

The OLLI INSIDER

September 2026

News for OLLI members at The University of Alabama in Huntsville



TIME FLIES: SUMMER IS OVER, AND FALL IS HERE

New and returning members (top two photos) at OLLI's open house on Aug. 7, which introduced the fall term; learning how to create and maintain a terrarium; touring the Beechcraft Heritage Museum. And which of these retired ministers is UAH OLLI member John Syster? (Photographers include Steve Stewart, Roxanne Pennington and Chris Stuhlinger.)



uah.edu/olli

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From the Editor

IF YOU ARE LUCKY, HELP SOMEBODY ELSE



"Better than I deserve," radio financial guru Dave Ramsey says when a caller asks how he's doing.

Many of us, like Dave, have been lucky in some ways, whether or not we are rich. The appropriate response is to be generous to others. Pay it forward.

In his 2025 novel *FDR Drive*, former FBI Director James Comey quotes a woman explaining life to her adolescent daughter. A girl at school, probably

parroting her parents, had commented that the world was divided into "makers" such as hedge-fund managers and "takers" such as government employees.

"It's hard for most people to recognize that they have a lot of money, at least in part, because they were in the right place at the right time, or had the right parents or mentors, or looked or sounded the right way, or so many other things that are accidents," Comey's mom character (a federal prosecutor) says in her critique of the makers.

"Some of them deal with it by living a life of gratitude and humility while trying to help people who are less fortunate."

When I drive out of state, I often invest in lottery tickets. My lifetime winnings total \$2, but I defend my spending as a donation to education or whatever good cause the lottery supports. If I actually *did* win a big lottery prize, I ought to share it. Remind me if that ever happens. Meanwhile, there are things you and I can do.

This is the time of year to consider monetary donations for their own sake as well as for tax breaks. But money is not the only thing we can share.

We can offer time, assistance and talents to other people who could use the help. We can volunteer to do whatever we do uniquely well, for the benefit of other individuals or society at large.

OLLI benefits from members' prolific volunteerism in all the ways described above. Many of our members are dedicated servants and donors in the Huntsville community and beyond. These generous people inspire all of us to recognize good fortune as an opportunity to help.

Inside *The Insider*: Glen Adams profiles John Syster, an OLLI teacher and retired minister.

Marsha Langlois explains how OLLI board members can help you and how you could become one of them. Roxanne Pennington asks experienced OLLI members to help new ones and announces the annual photo contest theme. Donna Berger announces that free Tuesday lunches will start Sept. 22.

David Sayre outlines group travel opportunities. Steve



Kari Fagin, associate director of the National Resource Center for Osher Institutes, discusses how volunteerism can fit into a busy life on July 29 during the Southern Regional Conference for Learning in Retirement at the University of Georgia. (Photo by Steve Stewart)

Goodman continues his travelogue from the Dalmatian coast and Greece, and Nancy Darnell describes her travel adventures. Lee Roop notes that many flight itineraries include Nashville, which can be a destination on its own.

Chris Stuhlinger and Alison Toney preview local events and tours. Lisa Brunegraff outlines autumn bonus lectures. See the news and information from member interest groups in reading, art and hiking.

We have articles from Birgit Stensby and Suezy Proctor about organizing and teaching courses, as well as Roxanne Pennington's account of the summer course about terrariums.

Clay Williams writes about finding purpose in retirement. Anelisse Westmeyer simplifies locating Zoom links for courses. OLLI welcomes Madyson White as marketing and design specialist.

John Mason discusses President Franklin D. Roosevelt's proposal for a "second bill of rights" addressing economic security.

Steve Stewart
Editor, The OLLI Insider

From the President

HAVE YOU NOTICED THOSE OLLI PINS?



If you have been attending OLLI classes and events, you may have noticed that some members have OLLI pins attached to their name tags. Perhaps you've wondered, "What does that pin mean?"

Well, now you know! **Those pins identify members of your OLLI Board of Directors.**

As your board president, I have come to appreciate how much of OLLI's

success comes from members who are willing to give their time, ideas, energy and enthusiasm. The board is made up of **between 18 and 25 members.**

Board members are elected by the OLLI membership for **three-year terms** and may serve a maximum of **two consecutive** terms. When there are openings on the board, members may nominate themselves or nominate another OLLI member (with the member's permission). The entire membership then votes for the candidates who will fill those open positions.

And here is something you may not know: **Any active OLLI member who has been a member for at least one year is eligible to serve on the board.** That means there may be a future board member sitting beside you in your next class, enjoying an event with you, chatting with you between classes, or looking back at you in your mirror every day.

