

The

February 2026

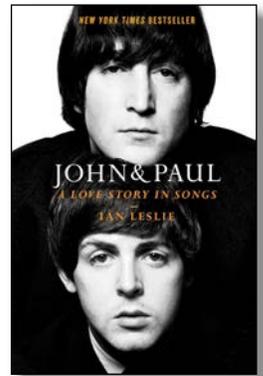
OLLI INSIDER

News for OLLI members at The University of Alabama in Huntsville



MAGICAL MYSTERY TOURS

Spring open house; a baptism painting at the Huntsville Museum of Art; Bob and Nancy Darnall complete their semester at sea; Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge; Debbie and Jim Beaupre on a cruise to Greece and Croatia. And what do you remember about the Beatles?



uah.edu/olli

Wilson Hall – Room 105
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From the Editor

‘LOOK FOR THE HELPERS’ — AND BE ONE



I admire Mister Rogers. But I was not one of his child fans. Last year when I visited his exhibit at the Senator John Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh and checked his timeline, I realized why.

Fred Rogers' PBS television show "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" started in 1968, the year I graduated from high school, and ran for 33 years. My children watched it.

Mister Rogers (1928-2003) was "the thoughtful television neighbor whose songs, stories and heart-to-heart talks taught generations of children how to get along in the world," as *The New York Times* wrote in his obituary.

"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news," he said, "my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'"

Helpers bring comfort not only through the relief they provide, but also by reminding us that there are still good things and people in the world. They show us the way to deal with adversity — by persisting and overcoming. And they inspire us to become helpers ourselves.

In some ways Mister Rogers reminds me of Brother Ralph, a preacher whom I met only after he retired. I don't call many people "Brother," and he was old enough to be my grandfather. But "Brother" was a natural name for someone so warm, gentle and encouraging.

On many occasions, Brother Ralph told me that whatever project I had just completed was the best such thing he'd ever seen. I won't call him a liar, but my opinion of my own accomplishments was much less exalted than his. However, his words motivated me to try to live up to his expectations.

I figured out what he was up to when I heard him compliment another minister for delivering "the best sermon I've ever heard." I had endured the same sermon and formed a contrary opinion. But Brother Ralph saw his role, at that stage in life and probably earlier, as being an encourager.

Maybe Mister Rogers (also a minister) and Brother Ralph were aware of the truest definition of religion I have ever seen, written by John Greenleaf Whittier: "To worship rightly is to love each other, / Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer."

Many of us at OLLI are lucky. Our lives may have included hard work, hardships and even tragedies, but we have survived and fate has treated us well. Now our circumstances are more fortunate than those of many, perhaps most, people. Our most useful and satisfying role at this point can be to help and encourage others — younger people as well as our peers.



"Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" as depicted at the Senator John Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh. (Photo by Steve Stewart)

Inside *The Insider*: How is OLLI like a children's pickup baseball game? Phil Graham explains.

Do you remember your reaction to the Beatles? Who doesn't? Lee Roop writes about it.

Chris Stuhlinger and Betty Koval bring us up to date on coming events and bonuses, respectively. Marilyn Szecholda describes plans for Leisurely Lunches and the Souper Bowl.

John Mason invites you to help staff the volunteer office, run for the Board of Directors, nominate a Volunteer of the Year, and enter the annual photo contest. Nancy and Bob Darnall give their fourth and final account of their semester cruising the world. David Sayre outlines 2026 travel offerings and says 2027 is being planned.

Clay Williams delivers good news: Membership is growing, and new members have multiple chances to get involved.

Glen Adams profiles Jim Beaupre, who teaches both physics and art. John Mason discusses how to keep the U.S. Constitution alive.

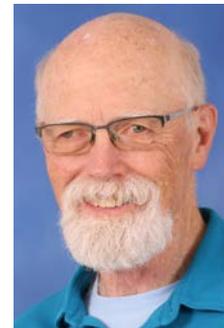
Jean Krieger writes about art journaling in her report from the Artist Studio Member Interest Group. We also have a MIG report on hiking and biking from Chris Stuhlinger and Steve Jones, and information from the OLLI Reads MIG.

Glen Adams is a member of the *OLLI Insider* production team, but we hid the back page from him to preserve a surprise. Look there, and you'll see why.

Steve Stewart
Editor, The OLLI Insider



A GAME OF PICKUP



(Image below by [Andreas Volz](#) from [Pixabay](#))

Last week, my best friend, Steve McKenzie, and I spoke on the phone.

Steve, who resides in Omaha, and I have been joined at the hip since seventh grade, and we check in with each other about every four to six weeks. Our conversations cover the range of inconsequential matters. We solve all the world problems, and sometimes we reminisce.

One topic we shared memories upon was recounting our neighborhood pickup baseball games. We spoke about how we went out and gathered up a few schoolmates or guys we didn't know, but got to know, to play baseball. Someone brought the ball; someone brought a bat. Teams would be chosen.

Most often, we played in a vacant grass lot across the street from Steve's house. There was no backstop; there were no chalk lines. Game rules were usually based upon what tree or light pole constituted a foul line, and an out may have been as simple as a swing and a miss on a single pitch.

Teammates would cheer each other's phenomenal fielding and ignore a boneheaded error one might commit. Though we may have kept score, the win or the loss was of no real consequence.

When we collectively decided to end a game, we would head over to a grocery store and plug a nickel into the machine slot, pull out an ice-cold 8-ounce bottle of Coke, and toast one another to a game well-played. We were the players, the coaches, the sports announcers, and the fans for each other.

For numerous reasons, including our shared history, I count myself extremely fortunate for Steve's friendship. It's incomparable.



For those of us who are, or will soon be, in post-work lives, OLLI provides a liberating and safe environment. Like any "pickup" activity, OLLI provides opportunities to engage with friends and, hopefully, forge new connections with individuals we haven't met, yet.

Most importantly, in my mind, is that when following an OLLI activity we collectively go to the OLLI lounge, grab a drink of choice, and toast each other to a life well-lived.

At OLLI, we are the players, the coaches, the announcers and the fans for each other.

Phil Graham
President, OLLI at UAH Board of Directors



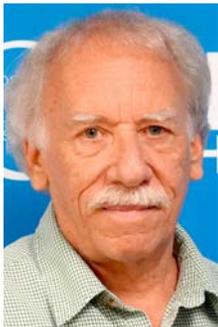
COFFEE CONNECTION CONTINUES

Newcomers and all OLLI members are invited to join Board President Phil Graham over a hot or cold beverage in the OLLI Lounge (152D Wilson Hall). This event started in the fall. Hours for spring semester start Feb. 1:

- **Monday**, 10 to 11:30 a.m.
- **Tuesday**, 8 to 8:30 and 10:30 to 11 (or visit Phil in the volunteer office, 151 Wilson Hall, between 11 and 1).
- **Wednesday**, 1 to 2 p.m.

Events Committee

SIGN UP NOW FOR REMAINING SPRING EVENTS



Registration for the first six events of spring semester opened in December. Several of those filled up quickly and now have waiting lists (we encourage you to register early!).

Check the OLLI website (Bonuses and Special Events at <https://tinyurl.com/events-bonuses>) to see if spaces are still available for events. Registration for the remaining four events is now open; see the details below.



OLLI's coming events include an eagle safari, birdwatching, and touring a water treatment plant and a rescue mission. (Some images came from the venues.)

OLLI members at a significant discount and with our demographics in mind (only mild physical activity). OLLI registration deadline is Feb. 20 (Step 1). USSRC deadline to register and pay is March 6 (Step 2); no refunds after this date! Contact me if you have questions or concerns about these activities or physical limitations.

