

# The OLLI Insider

News for OLLI members at The University of Alabama in Huntsville

November 2024



## RAILROADS, STARS, POLITICS, HISTORY AND SERVICE

*The Decatur railroad depot; the Von Braun Astronomical Society Planetarium & Observatory; one of many historical photos shared from the Huntsville Revisited Museum; Jill Stewart, the subject of this month's profile, with Charger Blue; helping manufacture carts at Mobility Worldwide; explaining the messy presidential election of 1876.*

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# From the Editor

## VOTE TUESDAY— BUT FIRST GET THE FACTS



Newspaper editors are not as smart or well-informed as you may think.

In 1984, I was the editor of a small-town Alabama newspaper when Eunie Smith came through to campaign for her husband, Albert Lee Smith Jr.

He was a former congressman from Birmingham, running for the U.S. Senate against incumbent

Howell Heflin. (She was also a leader of Eagle Forum, an advocacy group, and later succeeded Phyllis Schlafly as its national president.)

As I interviewed Eunie Smith for a news story, I kept my opinions to myself. And afterward, she asked for our newspaper's endorsement of her husband.

"Well," I said, "Sen. Heflin is strong on the First Amendment." I was trying to be polite and avoid telling her no.

"Well," she said, "my husband is strong on the Second Amendment."

I assume that she knew the First Amendment protected freedom of the press. But I confess that I had to look up the Second Amendment. I knew the right to bear arms was in the Constitution but not where.

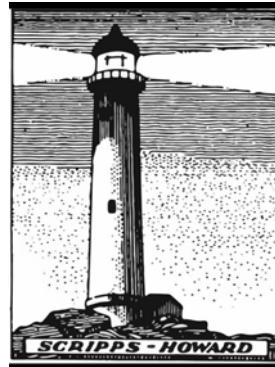
Our brief closing conversation revealed a lot about our own priorities and the candidates'. However, if I had known what the Second Amendment was, we might have had a longer and more fruitful dialogue — understanding each other better, if not changing either mind.

Before any of us vote, we ought to inform ourselves, both by looking up facts and by exchanging thoughts with others, especially those who disagree with us.

Since 1923, E.W. Scripps Co., publisher of the Birmingham Post-Herald (1850-2005) and other media, has used the motto "Give light and the people will find their own way." This presupposes that people will bother to take advantage of the opportunity to be enlightened.

We have an OLLI class this term about campaign news coverage. The gist of it is that we should use and trust the *fact-based* media — the ones that make an honest effort to dig up the truth and report it. Get the facts from several good news media and other trustworthy sources, including other people. And then cast your vote Tuesday.

The Madison County sample ballot available at [tinyurl.com/madisonco-ballot-nov24](https://tinyurl.com/madisonco-ballot-nov24) shows contests for president of the United States, Alabama chief justice, Madison County probate judge, Madison County Commission chairman, and County Commission members. There also is a proposed state constitutional amendment about an issue that appears



"Give light and the people will find their own way" is the motto of E. W. Scripps Co. and Scripps-Howard newspapers.

to be local to Franklin, Fayette and Walker counties but is nonetheless on ballots statewide.

I thank Eunie Smith for inducing a little healthy humility and reminding me that even the well-informed among us need to educate ourselves and do our best to vote wisely.

**Inside The Insider:** Glen Adams profiles Jill Stewart, who joined OLLI seven years ago, became our board president, and continues to serve and lead. "I just can't imagine my life now without the experiences and friendships OLLI has given me," Jill says.

Bob Carroll reflects on what he learned about astronomy from older generations and notes that now is the time for all of us to pass along what we know.

John Mason, in his president's column, says it is more fun to join OLLI than to be a garden hermit. Leah Black writes about laughter, food, coffee and other benefits of hanging around OLLI. Marilynn Szecholda writes about the weekly free breakfasts that ended recently, as well as the coming Teacher Appreciation Day and holiday party.

Clay Williams outlines ways we can support OLLI financially, as well as funding scholarships for UAH students.

In his history column, John writes about Tecumseh, a Native American folk hero described by his nemesis William Henry Harrison as an "uncommon genius" and revolutionary.

Chris Stuhlinger reports on a flurry of recent off-campus events and a distillery tour coming this month. Jean Krieger shows what the Artist Studio Member Interest Group is learning about surrealism and the art in Huntsville's new City Hall. Chris writes for the Hiking & Biking MIG about recent and coming events in the Huntsville and Decatur areas.

David Sayre says that we have another good year of U.S. and foreign travel coming up. From the September tour of Iceland, we have an article by Chris, comments from travelers, and pages of their spectacular photos.

**Steve Stewart**  
Editor, *The OLLI Insider*

# From the President

## ARE WE BECOMING GARDEN HERMITS?



In the early 15th century, it is believed that one Francis of Paola may have become the first of what would be a trend: a hermit, living in a cave on his father's estate. Francis would ultimately leave the cave and even go on to serve as a confidant and adviser to King Charles VIII, but he had given rise to a new cultural phenomenon: the garden hermit!

Thereafter, throughout France, estates of dukes and other lords often included small chapels or other outbuildings where a resident hermit could remain in attendance. According to Professor Gordon Campbell of the University of Leicester, the first estate with a well-known hermitage (which included a small house, chapel and garden) was the Chateau de Gaillon, renovated by Charles Cardinal de Bourbon during the 16th century.

Garden hermits became popular with British aristocracy during the 18th and early 19th centuries, and many are known to have employed these ornamental hermits. The one at Painshill, one of the finest remaining examples of an 18th-century English landscape park, was hired by the Hon. Charles Hamilton, fellow of the Royal Society, to adorn his lawn for a seven-year term. Alas, that job came with a set of strict conditions. Hamilton's hermit lasted only three weeks until he was sacked after being discovered carousing in a local pub.

As decorations, hermits basically spent their work lives as nonentities, simply adorning their employers' property. Some historians suggest that the hermits, who in return for their services-in-residence generally received a stipend in addition to room and board, were hired for the sole purpose of inhabiting their small structures and functioning as any other garden ornament. Although they might sometimes be asked to make themselves available to guests, answering questions and providing counsel, they would not generally communicate with visitors. They were just there, functioning like a piece of living artwork for the world around them to enjoy.

Are we today reinventing this fad and becoming our own nation of garden hermits? It's an easy rut to fall into as we sit at home and yell at the TV while having our groceries and meals delivered, our cars washed and our yards manicured by lawn specialists. What's next, for goodness' sake? Doctors making house calls?

Well, I for one am not ready to don a little red cap and blue vest and sit like Papa Smurf in the flower bed glaring at passers-by. No, sir! And that's because I have OLLI and everything it offers to keep me lively, interested and, yes, sane. (And no, in spite of what some of you may think, my job there is *not* to sit in the lounge glaring at passers-by!)



Hubert Robert's painting "Hermit in the Garden," c. 1790; a traditional German garden gnome sitting on a tree stump. (Both images are from Wikimedia Commons; gnome photo by Bullenwachter)

So take this as a clarion call! Why, this month alone, we'll have eight bonuses and events, classes that are still available in any variety of subjects, member interest groups that meet nearly every week, and even the never-ending experiences offered by all our travel opportunities. There are almost too many choices. So why be a hermit when you can come and join the happy throng?

So take those little caps off and throw them away. Get rid of that old curmudgeon grimace and put on a smile. Come to OLLI and enjoy your life as a member of our ever-growing family. You'll find that you have a lot to share *and* a lot to gain. Just one ask: When you do decide to climb out of that flower bed to come join us, please brush the, um ... stuff off first.

If you'd like to know more about garden hermits, look up the Nov. 28, 2022, podcast "This Job Is History." It features the profession of garden hermits. It may offer tips on how to avoid this lonely lifestyle. Then again, there *are* a lot of nice estates out there needing a little sprucing up ...