There's more than one way to get involved.

Board service is one way to become involved, but it certainly isn't the only way. OLLI typically has **nine committees**, each playing an important role in making our organization successful:

- **Administration and Finance**
- **Curriculum**
- **Events**
- **Scholarship and Fund Development**
- **Member Services**
- **Public Relations**
- **Social**
- **Travel**
- **Volunteer Services**

Board members are expected to volunteer for at least **two committees**, although they are welcome to serve on more. Committees provide opportunities to work with other volunteers and put your individual interests and talents to work for OLLI.

But here's the best part: **You don't have to be a board member to serve on a committee.**

OLLI members at large are encouraged to volunteer as well.



Either of these pins identifies a member of the OLLI Board of Directors. (Board members are pictured on Page 4.)

Maybe you enjoy organizing events, welcoming new members, working with curriculum, promoting OLLI, supporting scholarships, planning social activities, or helping with travel. Maybe you would like to help with the attendance roster and announcements for a class. Or perhaps you simply have some time and would like to meet more OLLI members and be part of what makes this organization special.

If you are interested in volunteering, please stop by the OLLI office (103 Wilson Hall) and provide your name and contact information. You can also email olli.info@uah.edu with your contact information and the area in which you are interested.

I hope you'll consider getting involved. One of the wonderful things about OLLI is that there is always room for another helping hand, another good idea, and another enthusiastic member.

And the next time you see someone wearing an OLLI pin, say hello and ask about their OLLI experience. You may be surprised at what you have in common.

Perhaps someday, **you'll be wearing one of those pins, too!**

Note: OLLI currently has two styles of pins because of the recent change in the OLLI logo. Both styles represent our board members.

Marsha Langlois
President, OLLI at UAH Board of Directors

People of OLLI

OLLI AT UAH BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2026-27



Marsha Langlois
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Suezy Proctor



David Sayre



Steve Stewart



Ed Stone



Chris Stuhlinger



Silvia Summers

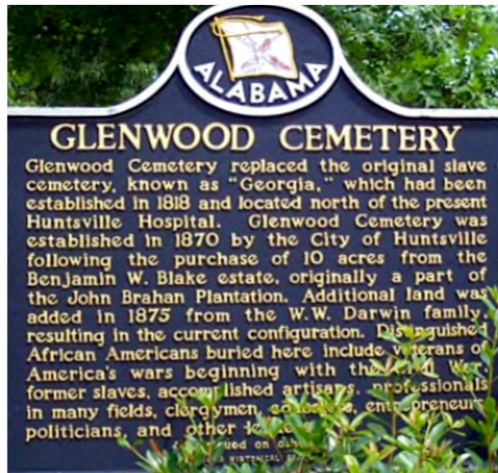


Mark Tenhundfeld



Alison Toney

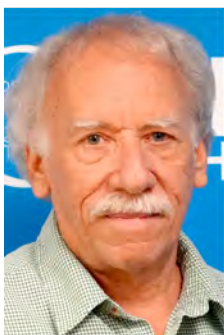
Events Committee



Coming events (left to right, top to bottom): First Solar, Oakwood and Glenwood cemeteries, Hubert Family Farms, U.S. Space and Rocket Center, Huntsville Aquatic Center. (Some photos are from websites.)



EVENTS CO-CHAIRS AND COMING EVENTS



As you may have noticed, Alison Toney and Chris Stuhlinger are now co-chairs of the Events Committee.

This paragraph is from Chris: I'm very happy that Alison has agreed to take on this new role,

especially since she is already involved in several other OLLI committees and activities. The planning, organizing, and coordination of events for each term takes quite a bit of behind-the-scenes work. Our fantastic committee members come up with great ideas for events (and incorporate ideas from the recent survey) and then, with guidance from the co-chairs, work with venues to plan and implement their events. I really appreciate Alison's help as she takes on some of the leadership responsibilities to help bring the committee's events to our OLLI members!

We have several events planned for September and early October. Be sure to register for and attend the events of your choice!

Event recap

Beechcraft Heritage Museum, July 24 — OLLI members enjoyed a docent tour of the museum (located in Tullahoma, Tennessee), which preserves the heritage of Beechcraft airplanes built since 1932. Thirty-eight beautiful, vintage airplanes are on display, including Staggerwings, Bonanzas, Barons, Dukes, and Musketeers. After the museum visit, members enjoyed lunch at the nearby Whiskey Trail BBQ and Steakhouse.

