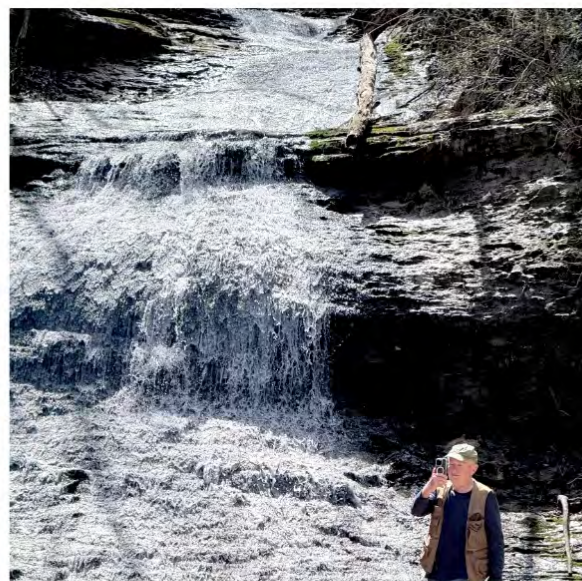


The OLLI Insider

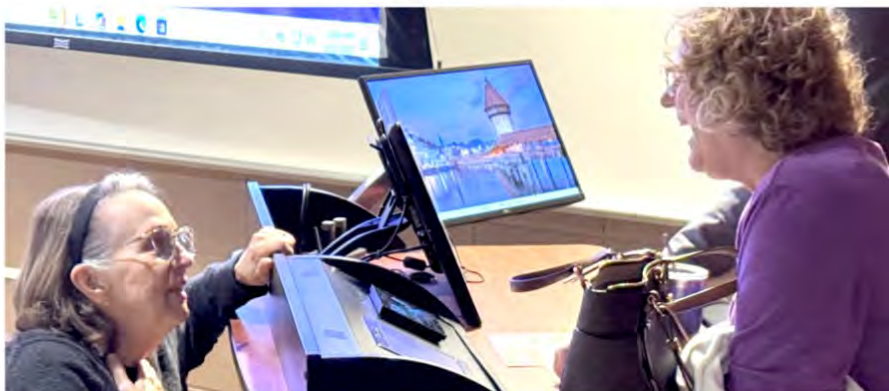
News for OLLI members at The University of Alabama in Huntsville

April 2025



ARTS, NATURE, ADVENTURES, HISTORY & HEALTH

*Alabama Center for the Arts in Decatur;
waterfalls at John and Marsha Langlois' farm;
OLLI teacher Candi Holcomb; historic Mooresville;
women who were executed for standing by their
beliefs; a briefing on Alzheimer's disease.*



uah.edu/oli

Wilson Hall Room 105

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From the Editor

NO NEED FOR MOM TO CALL YOUR OLLI TEACHER



A student in an OLLI course, which I was teaching, was kind enough to inform me that she would miss class because she would be helping her daughter, who is a school-teacher, at an event. I thanked her for telling me and told her she'd made the right choice.

But, as she knew, the notice to me was not necessary. OLLI does not require attendance or homework,

nor do we give grades. We teach and learn for the fun of it.

The episode reminded me of a phone call I received while teaching at another university. A student's mother asked apologetically whether he could miss my class while attending a family event. I said yes. What I couldn't tell her was that missing class was nothing unusual for him.

(I could not reveal this information because of the same sort of privacy regulations that apply here at UAH. On member name tags pictured in *The Insider*, we blur the names. If I need to reach you and you haven't told me how, the OLLI staff cannot give me the contact information but cheerfully helps by sending you a message to get in touch. We don't use personal email addresses in *The Insider* for similar reasons.)

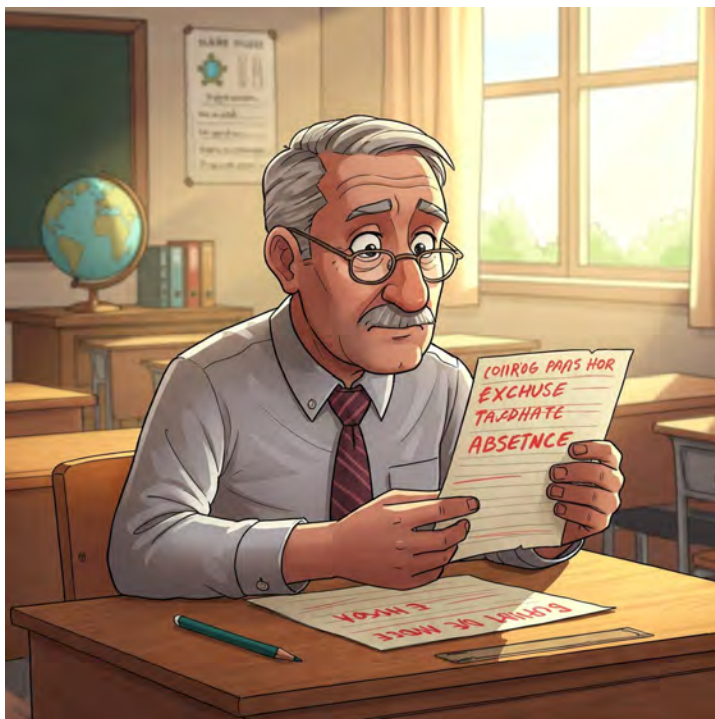
Learning is fun. Seeing friends is fun. Put the two together in an environment like OLLI, and people come because they *want* to be here. If you cannot attend, there is no need for a note or a phone call from you or your mom.

You can attend as sporadically as my former student if you wish, but you will be missing some good stuff. Of course, you are not paying \$900 or more for the course, as he or his parents were.

Inside *The Insider*: In February, OLLI lost stalwart members Patti Patrick and Joan May. In this issue, you will find memories of Joan, as well as Nancy Darnell's article reminding us to express appreciation to people while we can. Memories of Patti were published in March's *Insider*.

Dave Sayre lists OLLI group travel plans and offers new details of a trip to New Mexico in late 2026. Phil Graham gives a report from the Shiloh and Corinth Civil War history sites, accompanied by photos from him and Glen Adams.

Betty Koval gives details about three bonus lectures this month, including one by NASA astronaut Jan Davis. Chris Stuhlinger notes April events on the UAH campus and in Florence. Chris and Steve Jones tell about coming activities of the Hiking & Biking Member Interest Group. We have reports on the art, reading and dining MIGs, too. Jean Krieger, leader of the Artist Studio MIG, writes about famous musicians who are also visual artists.



No excuses are required for skipping OLLI classes, but you might miss something important or interesting.

(Art generated by Google Gemini)

Glen Adams profiles Candi Holcomb, an OLLI member and versatile teacher who has stepped in to keep courses going.

Leah Black discusses the lounge, free food, member interest groups and other OLLI amenities.

In John Mason's column as OLLI board president, he passes on advice from an ancient Roman emperor about casting off anxiety in difficult times. John's history column is the first of two articles discussing tariffs, how they work, and what effects they might have on today's economy.

Lee Roop's monthly column is about the Five Points neighborhood, where history and present times come together. He interviewed the present owner of the landmark Star Super Market.

John Syster writes for the Curriculum Committee about the magic of wondering and where it will take you. Clay Williams names some summer courses and notes that we'll have a replacement soon for our online registration system.

Steve Stewart
Editor, *The OLLI Insider*

From the President

STAYING SANE IN AN INSANE WORLD



"May you live in interesting times" is an English expression said to be a translation of a traditional Chinese curse. The expression is ironic: "Interesting" times are usually times of trouble. Well, I think I can safely say that today we do live in interesting times! Interpreting the meaning is up to you.

So this month, I would like to offer some tips on surviving these times. I subscribe to a daily podcast from the *Daily Stoic* that helps me maintain my way. I attribute the inspiration and the tips to them. (Any erroneous interpretations are, of course, all mine!)

Marcus Aurelius, Roman emperor from 161 to 180 CE and Stoic philosopher, tells us in his *Meditations*, 9.13, that "Today I escaped anxiety. Or no, I discarded it, because it was within me, in my own perceptions — not outside."

This, my friends, may be the key. In other words, we control our own lives and everything in them. Whether any outside influence causes us to change our direction is entirely up to us.

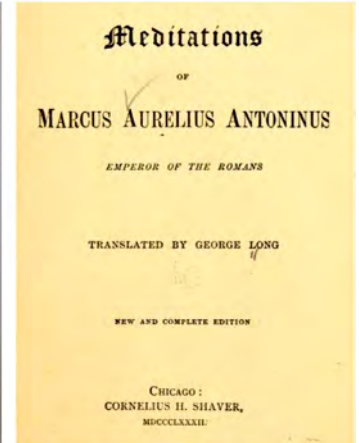
So here are some ideas for you to consider to help you navigate your way to a saner day:

1. **Hold on to the truth.** We are bombarded from all sides by "news," fake or otherwise. How do we discern the truth? Those who wish to influence us know that if they give us more than one or two "crises" to consider, our brains get overwhelmed, and making rational decisions becomes increasingly more difficult. We must analyze what we see and hear before choosing a path. And that path should always lead only in the direction that we know to be right and just.
2. **They are who they say they are.** When they tell us who they are, listen. Again, allegedly from Marcus Aurelius, "Hold your breath until you are blue in the face. They will just keep doing it."
3. **Focus on what you can control.** Our individual actions are the only things in this world that we really control. Sift out the outside noise. Be your best self.
4. **Keep an even keel.** This may be the most difficult to do in insane times because there is so much noise trying to distract you. When you are threatened with distraction, see Tip No. 3 above.
5. **Turn off the news and try this instead:** Pick up a book and read. The genre doesn't matter; just immerse yourself in something that takes you away from the daily turmoil.
6. **Ask yourself this question:** "Is a world without dishonest, annoying people possible?" The definitive answer is "No!" So see Tip No. 3.
7. **Choose not to be harmed.** Remember that we control how we act and how we feel. We can be harmed only when we choose to allow something or someone to make us worse as a person. Everything else can be cured by remembering the old nursery rhyme "Sticks and stones ..."
8. **See the opportunity.** Opportunity is everywhere if we choose to see it and then act on it. Think about this: "The impediment to action advances action, what stands in the way becomes the way" (Marcus Aurelius, 5.20). When life seems to get in the way, analyze why that is. There is likely an opportunity hiding just behind the obstacle.
9. **Don't follow the herd.** You determine what is your best self, what's right and what's just. Don't give in to peer pressure; do what's right because it's right.
10. **Don't let it stop you.** You know, if at first you don't succeed. And,
11. **Have fewer opinions.** One last quote: "You always own the option of having no opinion. There is never any need to get worked up or to trouble your soul about things you can't control. These things are not asking to be judged by you. Leave them alone." I think by now you can guess from whom that comes. In other words, reflect more and talk less.