- Friday, March 27 — **Irish drumming at the downtown public library**, 1-3 p.m. Cost: \$10. Have you ever wanted to learn how to play an Irish traditional instrument? Here's your chance! Join Andy Krespe from the Irish Drum Center for a hands-on experience as we learn how to play a reel on the bodhran (Irish traditional frame drum). No experience necessary, and drums and tipplers are provided. We hope to see you there.
- Friday, April 17 — **South Parkway Water Treatment Plant**, 2-4 p.m. Cost: \$0. Find out what happens to our Huntsville water supply between the source and our taps. We will visit one of Huntsville Utilities' largest water treatment plants (48 million gallons per day capacity). The Huntsville water system was established in 1823 and is the oldest system west of the Appalachians. Our water comes mainly from the

(continued on the next page)

Event recap

Huntsville Museum of Art, Jan. 23 — OLLI members, led by two docents, were treated to an excellent tour of several galleries at the museum. Highlighted were paintings, metal sculptures, glass works, photographs, and paintings that looked like photographs — very impressive. Our docents did a great job helping us understand and appreciate the intricacies of the various works of art.

Spring events

Registration is now open for the following events:

- Friday, Feb. 13 — **Huntsville Ballet experience**, 9:30 a.m.-noon. Cost: \$0. Experience ballet dancers during a rehearsal and lecture with the ballet's artistic director. Attend the evening performance of *Dancer's Choice* (on your own). Learn more and purchase tickets for Huntsville Ballet performances at <https://tinyurl.com/dancers-choice> or <https://huntsvilleballet.org>. 30% discount code: OLQ.
- Saturday, Feb. 14 — **Bald eagle safari at Lake Guntersville State Park**, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Cost: \$0. Join park naturalist Anna Crow to learn all about bald eagles. We will start with a presentation about the history and conservation of these majestic creatures, then watch for nesting bald eagles in and near the park. We will break for lunch at the park's lodge (additional cost). Bring your cameras and binoculars.
- Saturday, March 21 — **Space Camp experience at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Cost: \$100. Spend a full day at Space Camp! Gear up for an unforgettable adventure as you become part of the astronaut crew on a full space flight mission training experience. Then learn what it's like to walk on the moon with the one-sixth gravity simulator, a "chair" suspended from springs (low impact). Finally, visit the USSRC archives for a presentation about the center's large collection of space artifacts and documents. The staff at USSRC has curated this custom experience for

Events Committee

SIGN UP NOW FOR REMAINING SPRING EVENTS, CONT

Tennessee River, but there are three wells in the system also. The South Parkway plant processes water from the river.

- Saturday, April 18 — **Birding at Chapman Mountain Nature Preserve**, 9-10:30 a.m. Cost: \$0. Join Tim Gels (Land Trust of North Alabama) at the Education Pavilion to learn about slow birding: the art and science of enjoying common birds in your own backyard. Tim will also share tips for basic techniques, tools and resources for birding, a growing hobby. We will see if we can spot any resident and spring migratory birds during a short walk on a nearby trail.
- Friday, April 24 — **Downtown Rescue Mission**, 10 a.m.-noon. Cost: \$0. Tour the Downtown Rescue Mission main campus in Huntsville, where we'll see firsthand how your donations and thrift store purchases directly support their vital work in the community. A complimentary lunch will be provided. Then we will

travel to their thrift store in Madison for an opportunity to shop for great bargains (a coupon will be provided for all participants). All attendees will meet at the UAH Wilson Hall parking lot and then travel by van and one carpool vehicle to the main campus and thrift store.

The following is not OLLI-sponsored, but we held a previous event at this show, and several OLLI members are also members of the quilters' guild:

- Friday and Saturday, Feb. 20-21 — **Heritage Quilters of Huntsville Fanfare Quilt Show 2026**, 10 a.m.- 6 p.m. at the Von Braun Center (East Hall). Cost: \$10. This show features more than 200 quilts on display, vendors, special exhibits, demonstrations and lectures, a judge's program and more. Details are at tinyurl.com/2026-quilt-show.

Chris Stuhlinger
Events Committee Chair

EXPLORE THE ARTS



Huntsville Ballet Experience

February 13, 2026 - 9:30-Noon - Huntsville Ballet Studio

Experience Dancers in a lecture demonstration class and rehearsal
Q&A with Artistic Director, Philip Otto

Irish Drumming

March 27, 2026 - 1:00-3:00 - Downtown Public Library

Learn to play an Irish Reel on the bodhran in a hands on experience
with Andy Krespe from the Irish Drum Center

Online registration under Special Events



Are you ready for an out of this world SPACE CAMP EXPERIENCE?

We've partnered with our friends at the **U.S. Space and Rocket Center** to make it happen.

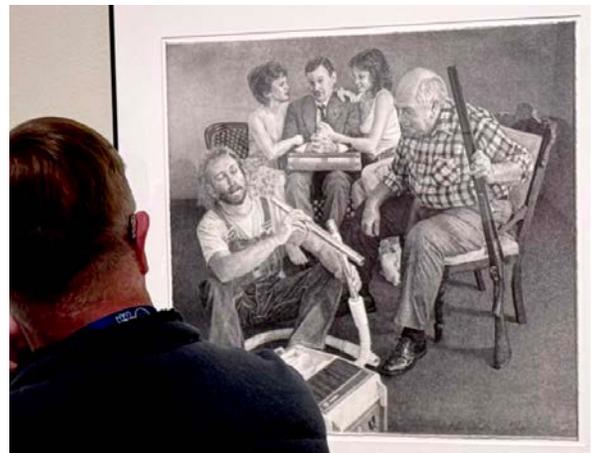
Saturday, March 21, 10 am to 4 pm

The registration deadline is Friday, February 20.
For registration and payment details, check out the OLLI course guide or visit us at uah.edu/olli.



Events Committee

TOURING THE HUNTSVILLE MUSEUM OF ART, JAN. 23



(Photos by Steve Stewart and Chris Stuhlinger)

Coming Bonuses

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: CEMETERY, BUS BOYCOTT



Hello, OLLI friends!

Here we are, and just like that, it is February! As we embrace the new month, I am excited to share special opportunities coming up.

Please mark your calendars for two engaging bonus talks in honor of Black History Month.

The first event will be held Feb. 6 and will focus on the historic **Glenwood**

Cemetery. Our presenters, Olye Conley and Penny Summers, are both retired educators who will share their knowledge and insights about this important site.

On Feb. 20, we are delighted to welcome our very own OLLI member, Dr. Ramona L. Hyman. Dr. Hyman is a multi-talented author, poet, producer and retired professor from Oakwood University. She will be presenting her research on the **Montgomery bus boycott**, offering us a deeper understanding of this pivotal moment in American history.

These enriching bonus events are on Fridays at 11 a.m. I look forward to seeing you in class and at these events!

Betty Koval
Bonus Coordinator



An exhibit about Rosa Parks, whose arrest triggered the 1955-56 Montgomery bus boycott, in the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington. (2019 photo by Steve Stewart)



Visit uah.giftplans.org to access a free estate planning checklist for the New Year!



EXPLORING HISTORIC GREECE AND CROATIA

Jim Beaupre presented a bonus lecture Jan. 23, describing the cruise of Greece and Croatia that he and wife Debbie took in the fall of 2024. An OLLI group cruise along the Dalmatian coast in April and May of this year will visit the same region. (See David Sayre's travel column on Page 11 and Glen Adams' profile of Jim on Pages 16 and 17 of this *Insider*.)

Greece-Croatia Cruise Goals

Debbie

1. Don't fall
2. Remember what we see
3. Fish
4. Croatian art and jewelry
5. Exercise
6. Don't overeat
7. Beat the hurricane out of Atlanta

Jim

1. Enjoy
2. Athens sights
3. Small port rambles
4. Diocletian palace
5. Dubrovnik
6. Home safe
7. Home with all our stuff



The Illusionary Parthenon

It's pretty big, but it was designed to look bigger

- Columns tapered to look taller than it is
- Floor curved so that it looks wider-lower at ends
- Columns spaced to give a wider appearance – wider in the middle
- Statues (Elgin marbles) canted to fake a taller appearance



(Event photos by Steve Stewart; slides and other photos from the speaker)

Social Committee

BONUS SNACKS, LUNCHES AND THE SOUPER BOWL



Spring term is finally here, and the Social Committee is looking forward to serving food on bonus Fridays, lunches on Tuesdays, and homemade soup at the Souper Bowl.