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

**John Mason**

**President, OLLI at UAH Board of Directors**

# Calendar

## NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2024

**November 1 | Fri | 11:00 am | [Online/In-Person](#)**  
**Bonus: Together, We End Polio**  
**Wilson Hall**

Learn how Polio has become almost eradicated around the world with the help of Rotarians traveling to countries like India. Our presenter will share his experiences as he made three trips to India for Polio immunization days in 2017, 2018 and 2023.

*Presented by William "Bill" Petty, dedicated Rotarian volunteer.*

*Free for OLLI members. Sign-up is required.*

**November 8 | Fri | 11:00 am | [In-Person](#)**  
**Event: Teacher Appreciation Day**  
**Trinity United Methodist Church**

Join us as we thank our instructors for their knowledge and time. The program will feature recognition of the discipline chairs and instructors. Lunch will be served, and entertainment will be provided.

*Free for OLLI members. Sign-up is required.*

**November 15 | Fri | 11:00 am | [Online/In-Person](#)**  
**Bonus: OLLI Travel Experiences**  
**Wilson Hall**

One of OLLI's benefits is taking part in wonderful travel opportunities. Hear travel adventures and experiences from recent trips to Ireland and Iceland from fellow OLLI travelers and learn about upcoming travel excursions.

*Presented by members of the OLLI Travel Committee.*

*Free for OLLI members. Sign-up is required.*

**December 03 | Tu | 5:30 pm | [In-Person](#)**  
**Event: OLLI Holiday Party**  
**Conference Training Center**

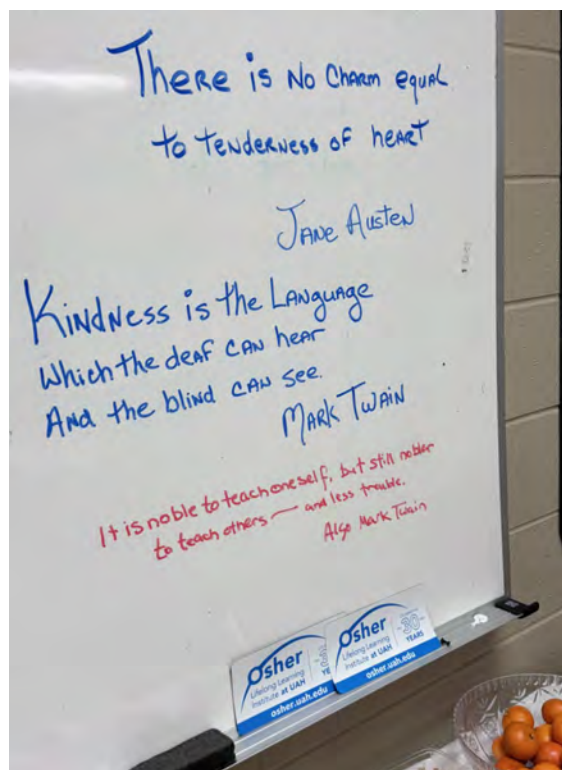
Spread some holiday cheer with your fellow OLLI members! Bring your friends and family to join in the fun! DJ Ted Cannon will provide music and entertainment, so bring your dancing shoes. The buffet dinner will feature Lemon and Thyme-Seared Chicken Breast, Honey and Five-Spice Pork Loin, Garden Salad, Steamed Brown Rice, Sautéed Green Beans, Dessert, and Beverages. Beer and wine will be available.

**COST: \$35 PER PERSON** *Sign-up is required.*

**The deadline to purchase tickets is November 22.**

## WISDOM IN THE OLLI LOUNGE

Quotations from English novelist Jane Austen and American writer and humorist Mark Twain added value for visitors to the OLLI lounge (152D Wilson Hall) on Oct. 8.  
(Photo by Steve Stewart)





# Events Committee

## ONE MORE NOVEMBER EVENT AND HELP WANTED



September and October were busy months for events, as evidenced by the recaps below.

We have one more event scheduled for November: the Irons One Distillery tour at Lowe Mill.

Our next set of events, for spring semester 2025, is being planned. Watch

for a preview in the December newsletter.

We are seeking one or two additional members for the Events Committee to help plan our events. Committee members come up with ideas for events, contact venues to arrange visits, and attend their events to assist with logistics.

This is a great opportunity for you to help provide meaningful and interesting learning activities for your fellow OLLI members! Please contact me or OLLI staff if you are interested.

### Recaps of recent events

**Huntsville City Football Club soccer game**, Sept. 22 — Our group watched our Huntsville soccer team compete against Cincinnati. Unfortunately, Huntsville FC remained scoreless in the 2-0 defeat.

**Historic Decatur Train Depot tour**, Sept. 27 — Retired Judge David Breland, who is also a Decatur historian, gave us an entertaining and informative history of railroading in Decatur. Numerous model train layouts are on exhibit at the train depot.

**Mosaic art class**, Sept. 28 — Participants created various art projects using the tiles from the historic restored mosaic at First Baptist Church. A certificate of authenticity was provided to each project.

**Biergarten fundraiser**, Oct. 3 — More than 600 people attended this Biergarten at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. OLLI at UAH was the beneficiary of the charity fundraiser, and quite a few visitors stopped by our OLLI table to learn more about our program. About 50 OLLI members attended, many of whom enjoyed a German meal and a beer.

**Secret Art Trail**, Oct. 4 — OLLI members enjoyed a fun afternoon in downtown Huntsville searching for 22 pieces of art on public display within a few blocks of the courthouse square.



OLLI members will tour the Irons One Distillery at Lowe Mill on Nov. 9.

**Von Braun Astronomical Society Planetarium & Observatory tour**, Oct. 11 — We were treated to a fascinating planetarium program that included an introduction to gravitational waves and a search for constellations during the star show projected inside the dome. Clear skies allowed us to gaze through three telescopes as we observed the moon, Saturn and the Eagle Nebula, which contains the “Pillars of Creation.”

**Mobility Worldwide tour**, Oct. 12 — OLLI members took a short tour of Mobility Worldwide and learned about how this organization provides mobility carts for needy people all over the world. The carts are propelled by hand. After the tour, participants donned safety gear and were instructed on how the carts are built. Each person took a turn at the various work stations to help build a cart. A similar tour was held Oct. 19. Volunteers are always welcome.

### Coming event

- Saturday, Nov. 9 — **Irons One Distillery tour** (Lowe Mill, Huntsville), 1 to 2:30 p.m. Visit Huntsville's first bourbon distillery — one man, one whiskey, one batch at a time. Join master distiller Jeff Irons to learn about the process used to make this unique local whiskey. Tour cost is \$10 or less (pay at the door), depending on attendance (sample tasting included).

**Chris Stuhlinger**  
**Events Committee Chair**



## DECATUR TRAIN DEPOT TOUR, SEPT. 27

Retired Judge David Breland explained a photograph showing that Elvis Presley visited the depot long before OLLI members did.



(Photos by Steve Stewart and Chris Stuhlinger)



## MOSAIC ART CLASS AT A CHURCH, SEPT. 28

The five-story "Cosmic Christ" mosaic on the façade of First Baptist Church, completed in 1973, lost tiles and was restored in 2015-2022. But the original tiles are being used to create arts and crafts pieces, raising money for local missions. OLLI members attended a class. Anyone is welcome. The next class will be Nov. 12.

To register, email [fbcmosaiccreations@gmail.com](mailto:fbcmosaiccreations@gmail.com).





