)

This Moment in History

DID YOU KNOW ...?, CONT

Then, in 1073 CE, the founder of the Seljuk Dynasty in Persia invited Omar Khayyam (yes, that Omar Khayyam!), to go to Esfahan to set up an observatory. For 18 years Khayyam led a number of scientists and produced work of outstanding quality, including the compilation of astronomical tables, ultimately contributing to calendar reform in 1079.

Did I mention outstanding quality? Khayyam measured the length of the solar year as being 365.24219858156 days. How significant is this calculation? Well, first it shows an incredible confidence to attempt to give the result to this degree of accuracy. Today we know that the length of the year changes in the sixth decimal place over the course of a person's lifetime; Khayyam took it to 11 decimal places! Second, his calculation was outstandingly accurate. For comparison, the length of the year at the end of the 19th century was 365.242196 days, while today it is 365.242190 days.

Even so, not everyone bought into Khayyam's position.

The old Roman Empire's year, for example, had 304 days divided into 10 months, beginning with March. Julius Caesar realized that the system had become inoperable, so he effected drastic changes in 46 BCE. The New Year from that point began on Jan. 1 and ran over 365 days until Dec. 31. Further adjustments were made under Augustus, who introduced the concept of the "leap year" in 4 CE. The resultant Julian calendar remained in almost universal use in Europe until 1582, and in some countries until as late as the 20th century.

The Christian church then came along and changed the system again with the so-called Calendar of Filocalus in

354 CE. It contained both pagan and Christian festivals, but significantly, it contained the earliest reference to the celebration of Christmas as an annual holiday or feast, on Dec. 25, although unique historical dates had been mentioned much earlier by Hippolytus of Rome during 202-211.

In the 8th century, the Anglo-Saxon historian Bede the Venerable used another Latin term, "*ante uero incarnationis dominicae tempus*" ("the time before the Lord's true incarnation," equivalent to the English "before Christ"), to identify years before the first year of this era.

This would be the last major change in the Western calendar until the abbreviations CE (Common Era) and BCE (Before the Common Era) were adopted in the early 1700s by English language dictionaries and writers. In the late 20th century, CE and BCE became more widespread, replacing BC and AD in some fields, such as academia and science.

Today, though there are several other calendars still in use such as the Islamic, Hebrew and Chinese calendars, the Gregorian calendar is the most popular. In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII reformatted the Julian calendar to sync the months with the seasons. In it, leap days happen every four years, except for years divisible by 100 but not 400.

Catholic countries adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1582, while Protestant countries adopted it in the 17th and 18th centuries. More than 190 countries around the world use it today.

By John Mason

Member Interest Groups

HIKING & BIKING MIG — RECENT RECAPS AND FALL ACTIVITIES



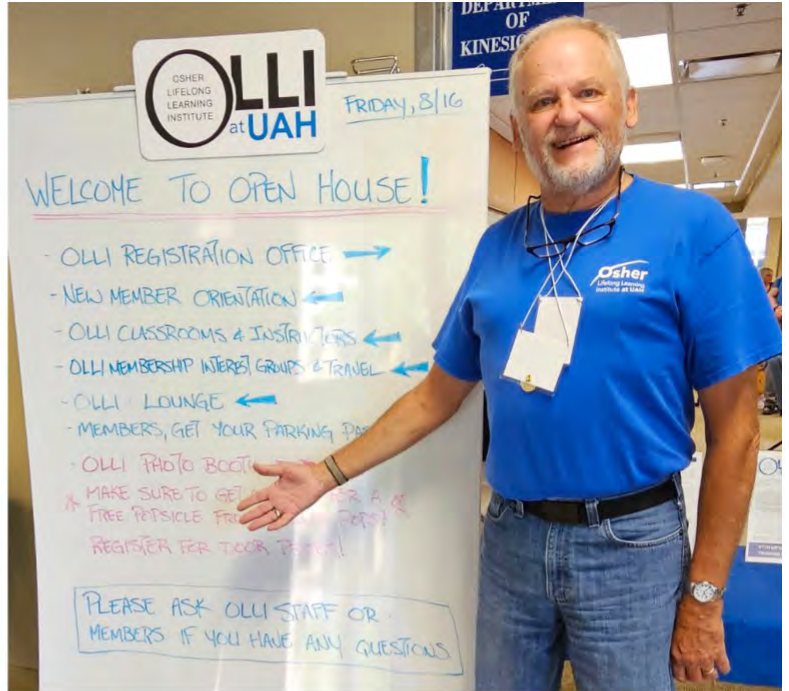
A nature walk and bike ride at Redstone Arsenal on July 13 (left photo) included a visit to the old Redstone Test Stand, a national historic landmark. A nature walk at Point Mallard Park in Decatur (right) will take place Sept. 29.

AUG. 16: OPEN HOUSE LAUNCHES FALL TERM



(Photos by Marsha Langlois, Glen Adams, Patricia Haag and Steve Stewart)

MEETING AND CATCHING UP AT OPEN HOUSE



(Photos by Marsha Langlois, Glen Adams, Patricia Haag and Steve Stewart)

The Last Word



From left: The old logo; evolution of the design based on an old key; the new logo, approved by Osher and UAH.

NEW LOGO: BRINGING OUT THE OLLI IN OSHER



Sue Chatham and Glen Adams, members of OLLI's Public Relations Committee, used the new logo to publicize OLLI during a Newcomers Fair at the Madison Public Library on Sept. 17.

OLLI at UAH — one of 125 Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes affiliated with the Bernard Osher Foundation — starts the new semester with a new logo. Justin Clay, marketing and design specialist, explains why and discusses the thinking behind the design:

Our main priority in updating the logo was to make “OLLI” the focus.

“The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at The University of Alabama in Huntsville” is a mouthful, and there can be some dissonance when the branding doesn't match how we refer to ourselves, which is either “OLLI” or “OLLI at UAH.”

So, that was the guiding focus. From a technical standpoint, we had to ensure that our solution aligned with Osher's and UAH's branding and obtain approval from both entities. We needed to include the full name of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, so I slightly modified the Osher Foundation's logo and incorporated that with the official fonts and colors we use at UAH for the rest of the typography.

As an artist or designer, you're trained to see patterns and the interactions of shapes in pretty much everything. So I get a kick out of designing things that look like other things, even if it's not so obvious.

My original sketch for this layout was roughly based on an old key. Keys have symbolically represented many different things, one of which is knowledge. That connection felt like a good start, and the shape of the design grew from there.