Before and after every bonus, we will have an array of pickup **snacks in the lounge**. Be sure to attend the next bonus on Feb. 6 from 11 to noon and learn about the history of Glenwood Cemetery. Then stop by to enjoy the

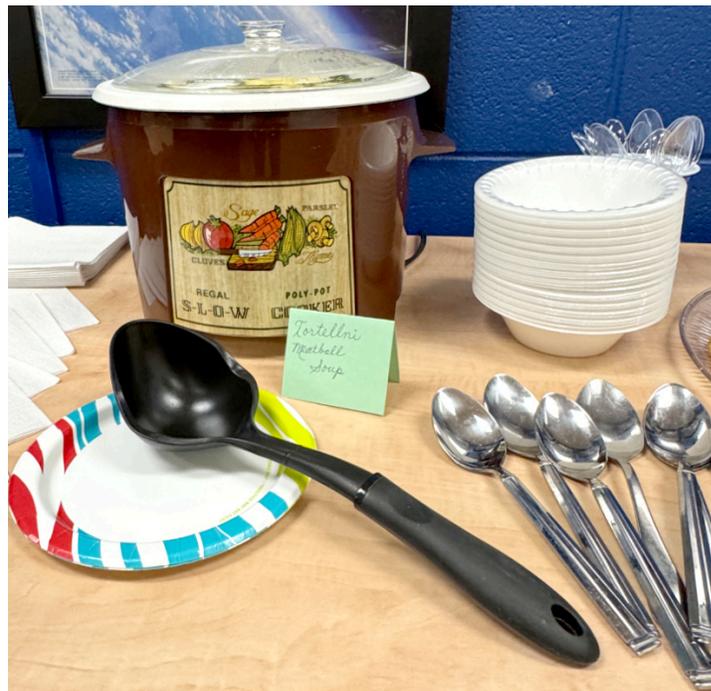
snacks and conversation with OLLI friends.

Weekly **Leisurely Lunches** will begin this term on Tuesday, Feb. 3, from noon to 1. This first free lunch will include sandwiches, a casserole, salad, chips, and several delicious desserts. Come by the lounge between classes, have lunch, and meet new members.

The **Souper Bowl** will be on Feb. 20 after the bonus. Members will sign up to bring their favorite soups in crock pots. A large selection of tasty soups, rolls and desserts will be on display to sample.

We look forward to seeing you at our OLLI events.

Marilynn Szecholda
Social Committee Chair



Members will bring soups for everyone to eat free during the Souper Bowl on Feb. 20 after the bonus about the Montgomery bus boycott. (2025 photo by Marsha Langlois)

15 T-SHIRT SLOGAN ENTRIES STILL IN THE RUNNING

By Phil Graham

President, OLLI at UAH Board of Directors

In next month's *OLLI Insider*, we will be announcing the winner of the OLLI T-shirt slogan contest. Thank you to each participant submitting an entry.



The Public Relations Committee received 45 contest entries. On Dec. 10, 103 OLLI members and non-OLLI members cast ballots for their top five slogans from the 45 submissions. The ballot slips did not identify any individual submitting an entry.

The Board of Directors reviewed the balloting results. The determination was that slogan entries receiving no

less than 10 percent of the total ballots cast would be forwarded to the committee for finalist selection. Fifteen slogan entries have met this standard.

The committee is selecting finalists from the following 15 slogan submissions based on the following criteria:

- Conciseness — The selected slogan will be limited to

eight words or symbols.

- Amount of SWAG — The selected slogan will be distinctive and differentiate OLLI at UAH from other lifelong learning groups.
- Memorability — The selected slogan will imprint a compelling image of OLLI, UAH and elderhood.

Which of these 15 slogans would you wear on the back of your OLLI at UAH T-shirt? Stand by for news of the winner.

- **Wisdom for the Ages**
- **Age Is Artificial — Intelligence Is Lifelong**
- **Curiosity Never Retires**
- **OLLI Is Exercise for the Brain**
- **Come for the Classes, Stay for the Friendships**
- **Curiosity Never Dies**
- **Never Stop Learning**
- **To Boldly Go in Search of Knowledge**
- **OLLI Members Never Graduate**
- **Keeping Minds in Motion**
- **Curiosity Leads — Friendships Follow**
- **Curiosity Thrives Here!**
- **Learning Never Gets Old**
- **The Journey Is Ongoing**
- **OLLI — One Adventure after Another**

Member Services Committee

OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER AND WIN A CONTEST



Lots of catching up to do this month — mostly reminders of things waiting for us on the horizon!

First, another new term is here, and we

really need volunteers to **staff the OLLI volunteer office** (151 Wilson Hall) during active class times. I have placed a signup sheet on the desk in the office, and request that you all stop by and volunteer for a slot.

Slots are generally in two-hour increments, and are a good way to meet your fellow members and learn more about the program. I can't encourage you enough to volunteer to fill up those slots!

Second, if you want to help see our organization grow, then consider **running for election to the Board of Directors**. We're seeking and encouraging people in our membership to consider serving OLLI as board members.

Nomination forms will be provided online beginning later this month, and voting will be open for three weeks. Individuals nominate themselves, or others may nominate an individual with the nominee's permission.

The committee will review and ensure that the candidates meet the requirements for board candidacy — primarily being an OLLI member for at least one year.

Following the election, winners will be contacted and invited to the April board

OLLI Volunteer Office Daily Schedule					
Start Time	Time Blocks				
8:00 AM	1h				
TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00 AM					
9:00 AM					
10:00 AM					
11:00 AM					
12:00 PM					
1:00 PM					
2:00 PM					
3:00 PM					
4:00 PM					
5:00 PM					

Spring 2026

Sign up to help keep the OLLI volunteer office open to serve members. You can find this signup sheet in the office, which is 151 Wilson Hall.

meeting to meet the existing board members. They will be formally inducted at the May meeting to begin their three-year commitment.

Also at the May meeting, the newly seated board will have its first important responsibility: electing the members of the Executive Board. This group includes a president, vice president of curriculum, vice president of administration and finance, secretary, and treasurer of the organization.

As of today, we have candidates for all of the positions, but this is an election, not a coronation! If you want to take a larger role in OLLI, throw your hat into the leadership ring!

Another opportunity to recognize one of our own will also become available in March when we will open voting for the OLLI **Volunteer of the Year**. Who do you think has done the most to

make OLLI a success this year? Why don't you let us know and nominate them?

Links for voting will be posted in the weekly eNews beginning Feb. 20, and voting will remain open through March 13.

And last, but certainly not least, remember the annual **Philip Flowers Memorial Photo Contest** is up and running! This year's subject is **NIGHTLIGHTS**: exploring both the literal and abstract interpretations of light after dark. You can submit your photos now by emailing olliphotcontest@uah.edu. The deadline is March 31.

Let's get those ballots and photos coming in! Our success and the fun we all have is in the participation. Join in!

John Mason
Member Services Committee Chair

Travel Committee

2026 OPPORTUNITIES REMAIN AS WE PLAN FOR 2027



We are an on-the-move group of people.

Stay tuned for our up-and-coming travel opportunities for 2027.

We have fantastic Travel Committee members who have itchy feet for

going to exciting places. Over the next couple of months, we will provide new, exciting travel experiences.

Visit the Travel Opportunities area on the OLLI website to check out the travel adventures! It is at <https://tinyurl.com/olli-travel>.

- Steve Goodman is leading a wonderful **cruise along the Dalmatian coast** — April 24-May 11, 2026. This cruise will include Croatia (Zadar, Zagreb, Plitvice Lakes, 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. Details are at <https://tinyurl.com/olli-dalmatia-greece2026>.
- **Historic Triangle Sampler: Williamsburg, Jamestown and Yorktown** — May 17-22, 2026. Come and celebrate our country's 250th anniversary. Discover the best of Williamsburg, Jamestown and the Yorktown battlefield as Virginia's colonial history is brought to life by re-enactors and at living-history museums, with lots of time to explore on our own. Here's the ultimate experience for history buffs. Take field trips with local experts. Look out over the James River from a 17th-century church in historic Jamestown, and imagine the settlers from the first permanent English colony. We have up to 12 spots available. Activity level: Keep



Cape Town is one stop during OLLI's visit to South Africa, scheduled Aug. 21-Sept. 3, 2026.