So the point of all this is that we can choose not to be frustrated or misled, and we can choose to be content in doing the right thing. Why not try the right thing?

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

John Mason
President, OLLI at UAH Board of Directors



Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius was also a philosopher. (Images from Ad Meskens, via Wikimedia Commons; and the Library of Congress)

Events Committee

APRIL: BEEKEEPING, UAH SPORTS, INDIAN MOUNDS



We have three more events scheduled for spring semester. Join us to learn about beekeeping, cheer on the UAH sports teams at Charger Park, and learn about the Native

Americans who lived in the Shoals area a few hundred years ago.

Registration and attendance at our events and tours have been increasing, and it is exciting to see more participation from OLLI members. Several recent events reached capacity for attendance weeks ahead of time, and registration had to be closed. Be sure to sign up early!

When possible, we'll start a waiting list, and I'll do my best to accommodate as many members as possible. But be aware that some venues have strict attendance limits.

Event recaps

Alabama Center for the Arts, Feb. 28 — OLLI members toured this Decatur facility, which is a collaborative partnership between Calhoun Community College and Athens State University. Students are provided with affordable arts degrees in the fields of visual, musical and performing arts.

Historic Mooresville, March 22 — Mayor Nikki Sprader led our group on a fascinating tour of the small town of Mooresville on a beautiful Saturday morning. The town (population 47) became incorporated in 1818 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. We took a step back in time to visit the stagecoach tavern, the oldest continually operated post office in Alabama, and the brick church. Sprader also told us many stories about the historic homes and some of their residents from the past 200-plus years.



UAH Beekeeping Club's apiary; sports at Charger Park; Florence Indian Mound Museum.



Coming events

- Friday, April 4 — **UAH Beekeeping Club apiary visit** (Huntsville), 2-4 p.m. Following a north Alabama winter, spring warmth energizes honeybee colonies for the summer ahead. The rewards of caring for bees and for harvesting the wondrous products of their labors are joyful. This hands-on tour at a local apiary will increase a participant's understanding of the importance of bees' health, the benefits that come from responsible bee husbandry, the threat to their existence, and the increasing need for beekeepers. **NOTE:** This event has reached capacity and is closed to registration.
- Saturday, April 12 — **UAH sports: baseball, lacrosse, softball** (UAH campus). Schedule: baseball vs. Mississippi College, noon and 3 p.m.; men's lacrosse vs. Lander, noon; softball vs. Mississippi College, 1 p.m. and to be determined. Cheer on the men's and women's UAH Chargers teams! Attend one

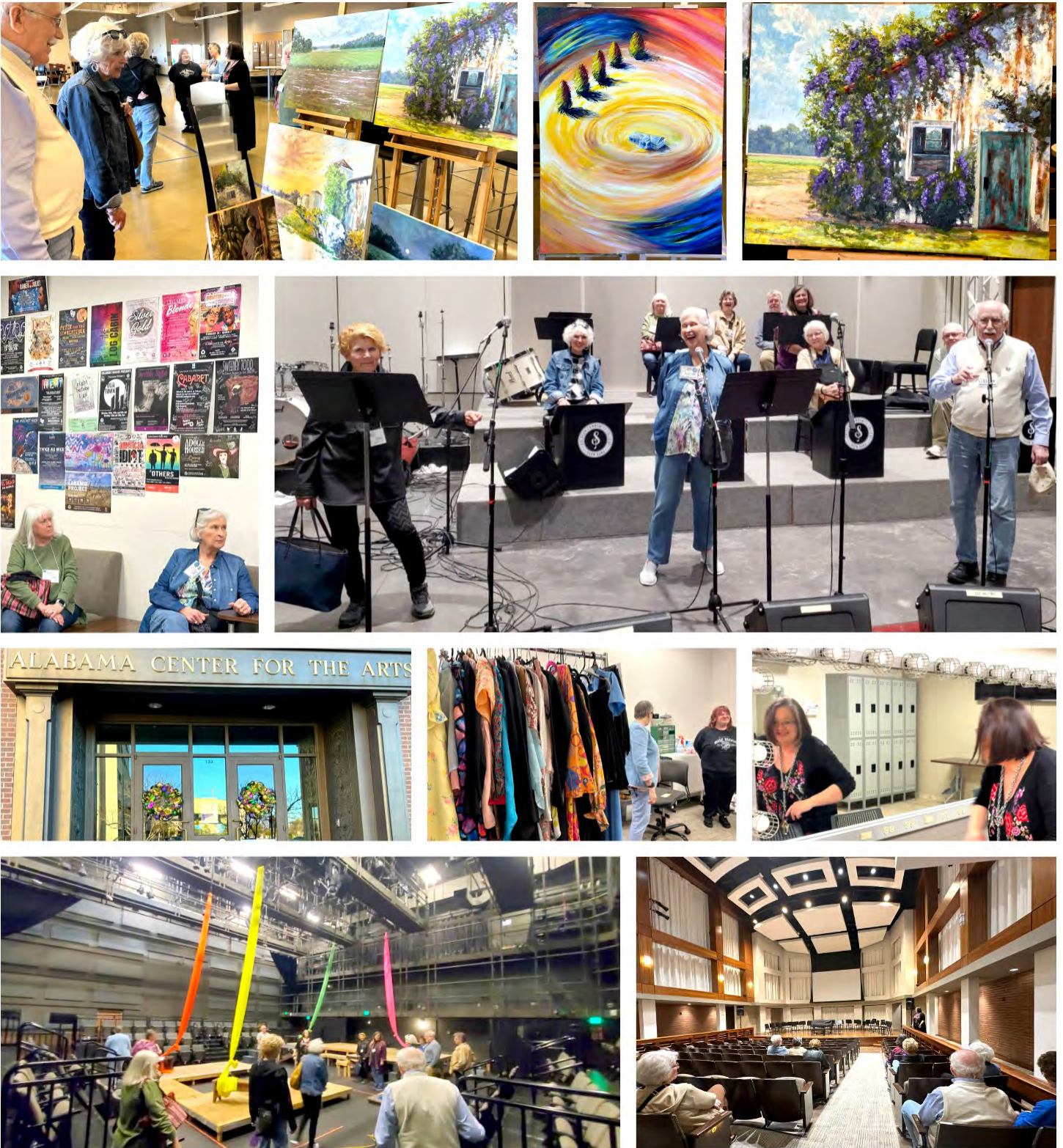
(or all) of three sporting events at Charger Park. There is no charge for attending, so you are free to move among the ongoing games.

- Friday, April 25 — **Indian Mound Museum tour** (Florence), 1:30-3 p.m. Visit an Indian mound built nearly 1,700 years ago by Native Americans in the Shoals. A presentation about the mound and its builders will be followed by a guided tour of the museum. We will be able to climb the mound as well. The museum is an excellent educational center presenting artifacts and displays of Native American cultural practices. Meet in the museum lobby by 1:30 pm. Carpooling will be available. There is a \$2-per-person fee for the visit. The museum closes at 4 p.m. There is no registration limit.

Chris Stuhlinger
Events Committee Chair

Events Committee

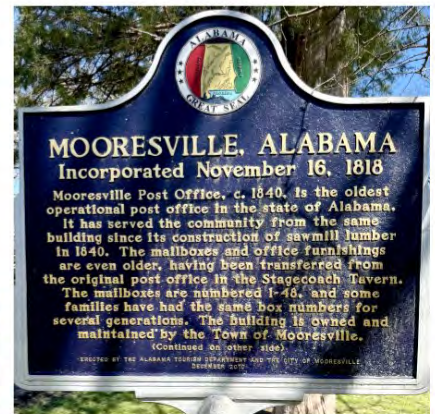
ALABAMA CENTER FOR THE ARTS TOUR, DECATUR



(Photos by Patrice Stewart and Chris Stuhlinger)

Events Committee

MOORESVILLE WALKING TOUR, MARCH 22



(Photos by Glen Adams, Steve Jones and Chris Stuhlinger)

Coming Bonuses

SPINE HEALTH, COSTA RICA AND AN ASTRONAUT



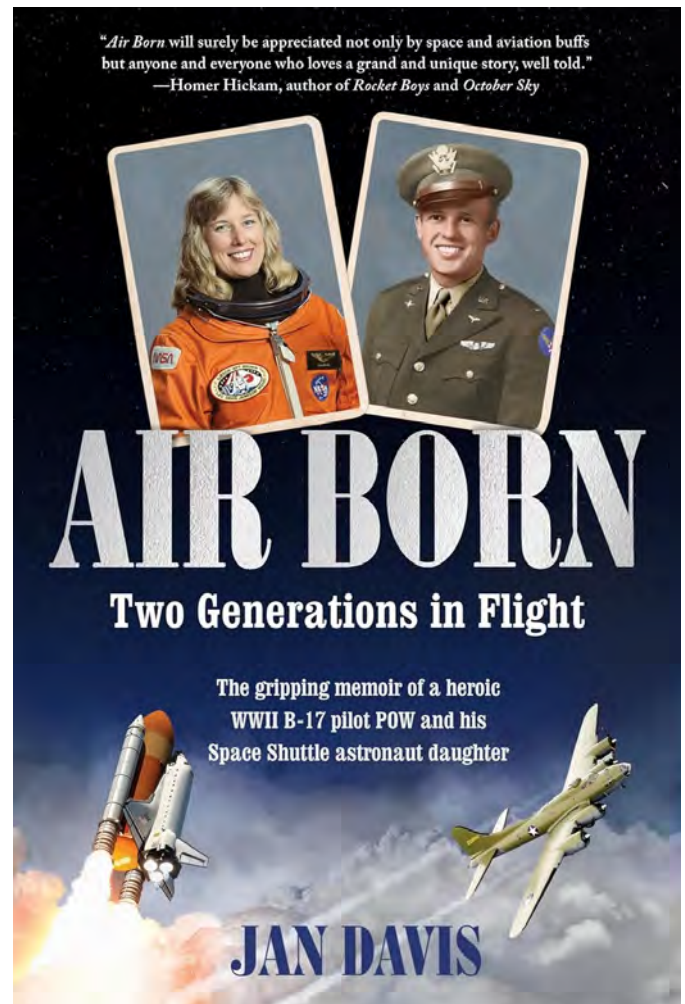
Wow! You are in for a treat this month. We have three great bonuses instead of the usual two.