Events for September and early October

Note that registration for some of these events has already reached capacity. You can join the waitlist if you wish.

- Thursday, Sept. 10 — **First Solar factory tour** (Trinity, near Decatur), 12:30-2:30 p.m. First Solar is America's leading photovoltaic solar technology and manufacturing company, providing a competitive and responsibly produced alternative to conventional crystalline silicon PV modules. Cost: none.
- Saturday, Sept. 12 — **Oakwood University Cemetery and Glenwood Cemetery** (Huntsville), 9 a.m.-noon. Join William Hampton from Huntsville Revisited as we

(continued on the next page)

Events Committee

COMING EVENTS, cont from previous page

enjoy a narrated tour of two historic Huntsville cemeteries: Oakwood University Memorial Gardens Cemetery and Glenwood Cemetery. The beautiful grounds honor pioneers and cultural icons, including Little Richard, and preserve sacred spaces such as the Historic Slave Cemetery. Glenwood Cemetery is a historic cemetery for African American burials founded about 1871. Cost: none (tips welcome).

- Friday, Sept. 25 — **Sunflowers at Hubert Family Farms** (New Market), 2-3:30 p.m. Learn about the history of the farm that has been in the Hubert family since 1917, the planting process for crops and flowers, agriculture and agritourism. Relax and enjoy the beautiful sunflower fields, and have fun picking your own to take home. Cost: \$15 for admission and You-Pick cup of flowers (10 stems), or \$20 for admission and You-Pick bucket of flowers (25 stems).

- Thursday, Oct. 1 — **Biergarten under the Saturn V** (Huntsville), 5-7:30 p.m. Bring your family and friends to an evening of good food, live music, and fun under the Saturn V rocket at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. The beneficiary of this evening's charity fundraiser will be OLLI at UAH! Cost: Varies according to food order.
- Friday, Oct. 2 — **Water Aerobics at Huntsville Aquatics Center**, 1:45-3 p.m. Pool time! Get an easy-on-the-joints workout at the Huntsville Aquatic Center's instructional pool, a heated indoor pool with jets. Admission gets you the swim class and all-day swim, so get your swimsuit ready. Locker rooms are available, and there's a view of the lake you can enjoy afterward. Cost: \$4 (unless you already have a membership).

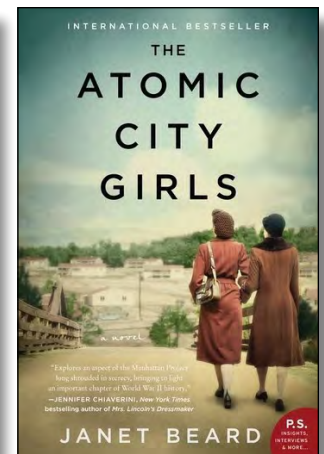
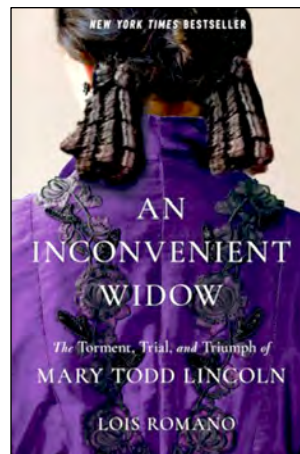
Chris Stuhlinger and Alison Toney
Events Committee Co-chairs

Member Interest Groups



BOOK DISCUSSIONS: 'WHISTLER,' MARY LINCOLN, 'THE ATOMIC CITY GIRLS'

Twenty-one people attended the Aug. 12 discussion of Ann Patchett's *Whistler* by the OLLI Reads MIG. Mary Beth Chamberlain led the session. On Sept. 9, the topic will be *An Inconvenient Widow* by Lois Romano, about Mary Lincoln. The Oct. 14 topic will be *The Atomic City Girls* by Janet Beard. All OLLI members are invited to the noon meetings in Wilson Hall. (Photos by Jill Stewart)



Events Committee

BEECHCRAFT HERITAGE MUSEUM VISIT, JULY 24



(Photos from Chris Stuhlinger and Rainer Klauss)

Coming Bonuses

FIRST SEPTEMBER BONUS IS ON 9/11 AND ABOUT 9/11



Hello, OLLI members!

Taking over the bonuses for the fall was challenging. Betty Koval raised the bar for the quality of the speakers. Good programs are important to keep OLLI vibrant.