- the pace — walking up to two miles on varied terrain, boarding a motor coach and standing for long periods of time. The point of contact is Lisa Brunegraff. Look for details at <https://tinyurl.com/olli-triangle-26>. If you want to get enrolled from the reserves, please call Road Scholar toll free at (800) 322-5315 by Jan. 5, and reference Program No. 22991 and Reserve No. 20785121.
- **Explore South Africa** — Aug. 21-Sept. 3, 2026. Join us for another exciting Nanda Journeys adventure as our OLLI travelers learn about the local history, culture and wildlife conservation efforts in and near Johannesburg, George and Cape Town. Visit Soweto, the Cradle of Humankind, Cradle Nature Preserve, Pilanesberg National Park, the Garden Route, Table Mountain and more. Mingle with the locals and participate in several safaris. The cost per person is \$4,699 (double occupancy, land only). For a detailed itinerary and registration information, contact Chris Stuhlinger or visit <https://tinyurl.com/olli-south-africa-2026>.
 - **The Best of New Mexico: Santa Fe, Taos and Albuquerque** — Nov. 9-16, 2026. Explore the best that New Mexico has to offer: the cosmopolitan heart of Albuquerque, the state's largest city; the Old World charm of Santa Fe; and the frontier spirit of Taos. From history and culture to cuisine and the arts, compare and contrast these unique cities and see how they evolved into the jewels they are today. To express an interest or request information, contact Jane McBride or go to <https://tinyurl.com/olli-nm-2026>.
- Never let curiosity fade! Contact David Sayre, other members of the Travel Committee, or coordinators for the trips at olli.info@uah.edu. All who wander are not lost!
- David Sayre**
Travel Committee Chair

News From UAH

SPRING SEMESTER IS OFF AND RUNNING



Our spring semester is underway. I hope everyone has had a good start to the semester with their courses and other activities.

As you are probably aware, this semester is actually two terms in one. We have six weeks of courses before spring break (March 9-13) and then an additional seven weeks of new courses after that.

This has been by far our most crowded semester. Membership and registration numbers are at the highest levels in years. We are finally closing in on that 1,000-member goal that we have striven to get back to for so long!

As of this writing, we have 17 full classes, and I bet we will have many more. OLLI staff does all it can to get as many of our members in classes as possible, but classroom/facility size, as well as teacher preferences in many cases, dictates how many we can allow. With growth comes these issues, but growth is a great problem to have.

This leads to two points.

First, when registration for a semester opens, do not hesitate to sign up for classes. Don't miss out on the courses you want.

Second, remember there are other great benefits to OLLI membership besides classes: Friday bonus lectures, member interest groups (MIGs), travel opportunities, special programs and tours, plus plenty of social activities that make your yearly membership fee worthwhile.

Speaking of members, I do want to officially welcome all of our new members who have recently joined our family. And we pride ourselves on being a family. Yes, we have a few



OLLI's benefits include multiple opportunities to make friends with old-timers and newcomers. Research shows that people remain members when they feel that they belong. (Photos from open house by Marsha Langlois, Justin Clay and Steve Stewart)



annoying aunts and uncles, but overall, we take care of one another.

I advise you to get involved. Drop by the lounge for coffee with fellow members. Our research proves that people who join OLLI remain members when they feel that they belong.

I advise against just showing up to classes and leaving. Attend a bonus, a lunch program, a special tour or something. Meet people and make connections.

And for current members, remember



you were the new kid on the block at one point. Make sure you welcome new members and make them feel at home. Say hello. Invite them for coffee or to lunch at Charger Café. Let's show them what OLLI is all about.

And remember, OLLI staff is here to help. If you have any questions at all, do not hesitate to drop by our offices in Wilson Hall (Rooms 103, 105 and 106). And we even may let you know who the crazy aunts and uncles are!

Clay Williams
OLLI at UAH Program Manager

Course Spotlight

It's time to register for spring 2026 courses. You can register here: [https://tinyurl.com/olli-uah-registration!](https://tinyurl.com/olli-uah-registration)



GENTLE ENERGY FLOW: TAI CHI & QIGONG FOR SELF-HEALING

2/2 – 3/2 • M • 1:15 – 2:45 p.m. • 5 sessions • In person • S. Wojcik • \$40

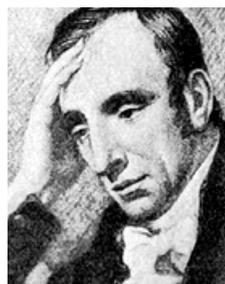
Discover the calming power of mindful movement. This course introduces you to simple, flowing practices from the traditions of Tai Chi & Qigong — gentle arts known for promoting balance, relaxation and inner vitality. The movements can be practiced seated in a chair or with standing options for those who prefer. No prior experience is needed. Learn gentle tai chi and qigong routines you can enjoy in daily life for stress relief and self-healing.



A PERSONAL GUIDE TO CREATING A NATIVE GARDEN

2/5 – 2/26 • Th • 10:30 a.m. – noon • 4 sessions • In person • S. Webb • \$40

This course will cover all aspects of native gardening, renovations, principles and preparations! Learn how to find plants and add decoration to your own special garden, whether it is old or new. Happy gardening!



THE POETRY OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

2/9 – 3/2 • M • 10:30 a.m. – noon • 4 sessions • In person • W. Thames • \$40

Join us for an exploration of the major works of William Wordsworth, the fascinating and engaging poet who was instrumental in the creation of the Romantic movement in English literature in the early 1800s. We'll engage with his "Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey" and "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," along with many other works. Reading Wordsworth, you find yourself understanding and appreciating what is best in humankind.



HAIKU AND OTHER JAPANESE POETIC FORMS

3/18 – 4/15 • W • 1:15 – 2:45 p.m. • 5 sessions • In person • T. French • \$40

In this course, we will learn about, write, workshop and share various Japanese poetic forms, such as haiku, senryu, haibun, haiga and tanka.

Save 20%

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Constitutional Corner

IS THE CONSTITUTION DEAD? WHO CAN REVIVE IT?

This is the fifth of monthly “Constitutional Corner” columns, written alternately by John Mason and Mark Tenhundfeld.

By John Mason

We hear the phrase “constitutional crisis” in the news lately. Do you think the framers of that document might have thought to set up a system so such a crisis never arose? If so, to whom did they grant the authority to mitigate it? And, was their thinking on



the subject influenced by their times? Were they as prescient as we give them credit for?

My last two articles on the Constitution defined the roles of the first two co-equal branches of our government —

legislative and executive — and demonstrated that the founders gave great credence to the idea of “separation of powers.”

Article I defines roles and responsibilities of Congress. Article II is not as specific, leaving the limits of executive power more open-ended. Both put certain age and residence qualifications on applicants. This set the framework in which the founders believed those willing to serve would reside.

This month, we’ll discuss Article III, which is still less specific.

The essence of Article III is laid out in the first sentence of Section 1: “The judicial Power of the United States shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish.” It further gives the Supreme Court appellate jurisdiction over those “inferior” bodies, making it the final stop in judicial applications.

(Justice Robert Jackson wrote, apparently with tongue firmly in cheek, that “we are not final because we are infallible, but we are infallible only because we are final.”)

Ultimately, the supremacy clause along with cases like *McCulloch v. Maryland* and *Martin v. Hunter’s Lessee* established the sense of hierarchy. But there are no requirements as to who can serve on the courts nor definitive guidance on how to remove them if necessary.

Why, then, did the founders give the judiciary such latitude with regard to qualifications and responsibilities? And given its defined scope, how did they intend for it to exert its influence? And why doesn’t the judiciary have the power of enforcing those laws on which it has ruled? Could it be that the founders recognized that enforcement and definition had to be separate?

Law professor David E. Pozen believes that the founders relied on good faith. Good faith, he wrote, “is said to supply the fundamental principle of every legal system.” Is then, the one core presumption of the Constitution that our leaders shouldn’t lie or cheat?