- **April 4 — Dr. John Rodriguez-Feo**, on staff at The Orthopaedic Center as a spine specialist, will tell us about vertebral compression fractures and spinal stenosis. Women are particularly affected by this, but do not think it cannot happen to men as well. You will want to learn about this subject because we are of that age demographic for this to manifest. As I have stated before, “As you age ...”
— like we are not aware we are aging!
 - **April 11 — Bob Lawton**, who lives six months of each year in Costa Rica and is a former co-worker of OLLI member Sam Campbell, will speak to us about the “Cloud Forests, Conservation at Monteverde, and the Impacts of Ecotourism in Costa Rica.” For everyone traveling to Costa Rica on the OLLI tour in August and September, this should be an informative talk. I am sure he will field questions we may have.
- Our **SUPER BONUS** will be:
- **April 18 — Dr. Jan Davis**, NASA astronaut, and author of *Air Born: Two Generations in Flight*, will highlight her father's World War II experiences and her three space shuttle flights. Please bring a prospective member or friend because the venue for this bonus is the Student Services Building. We would like to see a roomful of our current OLLI members and hopefully prospects who may join OLLI.

We have a great program at OLLI — not only the free bonuses and member interest groups, but also top-notch classes. There is the travel mentioned above, but the very best part of OLLI is the community we have here. So many of the people I have met here have come to be like family to Bill and me.

While on campus, please stop by the lounge (152D Wilson Hall) for free coffee and sometimes tasty food but *always* great fellowship of like-minded lifelong learners! You never know if you will meet a new friend.

Betty Koval
Bonus Coordinator



Jan Davis, who will present the April 18 bonus, is an astronaut and the author of this book.

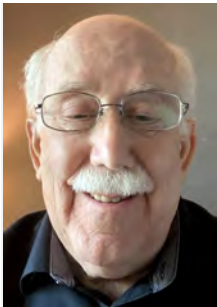
Curriculum Committee



History's wonderers have included sculptor Auguste Rodin's *The Thinker* (depicted at left by Susan Lucille Davis); and Abraham Lincoln and John Syster, who were seen drinking together in 2011 at High Point University in North Carolina (photo by Kathy Syster).



WHEN WE WONDER ABOUT THINGS, WE GROW



I wonder about a lot of things. Wondering is very usual for people of the OLLI generation. We have lived a lot, often in a plethora of locations, and we have lived

through a multitude of newsworthy events. So we wonder.

This week I was wondering about what plays, poems and novels had been written concerning the Salem witch trials (I begin teaching a class on that episode in our nation's history later this month). I knew about Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables*, but I discovered Henry Wadsworth Longfellow had also written a play and John Greenleaf Whittier had written a lengthy poem. Ah, the joy of discovery, finding a new perspective amidst the wondering.

I wonder, as I am sure you do, through much of the day. I think it is a trait of those who join OLLI. There is still so much to learn about history, for example. Was Mary Queen of Scots an interesting character? Was her son James I of England full of intrigue? These were questions answered by Connie Atkinson in a just-completed class.

There is still so much to learn about Bollywood and pirates and playing bridge and tai chi. But if we are really to address our wonderings, don't we need to understand the world from all sorts of eyes?

My wonderings have led me to read an immense stack of books about Abraham Lincoln. Carl Sandburg wrote about Lincoln through the eyes of a poet. John G. Nicolay and John Hay wrote through the eyes of his secretaries. Elizabeth Keckley wrote through the eyes of a freed slave who became Mary Todd Lincoln's seamstress. Julia Taft wrote through the eyes of a teenager whose brothers played regularly with Lincoln's youngest sons. Ron White wrote through the eyes of a minister of the 20th century.

I wonder, sometimes, if there are ways to broaden our perspectives. A few OLLI folk wondered if we could start a reading group. We met. We planned. Now approaching our first anniversary, "OLLI Reads" has a small shelf of read books. The choices are eclectic: (*The Measure*, *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store*, *Furious Hours* (about Harper Lee), *The Demon of Unrest* (about the beginning of the Civil War), *The Bluest Eye* (a banned book). On May 7 at noon in 152 Wilson Hall, we will discuss *Educated* by Tara Westover. Each of the participants has different understandings and ideas about the

books, and as a consequence each of our horizons is expanded.

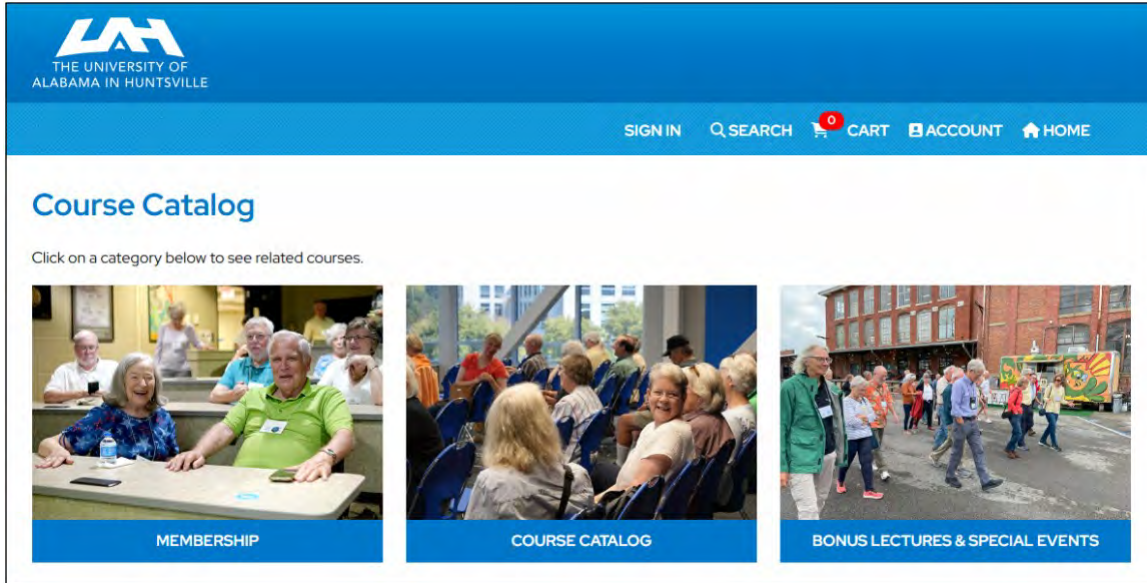
That is what happens with good wondering, I think. We grow, we learn, we understand and allow our world to expand.

While I was minister of a congregation in Sarasota, a few African Americans started attending the church. One of them was a retired minister and former president of our denomination. He sat down with me one day and told me how much he appreciated the congregation. Then he said that if we wanted more African Americans to attend (I did), we should read some of the books he recommended and understand their heritage and their journeys.

Being a wondering sort, I read the books, I listened to stories, I included some different stories in my sermons that I had not used before. The church grew, the African American portion of the church grew, and I grew. My horizons expanded.

I wonder about a lot of things. I hope you wonder, too.

John Syster
For the Curriculum Committee



This is a preliminary screenshot from OLLI's new online registration system, which will go into effect soon. It is still a work in progress. Watch your email for details.

SPRING TO SUMMER



The OLLI spring semester keeps rolling along. We have about one month left of courses, bonuses and special events as we enjoy learning about the USS *Liberty*, witchcraft, and Alabama reconstructed. Plus, I hope someone tells me exactly what a brain dance is.

We hope everyone has enjoyed the term. Please complete course evaluations once your class is finished and remember to tell your instructor

thanks for teaching. The vast majority of our instructors are volunteers who donate their time to develop their presentations. OLLI would not survive without them.

With that in mind, summer is not that far away. We have an exciting group of courses that will ease you through the summer months until fall. Our courses run much shorter during the summer, since many do not want longer commitments because of summer plans and travel. This year's batch will feature great history, health and fitness, food and drink, art, literature and music.

Some summer course titles to tantalize you include: "3D Printing Basics," "Tea Time," "Chair Yoga" and "Feel the Beat: Drummers!" Courses start June 2.

As discussed last month, OLLI will be utilizing a new online system to register our members into courses and tours. Be

on the lookout for an email about the system, which will contain a link for members to check their personal system profiles and change their passwords. Because we want our members to feel comfortable using the system, our staff will also be offering training sessions. We will work diligently to keep everyone in the loop.

Speaking of staying in the loop, please remember that the weekly *eNews* that is sent out to all members on Fridays at 4:30 p.m. is the absolute best way to keep track of everything going on with OLLI. If you are not getting that email, please let staff know.