## BIERGARTEN FUNDRAISER FOR OLLI, OCT. 3



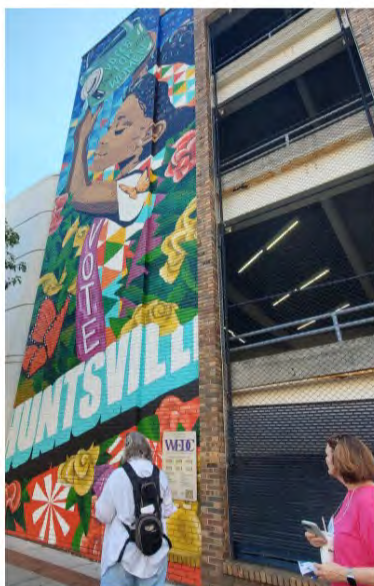
NEIL ARMSTRONG, COMMANDER, APOLLO 11  
JULY 20, 1969



(Photos by Steve Stewart and Chris Stuhlinger)



## DOWNTOWN HUNTSVILLE ART TRAIL, OCT. 4



(Photos by Steve Stewart and Chris Stuhlinger)



## EYES ON THE SKY FROM MONTE SANO, OCT. 11

The tour of the Von Braun Astronomical Society Planetarium & Observatory included an introduction to gravitational waves, a search for constellations, and viewing of the moon, Saturn and the Eagle Nebula. This photo of the nebula was captured that night and processed by Brennan Begley and Jeff Delmas. Presenters included them and Gena Crook, who demonstrated technical points by using two coffee mugs on a string.





## MOBILITY WORLDWIDE TOUR, OCT. 12



(Photos by Patricia Haag)



# Curriculum Committee

## PASS ALONG WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED TO OTHERS



It was a crisp, fall Ohio evening with clear skies and low humidity. Dad came in the front door and called to my brother and me to come downstairs. His voice had an urgent tone, so we both dropped whatever we were doing and ran down the stairs jostling each other.

"Want to look through Mr. Cullis' telescope?" Well, yeah, does a bear poop in the woods? "Go get your coats on and grab a stocking cap. Let's go across the street." In 10 seconds we were at the door as Dad informed Mom of our whereabouts.

Mr. Cullis was in his 70s at the time and was publisher of our daily newspaper, where he had been for 40 years. He was an avid amateur astronomer and had built his own refractor telescope, hand polishing the objective lens. If anyone in the neighborhood saw him out in his driveway doing some evening observing, it was common to walk on over and invite yourself to share the view. He graciously did so, briefly explaining what was in the eyepiece.

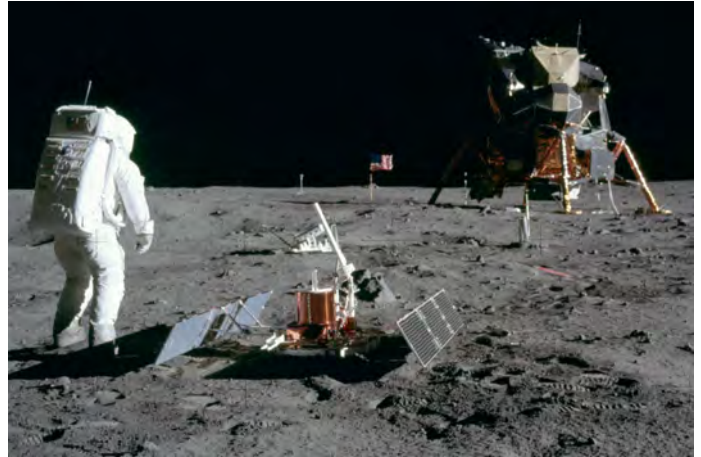
There was a waxing crescent moon. Using a dim flashlight, Mr. Cullis showed us a sketch of the visible crescent of that night and pointed out Mare Tranquillitatis so we could find the same through the telescope.

The U.S. was in the space race with the Soviet Union, and President John F. Kennedy had challenged the country to land a man on the moon before the decade was out. Every schoolkid was enthralled by the Mercury and Gemini mission launches, and the NASA astronauts were national heroes. Mr. Cullis explained that "Tranquility Sea" was one of the top picks for the future landing sight. I naively ask if we could see the moon lander through the telescope when the big event happened.

"No, Bobby, it's too far away," he chuckled. My older brother gave me his best "you doofus" look reserved for times like this. "But, if you look carefully, you will see the shadows of the crater walls, especially along the boundary between the sunlit portion and the dark night portion," Mr. Cullis taught us. He got a milk crate out of his garage for me to stand on and look through the eyepiece.

I stepped up and squinted into the telescope and was immediately hooked. The moon slowly crept out of the view, and Mr. Cullis patiently taught me how to gently turn one of the knobs extending from the tripod mount in order to track the moon.

My brother became impatient for his turn, so Dad lifted me down for John to have his turn. I had many questions for Mr. Cullis, which he politely answered, but he also suggested I go to the town library and check out books. John



"Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." With those words, U.S. astronaut Neil Armstrong announced July 20, 1969, that he and Buzz Aldrin had landed on the moon in about the same location that Bob Carroll saw earlier as a child through an older neighbor's telescope.  
(NASA photo by Neil Armstrong)

finished his turn; Dad took one last view. We thanked Mr. Cullis and he answered with his usual "Anytime, boys. Anytime."

He looked at my brother and asked, "How are your Latin studies proceeding, John?" He knew my brother was enrolled in Latin at the high school because Miss Max, also a neighbor, was the Latin teacher. Mr. Cullis offered words of encouragement and added the caveat that John would never regret taking it. He turned his gaze to me and winked, saying, "Your turn's coming, Bobby."

That summer, I was promoted to Webelos rank in Boy Scouts, transitioning from Cub Scouts. Webelos Scouts were eligible for a special three days of camping at Camp Lakota. On Saturday, July 20, 1963, a total solar eclipse was occurring, with the totality path crossing Canada. At the latitude of Northwest Ohio, we would be able to see 80 percent of totality, and were we ready! Our packing list for the campout included "shoebox."

On Friday evening in the dining hall, we made camera obscuras out of the boxes. We cut out a hole the size of a quarter in one end and glued a piece of aluminum foil over the hole. At the other end we glued an unlined index card, cut to size, on the inside of the box. Finally, one of the adults or a counselor came along with a sewing needle and poked a small hole in the aluminum foil to make a "lens."

The concept was to turn your back to the sun, hold up the box upside down (no lid), and align the pinhole toward the sun. An image of the sun was thus projected onto the white face at the opposite end.

*(continued on the next page)*



# Curriculum Committee

## PASS WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED TO OTHERS, CONT

The next day we went through typical camp and craft events, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the afternoon event. That afternoon they gathered us in a meadow, issued our boxes, warned us to never look directly at the sun, and showed us how to hold the boxes up and align them. It took some practice, and eventually we all got the knack.

As the lunar shadow began taking a larger and larger bite out of the sun, one could hear elation across the field. "Oh, wow!" "Cool!" "Look at mine!" The phrases were repeated as the sun disappeared into a crescent, then began to free itself from the shadow.

Little could I predict it, but 54 years later, living in Lexington, South Carolina, I would witness, along with my granddaughters, the Saros cycle completion of the same solar eclipse. But this time it was total, not partial, and the path of totality went right through Lexington. The baton of eclipse knowledge was passed. (There is not space enough to explain the Saros cycle in this column, but ask me over a cup of coffee, and I'll be glad to explain.)

Much knowledge and learning are generational. Mr. Cullis was always gracious in his inviting neighborhood kids and their parents over to look through his telescope and grasp the wonders of the night sky. Scouting is the same — one generation passing along skills and craftsmanship to another. I still have my dad's Scout manual from 1930!

My son earned his Eagle Scout, and I was proud to have been an assistant scoutmaster for his Troop. And, though I was never educated in astronomy, I taught myself over the years, sparked by Mr. Cullis' telescope viewings, and ended up teaching high school astronomy for 14 years.

OLLI classes are the culmination of passing along of prior learning. I believe it is powerful. Lifelong learning is the ultimate use of our brainpower. True, OLLI is not uniquely generational, but it can be. Ever had a conversation with somebody younger, especially in your family, that started with "Guess what I learned today in my OLLI course"? There you have it!

As always, I end by strongly encouraging you to consider a topic you are well-versed in and proposing a course for the OLLI curriculum.

Spring courses for 2025 are set, but we'll be prodding you for the coming fall 2025 semester. Consider being a sharer of knowledge! Have questions? Talk to any of us on the Curriculum Committee.

Veni, vidi, vici.

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



Your will is a powerful tool in  
planning for yourself,  
your loved ones,  
and your community.

It's easier than you think to  
create a legacy of support for  
the future of OLLI.