Let’s consider a little thought experiment. When the founders — themselves wealthy, educated, and powerful men from across their respective states — convened, the opposing examples of government they had to look at were the autocracy of kings and the equality of men such as themselves. Thus, they reasoned men like themselves would be best suited to successfully manage this experiment in democracy.

Was this system inventing an oligarchy or a democratic republic? Which do the rules favor? But, and this may be key, does it follow, then, that they believed our Constitution depended on the honor system?

(continued on the next page)

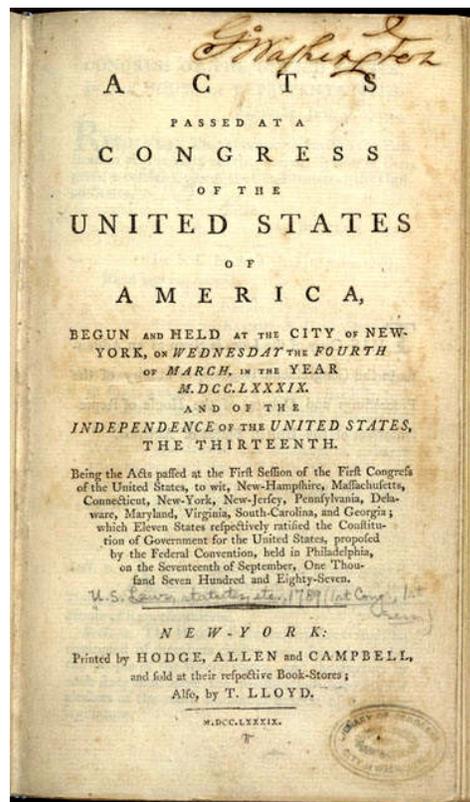


The framers set out to avoid constitutional crises by passing the Judiciary Act, signed into law by President George Washington on Sept.

24, 1789. The Constitution had established the Supreme Court. The 1789 act, principally authored by Sen.

Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut, established lower courts, structure and jurisdiction. It created the position of attorney general. The act has been amended through the years, but its basic outline remains.

(Top image by [Nick Youngson](#) via [pixforfree.org](#); bottom image from [Library of Congress](#))



Constitutional Corner

IS THE CONSTITUTION DEAD? CONT

We can surmise that they did. Moreover, they recognized the danger of a single branch of government becoming overly powerful, and so separated key powers accordingly.

Consider this possible syllogism:

1. To prevent the rise of tyranny in American government, said government shall consist of three distinct but co-equal branches, each endowed with specific roles and responsibilities designed to evince a government of the people in which no one branch may ever reign supreme.
2. This system shall be designed, therefore, to ensure that only the most able and honorable men ascend to the highest roles in leadership.
3. The men most able to assume those positions of power are those of wealth, education and power, who, by their experience, are most conversant with the intricacies and the demands of democracy.
4. Therefore, a separation of power will serve as a system of checks and balances overseen by men of honor so that government can work in concert to meet the best needs of its citizens and protect this Constitution, which it serves.

This conclusion is not valid. Premise 1 is likely true; Premise 2 might be; but Premise 3 is false, depending too much on questionable assumptions. While the founders may have been such men, their conclusion based on honor falls short.

As columnist John Krull writes: “If [our leaders] don’t demonstrate good faith — if they don’t honor their oaths and do their duty — so many things begin to fall apart. The proper functioning of a self-governing society. Government itself. And the rule of law.”

When it comes down to it, there’s an awful lot riding on the honor system.

Now fast forward to today. In spite of their prescience, the founders were designing a system fraught with unknowns. They believed that good government depends on good

people, and they assumed that we’d always be so lucky as to have people of good character in that government.

Did they assume that all future presidents would be imbued with the honor and character of George Washington, and that like him, none would ever wish to crown themselves king? Probably not. Ambitious and unjust men were well-known to them. In fact, it’s likely that many of them feared that someone would want just that, and hence they instituted checks and balances.

But perhaps — and this is especially true in Article III — their trust in honor may have been an impediment to giving the judiciary a means of responding to such a takeover. While the Constitution gives both the legislative and executive branches means to check judicial overreach, some (such as Chief Justice John Roberts in his 2025 report) argue that strong congressional enforcement infringes on judicial independence.

Significant debate also exists over creating a truly *enforceable* ethics code that has independent investigatory and disciplinary bodies, because the court’s current code is voluntary. Lifetime tenure makes it extremely difficult to remove bad judges.

And finally, constitutional standards for impeachment must meet a high standard. And since it’s Congress that determines those ground rules, application depends on politics, allowing for a situation where a House and Senate controlled by a supermajority of one party could start getting rid of judges who rule in ways that supermajority dislikes.

So implementing these types of controls could initiate a slippery slope. A crisis, perhaps?

That’s the one thing the founders did not do — perhaps could not conceive of doing: to give clear guidance on what to do if and when one or more of the branches failed to meet their expectations. They left resolving that issue up to us. And therein lies the greatest flaw in the founders’ genius.

GENEALOGY CONFERENCE AVAILABLE FREE ONLINE

A free online genealogy event offers more than 200 classes in 72 hours, according to OLLI member Cliff Lanham.

Cliff, who has taught genealogy for OLLI, said RootsTech will run March 5-7 from Salt Lake City. If you are a registered participant, you can come back later to watch the

classes you missed.

RootsTech offers expert tips and inspiring stories to help attendees discover and share family history, Cliff said. Details are available at <https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/>.

People of OLLI

JIM BEAUPRE USES EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE TO TEACH OLLI MEMBERS ABOUT PHYSICS AND ART

By Glen Adams

OLLI hit the physics jackpot when Jim Beaupre volunteered to teach. Jim, who has taught numerous physics courses at OLLI, not only has a Ph.D. in theoretical physics, but also held a two-year post-doctoral Atomic Energy Commission fellowship.

Jim is the subject of this month's *Insider* profile.

Jim grew up in northern Illinois, the son of a door-to-door salesman of vacuum cleaners. He had three younger brothers and two younger sisters. Life wasn't easy: "It was either feast or famine. I well remember all the struggles to make ends meet. We were all shaped by those struggles."

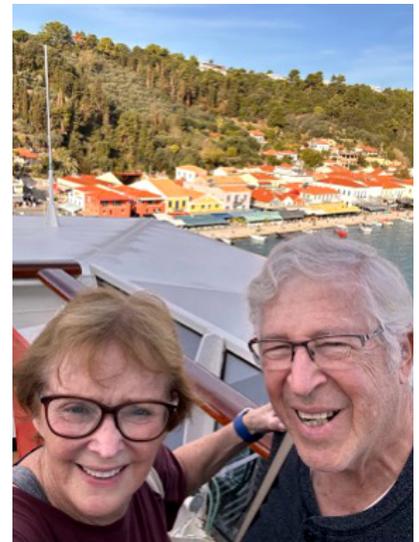
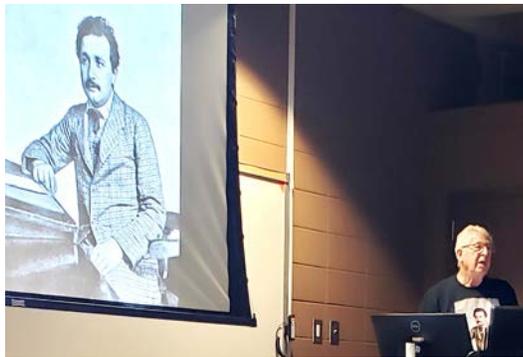
His academic undertakings got off to a rocky start: "I was busted under the bridge over the Kankakee River while playing hooky in the first grade. I was unrepentant. Thus began my life in crime."

Fortunately, Jim did straighten out. In the seventh grade he began delivering all the Chicago papers to the south end of his town. By the end of eighth grade, he was measuring houses for the county assessor. In ninth grade he worked at the local drugstore. He commuted by train to Joliet Catholic High School, where he belonged to the Physics Club and he graduated with the Physics Prize.

"I would not have attended college if it wasn't for the Russians," Jim said.