Finally, please save the date of Tuesday, May 6, for the OLLI annual meeting and dinner. It will be held at Burritt on the Mountain and be full of fun, food and fellowship. This is always a great way to cap off the year. More details coming soon.

Clay Williams
OLLI at UAH Program Manager

People of OLLI

CANDI HOLCOMB TEACHES ABOUT BEER, TAI CHI AND PILATES; FILLS IN TO KEEP COURSES GOING

Candi Holcomb's breadth of experience has made her an ideal OLLI member and teacher.

She has lived all over the world, served in the Peace Corps, volunteered with multiple organizations, read extensively, and worked for the Army for 34 years. She is now teaching classes in tai chi and beer (being careful not to mix the two classes up). Candi is the subject of this month's *Insider* profile.

Candi was an honest-to-gosh Army brat. Her father was a career Army officer, and her mother a special education and elementary school teacher. By the time Candi graduated from high school, she had attended eight different schools.

"Growing up, I was an avid reader and loved science, especially biology," recalled Candi. "I wanted to be a doctor and focused a lot of my studies on that. I also played piano and piccolo and flute. I always loved travel, museums and the theater.

"Moving around instilled a passion for seeing new places, trying new things and meeting new people. This lifestyle really bonded us as a family. I didn't have a hometown, so my roots are my family. We're geographically separated, but we continue to have a weekly Zoom call, which started during COVID, to check in and catch up."

When her family moved to Germany after Candi's graduation, Candi moved to Arkansas to attend Arkansas State University, where her grandmother worked. She majored in zoology and spent her summers in Germany, from which she was able to explore Europe.

By the time she finished college, she had had second thoughts about becoming a doctor.

"Getting a taste of life outside the U.S. made me ready to see what else was out there," said Candi. "One day I saw a flyer advertising the Peace Corps. It sounded like a great adventure and something that was perfect for me at this time of my life."



Candi Holcomb (wearing green jacket) takes a morning camel ride at Wadi Rum in Jordan during a 2024 trip with Wild Women Expeditions to Jordan and Egypt. She swings in a park near Quito, Ecuador, on her 2023 visit to the Galapagos Islands and the Amazon. In 2021, a family reunion in Morganton, Georgia, celebrated her mother's 80th birthday. Candi is in the front row, second from right, next to her parents, Larry and Julie Holcomb. Candi's brothers, sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews are with them.

Thus began a true adventure. "For two years, I lived in the Philippines in Northern Luzon and taught farmers how to build and maintain backyard fish ponds," said Candi. "I had my own hut, but no running water and only sporadic electricity. I also worked to build a li-

brary and an eye clinic. This was during the People Power Revolution when [Ferdinand] Marcos was deposed and Cory Aquino became president. It was an exciting and educational two years."

(continued on the next page)

Member Services Committee

OLLI HAS MANY ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES



As the spring term is moving along, I have begun to look back at the many years I have spent as an OLLI member.

Sometimes it seems like only yesterday that I found OLLI and began the wonderful, enriching experience of being a member.

Volunteering as a committee and board member allowed me to meet many amazing people and make wonderful friendships and memories. I learned so much, too. Within this wonderful organization are many brilliant people who share their talents with us. Volunteering is a great way to become a part of it all.

The lounge (152D Wilson Hall) has always been the place

to meet old and new friends, have a cup of coffee and/or a snack, and enjoy some great social interaction. If the coffee is low, feel free to make a pot. If you are not sure how, just ask someone. Please feel free to make suggestions to improve the OLLI lounge experience.

Check on the member interest groups and join them, or even start a new one if you have a special interest you think others might like to share. The MIGs usually continue meeting all year long.

Don't forget to come and share some bountiful snacks in the lounge before (and after) the Friday bonus lectures. It's an excellent time to chat with other OLLI members and maybe make a new friend.

Leah Black
Member Services Committee Chair

People of OLLI

CANDI HOLCOMB TEACHES, CONT

After the Peace Corps stint, Candi moved to St. Louis to be with her family and to figure out what she wanted to do in life. Her father encouraged her to apply to the Army Intern Program. Her acceptance into the Comptrollership Program was the start of a 34-year career. She began at the Aviation Systems Command in St. Louis, earned an MBA at Syracuse University, spent time with the Training and Doctrine Command in Virginia, and finished her career here at the Space and Missile Defense Command.

"I worked as a program and management analyst and quality specialist and did a lot of project management, teaching, facilitation and team building," said Candi. "I loved working with people and finding solutions to problems."

She was honored by being selected as a national examiner for the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award Program with the Department of Commerce.

"I was lucky enough to travel with my job," said Candi. "I spent time in the Marshall Islands, Panama, Europe, Alaska, Colorado, New Mexico, as well as many other places."

She has enthusiastically introduced her nieces and nephews to travel: "We've hiked in Sedona, been a princess in Disney World, toured the Louvre, explored the architecture of Brussels, and floated the canals of Amsterdam. In

May, my nephew and I are headed to New Zealand."

Volunteering didn't stop with the Peace Corps. Since moving here in 1999, she has been a Big Sister for Big Brothers Big Sisters. She and her late dog Bear were therapy partners, and they visited schools, hospice patients and caregivers. Candi continues to volunteer with hospice.

Even before she retired in 2019, Candi discovered OLLI when she decided to take a class in Italian in preparation for a trip to Italy. She has continued membership in OLLI and has taken a variety of classes, which include Italian, tai chi, belly dancing, beer, yoga and ukelele.

Candi crossed into teaching when she helped organize a member interest group in tai chi in 2022. It meets every Friday morning from 9 to 10 in the Wilson Hall atrium. The MIG now averages 20 or more attendees.

Then in 2023 when tai chi instructor Jerry Pang had to take a leave of absence, Candi and Phil Graham continued the class. When Jerry returned, Candi and Phil started a new tai chi class for more experienced students.

Last summer, Candi was asked to teach a class on Pilates, which she had been doing personally for 13 years.

Finally, when the beer class instructor

had to step aside in 2023, Candi and several other members were able to keep the class going.

"The last two semesters, I coordinated a brew crawl where we went to different breweries and taprooms and had presentations on the different beers," said Candi. "So I think my role at OLLI could be defined by giving a little CPR to things that might have otherwise gone away."

What has OLLI meant to Candi?

"One of my goals is to do everything I can to live a vibrant life," said Candi. "I'm very aware of the difference between lifespan and 'health-span,' and I would like to do what I can to make sure I live life to the fullest. OLLI is key to that pursuit. Not only does it provide myriad opportunities to learn and experience different things; it has given me ways to expand my horizons and push myself out of my comfort zone."

"Additionally, OLLI members are amazing folks. I feel fortunate to be around so many lively and engaging people that don't let much of anything stop them. It's truly inspiring, and I am so grateful and lucky to be part of the OLLI community."

OLLI is grateful to have you. Thanks, Candi, for all you do for OLLI.

By Glen Adams

Travel Committee

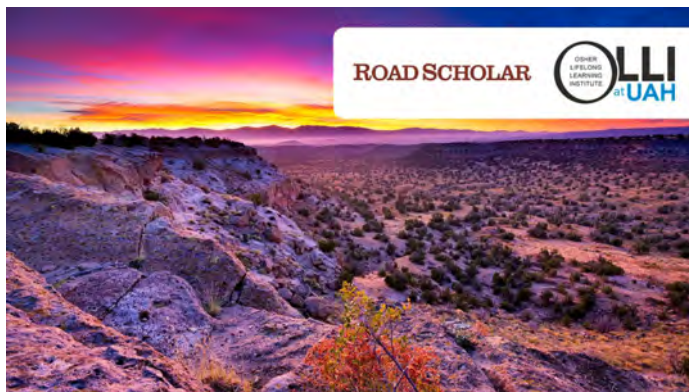
SPECIAL TREATS AND PLACES TO EXPLORE



Wow! I am constantly surprised and inspired by our OLLI members' insatiable desire for travel and adventure.

A recap of our 2025 travels

- **On the Road: Cuisine & Culture in Acadiana Louisiana** — Jan. 13-20. This trip was a grand time for all who booked seats.
- **Shiloh National Military Park and Corinth Battlefield Unit** — March 10-11. I am sure there are many wonderful stories of the experiences. Can't wait to hear from all of the participants. See Phil Graham's article and the photos that he and Glen Adams took on the following page.
- **Signature City Pittsburgh** — Sunday, May 25, to Friday, May 30, with OLLI at UAH-planned options for pre- and post-extensions. As with all things in life, there are bumps in the road; a couple of seats for this adventure have reopened. This trip will tell a great 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. Please contact Michelle Laverty or David Sayre for more information.
- **Two Worlds of Peru: The Inca Highlands & the Amazon** — This trip (June 13-27) is now full. We are looking forward to hearing about all the adventures and seeing all the happy faces from the pictures.
- **Discover Costa Rica** — Aug. 30-Sept. 7. Explore the diverse rainforests, wildlife, culture and history of this small Central American country during a nine-day/eight-night adventure curated by Nanda Journeys. Visit a volcano, stay at a self-sustainable ranch, tour local farms, walk through the rainforests, meet the locals, see a Pacific beach, and more. For a detailed itinerary and registration information, see tinyurl.com/olli-costa-rica-25 or contact Chris Stuhlinger. At last report, 24 travelers had signed up and a few slots remained available.
- **The Best of New Mexico: Santa Fe, Taos and Albuquerque** — Nov. 9-16, 2026. As I tried to tease you last month, the New Mexico trip has come together and is up on the OLLI website travel section at tinyurl.com/olli-nm-2026. Jane McBride is your OLLI contact.
- **Split, Dubrovnik, Montenegro (Kotor), Albania (Saranda, Butrint), and Greece (Corfu, Delphi, Athens)**. This trip is with Overseas Adventure Travel (part of Grand Circle Travel), with whom we have had great experiences previously. Contact Steve for details. See tinyurl.com/olli-dalmatia-greece2026.
- **Visit New Mexico** — including Santa Fe, Taos and Albuquerque — with OLLI in November 2026. Details are at tinyurl.com/olli-nm-2026.