Contact [tammy.eskridge@uah.edu](mailto:tammy.eskridge@uah.edu)  
to learn more.



## SUPPORTING OLLI



For over 30 years now, OLLI has provided our community with great intellectual programs and social interaction for adults ages 50 and older. As




we continue to grow, we are looking for alternative sources of funding to ensure OLLI maintains high standards of professionalism in its mission.

Many of you may wonder how OLLI is funded. Membership dues and course fees provide a substantial amount, as does the interest of our endowment from the Bernard Osher Foundation.

Revenue also comes from contributions from you, the members! There are several opportunities for members to make donations.

Giving to the **OLLI Support Fund** helps us with special purchases. We recently used this fund to purchase new microphones and cameras for classrooms, the new chairs for the lounge, and a new digital camera and accessories. Donations to the Support Fund are used to enhance and make OLLI a better organization for *all* our members.

You can also give to **OLLI at UAH Legacy Giving**. Leaving a legacy for lifelong learning is a meaningful way to help ensure the longevity of OLLI at UAH. By making a planned or estate bequest, you can protect the program's enrichment for years to come.

		
<b>OLLI at UAH Support Fund</b> Help us nurture and grow OLLI at UAH while keeping our organization sustainable for generations to come. The Support Fund allows OLLI at UAH to offer members courses, field trips, travel opportunities, and social engagement.	<b>OLLI at UAH Scholarship</b> The OLLI at UAH Scholarship Fund provides support for deserving UAH undergraduate students. The scholarship assists in covering the cost of higher education to include tuition, books, housing, and other related fees.	<b>OLLI at UAH Legacy Giving</b> Leaving a legacy for lifelong learning is a meaningful way to help ensure the longevity of OLLI at UAH. By making a planned or estate bequest, you can ensure the program members care deeply about will be around through the ages.
<a href="#">GIVE TO THE OLLI AT UAH SUPPORT FUND &gt;</a>	<a href="#">GIVE TO THE OLLI AT UAH SCHOLARSHIP FUND &gt;</a>	<a href="#">GIVE TO THE OLLI AT UAH LEGACY GIVING FUND &gt;</a>

Options and links for financially supporting OLLI are at [uah.edu/library/olli/donate](http://uah.edu/library/olli/donate). Or you can find information, cards and envelopes in Wilson Hall.

Finally, you can give to the **OLLI at UAH Scholarship Fund**, which provides support for deserving UAH undergraduate students. The scholarship assists in covering tuition, books, housing and related fees.

In the past, we have done a traditional mailout that is costly as well as time-consuming. This year, we plan to promote our giving campaign more cost-effectively.

You can go online to [uah.edu/library/olli/donate](http://uah.edu/library/olli/donate) and donate, or check out the posters in Wilson Hall that contain donation cards and return envelopes.

OLLI just celebrated its 30th anniversary. To ensure that OLLI is well taken care of going forward, please consider donating to such a wonderful cause.

We hope you are enjoying the fall semester classes, bonuses, events and social gatherings. The OLLI staff is busy planning for an exciting spring 2025. The course guide and registration will be ready by mid-December.

**Clay Williams**  
**OLLI at UAH Program Manager**



# People of OLLI

## JILL STEWART FOUND NEW INTERESTS, FRIENDS BY JOINING OLLI; BECAME ONE OF ITS LEADERS

We all know people in OLLI who always seem to be there when something needs to be done. They are the people who keep OLLI functioning smoothly, along with the UAH OLLI staff.

One such member who immediately comes to mind is Jill Stewart. Since joining OLLI in 2017, she has been a facilitator, bonus event coordinator, board member, our immediate past OLLI board president, and now public relations chair. Jill is the subject of this month's *Insider* profile.

Jill's parents had a true fairy-tale romance.

"Once upon a time, there was a farm girl from Kansas and a farm boy from Kentucky who met on a blind date in Washington, D.C.," Jill said. "At the time the girl was 'semi-engaged' to a medical resident back home. But these two new acquaintances were mutually intrigued and exchanged letters after they each left D.C.

"They met up in other places for two more dates. Then the girl wrote a Dear John letter to the doctor-in-training. The fourth time the two got together was at their wedding in Kansas. And I was born nine months later in Oklahoma."

At first, Jill's dad worked at Curtiss-Wright Aeronautics in a job that required him to be on 24-hour call to go anywhere in the world to investigate air crashes. A friend suggested Hayes Aircraft in Birmingham. Her dad was hired by them as a technical engineer, and the Hoppers moved there when Jill was 18 months old. In the next six years, a brother and sister would be added to the family.

"Growing up in Birmingham in the '60s and early '70s, I was interested in becoming a journalist and writing about trends and events that captured the imagination of my generation," said Jill. "I worked on the editorial staff of student publications in both high school and college. On the advice of the



Jill Hopper Stewart at about age 7; with her children (from left) Claire, Nathan and Skye; and with Charger Blue, the UAH mascot.

then-editor of the Birmingham Post-Herald, I studied sociology and English at the University of Montevallo to prepare for a journalism career."

But life does not always go as planned, to say the least.

"I had met Michael Stewart, who would later become my husband, in Latin class when I was 13," Jill said. "Although we never dated in high school, we had become good friends working on the school paper and in other organizations. It was when he and I were studying at two different colleges that we reconnected and eventually married two weeks after I graduated."

They moved to Nashville, where Michael was enrolled in the Vanderbilt Divinity School to become a United Methodist minister. This wasn't quite what Jill had expected — he was a pre-med student when they began dating.

"Thus began our journey of the next 38-plus years as we moved to various appointments in north Alabama, including campus ministry at the University of Alabama and churches in Gurley, Tuscaloosa, Fayette, Jacksonville, Birmingham, Vestavia Hills and Hazel Green," said Jill. (Methodist ministers are sent by a bishop rather than called by a congregation, thus the frequent moves.)

"I could write a whole book on the liabilities and benefits of being a minister's wife," said Jill, "so I hesitate to encapsulate in into a sentence or two!"

Along the way, they welcomed son Nathan and daughters Skye and Claire.

Instead of journalism, Jill worked in health care settings and ultimately made a career in Alabama's Early Intervention System and with the agencies that provide direct services to families of infants and toddlers with developmental problems.

"Surprisingly, I realized one day that I couldn't imagine doing anything else," said Jill. "For 28 years I worked as a service coordinator or district early-intervention coordinator in every place we lived."

Then suddenly Jill was alone. "My husband died very unexpectedly 11 years ago," said Jill. "All our children were already building their lives in other states. So when I finally retired in 2017, I soon learned that when living alone your world can quickly get very small unless you are very intentional about seeking new horizons and new connections. That's when I found OLLI.

*(continued on the next page)*



# People of OLLI

## JILL STEWART FOUND NEW INTERESTS, FRIENDS, CONT

"My neighbor Dr. Harriet Somerville, who was already active on the OLLI Curriculum Committee, convinced me that OLLI was what I was looking for. OLLI has enriched my life and relationships ever since. OLLI was critical in helping me and others survive the isolation of the pandemic. I just can't im-

agine my life now without the experiences and friendships OLLI has given me."

Oh, yes, the children: Nathan is the general manager of the Kansas City Country Club in Mission Hills, Kansas. Skye is chief of staff for public admin-

istration for the city of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Claire is executive director of university marketing and advancement strategy for the University of West Florida in Pensacola.

Thanks, Jill, for all you do for OLLI.

**By Glen Adams**

## Member Services Committee

### OLLI COMES WITH LAUGHTER, FOOD AND COFFEE



I was enjoying the smiles and easy laughter coming from the folks gathered in the OLLI lounge before a Friday bonus. They were munching away on the assortment of snacks and having a great time connecting with other OLLI members.

I thought back on what I heard on WLRH on my drive to UAH that morning. There was a discussion on

research that showed the beneficial effects of people participating in activities they enjoy in a group. What a great validation of what OLLI provides to its members!