"Sputnik, the first orbiting satellite, was launched by the Soviet Union at the beginning of my junior year. The result was that the state of Illinois launched a large, successful Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) scholarship program. This enabled me to study physics at St. Procopius College in Lisle, Illinois.

"It was a great match. All of the science faculty had national laboratory connec-



Jim Beaupre presented an OLLI bonus in April 2024 about Albert Einstein's four landmark 1905 papers on space, time, energy and matter. Later that year, Jim and Debbie took a cruise that included Katakolon, Greece. Jim played a 3D scrabble variant on the ship.

tions. The head of the physics department worked for Enrico Fermi [winner of the 1938 Nobel Prize for physics] while getting his doctorate at the University of Chicago. The school was quite small, but focused on science. My graduating class of 60 had 13 physics majors.

"During the summers I worked as a fireman on a small railroad that hauled hot steel around the southern tip of

Lake Michigan. I worked out of Joliet, usually at night. An occasional day route passed behind Joliet State Prison. Yes, they really broke up rocks with big hammers. My next job was dogsbody at Pabst Brewing in Peoria. I was night janitor, boxcar unloader and bottle line tender."

Next Jim was off to Iowa State University, where he earned his Ph.D.

(continued on the next page)

People of OLLI

JIM BEAUPRE, CONT

in 1967. Then he held an Atomic Energy Commission postgraduate fellowship for two years, first at ISU and then at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center in California. After all that study and work, his next job was looking for a job.

"In 1968, research physics jobs were tight because of the ever-widening Vietnam War," he said. "One result was a 'brain drain' to Europe. I was one of the drainees. I secured a position in Germany at the Aachen Technical University. While in Germany, I did extensive traveling, beginning a love for wandering which has stayed with me."

Jim has been all through Europe, plus such far-flung locations as Malaysia, China, Cambodia and Russia.

After five years in Germany, Jim took a job in Huntsville with Teledyne Brown Engineering. And that's where he stayed for the rest of his career, except for four years with SAIC.

"At Teledyne, my group was responsible for developing physics models for missile systems," said Jim. "Later I became active in proposal training, writing and managing. My last assignment was to lead a proposal team that won a NASA contract."

While at Teledyne, Jim received the award for Teledyne Engineering Fellow for Lifetime Technical Achievement and

two awards as Teledyne Engineer/Scientist of the Year. He also found time to teach a graduate UAH course on "Boundary Value Problems of Physics."

After two failed attempts at retirement, Jim finally succeeded in 2015 and within a year had joined OLLI. He has taught numerous physics classes since: quantum mechanics; optics; electrodynamics; and Einstein's relativities, among others.

He began painting in his 60s and has taught two art classes, "Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain" and a course on shading.

"My science courses tend to be light on equations and heavy on history and anecdotes," said Jim. He has also given Friday bonus talks on Albert Einstein and on travel to Croatia and Greece.

Amidst all this activity, Jim married Debbie, his wife of 30 years.

What does the future hold for Jim and OLLI? "I look forward to continuing to present courses and interact with OLLI and OLLI people," said Jim. "It's been a rewarding experience just getting to know and travel with you all."

Thanks, Jim, for all you do for OLLI.

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SEMESTER AT SEA: THE DARNALLS' FINAL REPORT

This is the fourth and final article about the Darnalls' travels during the fall. Previous articles were published in November, December and January

By Nancy and Bob Darnall

Just six months ago, the 93-day cruise plus four-night extension loomed ahead as an endless vacation. Now, a month after we returned, we realized there is no endless vacation. That's why more vacations remain on the calendar and we look forward to more travel.

First, as Kai Ryssdal says on public radio's *Marketplace*, the numbers:

The cruise (one Grand Pacific Journey with 6 segmented cruises)

- 6 embarkation days
- 34 sea days
- 4 days for land extension
- 47 excursions
- 470 crew members
- 5 disembarkation days
- 59 days in port
- 37 ports
- 930 passengers

Distance on foot (per Nancy's Fitbit)

- 305.85 miles
- 731,085 steps

Dining

- Over 200 scoops of ice cream and gelato (per Bob's recollection)
- 97 breakfasts
- 97 dinners
- 1 whiskey tasting
- 3 whiskey sours
- 2 Pimm's cups
- 414 (est.) cups of coffee/cappuccino/espresso
- 94 lunches
- 3 wine tastings
- Multiple gin-and-tonics
- 1 old fashioned
- Several bottles of wine, tonic and ginger ale

Other

- 38 loads of laundry
- 41 port talks
- 14 solo performances of Viking entertainers



Clockwise from top left: The Puffin' Billy steam train, a Buddha statue large enough to have a back entrance, Indonesian art, Nancy with new friends, a blue-eyed penguin in New Zealand, and a basket boat. (Photos from Nancy Darnall)

- 6 farewell receptions
- 9 Viking Dome presentations (planetarium)
- 196 enrichment lectures
- 14 guest entertainers/groups
- 6 welcome receptions
- 6 Viking Explorer Society receptions
- 12 enrichment lecturers

Wow! No wonder we take so many shoes.

During the majority of the cruise, we had a pretty full ship. At **Vancouver**, 27 passengers boarded destined for **Auckland**, the entire cruise. Twenty-four of us completed that. Another 30 passengers were getting off at **Sydney, Australia**. This meant that every two to three weeks, somewhere between 700 and 850 passengers left, with a similar number coming aboard.

Notably, each new group has its own personality; not that every person was the same.

We had an acquaintance board in **Bangkok** to cruise to **Bali**; she was her ever-delightful self, as was her travel companion. That particular

group, however, was not interested in meeting new people.

Many of them had flown to Bangkok from the U.K., Canada or the U.S. Distances for those flights range from 6,000 to 8,800 miles and between 16 and 23 hours with connecting flights. They had to be exhausted. Those who flew west lost a day as they crossed the international date line. Even if they arrived four days early, they were exhausted, somewhat disoriented, and determined to see all they could in the two to three weeks they were in Southeast Asia.

Also, cruisers doing shorter legs are more likely to travel with friends or family, thus bringing their own groups.

We did meet so many interesting and outgoing people. Carol and Gary from the Liverpool area of England, Brenda and Wayne from outside Toronto, Sue and Grahame from Sydney, Jen and Bob from Sydney, Margaret and Melvin from Perth made our trip delightful and invited us to meet with them on future

(continued on the next page)

People of OLLI

SEMESTER AT SEA, CONT

journeys. From the U.S., we dined with Pam and Bob, Kay and John, Laura and Howard, Trudy and Paul, Rose and Roger. Tonya and Tom invited us to visit them in Whangarei, New Zealand.

Crew members on Viking display friendliness in addition to their professionalism. Among our waitstaff, many had traveled with us before; all had been promoted to higher positions. Nancy makes a point of knowing the cruise director and the entertainment staff.

On this adventure, we had two cruise directors: an Irish woman, Aioibhin, and an American man, Dave, plus their assistants, Tony of the Philippines and Sasha from Ukraine. The Viking vocalists, Molly, Ellie, Ryan and Zane, were from the U.K. and had attended college together. Flower and Renz made up the Viking Duo; Renz was a small but powerful singer who positively channeled Freddie Mercury of Queen fame. The Viking Band, always Filipino, amazed passengers and guest performers alike with their incredible sight-reading skills to take one rehearsal and give every guest a perfect accompaniment.

So, what about us?

When we return from a long trip, the question is, Are you glad to be home? Of course, we are. We miss our family, friends, OLLI classes, and all the activities of our lives at home. Yet, when we are away, we are in those places, in the moment. Homesickness doesn't affect us; somehow, we are where we are. I cannot explain it, do not know if we are unique or if that is what makes us long-trip travelers.

I can say it's great to be back. Bob enrolled in 16 OLLI classes; I chose nine. I explain it as pent-up demand. And to be teaching again is exciting.