Visit New Mexico — including Santa Fe, Taos and Albuquerque — with OLLI in November 2026. Details are at tinyurl.com/olli-nm-2026.

Split, Dubrovnik, Montenegro (Kotor), Albania (Saranda, Butrint), and Greece (Corfu, Delphi, Athens). This trip is with Overseas Adventure Travel (part of Grand Circle Travel), with whom we have had great experiences previously. Contact Steve for details. See tinyurl.com/olli-dalmatia-greece2026.

- **The Best of New Mexico: Santa Fe, Taos and Albuquerque** — Nov. 9-16, 2026. As I tried to tease you last month, the New Mexico trip has come together and is up on the OLLI website travel section at tinyurl.com/olli-nm-2026. Jane McBride is your OLLI contact.

I encourage all who have even a small shiver of a back-bone tingle about any of these trips to go ahead and pull the trigger.

And in addition to all of these, we are looking forward to some special treats and new locations to explore. We invite any and all of you to provide input and people who would like to take a little stretch to help pull together a wonderful OLLI-UAH adventure.

Contact David Sayre, other members of the OLLI Travel Committee, or coordinators for the various trips at olli.info@uah.edu.

All who wander are not lost!

David Sayre
Travel Committee Chair

Coming in 2026

- Steve Goodman is leading a wonderful **cruise along the Dalmatian coast** — April 24-May 10, 2026. This trip will include Croatia (Zadar, Zagreb, Plitvice Lakes,

Travel Committee

CIVIL WAR TOUR HIGHLIGHTS FREEDOMS' COST



Our Civil War history principally occurs between two bookend dates:

April 12, 1861, when formal hostilities commenced with Confederate Gen.

P.G.T. Beauregard

ordering the bombardment of Fort Sumter (South Carolina); and April 9, 1865, when Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House (Virginia).

In the almost exactly four years in between, some 620,000 American soldiers died — more than the total combined in all the rest of the wars in American history.

Interestingly enough, almost exactly one year after the opening salvo, it would be that same Gen. Beauregard who developed the Confederate plan of attack for what turned out to be known as “Bloody April” — the Battle of Shiloh, April 6-7, 1862.

On March 10 and 11, taking advantage of beautiful spring break weather, 13 OLLI members visited both Corinth (Mississippi) and Shiloh (Tennessee) national military parks. This tour complements John Mason’s series of Civil War military history presentations in a recent OLLI course. Walking along the lines of battle and visualizing the



At the Corinth Civil War Interpretive Center in Shiloh National Military Park, stone blocks represent major battles of the Civil War. The bigger the block, the larger the casualties of the battle. See the next page for more photos from the OLLI tour. (Photo by Philip Graham)

movement of forces from ground level bring reality to the campus.

By happenstance, when the tour group stopped to eat lunch at Hagy’s Catfish Hotel on the Tennessee River, both Lindsey and Vicki Bradley discovered Civil War-era pictures and information relating to familial grandparents from the area around Purdy, Tennessee.

National Park Service movies and interpretive centers delivered a deeper appreciation for the tour’s stopovers at Pittsburg Landing, Fraley Field and the Hornets’ Nest at Shiloh, and there was a park ranger presentation on the siege of Corinth at Battery Robinette.

Shy of the one-year anniversary of the breakout of hostilities, on April 6 and 7,

1862, opposing forces engaged in what may be termed the Civil War’s point of no return, the Battle of Shiloh. Over 110,000 men clashed across an unforgiving landscape under pouring rain and through merciless heat.

Shiloh’s unfathomable carnage resulted in over 23,000 American casualties (killed, wounded, captured). Shiloh portended a protracted and nation-rendering war.

Tours of our national battlefield parks do not promise adventure as much as they encompass opportunities to reflect upon our unique American heritage and to rediscover the cost for our freedoms.

By Philip Graham
Trip Leader



Three Smart and Simple Ways to Make a Charitable Gift from Your IRA to support OLLI!

- Create a Life-Income Plan
- Make an Outright Gift
- Name OLLI as Beneficiary of an IRA

Check out our NEW website for more details!

UAH.giftplans.org

Travel Committee

CIVIL WAR HISTORY AT SHILOH AND CORINTH



(Photos from Glen Adams and Philip Graham)

Member Interest Groups

LET'S EXPLORE 3 GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

Join your fellow MIG members as we explore three more Huntsville greenways and trails!

Join the Hiking & Biking Member Interest Group to receive details about upcoming 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

Recent activities

Chapman Mountain Nature Preserve, March 1 — After looking for birds at the bird blind, our group hiked the educational Terry Trail and identified several large hardwood trees and other natural features. We also visited the site of a former still at the end of the Moonshine Trail.

Hays Nature Preserve, March 15 — Postponed due to weather, will be rescheduled.

Langlois farm, March 23 — MIG members enjoyed a beautiful Sunday afternoon at the farm property of OLLI members Marsha and John Langlois in the Paint Rock valley. The main attraction was the picturesque three-tiered waterfall and creek in their backyard, along with numerous Virginia bluebells growing nearby at peak bloom. John and Marsha also raise chickens. We observed several adult chickens and 5-day-old chicks that had recently arrived.

Coming MIG activities

- Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m.-noon — **Bike ride at Aldridge Creek Greenway** (south Huntsville). Ride to Ditto Landing on this paved, mostly flat south Huntsville greenway. Ride is about 10 miles round trip.
- Sunday, April 13, 1-3 p.m. — **Nature Hike at Green Mountain Nature Preserve North**. Visit the "Halloween Forest" to see a grove of uncommon smoketrees. Trail length is 1.5 to 2 miles round trip, with an elevation change of about 200 feet.
- Saturday, May 3, 10 a.m.-noon — **Hike at Wells Memorial Trail** (Monte Sano State Park). See the towering hardwood trees growing in this beautiful cove forest. Trail length is about 1.75 to 2 miles, with an elevation change of about 250 feet.

See you on the trail!

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



Aldridge Creek Greenway, Green Mountain Nature Preserve North (bottom left), and Wells Memorial Trail.



Member Interest Groups

10 LEGENDARY MUSICIANS WHO ARE PAINTERS

Music is a form of art. These 10 famous musicians have shown that they are multi-talented by also creating visual art. While their styles may vary, each of them has a unique flair.

Most of them consider painting or drawing emotionally therapeutic. You can view internet images on Artnet, Artsy, Fine Art America, Mutual Art, or their personal websites.

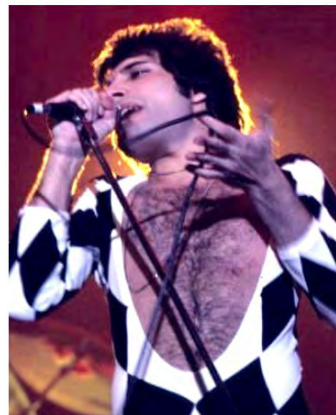
David Bowie (1947-2016), whose alter ego was Ziggy Stardust, changed music with “Space Oddity,” “Let’s Dance,” “Rebel Rebel” and the film “The Man Who Fell to Earth.” But before becoming “The King of Glam Rock” during the 1970s, this musician studied at Bromley School of Art in London. Bowie was a prolific artist. The majority of his visual works were portraits, which were sold at auctions. Bowie used the dark and hazy colors of the German Expressionist style.

Miles Davis (1926-1991) was a famous jazz trumpeter and composer who is credited with creating jazz fusion evident in albums such as “Milestones” (1958), “Birth of the Cool” and “Round About Midnight” (1957), plus “On the Corner” (1972). Miles’ passion for visual art began at an early age, but it wasn’t until the 1970s that Davis painted constantly during his health issues. Davis’ artwork is stylized with vivid colors and geometric shapes, and it contains influences of African art. In 2005, a posthumous exhibition of his art was held in London.

Joni Mitchell (1943-) is best known for her folk-rock songs like “Big Yellow Taxi,” “Free Man in Paris,” “Woodstock,” and her greatest songwriting classic, “Both Sides Now.” Blending aspects of folk and rock, Joni rose to prominence during the late 1960s and earned 10 Grammy Awards. However, Mitchell considers herself a painter first and a musician second because she studied painting at Saskatoon Technical College and at Alberta College of Art. Many of her artworks are featured on album covers, such as her 1971 record “Blue” and the record “So Far” by Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young.

Michael Jackson (1958-2009) was a man of many talents and “The King of Pop” during the 1980s. Who knew Michael was also an extremely gifted painter? Look up his Charlie Chaplin portrait, painted when the singer was 9 years old. He was inspired by his friend Brett Strong. They purchased an art studio, and there Michael produced portraits, landscapes, abstracts and sculptures. Today it is estimated that Michael created artworks worth over \$900 million.

Sir Paul McCartney (1942-) may be one of the most legendary musicians and songwriters of all time. However, for the last two decades, he’s been a productive painter, too. Paul experimented with drawing and painting when he was



Miles Davis (top), Freddie Mercury (bottom left) and Paul Stanley.

(Photos by Rob Bogaerts, Carl Lender, and Wayne Clyne, via Wikimedia Commons)

in school but never took it seriously until age 41. By 1999, he shared his talent with the world when he held his first public exhibition and released an art book titled *Paul McCartney Paintings*. His artwork has the texture and color of the abstract expressionists.

Bob Dylan (1941-) is described as a groundbreaking musician because of songs like “Mr. Tambourine Man,” “Blowin’ in the Wind,” “The Times They Are A-Changin’” and “Lay Lady Lay.” The folk singer received the following awards: a Pulitzer Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nobel Prize for Literature, the National Medal of Arts, and an Oscar. But Dylan is also an inexhaustible painter. Dylan published his artworks in the 1994 book *Drawn Blank* and the 2010 book *The Brazil Series*. He created his 2019 solo traveling exhibition called “Retrospectrum.”