OLLI has the desire and ability to provide a variety of classes, programs and events that can satisfy just about anyone. The opportunity to engage socially with such a great group of interesting people is priceless. Also, don't forget the member interest groups (MIGs).

And the food! Member Services just loves to provide the snacks to add to the fun. We try to have a nice spread of food, but if you would like to suggest something or even provide it, just let me know. We try to have something for everyone's taste and food sensitivities.

Coffee is available at all times, or tea if that is your choice. You can use the microwave to heat water or even your lunch; just be sure to clean up any spills, etc.



Members mingled in the OLLI lounge (152D Wilson Hall) before and after the Huntsville Revisited bonus on Oct. 18. (Photo by Steve Stewart)

Even though there is plenty of time, be on the lookout for interesting photo ops for the annual photo contest. The subject is "Contrasts." The deadline to submit photos is April 1, 2025.

**Leah Black**  
**Member Services Committee Chair**



# Social Committee

## BREAKFAST, TEACHER APPRECIATION, A PARTY



Fall term is rolling along, with interesting classes and opportunity to meet friends and learn new things.

Early Bird breakfasts — weekly events that

ended recently for the fall semester — were a big hit, and lots of members showed up on Tuesday mornings and enjoyed a variety of good, free food. Thanks to all those who contributed to the breakfasts and those who came by to eat and socialize.

Our next big OLLI event is Teacher Appreciation Day on Friday, Nov. 8, at Trinity United Methodist Church from 11 until 1. This is our chance to thank our teachers for this fall term of great classes. The Social Committee will be serving lunch. Be sure to sign up at [tinyurl.com/olli-teachers-2024](https://tinyurl.com/olli-teachers-2024) and let us know you will be attending.



Free Early Bird breakfasts were held on Tuesdays in the OLLI lounge. These scenes are from Oct. 8. See more pictures on the following page. (Photos by Steve Stewart)

It's not too early to plan on coming to OLLI'S Holiday Party on Dec. 3 at the Conference Training Center from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. We will be having a buffet dinner and dancing to DJ Ted Cannon. The deadline to buy tickets (\$35 a person) is Nov. 22. Find details and

the tickets link at [tinyurl.com/OLLI-party-2024](https://tinyurl.com/OLLI-party-2024).

The Social Committee invites you to come to these events, meet your friends, and become lifelong learners.

**Marilynn Szecholda**  
Social Committee Chair



**Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2024**

5:30 p.m.

Conference Training Center, UAH

**Dance to DJ Ted Cannon's music!**  
**Buffet dinner; beer and wine available**

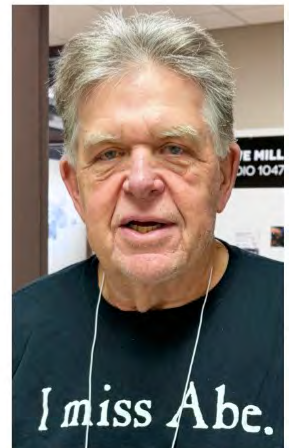
Buy your tickets by Nov. 22  
(\$35 per person)

Details at  
[tinyurl.com/OLLI-party-2024](https://tinyurl.com/OLLI-party-2024)



# Social Committee

## BREAKFAST WITH FRIENDS IN THE OLLI LOUNGE



(Photos by Steve Stewart)



# Travel Committee

## ONE GOOD TRAVEL YEAR DESERVES ANOTHER



Well, what can I say? 2024 looks to have been a wonderful year for our members to keep their heads up and see the other parts of the world. So many wonderful trips this year.

As we approach the long holiday season at the end of this year (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year's), it is time to plan

what will satisfy our wanderlust for next year.

### New travel opportunities in 2025

- **Two Worlds of Peru: The Inca Highlands & the Amazon** — This trip (June 13-27) is now full. We are looking forward to hearing all of the adventures and seeing all the happy faces from the pictures.
- **Signature City Pittsburgh** — Sunday, May 25, to Friday, May 30, 2025, with OLLI at UAH-planned options for pre- and post-extensions. We have a few more openings still and invite you to have a wonderful time on this great American story of the rise of American manufacturing and the impact of a key industrial city. Find out what makes it "America's Most Livable City." See details at [tinyurl.com/olli-pittsburgh2025](https://tinyurl.com/olli-pittsburgh2025). Please contact Michelle Laverty or David Sayre for more information at [olli.info@uah.edu](mailto:olli.info@uah.edu).
- **On the Road: Cuisine & Culture in Acadiana Louisiana** — Jan. 13-20, 2025. (Registration for this trip closed Sept. 30.) We will all be so glad to share our wonderful adventure and share our experiences on this. Any questions, please contact Claudia Pols at [olli.info@uah.edu](mailto:olli.info@uah.edu).

### What's in the works

We are in the final review phases of these new adventures:

- Shiloh National Military Park and the Corinth Battlefield Unit: What a wonderful adventure about the Civil War, such a difficult time in our country's history. Go to a place where history was made, and reflect on the impact it has on our nation's development.
- How about Costa Rica? We are getting interest in continuing exploration of our neighboring countries to the south.
- How about the Dalmatian Coast? What an intriguing adventure: Croatia (Zadar, Zagreb, Plitvice Lakes, Split, Dubrovnik), Montenegro (Kotor), Albania (Saranda, Butrint), Greece (Corfu, Delphi, Athens).



Shiloh National Cemetery at sunrise in Shiloh National Military Park, which may soon be a travel destination for interested members of OLLI at UAH.  
(National Park Service photo)

- Or how about Santa Fe, New Mexico? Oh, my, what a wonderful, intriguing and enriching community to explore!

### OLLI Travel Committee — continuing to explore

I am working with the committee members to define the travel windows and will be publishing them soon. Let us hear from you about any of these ideas. We need your inputs and suggestions.

We all know that traveling with OLLI means big adventures abroad and nearby excursions. Travel is part of what keeps us healthy and young in spirit.

Contact David Sayre or other committee members at [olli.info@uah.edu](mailto:olli.info@uah.edu).

*All who wander are not lost!*

**David Sayre**  
**Travel Committee Chair**



# Travel Committee



Thirty OLLI at UAH members toured Iceland Sept. 8-17. Hvannadalshnúkur, Iceland's highest peak, is in the background of this group photo. Sights included the northern lights (seen from several locations, including Vik as shown here), and the Skogafoss waterfall with a rainbow.



(Photos by Hafsteinn Thorolfsson, Marsha Langlois and Chris Stuhlinger)

## ICELAND — LAND OF FIRE, ICE AND LIGHTS?

A return visit to Iceland had been on my wish list ever since a brief visit there with my father in 1977. He rented a four-wheel-drive Land Rover to help us explore the surroundings of Reykjavik (Iceland's capital) long before substantial tourism infrastructure had been developed there.

Discussions with our OLLI Alaska travelers in August 2022 revealed that several others also had Iceland on their lists, so our next destination became obvious. Our Iceland tour in September 2024 included 13 travelers from the Alaska visit, plus about 10 newcomers to OLLI who joined to take part in this trip. Our group of 30 OLLI members included travelers from six states and Germany.

The island country of Iceland is unique in several ways. Located just below the Arctic Circle, it was formed millions of years ago from volcanic activity. New lava eruptions still add land mass to the country today. Geothermal activity provides hot water and steam to produce electrical energy, as do hydro powerplants. About 10% of the country is cov-

ered in ice (compared to about 80% of Greenland). Iceland was first settled by Vikings from Norway and gained its independence from Denmark in 1944. About two-thirds of the country's 385,000 people live in the greater Reykjavik area. Iceland is also known as one of the best places to view the northern lights, which are usually visible starting in September.

As group leader, I selected Nanda Journeys, a small travel company based in California, to put together an itinerary for us based on my list of suggested venues and activities, as well as their suggestions. Nanda specializes in bespoke tours for groups with special interests, so they did a fantastic job putting together a 10-day custom tour exclusively for our OLLI members.