On the ship, we embraced the experiences as our "semester at sea." Field trips, lectures, dining, museums, new people, art, and night skies filled our days and nights. We saw animals, one of which we had never known — an echidna. Kangaroos, wallabies, wombats, Tasmanian devils, cockatiels (which the Aussies called cockatoos), platypuses, koalas, civets (the coffee-berry poopers), macaques, Komodo dragons, chickens, water buffalo, sharks, skates, rays, and many others made our list.

New destinations on this trip included **Japan** and **Taiwan**. We never imagined that as Americans we'd see **Taipei**. I held that view until we went ashore.

In **Vietnam**, the welcome to Westerners including Americans is heartwarming. That day of monsoon rain in the basket boats became one of our favorite adventures ever. **Cambodia** remains so poor, yet so open to travelers. **Thailand's** queen mother died several days before our arrival; the memorials to her were everywhere.



Nancy and Bob Darnall with a water buffalo in Vietnam.

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, offered fabulous architecture and gardens.

Indonesia manages to incorporate so many beliefs, cultures, ethnicities and entrepreneurs within the hundreds of islands. They worked so hard for peace and independence and are so proud of their accomplishments.

Across **southern and southeast Asia**, we toured many local fabricators of wood carvings, batik prints, painting and enamel artwork, woven baskets and clothing. In every instance, the craftsmanship, artistry, quality and variety stood out. The pride in their products is evident from the fishermen to the retail sales people. If you see an item "Made in Vietnam," "Made in Indonesia," "Made in Cambodia," etc., you should expect and receive well-made items.

In **Australia**, we visited a park that had airborne cable cars, a "train" that took us backward up a hill so steep we were standing, and models of so many dinosaurs that we lost track of the number. Aboard the "Puffin' Billy" steam train, passengers ride on benches running down the middle of the rail cars; management encourages riders to sit on the open windowsills to see the view.

Snorkeling again at the **Great Barrier Reef** from **Cairns** showed recovery of this dynamic underwater miracle. Also, in Cairns we visited the aquarium. The various ways these displays of underwater creatures and geography are depicted taught us so much. We had gone to others in Alaska and Japan.

New Zealand is among the most livable countries we've visited. Lots of open spaces, extraordinary cultural and recreational opportunities, temperate weather, and, by no means least, they speak a form of English we understood.

It's too late, but had we been more adventurous 10 or 15 years ago, we might be Kiwis by now.

Member Interest Groups



Two examples of art journals (photos by Jean Krieger).
Marcus Aurelius (top) and Charles Darwin were prominent journalers in history.

ART JOURNALS ARE AN EXPLORATORY PROCESS

Art journaling is a creative practice that emphasizes process over product. These mixed media books merge artistic creativity with personal reflection, experimentation and self-expression. There are no fixed rules regarding materials, technical skills or outcomes. Art journals function as an exploratory process, not a polished artwork.

Historical reference

Art journaling has deep roots evolving from ancient thinkers like Marcus Aurelius (*Meditations*); to artists like Leonardo da Vinci (observations); to scientists like Charles Darwin (field journals).

In the late 19th century, Picasso and Braque developed collaging, Hannah Hoch established political photo-montages, Frida Kahlo created cathartic images, and Georgia O'Keeffe abstracted nature. In the 1970s, Dr. Lucia Capacchione developed the psychological "creative journal method" influenced by Carl Jung and Anais Nin's diaries, which caused art journals to become mainstream.

Process or method

In art journaling, you can use whatever materials or mediums are available — there are no required supplies. You would need a bound surface like a sketchbook, composition notebook or altered book and basic application tools such as glue, glue sticks, brush and scissors.

Creators can use a variety of drawing media (pencils, pens, inks, markers, pastels) and painting mediums (watercolor, alcohol inks, or acrylic paint — not oil). Makers can use a range of materials: magazine cutouts, tissue paper, stickers, ephemera, and stenciled or stamped images. Creators could even incorporate writing such as poems, quotes, song lyrics or stream of consciousness.

Types of journals

A nonobjective/abstract journal allows one to discover

varied materials (fabric, string, ribbon, papers) or mixed media (mentos or ephemera). An accordion book consists of multiple pages folded in a back-and-forth way to expand and contract compactly. An altered book repurposes old books — children's books with thick paper work best. An artist's sketchbook explores color palettes, mark-making techniques, or mediums like pastels, watercolor, alcohol ink, colored pencils.

A gratitude journal illustrates what you're thankful for or what brings you joy. A junk journal is a handmade book using recycled materials and found objects combined with bookbinding techniques. A therapeutic or memory-based journal reveals feelings, daily emotions, memories or future goals. A travel journal contains memorabilia maps, postcards, or photos with descriptive narratives.

Key considerations

One of the most critical issues for art journaling is the type of paper for pages. You should choose a heavier paper such as mixed media, card stock, or 90- to 140-pound watercolor. The second issue is the journal's binding — either spiral/wire-bound or hardbound with sewn or glued spines.

The last critical concerns are the cover and back, both of which should be durable. The size of your journal is subjective, simply based on preference and convenience.

Conclusion

Art journals are accessible to everyone. Choosing a type of journal and exploring themes such as mythology, flowers, seasons and feelings is easy. There is no extensive learning curve or critical judgment of the final project.

So, embrace accidental mistakes, investigate your creative side, and enjoy the fun of art journals.

Jean Krieger
Leader, Artist Studio Member Interest Group

Member Interest Groups

ENJOY THE OUTDOORS WITH SPRING MIG EVENTS

Once again, we are offering several opportunities for you to enjoy the great outdoors in the Huntsville area. Choose from a nature walk, a bike ride and three hikes, or attend them all! The Wade Mountain Nature Preserve and the Devil's Racetrack trail will be a new destination for the Hiking & Biking MIG.

Mark your calendars and make plans to join us! Registration information for each activity will be sent to MIG members about two weeks before each activity. To join the Hiking & Biking MIG and 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.

Join the MIG: <https://tinyurl.com/hike-bike-mig>

March and April MIG activities

- Sunday, March 8 — **Blevins Gap Nature Preserve** (southeast Huntsville), 1:30-3:30 p.m. Bring your hiking poles to reach the ridgetop and enjoy vast views of the valley below. Hike the 2-mile (each way) Bill and Marion Certain Trail to some scenic overlooks from the ridgetop. The first half-mile is uphill (about 300 feet elevation change); the rest of the trail is easy and flat along the ridgetop.
- Saturday, March 28 — **Rainbow Mountain Nature Preserve** (Madison), 10 a.m.-noon. Hike the Rainbolt Trail to the top of Rainbow Mountain and see Alligator Rock and Balance Rock along the way. 200-foot elevation change, less than 2 miles round trip.
- Sunday, April 12 — **Big Cove Creek/Flint River Greenways** (Hampton Cove), 1:30-3:30 p.m. Choose to take a leisurely walk along Big Cove Creek to the Flint River or ride your bike on the greenways (distance depends on group preference). Bring your own bike and pedal along an easy, relatively flat, scenic paved route along Big Cove Creek to Hays Preserve, and then along the Flint River Greenway to Southeast Old Highway 431. 3.5 miles one way (7 miles round trip).



Left to right, top to bottom: Blevins Gap, Rainbow Mountain, Wade Mountain, Big Cove Creek/Flint River.

- Saturday, April 25 — **Wade Mountain Nature Preserve** (north Huntsville), 10 a.m.-noon. Hike the Devil's Racetrack trail through the woods, then turn uphill to see limestone glades and enjoy views from the power line right of way. 3.5 miles round trip, about 270-foot elevation gain.

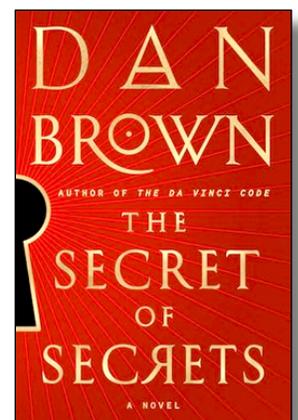
See you on the trail!