(continued on the next page)

Member Interest Groups

CHAPMAN MOUNTAIN NATURE HIKE



(Photos by Chris Stuhlinger)

10 LEGENDARY MUSICIANS, CONT.

John Mellencamp (1951-) is “the heartland rocker,” known for songs such as “Jack & Diane,” “Hurts So Good,” “Pink Houses” and “Small Town,” as well as his work with Farm Aid. John earned one Grammy Award and was elected to both the Songwriters and the Rock & Roll halls of fame. Mellencamp’s paintings, like his music, focus on small-town America and anti-establishment themes. John has exhibited in galleries across America, including the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville and ACA Galleries in New York.

Freddie Mercury (1946-1991) was the four-octave-range lead singer, flashy pianist and primary songwriter for the rock band Queen. He is famous for songs such as “Bohemian Rhapsody,” “We Are the Champions,” “We Will Rock You,” “Another One Bites the Dust” and “Under Pressure.” But Freddie also created beautiful art. He graduated from the Ealing Art College in London before forming Queen. Freddie used the Zodiac star signs of the band members to create the famous “Queen Crest,” which appears on the band’s 1979 album.

Paul Stanley (1952-) is one of rock music’s most recognizable faces and the steadfast voice of the band Kiss. However, the songwriter is also an accomplished artist. Paul designed the Kiss iconic logo. He creates large portraits and abstracts that are colorful, simplistic and heavily textured. His artworks are for sale by Wentworth Gallery, and his 2023 “Black Series” exhibitions toured Florida, Maryland and New Jersey. Over the past decade, Paul has sold over \$10 million worth of paintings.

Cat Stevens (1948-) is a British singer-songwriter, best known for “Peace Train,” “Wild World,” “Hard Headed Woman” and “Morning Has Broken.” As a small child, Cat wanted to become a famous professional artist. He eventually enrolled in art school at Hammersmith College. Stevens’ passion for music overtook his enthusiasm for visual art. However, he continued drawing and his artwork was featured on the album covers “Tea for the Tillerman” and “Teaser and the Fire Cat.”

Jean Krieger
*Leader, Artist Studio
Member Interest Group*

Member Interest Groups

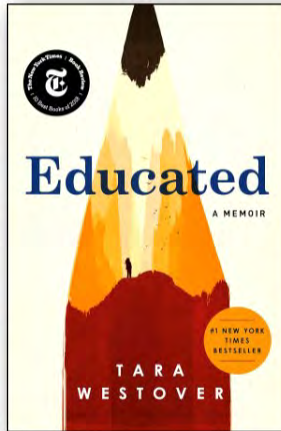
LANGLOIS FARM NATURE WALK, MARCH 23

Hosts were Marsha (bottom left photo, wearing hat) and John Langlois (middle right photo, pointing).



(Photos by Steve Stewart and Chris Stuhlinger)

Member Interest Groups



OLLI BOOK DISCUSSIONS: FROM 'THE BLUEST EYE' TO 'EDUCATED' MEMOIR

The OLLI Reads Member Interest Group met March 5 to discuss "The Bluest Eye" by Toni Morrison. Group members selected "Educated" by Tara Westover for the next discussion, scheduled for May 7 at noon in 152 Wilson Hall. OLLI members are invited. "Educated" is a memoir about overcoming a survivalist Mormon family background to obtain an education, including a history Ph.D. from Cambridge University. It shows how education enlarged the author's world.
(Photos by Steve Stewart)

SERIOUS ABOUT ITALIAN FOOD

OLLI's Dine Out Member Interest Group met March 20 at SaZa Serious Italian, a restaurant in Town Madison.
(Photo from Sandra Dabrowski)



Huntsville Then and Now

PAST, PRESENT AND 5 STREETS COME TOGETHER



Want to see historic and modern Huntsville sharing a key neighborhood in today's booming city? Welcome to Five Points, where decades of coexistence have created

something special.

"We have an urban neighborhood," says Darden Heritage, owner of the Star Super Market grocery that anchors the historic residential area. To him, that means his 80-plus-year-old store is where a millionaire can stand in the same checkout line as someone paying with food stamps. That's true of "very few places" today, Heritage says.

But here where five Huntsville streets have met for decades — the famous "five points" — you also find longtime favorite restaurants like Thai Garden and newer favorites like 1892 East Restaurant & Tavern. You find a long-serving coin laundry, a new bookstore called "The Snail on the Wall," and Walkers Market, a purveyor of wines and fine home goods.

It's that historic and modern mix that makes Five Points special, but multi-generational success is complicated and fragile. You need to meet ongoing needs and make room for new passions. A neighborhood grocery can anchor that development if someone knows what to keep and what to change.

Star Super Market's appropriately named caretaker/owner now is Heritage, a pharmacist by profession who operates from the store and was the longtime owner's choice as a successor. I know he's made improvements. The floors don't seem to creak, and the aisles are wider for carts to pass. But the market feels like where my mother shopped in the 1950s with Little Me in tow.



Five Points Coin Laundry and Star Super Market are on the northwest and southeast corners of the block bounded by Pratt Avenue, Russell Street, Wellman Avenue and Andrew Jackson Way Northeast.

Although the ice cream cones are still stars, the back wall meat department is the store's "star" to me. It feels and looks like the meat department where my mother shopped. And you never know whom you'll meet.

I was telling Heritage recently about the first house I lived in as a child in Huntsville. It was on Stevens Avenue a few blocks from the store. A man named Billy Roden lived across the street. He was a butcher at Star Super Market and would sometimes bring extra beef home for dinner. He shared that beef with our young family more than once.

I'll never forget Mr. Roden's generosity and wide smile. Or his son, my first real playmate.

Heritage smiled as I told him my memories — the smile of someone who's heard many stories like this. And because a good owner knows his customers, we stopped our conversation so he could call over a man just dropping by to pick up lunch. It turned out that man knew my generous neighbor from decades ago. And why wouldn't he? This man's last name was Roden, too. The

two Rodens, generations apart, were related.

Just another day at the Star Super Market. Significant to the world at large? Not really, but it's significant anywhere two people can share some history and feel it beneath their feet.

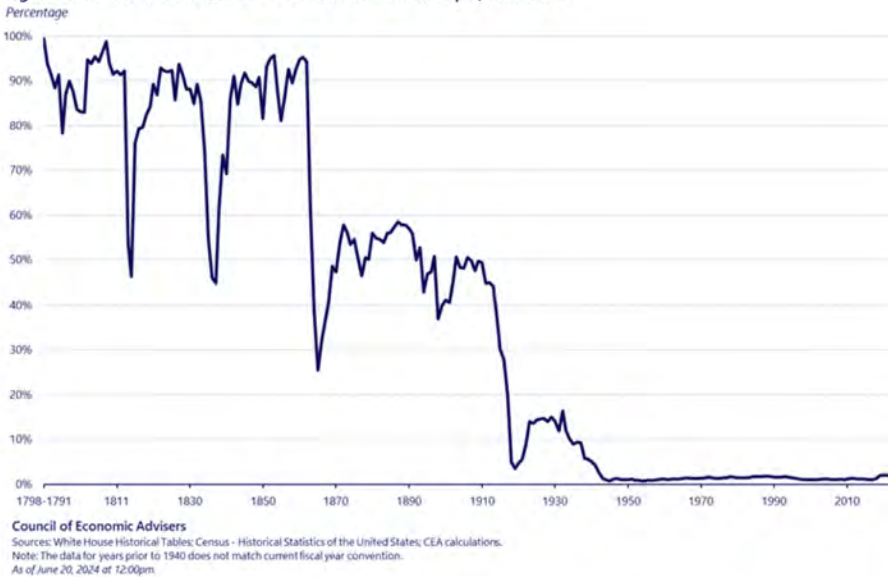
Modern apartment buildings have risen recently near Five Points, and music festivals happen on its streets. But you can see and live the old Huntsville story in Five Points today, and the odds look good for that to continue. It doesn't get better than that, so don't miss it.

You can also see this cooperation and innovation at the upcoming annual PorchFest outdoor music festival. That's where musicians sit on porches along a blocked Pratt Avenue while fans sit in lawn chairs on the medians and walk the street to see the show. This year's festival is May 3.

By Lee Roop

An Insider's Look at History

Figure 1a. Tariffs Revenue as a Share of Total Federal Receipts, 1798-2023



This graph and the one on the next page, available at

bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov, show how tariffs have diminished as a share of federal receipts and how tariffs affect the after-tax income of people at different income levels. For links to information relevant to this OLLI Insider article, go to tinyurl.com/insider-tariffs.

ARE TARIFFS STILL VIABLE IN GLOBAL MARKETS?

We've heard the term "tariffs" a lot lately, especially in light of how we now apparently plan to use them, according to a Nov. 26 CBS News report, to "supercharge the trade policies pursued during his [President Trump's] first administration and, more broadly, help the U.S. achieve key economic and social goals."

So what are tariffs? How did they come about? Who is responsible for implementing them? And, of course, will they really supercharge the economy? In other words, will this policy work?

So, in this column and the next one, we will have a crash course on the subject. First, let's understand the history of tariffs: how they came to be, and how they've changed since their inception. In next month's column, OLLI member and retired lawyer Mark Tenhundfeld will explore the constitutional basis for the creation and application of these burdens.

By the end of these discussions, I hope we'll have a better understanding of the strengths and pitfalls of using tariffs as a revenue-producing strategy.

Simply put, tariffs are a tax one country imposes on goods imported from another country. And it's the *importing* business that pays the tariff at the point when those targeted goods cross the border into their country. So if we place a 10% tariff on, say, tequila from Mexico, that means that Mara Imports in Riverside, California, has to pay 10% more for every bottle. Think those added costs get passed along to the consumer? You bet they do!

Now, while there is some evidence that imposing tariffs on trading partners does help protect U.S. businesses when domestic manufacturing jobs are decreasing, it ignores the broader impact on U.S. manufacturers who end up facing higher costs for raw materials they import, as well as from retaliatory tariffs from other nations.