*(continued on the next page)*



## ICELAND — LAND OF FIRE, ICE AND LIGHTS?, CONT

Nanda Journeys has a vast network of local partners around the world to help plan tours. Their partner in Iceland provided us with a wonderful tour guide and motor coach driver, both native Icelanders. Our guide Hafsteinn (nickname Haffi) shares his knowledge of Iceland with tourists during the summer and follows his professional passion for singing and music composition during the winter. Haffi sang to us several times and shared several Viking sagas during our tour. Hermann expertly drove us around the Golden Circle and Ring Road routes, dealing with narrow roads, occasional rain, strong winds and sleet.

The weather forecast before our arrival called for showers most days and daytime temperatures up to 50 degrees F, with wind. The rain held off on most days, but the winds surprised us on a few days with steady speeds of 20-plus mph and occasional gusts up to 50 mph. But most days gave us sunny skies with some calmer winds — almost perfect weather!

Limited newsletter space precludes me from submitting a detailed synopsis of our tour, so allow me to offer some highlights. Every day was filled with spectacular scenery and new experiences. Occasional free time was built in for relaxation and reflection.

We participated in a cooking class on the evening of our first full day in Reykjavik. Professional Icelandic chefs helped us prepare a variety of delicious dishes, which traditionally include lamb or several types of fish (cod, Arctic char, salmon, herring, etc.).

Our group members soaked in several thermal baths during the tour, which are heated to about 100-110 F by natural hot springs. A cold plunge pool, a mist room and a sauna are sometimes included. And a bar accessible from the water is always close by.

Thingvellir National Park is the only easily accessible place in the world where one can walk between two tectonic plates (North American and Eurasian). The plates are moving apart at the rate of about 1 inch per year. The Vikings established the world's first democratic parliament nearby in AD 930.

Waterfalls can be seen almost everywhere, from small trickles cascading down the mountainsides to enormous volumes of water thundering down from melting glaciers and ice packs. Gullfoss, Godafoss and Skogafoss are three of the well-known roaring falls we visited.

We drove through vast lava fields that were created by eruptions thousands of years ago. We hiked around volcanic craters, strolled on black sand beaches, and admired basalt columns that formed from cooling lava. We also visited geothermal areas, including Geysir, and observed Strokkur, a small geyser that erupts every 5 to 10 minutes but was disappointing the day of our visit (the Big Burp).

Icelandic horses and sheep can be seen throughout the countryside. A goat farm visit taught us about recent efforts to save the goats from near extinction. No crossbreeding from outside the country is allowed to prevent disease and maintain the purity of all these Icelandic breeds.

Fishing was the main industry in Iceland until tourism took over in recent years. Many quaint fishing villages are scattered along the coastline. A fisherman in northern Iceland showed us how to filet cod, and he offered us a sample of fermented shark. Several in our group tasted it and then received Rotten Shark certificates.

And did we see the northern lights? Boy, did we! We were fortunate to have several nights of clear skies and higher solar activity, which directly influences whether the northern lights will be visible. After walking just a few steps from our hotel rooms in both southern and northern Iceland, we witnessed beautiful displays of greens, reds and purples dancing above us. Because our night vision is usually not sensitive enough to see colors, the lights appear whitish until our cameras' more-sensitive receptors reveal the true colors.

Overall, our OLLI group was most fortunate to enjoy a wonderful and informative tour of Iceland! Learn more about our adventures and see some beautiful photos by attending the Friday bonus scheduled for Nov. 15 at 11 a.m. in Wilson Hall.

**Chris Stuhlinger**  
**Group Leader for Iceland tour**



## ICELAND: 'UNIQUE,' 'A TRIP OF A LIFETIME'

Chris Stuhlinger and Michelle Lavery put some written questions to the OLLI members who traveled to Iceland in September. Below are selected questions and edited responses.

### What single event/visit/venue "made" the trip for you as an individual?

- Sky Lagoon
- Visiting the Dark City and eating wild blueberries that [guide] Haffi taught us how to forge. All that was visible there just encapsulated, for me, all that was the violence, beauty, rawness of Iceland. The appearance, edibility of the wild blueberries was a sweet hug. Haffi singing the Icelandic national anthem in the lighthouse.
- The most exciting event for me was the hike on the glacier. I had never experienced walking on ice like that, and the scenery was breathtaking. It was a great event to pull the entire group together, too.
- Visits to the three waterfalls. A rare sight for someone from the desert Southwest.
- Seeing the northern lights.

### What single event/visit/venue "made" the trip for you as part of the group of 30 travelers?

- Cooking class.
- My first, surface thoughts are the cooking class, our group's spontaneous outburst of laughter when the lava museum's film showed the great burp. Upon reflection, our Sunday afternoon, self-organized trip to the [Perlan] Museum. ... Unbeknownst to the majority of us at the time, the museum provided us with a very good foundation for what we were going to see and visit in the coming days. Maybe a Ring Road tour of Iceland should start with a visit to this museum.
- The glacier walk.
- Seeing the northern lights — a quest that most of us were sharing.

### What were you most excited about sharing with your family/friends after you returned home?

- Glacier walk.



- They wanted to see pictures of the northern lights. I wanted to show pictures of the Dark City. I grew up in a Pittsburgh neighborhood, community of steel workers. I've heard the stories and understand the concept of hot molten on water versus water on hot molten. So for me, the story of the creation of the Dark City was very relatable.
- Seeing the northern lights. One night would have been wonderful. Three were so much more than anticipated.

### Which experience was unique for you (something you've never experienced before)?

- Glacier walk.
- Watching someone [a fisherman] swallow a fish lens — with a smile! Sipping sheep dung smoked whiskey. That was really good! Freezing my face off while being toasty below at the Sky Lagoon. Thirty minutes in which I ate wild-caught salmon (fixed two different ways), goat (fixed two different ways) and lamb.
- The most unique experience was seeing the northern lights. We were lucky enough to experience a spectacular display, and I thoroughly enjoyed photographing them.
- Sky Lagoon was a unique experience that would never have been on a list of things that I wanted to do but was very enjoyable.



Travelers saw the northern lights (aurora borealis) several times on their tour that circled Iceland. A fisherman extracted the lens from a cod's eye as he prepared the fish for market. (Photos by Steve Stewart and Lisa Brunegraff)

### Of all the travelers' photos you have seen, which one photo best sums up the trip for you?

- Aurora photos.
- Diamond Beach — there was one chunk of ice that was 90% crystal clear, had hollowed-out spots. When the sun shone on that piece of ice, it truly looked like a huge, sparkling diamond. And sitting on that black sand — oh, my!
- Perhaps my picture of our group hiking up the glacier.
- No way to sum up the trip with just one photo.

### Which photo will bring a smile to your face every time you see it?

- I will always smile at a photo of Tilman [Stuhlinger] being the first person to climb to the wormhole lava structure in the Dark City. I hope there is a picture of him standing with his back to us and him gazing into what is just on the other side.
- Multiple ones, by Sallie Robinson, of people happily soaking in the Sky Lagoon.
- Too many photos to mention that are making me smile.

### What was your favorite Icelandic food or meal on the trip (something that pleasantly surprised you and/or would not be available in the U.S.)?

(continued on the next page)



## ICELAND: 'UNIQUE,' 'A TRIP OF A LIFETIME,' CONT

- Goat and reindeer were unique; fish was varied and always good.
- At the cow farm, the first charcuterie board we had as an appetizer, and the following lamb shank entree with rhubarb sauce. ... We had two different preparations of salmon and two different preparations of goat as an appetizer and really, really good lamb as the entree. Plus, that meal was after our visit to the Dark City, where Haffi taught us to pick wild blueberries. [Two of us] had wild blueberry spritzers as our cocktail.
- My two favorite meals were the salted cod at the fish factory (so tasty) and the Arctic char we had at the last meal together. Both were fantastic (I love seafood).

- Perhaps the salt cod in Hauganes.
- Favorite food is the cinnamon roll from Braud Bakery with the hot dog a close second.