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



HARPER LEE, DAN BROWN

The OLLI Reads MIG met Jan. 14 to discuss *Go Set a Watchman* and other Harper Lee writings. In the next meeting — at noon March 18 in Wilson Hall — the topic will be *The Secret of Secrets* by Dan Brown. All OLLI members are invited. (Photos by Glen Adams)



Member Interest Groups

OLLI AND THE BIRDS VISIT WHEELER REFUGE

The Hiking & Biking MIG visited Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in Decatur on Jan. 17. Members toured the visitor center; observed live migratory waterfowl as well as many creatures on video; and walked the Atkeson Cypress Trail and boardwalk.



Most cranes seen at Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge are gray sandhill cranes, but occasionally you'll see a rare, endangered whooping crane. It's the white one in this picture shot on Dec. 30 by Sarah Styers, daughter of David and Kathy Styers.

(MIG photos by Chris Stuhlinger and Steve Stewart)

SPRING SEMESTER OPEN HOUSE, JAN. 9

About 230 new and old OLLI members attended open house in Wilson Hall on Jan. 9, learning about courses starting soon, bonus lectures, member interest groups, events, tours, social activities, travel and other adventures.



(2 pages of photos by Glen Adams, Justin Clay, Marsha Langlois and Steve Stewart)

OLLI Life

OPEN HOUSE: SIGNING UP, LEARNING ABOUT OLLI



(2 pages of photos by Glen Adams, Justin Clay, Marsha Langlois and Steve Stewart)

Huntsville Then and Now

'I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND' OPENED A NEW WORLD



By Lee Roop

A Christmas gift from my wife — Ian Leslie's fascinating book, *John & Paul: A Love Story in Songs* — has been more than a great read. It has been a trip to the past.

I don't have to tell you which John and Paul. They were leaders of the Beatles, and the book looks at the whole arc of the band's history. It is a great read with

good and bad days recalled.

My earliest memory of hearing the band is lying on the floor in my family's northwest Huntsville home. It was 1964, I was 11 years old, and I was doing my homework.

I was also listening to my portable, battery-powered, light green Sears & Roebuck radio. A little bigger than a deck of cards but made of plastic, it probably cost \$5. I'd give \$1,000 for it now.

The DJ played "I Want to Hold Your Hand," and it was a new world. My mother and I were "Elvis people," two Tennesseans by birth who trekked together to the theater each year at Thanksgiving to see The King's latest excuse to sing and dance on the big screen and make a fortune.

The movies were at the Martin Theater in downtown Huntsville, and I was always willing to go. I loved Elvis, too, from the beginning.

But when I heard the Beatles through that tinny radio, I instinctively knew music was changing.

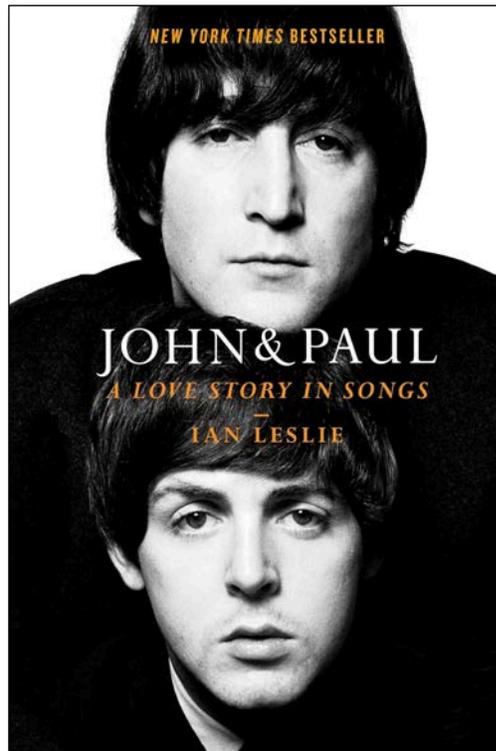
A few months later, the Fab Four appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, and to say you watched in real time is like saying you saw the first moon landing.

I had to smile while watching a Beatles tape just recently. The boys were clean in dark suits and ties and sporting hair that was shockingly long then and wouldn't bring a second look today.

But they famously drove the packed audience of girls and young women crazy. To tears of love and joy.

The Four were good musicians and lyricists, of course, and cute and clean enough to open doors to early adult acceptance.

Not that we fans particularly cared what adults thought. For



A new book evokes fond memories of the Beatles' tunes and the "tantalizing ambiguity" of their lyrics.

some of us on the floor with our radios, music would never get better.

The new book is mostly about John and Paul's relationship and their surreal ability to paint the 1960s in words and music. Together. Until they weren't together anymore.

Does everyone think the music of their youth was magic? Probably. My father loved *The Lawrence Welk Show*, where the big band played and people danced.

Leslie writes about the Beatles' special connection with their teenage female fans (and their moms) and the "tantalizing ambiguity" of lines like "When I touch you, I feel happy, inside."

We knew the message — all you need is love — but we didn't know yet how to make it real. And when the story turned sour with excessive drug use and years later with John's murder in New York City, we knew the long and winding road had many wrong turns.

But it was a magical mystery tour all the same.

The OLLI course "George, John, Paul and Ringo: Beyond the Beatles" is underway now, meeting from 1:15 to 2:45 p.m. each Monday for five more weeks. Nancy Darnall teaches it. To register, go to <https://tinyurl.com/olli-register-uah>.

The Last Word

GOOD STORIES, GOOD HUMOR AND A GENTLE NUDGE

💖 Cupid chooses Glen for February

Have you noticed a little extra sparkle around OLLI this month? Cupid has been making his rounds — not with romance on his mind, but with an eye for kindness, wit and community spirit. And this February, he's taken careful aim at Glen, our globe-trotting, animal-loving storyteller who keeps the newsletter running smoothly and the staff out of trouble.

Every month, Glen brings OLLI members to life through his thoughtful profiles, shining a light on the people who make OLLI more than a schedule of classes. His comments are the perfect blend of practical and witty, and his steady guidance keeps *The OLLI Insider* on course. Cupid, naturally, wanted to know how he does it — so he invited Glen in for a job interview.

💖 Cupid interviews Glen for the job

Cupid: Welcome, Glen. Please sit — but not on my quiver. So, you're applying for Assistant Cupid?

Glen: I thought this was about the newsletter.

Cupid: Same skill set. Accuracy, charm, and preventing chaos. Now,



Glen Adams aces his interview.

then ... what makes you qualified?

Glen: I already keep a team of writers out of trouble. That seems relevant.

Cupid: Very. Trouble-prevention is a core competency. How's your aim? Can you hit a deadline at 20 paces?

Glen: Consistently. And without injuring anyone, which I understand is not always your record.

Cupid: Minor incidents. I see you write monthly profiles — that's basically emotional archery.

Glen: I call it storytelling, but I'll accept the metaphor.

Cupid: You also travel. That's good. We need someone who can navigate airports without losing arrows or dignity.

Glen: I've lost luggage, but never dignity.

Cupid: Excellent. And you're an animal lover?

Glen: Absolutely.

Cupid: Perfect. Some of my best field agents are doves, and they can be ... opinionated. You'll fit right in.

Glen: I'll bring treats.

Cupid: Final question: How would you spread joy in this role?

Glen: The same way I do at OLLI — with good stories, good humor, and a gentle nudge in the right direction.

Cupid: Glen, you're hired. Report for duty on Feb. 14. Dress code: Wings optional, wit required.

Glen: I'll stick with the wit.

Help The Insider identify and recognize people who quietly keep things cozy and tidy for the rest of us. If you have a nominee, please email OLLInewsletter@uah.edu.

OLLI DISCOUNTS ON 2 OF THEATRE LEAGUE'S SHOWS

OLLI members can obtain discounted tickets to two Broadway Theatre League performances, one of which is accompanied by a reception.

& *Juliet* is a jukebox musical that asks what would happen if Juliet had outlived Romeo. An OLLI reception will be held at noon on Feb. 27, followed by the show at 1 p.m.

Water for Elephants is a musical about a young man who

jumps onto a circus train after his dreams collapse, then finds new life and love. OLLI tickets are available for the 7 p.m. performance on May 5.

Phone 256-518-6155 and mention OLLI to pay \$68 per ticket. Both shows also are available on other days at regular prices.

All performances are in the Von Braun Center.