Then do they work? Let's talk about tariffs. And we'll start with their use in early U.S. history.

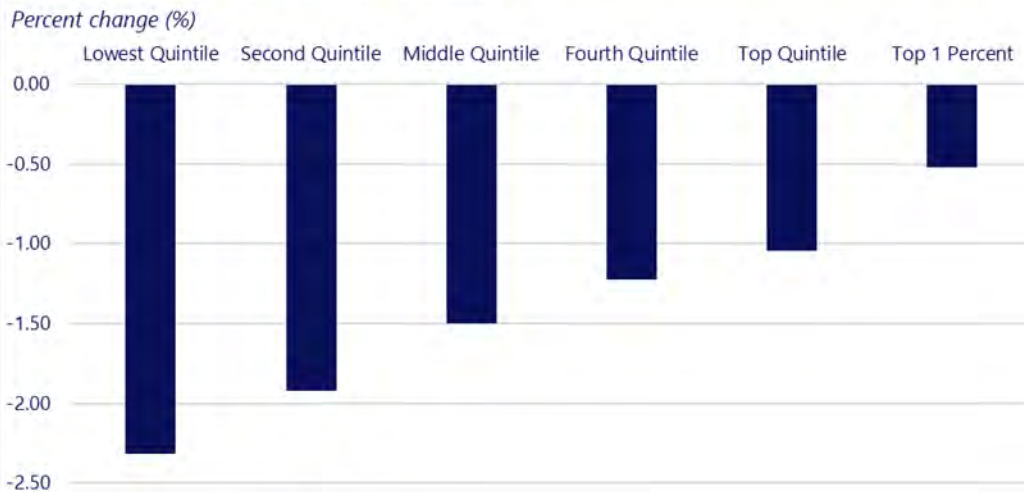
The Tariff Act of 1789 was one of the first acts signed into law by Congress. In our struggling early days, it had two purposes: (1) to promote trade, and (2) to raise revenue for the federal government. Notably, Alexander Hamilton viewed the act as playing a key role in protecting the burgeoning American manufacturing sector from foreign competition and in promoting industrial growth over the long term. So, in those circumstances, tariffs eventually grew to be an important source of revenue for the federal government. It is estimated that in some years during the 19th century, the tariff provided as much as 95% of the revenue for the federal government.

But by the early 1900s, the adoption of the income tax and the tremendous industrial expansion of the late 1800s undermined the historical justifications for the tariffs because: (1) the U.S. no longer needed them to fund the federal government, and (2) the U.S. no longer needed to protect its industry from foreign competition. Essentially, then, tariffs in the modern era no longer furthered the same interests as they did earlier in our history. Yet we continued to use them, nearly always with the same results.

(continued on the next page)

An Insider's Look at History

Figure 2. Distribution of Tariff Burden from a 10% Across-the-Board Increase, Percent Change in After-Tax Income



Council of Economic Advisers

Sources: Treasury Department; CEA calculations.

Note: CEA calculation adapting Figure 5 in Clausing and Lovely (2024).

As of June 20, 2024 at 12:00pm.

ARE TARIFFS STILL VIABLE?, CONT

In the wake of the 1929 stock market crash, President Herbert Hoover signed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act ("Smoot-Hawley Act") into law. This act sought to raise import duties by an average of 20% to protect American farmers from the economic downturn the crash had brought. In response, European countries promptly retaliated with tariffs of their own, causing trade between Europe and the U.S. to decline by two-thirds. The overall economic impacts are difficult to quantify, but it is thought that those tariffs contributed to European bank failures and exacerbated the economic turmoil of the 1930s, resulting in a rise of extremist ideologies throughout Europe. Germany's economy, for example, was really devastated.

Tariffs, and the threat of tariffs, have become central to U.S. trade policy in recent years, prompting other countries to consider, and in some instances implement, retaliatory tariffs. This back and forth does little other than raise concerns over the economic consequences and escalate tensions between the U.S. and its trading partners.

We've seen myriad justifications offered for the increased reliance on tariffs — including, but not limited to, bringing back jobs lost to foreign countries, replying to nations that have placed tariffs on imports from the U.S., curbing intellectual property theft, and balancing the trade deficit. So rather than raising revenues, it is clear that these tariffs are more directed toward protecting American interests. Perhaps we ought to ask ourselves whether tariffs are the right tool to address these problems.

In fact, reliance on tariffs to solve these problems could ultimately cause more harm than good. And we know also

that other countries have already passed, or are considering passing, retaliatory tariffs of their own. Given the mounting evidence that more jobs are lost than gained, and that prices will only increase on us, what do we stand to gain?

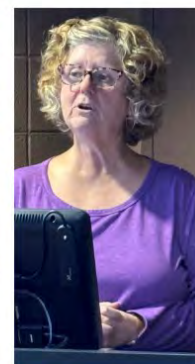
The U.S. should always seek to ensure it is being treated fairly by its trading partners and employ tools that are well-tailored to that end. There are some circumstances in which tariffs could be justified. An example is when another nation refuses to remove its own restrictions on goods from the U.S. In that circumstance, the tariff could serve as a narrowly tailored tool administered solely on that particular country as a means to leverage them into opening their markets to American goods. Even in that situation, however, the U.S. should consider if there are other means to achieve the same ends without employing tariffs that harm American businesses and consumers.

The U.S. has dramatically transformed since the days in which the tariff was introduced. New sources of revenue and the comparative strength of American manufacturing have obviated their historical justifications. To the extent that tariffs are a valuable tool of trade policy in the modern global economy, they should be utilized only as a last resort after reliance on methods less damaging to the U.S. economy have proven futile. In doing so, the U.S. can remain committed to free trade without allowing centrally managed economies to take advantage of her.

By John Mason

BRIEFING ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE, DEMENTIA

Dianne Pierson, a full-time volunteer with Alzheimer's Association, gave a bonus lecture March 21 about understanding Alzheimer's disease and dementia. She said Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging but results from brain damage. Regular aging is much slower than Alzheimer's. She described treatments and research. The association's website is alz.org, and it operates a 24/7 helpline at 800-272-3900. Around 90 people attended this bonus, in person and online.



Early (Mild) Stage	Middle (Moderate) Stage	Late (Severe) Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Functions independently, but has memory lapses.• Problems with concentration.• Challenges performing tasks.• Trouble remembering new information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confusion with words.• Personality and behavioral changes.• Forgetfulness of events or personal history.• Changes in sleep patterns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires around-the-clock assistance.• Unable to respond to environment or hold a conversation.• Changes in physical abilities.• Unaware of recent experiences.



(Photos by Steve Stewart and Marsha Langlois)

REMEMBERING RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION VICTIMS

Ruhi Jahanpour, a survivor and chronicler of Baha'i stories of persecution, told victims' individual stories in a Feb. 28 bonus. She focused on 10 women who were hanged in Iran on June 18, 1983, after refusing to deny their faith. They sacrificed their lives for the cause of unity and peace. "By denying what you believe, you deny your own reality and your own existence," the speaker said. (Photos by Steve Stewart)



FOOD AND CONVERSATION IN THE LOUNGE



Snacks and lively conversations were available in the OLLI lounge before and after bonus lectures on March 21 (left) and Feb. 28 (right). (Photos by Marsha Langlois and Steve Stewart)

In Memoriam

OLLI WAS JOAN MAY'S 'CREATIVE PLAYGROUND'

Joan May, a teacher and arts enthusiast who channeled much of her enthusiasm into OLLI, died Feb. 27 in Huntsville. She was 81.

An OLLI member since January 2016, Joan served as the Curriculum Committee's discipline chair for leisure and nature courses. She usually signed up to take five or six courses per term and was in two courses this term. She recruited members and teachers, and helped locate private gardens for OLLI's spring garden tours.

"My mother was never one to sit still," said her daughter, Robin May Seale of Huntsville. "She always needed to be engaged in something meaningful. When she retired, a friend introduced her to OLLI classes, and from the very first visit, she was hooked. She came home absolutely buzzing about the brilliant people she met and the fascinating conversations she had.

"OLLI became her creative playground. She poured herself into photography, explored her love for writing, and thrived in an environment where ideas flowed freely. She especially loved the lively political discussions — debates that were always respectful, thought-provoking, and full of diverse perspectives."

"But if there was one thing my mother was known for, it was her passion. When she loved something, she wanted the whole world to know about it! She probably convinced at least one to three people every day to check out OLLI. The OLLI community meant so much to her, and we are endlessly proud of everything she accomplished there. She was truly one of a kind."

Joan Freya Marcus was born Aug. 8, 1943, in Philadelphia to Henry Ely Marcus and Manya Robbins Marcus. In 1958 her family moved to Huntsville, where her father worked for the U.S. Army Missile Command at Redstone Arsenal.

She graduated from Huntsville High School in 1961, earned a B.A. from The University of Alabama, became an



Joan May

elementary school teacher, and married L. Michael May of Huntsville. Later she earned masters' degrees in special education and elementary education.

She taught first grade and special education, then taught fourth grade for 25 years at Whitesburg Elementary School. She enriched learning through arts, sciences, literature, poetry, science and technology. At Temple B'nai Shalom, she taught Sunday school and helped shape curriculum.

Joan served on the board of the Community Ballet Association and as its president and publicity chair. She helped secure funding and promote performances as CBA took the Huntsville Ballet Company to professional status. CBA presented Joan with the Ballet Laureate Award in 1996. Her other involvements included EarlyWorks Museum, Twickenham Study Club and Piedmont Garden Club.

During a graveside service in Maple Hill Cemetery on March 9, Joan was eulogized as a lifelong learner, a community pillar, and one who battled cancer for 37 years but treated it like "a gnat at the dinner table." An online obituary said she "was known for her spunky, no-nonsense personality and had a rare gift for drawing people into her world of warmth, wisdom, and grace."