### **This trip was not the cheapest or easiest. Why are you thankful that you participated?**

- It was the most unique place we've ever been. And the tour was done so appropriately for our group.
- Because it wasn't the easiest. Because it did not showcase the major cities. Because it was about seeing, touching what God had created and not about what a person created and someone else thinks belongs on a wall for people to pay to see. Because it was a trip that did not attract folks interested in what can be hung on walls. Because, in many ways, Iceland represents a last frontier, and I wanted to see all that rugged, raw, righteous nature before it was gone.
- This was a trip of a lifetime for me. I knew very little about Iceland before the trip, and now I feel I have learned a lot about their lifestyle, their culture, their warm baths, and their constant danger from volcanoes. I will always think differently about this country now that I have experienced this trip.
- Chance to become familiar with a new, very unique country; being with old friends and meeting new ones. The



excellent organization of the trip made the cost very worthwhile.

■ Iceland is a country full of wonderful scenery and experiences. We had a really great group of travelers. This combo made this trip great!

### **Anything else you want to share?**

■ We were so lucky to have such a great tour leader in Haffi. He made everything fun, even the days we had high winds, snow, and bitter cold weather. I hardly remember anything negative about the trip.

### **■ One traveler's consolidated answers:**

The trip to Iceland was truly wonderful, and it is hard to name my top experience. I just really loved all the scenery on the Ring Road. The photographs can't capture the vistas and scope of the terrain: lava fields and formations, craters, volcanoes, glaciers, mountains, fjords, lakes, waterfalls, the sea, beaches, clouds, and sunsets, small farms, churches, Icelandic horses and sheep.

My favorite stops included all the waterfalls, and the visits to the fishery, horse farm, dairy and goat farm.

My two favorite experiences were probably the amphibian boat tour at Glacier Lagoon and the Icelandic geothermal experience at Sky Lagoon.



Hiking and exploring Solheimajokull glacier, soaking in the geothermal Vok Baths. (Photos by Chris Stuhlinger and Sallie Robinson)

A special bonus and a true highlight of the trip was Haffi, our tour guide, sharing the culture of Iceland through story and song. The folk stories, lullabies and folksongs he sang on the bus were so fun. His musical offerings at Thingviller, at the site of the first parliament, and the Icelandic national anthem in the Akranes Lighthouse were particularly moving.

Icelandic food: I really enjoyed all the fresh fish, especially the Arctic char, at the Hotel Dyrholaey and Hofnin, and the salted cod from the local fishery in Ecta. The fancy fish soup at the little cafe at the Snaefellssjokul National Park was such a surprise and a treat. I also enjoyed the smoked and cured meats, including salmon, lamb, goat and reindeer. The lamb shank dinner at the dairy and the farewell dinner at Hofnin, on the harbor in Reykjavik, were delightful venues, and the meals were delicious. The cooking class at Salt was very fun and informative, and a good way to connect with fellow travelers on our first day together.

*Photos from the Iceland trip, as well as a video clip of guide Hafsteinn Thorolfsson singing Iceland's national anthem, will be shared during the "OLLI Travel Experiences" bonus presentation at 11 a.m. on Nov. 15 in Wilson Hall.*



# Travel Committee

## ICELAND TRAVELS: NATURAL AND MAN-MADE ART



(Photos from Nicola Balmain, Bob Carroll, Marsha Langlois, Steve Stewart, Tilman Stuhlinger and Soos Weber)



# Travel Committee

## MEMORABLE SIGHTS AND TASTES OF ICELAND

OLLI members' visit in September included climbing a lighthouse, visiting a red-lighted room in a lava museum, exploring ice caves in another museum, eating, and enjoying indoor and outdoor scenery.



(Photos from Allen Butler, Bob Carroll, Marsha Langlois, Tessa Lucas, Steve Stewart, Alison Toney and Chris Stuhlinger)



# Member Interest Groups

## ARTIST STUDIO MEMBER INTEREST GROUP



### FIELD TRIP: ART IN THE NEW CITY HALL

On Friday, Oct. 11, OLLI members took a docent-led tour of the artwork in Huntsville's new City Hall. "Our Civic Canvas" is part of Huntsville's "Amazing Spaces" public art collection. All 10 City Hall pieces are among 37 artworks located throughout the city from the collection. An Artist Studio Member Interest Group field trip is held on the third Friday of every month, and any OLLI members are welcome.



### NEXT ART HISTORY PRESENTATION: SURREALISM



Surrealist artists sought to express the unconscious mind, dreamworlds and illogical scenes. Surrealist artists include Salvador Dalí, René Magritte, Max Ernst and Yves Tanguy. If you want to know more about surrealism, come to the Artist Studio MIG on Friday, Nov. 22, in Wilson Hall. A PowerPoint with discussion on the style will be presented at 12:30 p.m. Any OLLI member is welcome.

*Text and photos from Jean Krieger, leader of the Artist Studio MIG*



# Member Interest Groups



Flint Creek Nature Trail (left) and Hickory Cove Nature Preserve are on November's calendar for the Hiking & Biking MIG.

## OUTDOOR FUN IN DECATUR AND HUNTSVILLE

We have two more activities planned for this semester: a nature walk and a hike in November. Join us for one or both activities, get outside, and maybe we'll see some colorful fall leaves!

Many of you have joined our Hiking & Biking MIG (member interest group) and participated in our activities. We currently have about 120 MIG members.

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 a valid OLLI membership to join the MIG and participate in MIG activities.

Join the MIG: [forms.gle/6M5BoaWX9Z4TLugE9](https://forms.gle/6M5BoaWX9Z4TLugE9)

Below is a list of remaining 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.

### Recaps of recent events

**Point Mallard Park**, Sept. 29 — Our group enjoyed a leisurely 3-mile nature walk along the shoreline at this Decatur park, where we spotted great blue herons and other interesting natural features.

**Rainbow Mountain Nature Preserve**, Oct. 13 — MIG members hiked up Rainbow Mountain on a beautiful day and admired Alligator Rock and Balanced Rock.

### Fall semester MIG activities

- Sunday, Nov. 10, 1-3 p.m. — **Flint Creek Nature Trail nature walk** (Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, southeast Decatur). Join us for this easy 1.2-mile nature walk through a lakeside pine/hardwood forest. Participants will have the opportunity to observe a variety of natural features with occasional glimpses of Flint Creek.
- Saturday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m. to 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**



# Member Interest Groups

## A SHORELINE STROLL AND A MOUNTAIN HIKE

The Hiking & Biking Member Interest Group visited Point Mallard Park on Flint Creek in Decatur on Sept. 29 and Rainbow Mountain Nature Preserve on Oct. 13.



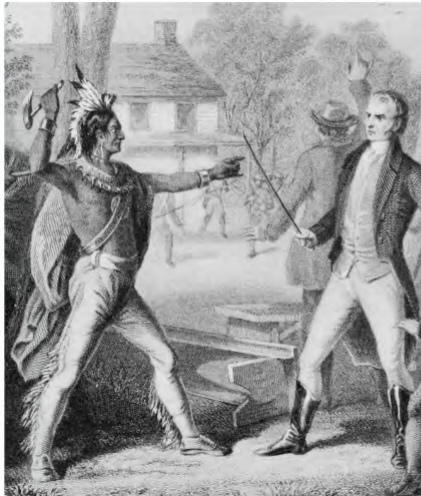
### POINT MALLARD PARK



### RAINBOW MOUNTAIN NATURE PRESERVE



# This Moment in History



Artists' renderings of Tecumseh, his meeting with William Henry Harrison, and his death at the Battle of the Thames. The second item was created by artist John Reuben Chapin and engraver William Ridgway; the third, by Nathaniel Currier. (Images from Library of Congress and Wikimedia Commons)

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

### November: A "Shooting Star" gives his all

A comet blazed across the Midwestern sky on that cold spring night, March 9, 1768. For the people of the Panther clan of the Shawnee tribe in Piqua, Ohio, it was surely a harbinger of greatness to come. On that same night in that small village, perhaps the most powerful and influential force among the native American peoples was born. He was named Tekoomsē, the Shawnee word meaning "Shooting Star" or "Panther Across the Sky."

This was a point in Native American and American history when the far-flung Shawnees were working to reunite in their Ohio country homeland. They had lost much of their territory to the expanding American colonies in a series of border conflicts.

His father was killed in battle against American colonists in 1774, so Tecumseh was thereafter mentored by his older brother Cheesekau, a noted war chief in his own right, who would also die fighting Americans in 1792. Soon thereafter, Tecumseh, now a fierce young warrior himself, joined the armed struggle of Shawnee Chief Blue Jacket against further American encroachment into their homeland. This ended with the bitter defeat at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794.

Afterward, the Native confederacy fell apart, especially after Blue Jacket agreed to make peace with the Americans. Tecumseh did not attend the signing of the Treaty of Greenville (1795), which ceded about two-thirds of Ohio and portions of present-day Indiana to the United States.

In 1805, Tecumseh's younger brother Tenskwatawa, who came to be known as the Shawnee Prophet, founded a religious movement that called upon Native Americans to reject European influences and return to a more traditional lifestyle. In 1808, they established Prophetstown, a village in present-day Indiana, that grew into a large, multi-tribal community.

The brothers initially worked to maintain a peaceful coexistence with the United States, until William Henry Harrison, governor of the Indiana Territory, negotiated the Treaty of Fort Wayne in September 1809. This treaty allowed the purchase of 2.5 to 3 million acres of Shawnee land in present-day Indiana and Illinois, and their feelings changed.

Although many Indian leaders signed the treaty, others were deliberately excluded from the negotiations. The treaty created widespread outrage among the tribes, and, according to historian John Sugden, "put Tecumseh on the road to war" with the United States.

Tecumseh began to travel, spreading the Prophet's message and proclaiming that Native Americans owned their lands in common and therefore should not cede more territory to the interlopers unless all the tribes agreed. As you might expect, his message alarmed American leaders as well as those Native leaders who sought accommodation with the United States. However, he emerged as a prominent figure and built an inter-tribal confederacy to counter U.S. expansion.

*(continued on the next page)*



# This Moment in History

## DID YOU KNOW ...?

### AN INSIDER'S LOOK AT HISTORY, CONT

In August 1810, Tecumseh's meeting with William Henry Harrison at Vincennes, capital of the Indiana Territory, resulted in a standoff that became legendary. Tecumseh demanded that Harrison rescind the Fort Wayne provision, saying he would oppose American settlement on the disputed lands, promising the chiefs who had signed the treaty would be punished, and saying that he was uniting the tribes to prevent further cessions. Harrison insisted that the land had been purchased fairly and that Tecumseh had no right to object because Native Americans did not own land in common. Harrison said he would send Tecumseh's demands to President James Madison but did not expect the president to accept them. As the meeting concluded, Tecumseh said that if Madison did not rescind the Fort Wayne treaty, "you and I will have to fight it out."

After the confrontation with Harrison, Tecumseh traveled widely, going from Indiana to Upper Canada to New England and beyond, trying to grow his confederation and stop the white men from stealing more native land. He was aided by two extraordinary events: the Great Comet of 1811 and the New Madrid Earthquake, which he and other Native Americans interpreted as omens that his confederacy should be supported. Many tribes, especially in the South, rejected his overtures — most notably the Choctaws and Chickasaws. His most receptive Southern listeners were among the Muscogee, a faction of whom became known as the Red Sticks and responded to Tecumseh's call to arms, contributing to the coming of the Creek War in 1813-14.

But Tecumseh had made a "serious mistake": he had informed Harrison he would be absent from Prophetstown for an extended time. Harrison wrote that Tecumseh's absence "affords a most favorable opportunity for breaking up his Confederacy." In September 1811, Harrison marched toward Prophetstown with about 1,000 men. In the pre-dawn hours on Nov. 7, warriors from Prophetstown launched a surprise attack on Harrison's camp, initiating the Battle of Tippecanoe. Harrison's men held their ground, after which the Prophet's warriors withdrew and evacuated Prophetstown. Harrison burned the village the following

day and returned to Vincennes, hoping erroneously that his preemptive strike would subdue Tecumseh's confederacy.

When the United States declared war on Great Britain in June 1812, as many as 800 warriors had gathered around the rebuilt Prophetstown. Tecumseh and his nearly 3,500 allies went to Amherstburg in Canada to throw their lot with the British. The British quickly recognized Tecumseh as the most influential of their Indian allies and relied upon him to direct the Native forces in scouting and probing enemy positions when American Gen. William Hull crossed into Canada and threatened to take Fort Malden. On July 25, Tecumseh's warriors skirmished with Americans north of Amherstburg, inflicting the first American fatalities of the war.

On Sept. 10, 1813, the British decided to abandon Amherstburg. Tecumseh led a rearguard action to slow the American advance and was slightly wounded in the arm. Many of his despairing allies soon deserted, leaving him 500 warriors. Outnumbered more than 3 to 1, he faced the Americans at the Battle of the Thames on Oct. 5, 1813, positioning his men in a line of trees along the right, hoping to flank the American advance. The left, under British command, collapsed almost immediately, and their troops fled the battlefield. Col. Richard Mentor Johnson then led an American charge against Tecumseh's position. Tecumseh was killed in the fierce fighting, and his few followers dispersed.

After his death, Tecumseh would become an iconic folk hero in American, Indigenous and Canadian history. His primary American foe, William Henry Harrison, described him as "one of those uncommon geniuses, which spring up occasionally to produce revolutions and overturn the established order of things." Tecumseh's stature grew over the decades after his death, leading him to become, for many Europeans and white North Americans, the foremost example of the "noble savage" stereotype. Noble? Certainly! Savage? I think not!

*By John Mason*

## OLLI Life

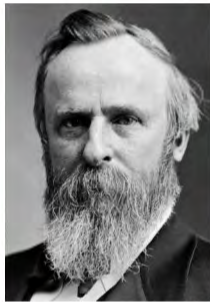
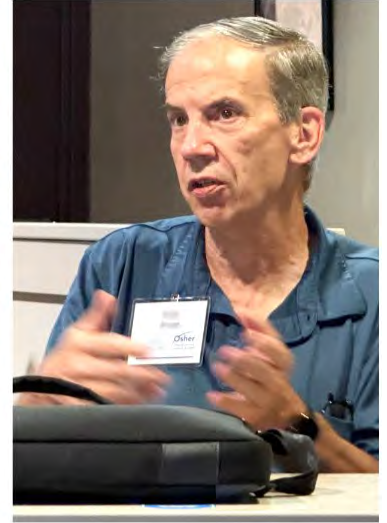
### HUNTSVILLE- CINCINNATI SOCCER, SEPT. 22





## DRAMA IN THE 1876 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Tom Borchert described the disputed presidential election of 1876 in a bonus presentation Oct. 4. The candidates were the two men shown in black and white: Rutherford B. Hayes (top) and Samuel J. Tilden. Hayes ultimately won with 185 electoral votes to Tilden's 184, although Tilden had received more popular votes, 4,286,808 to 4,034,142.



(Photos from Steve Stewart, Sue Chatham, Wikimedia Commons and the White House)



## LOOKING BACK AT HUNTSVILLE PEOPLE, PLACES

William Hampton, curator of the Huntsville Revisited Museum, discussed local history and showed dozens of photos of Huntsville people and places during a bonus presentation Oct. 18. Next month's *Insider* will include photos from a tour of the museum that took place Oct. 25.



(Photos by Steve Stewart and from the museum)



# The Last Word

## PUBLICIZING OLLI AT COMMUNITY EVENTS

OLLI members and staff set up booths at the Madison Street Festival on Oct. 5 and the North Alabama Health and Wellness Fair at Calhoun Community College in Huntsville on Sept. 28. Their purpose was to recruit OLLI members. The five pictures here from the Street Festival include Randy Boyette, Justin Clay, John Mason, Jill Stewart, Sue Chatham, Dave Sayre, Bob Darnall and Nancy Darnall.



(Photos from Sue Chatham and Steve Stewart)