Mike died in 2021 after 56 years of marriage. In addition to Robin, Joan's survivors include her son, Brett May of Palo Alto, California; three granddaughters; and two brothers.

The family suggested memorial donations to Temple B'nai Shalom or the Huntsville Ballet.

By Steve Stewart



Mark your calendar for the OLLI at UAH

Annual Meeting

Food • Fellowship • Fun

Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at Burritt on the Mountain,
3101 Burritt Drive SE, Huntsville

Watch for details at tinyurl.com/olli-annual-2025

In Memoriam

MEMORIES OF JOAN MAY (EDITED EXCERPTS)

"Though she be but little, she is fierce." — Shakespeare

There was never a more apt description of Joan May. I first met Joan in the early 1980s when our children danced with the ballet, and we talked together as we waited for rehearsals to end. Dedicated to the arts in general and ballet in particular, Joan devoted countless hours working for the Huntsville Ballet. A teacher by profession, Joan delighted and inspired generations of students with her creative approach to teaching. An eager lifelong learner as well, she found a home at OLLI. Joan reveled in the fellowship and stimulating conversation which abounds here. She never met a stranger and was eager to get to know everyone.

Though Joan battled several types of cancer for almost 40 years, she never let the disease define her or slow her down. Throughout those years, she continued to teach and be involved in the community's artistic, educational and social activities with a vigor that was boundless. She held a positive outlook and refused to accept defeat. Always looking for the good in others, she usually found it. Nevertheless, she suffered no fools and certainly would not tolerate foolishness in me!

I was privileged to be her friend. Her strength, good humor and determination continuously amazed me. I grieve at her passing but rejoice in the fact that she was part of my life for so long. She inspired me just by being "Joni May."

—**Dannye Drake**

When I think of Joan May, a quote from Hunter S. Thompson comes to mind: "Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming, 'Wow! What a ride!'"

Joan just knew how to live life to the fullest. I hope I can do as much. She will be missed. I also hope she is laughing at this.

—**Betty Koval**

Joan Marcus May was a passionate lifelong learner and teacher who brought light, love, joy, hope and tenacity to every endeavor and challenge. Her life made a significant difference to the friends, family and organizations to which she invested her energies.

—**Jane McBride**

Right up until the end, Joan was always curious, always enthusiastic, always wanting to help. Just a few days before she died, she was giving me advice about how to get around campus after an injury. She was unable to attend some of my Socrates Cafe classes, but she asked that

someone text her the discussion topic in case she wanted to contribute from afar.

—**Steve Stewart**

Besides bringing lots of energy and joy to OLLI classes and conversations, Joan worked tirelessly for many years as a discipline chair on the Curriculum Committee. She had a knack for discovering excellent teachers and enticing them to teach courses for OLLI. We will miss her work and dedication to OLLI and other worthy causes in our community.

—**Linda McAlister**

Joan was such an open and forthcoming woman, so willing to share her experiences, her heritage and her interests. Often, she reminisced about her grandmother and mother, her move to Huntsville as a high school student. Her willingness to explain her Jewish faith, the bigotry and misinformation at the ignorance of her new Southern acquaintances as a Jewish teenager from Pennsylvania, her love of the Huntsville Ballet and its people, and her wish to extend her joy to all who would listen made Joan May a force of nature. She, along with our few other Jewish members, answered questions about Judaism, the turmoil in Israel, the defamation of local places of worship, and just plain ignorance we were trying to overcome.

As a discipline chair of the OLLI Curriculum Committee, Joan made certain every instructor completed the required syllabus for the upcoming course, checked and rechecked scheduling, and made the instructor feel valued and necessary. As the OLLI liaison for the Huntsville Ballet, Joan lobbied for and obtained special pricing for our lifelong learners (and those of LearningQUEST, as well).

Joan was a regular in Socrates Café. How many times did she interrupt? "Sorry, it isn't my turn, just five seconds!" She was informed and passionate about her views regarding the care of people, the political arena, and just about everything in life. In early February, Joan asked me to text her during Socrates Café about the subjects and comments. I did this for two classes; she was too ill to respond the second week.

Sometime during the two weeks before Joan's final surgery, she and I walked to the OLLI parking lot together. She told me of the newest treatment for a spot on her hip, how she felt that it would give her more time. She stated that she did not want to die, that she had more to do. Joan always had more to do; that was her nature. During that walk, we talked about her life. I got to tell her how much I admired her, loved her. She was a role model in so many ways: mother, grandmother, patron of the arts, lifelong learner and friend.

—**Nancy Darnall**

People of OLLI

TELL PEOPLE WHY THEY'RE VALUABLE TO YOU

In April 1997, my dad and I attended the funeral of his first cousin, Larry, who was about 50 years old.

While Larry seemed more my age than Dad's, neither of us knew Larry particularly well. We just didn't see him much, and the age difference between my dad, at that time around 65, and the one for me, around 43, made it so that neither of us ever had a lot in common with this man.

Larry was the son of farmers; his mother, however, had a career at Redstone Arsenal as well as working the family farm. Her husband was in failing health. Her only daughter was dying of cancer. Larry was her only son, her baby, and seemingly healthy.

A chemistry teacher, an assistant principal and maybe a high school principal in the Madison County, Alabama, school system, Larry had collapsed of a heart attack at the barbecue grill on his patio during spring break. He left his wife and two sons in addition to his mother, father and sister.

Larry's mother, Margaret, was a strong, capable woman. Beauty came to her with the years. Think Depression-era photos of skinny, poor women. She grew to be a beautiful woman in her 70s until her passing at age 90 in 2017. I mention this because looks were something my family noted, especially in regard to Margaret. My recollection of her resounds with the grace, calm and beauty that evolved as she aged.

Anyway, Aunt Margaret spoke at Larry's funeral. She talked about him as a child, as an adult son, as a father and as an educator. The most important message in that courageous moment of eulogizing her own son came as Aunt Margaret spoke about all those people who attended the visitation and funeral.

They shared stories of Larry: how enjoyable his classes were; what a resource he was as a mentor and adviser; what a good man he was; how he made life changes in his students, his sons' friends, and others who knew him through work, church and his neighborhood. Some of his childhood friends revealed how he had talked them into college and the military, and at least one credited Larry with keeping him on the right side of the law.

Of course, I didn't know this man well enough to have a story. He was always nice to me when I was a child and friendly enough at the rare event where he and I might be present, usually a family funeral or holiday gathering.

Let me redirect your attention. The purpose of this essay is not to eulogize Cousin Larry, although he obviously would deserve it. Aunt Margaret's point that sad day as she said goodbye to her son informed us what those comments meant.



Joan May (left) and Patti Patrick enjoy an OLLI holiday party on Dec. 18, 2018.
(Photo by Val Seaquist)

None of the sentiments expressed surprised her. She knew the value and heart of her son well. Her message was simple. She said, "I hope that you told Larry, too."

There it lay: a frankly delivered epiphany. Tell those who mean something to you that they do.

In February 2025, two women who had a positive impact on my life died.

I had and took the opportunity to share with each of them their influence and impact on me. I talked to Patti Patrick by phone on Tuesday, Feb. 11, the day she passed. She was unable to respond; her brother, Bill Patrick, told me the family and doctors were certain Patti could hear me.

The last day I saw Joan May at OLLI, we walked to the parking lot together. I relish that I had the opportunity to share with both my friends what their friendship, the hours of conversation, experiences in the classroom, Joan's love of the ballet, Patti's resurrection at an OLLI class in Wilson Hall the day she "died" there (and was revived), and their dedication to living every day meant to me as they shared life lessons through all those activities.

To do so was a gift to me. Too often, we don't tell people what their friendship, volunteer activity, or stories mean to us. Time gets away from us; such conversations can feel awkward to many. Yet it's a comfort within our loss to know we spoke truth to a friend or acquaintance in a way that shared affection and gratitude.

(continued on the next page)

OLLI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT IS A TOP BUSINESS STUDENT

Neomi Marriam, OLLI's current scholarship recipient, attended a UAH scholarship breakfast March 6, as did Clay Williams, OLLI program manager.

Like OLLI members, Neomi is a nontraditional student. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in business management with a concentration in human resources. She is a College of Business ambassador and was selected as one of that college's top 20 students for 2025.

Neomi has three children, one grandson and four dogs. She loves the outdoors, reading good books and drawing. She is originally from Washington state, grew up in Utah, and joined the military at 18. She moved to Huntsville in September 2021 and says she has loved it ever since. She expresses appreciation for the scholarship.

The OLLI at UAH Scholarship Fund provides support for deserving UAH undergraduate students. The scholarships help cover tuition, books, housing and related costs. For information about donating to OLLI for scholarships and other purposes, go to uah.edu/library/olli/donate.



TELL PEOPLE WHY THEY'RE VALUABLE TO YOU, CONT

A huge consolation after losing each of my parents suddenly was the confidence that we had left nothing important unsaid. Sure, I would love to talk with them again, ask questions, share joy and pain. But no regrets.

After Aunt Margaret's lesson, I started sharing with the people around me how their actions added value to my life. I developed a habit of writing at least two notes of gratitude weekly to people in my life; I did this on Monday mornings. My skill at phrasing grew as I wrote more notes.

Since Joan May passed away on Thursday, Feb. 27, 2025, I remembered that I had dropped that practice. I don't even remember how long it's been since I stopped. I have written notes, but not with a purpose or on a regular basis. I began writing this remembrance on Monday, March 3, 2025. Notes commenced March 10.

The messages do not have to be written or detailed. A quick text message, a conversation in the hallway or the parking lot, a thank-you in the classroom all work to convey our gratitude for those in our lives, whether in a big or small way. Never will I write enough notes or express how much you all and they all mean to me.

In this life, we leave an imprint on so many without realizing the value. How humane and comforting it is to make part of that imprint a gesture of love and thanks that is unexpected but welcome. Just do it.

By Nancy Darnall