Inspiration came from many sources, like having lunch with friends, visiting a small airport or attending a large business symposium. With the help of a few OLLI members, I was able to gather a selection of people to reflect the different OLLI interests. I hope you find the lineup for the fall bonus speakers to be high-quality.

The 2026 fall lineup will include the following. All bonuses start at 11 a.m. on Fridays. You can find more details and sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/bonuses-fall-26>.

- **Alan Cockrell, professional pilot, on Sept. 11:** We all know about the four planes that went down on Sept. 11, 2001. What you do not know is how it affected the lives of the other pilots who were in the air or arrived at work that day. Here is one story.
- **A.R. "Rey" Almodovar, professional engineer and businessman, on Sept. 25:** Starting a small company is a part of the American dream. Come and meet a local man who achieved that dream. Learn how it started and how he keeps his company thriving,
- **Storytellers Tim Chasteen and Leah Oakley on Oct. 9:** Celebrating 20 years of Athens' fall Storytelling Festival, we are fortunate to have not one but two well-known storytellers. This festival is one of the premier events in North Alabama.

Two of OLLI's own members, both of whom have contributed their talents as course teachers, will give bonuses:

- **On Oct. 23, Suezy Proctor, an incredible storyteller,** will talk about her fascination with antique flame-throwers.
- **On Nov. 20, Ginger Campbell, M.D.,** will give a brief presentation on her work in **neuroscience**. By that time, she will have finished teaching a fall course on the same subject, called "Brain Science Primer."

The **super bonus** will take place **Nov. 6:**

- With the help of Jane McBride, we will be presenting "**Sallie's Ashes**," a documentary short film sponsored by the **Coal Ash Action Group**. We in north Alabama do not always pay attention to the southern part of the state unless it is to go to the beach. This coal ash



Bonuses on Sept. 11 and Sept. 25, respectively, will address pilots' experiences when terrorists struck 25 years ago, as well as how to start a small business.

deposit threatens not only the water but also the food chain and recreation that spread all the way into the Gulf. Alabama's biodiversity is a state treasure but also a critical component of the ecological health of the Southeastern United States.

Growing membership presents challenges. One challenge is finding more space for bonus audiences. Working with UAH, OLLI has made an agreement to utilize Chan Auditorium in the Business Administration Building (the second building to the south of Wilson Hall). So you, as a member, please sign up for the bonuses you would like to attend so we can get an accurate number.

Thank you for all the suggestions given to me. I look forward to seeing you in classes this fall and at our fall bonus events!

Lisa Brunegraff
Fall Bonus Coordinator

Course Spotlight

There is still time to register for fall 2026 courses. Register here: <https://olli.uah.edu/olliatuah/category/category.aspx>



PHUN PHYSICS!

9/14 – 10/26 • M • 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. • 7 sessions • In Person • B. Carroll • \$40

Newtonian physics made easy. We will use hands-on investigations and discrepant events to learn Newton's laws of motion, gravity and optics that have stood the tests of time. We will make connections to modern physics. And, as in previous semesters, a surprise visit by Sir Isaac might be on the agenda!



GERMAN STORIES FOR INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED READERS

9/17 – 11/5 • Th • 8:45 – 10:00 a.m. • 8 sessions • In person • L. Medenbach • \$40

Improve your German language skills by reading authentic German stories. We will start by finishing our detective story *Des Spielers Tod*. Then we start the next adventurous detective story, called *Mord am Morgen*, which involves a grumpy Kommissar and his very sassy colleague solving a murder in an abandoned house at the outskirts of a small German town.



SELF-PUBLISHING 101

9/23 – 10/28 • W • 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. • 6 sessions • Live virtual • S. Proctor • \$40

Everyone has a book inside them — but few ever write it. Why? The process feels overwhelming. In this course, you'll learn how to move from idea to finished manuscript and navigate self-publishing with confidence. This course will guide you step by step — so your story, expertise or legacy doesn't stay unwritten.



MONEY SAFETY & FRAUD AWARENESS

9/30 – 10/21 • W • 1:15 – 2:45 p.m. • 4 sessions • In person • L. Simmons • \$40

This course will help you recognize common scams, avoid financial exploitation, and make informed financial decisions with confidence. You will learn how fraudsters target seniors, identify warning signs of scams, protect personal and financial information, and respond to suspicious activity. Through real-world examples and practical strategies, the course promotes financial safety, digital awareness and smart money habits. This course empowers participants to stay informed, secure and financially confident.

Save 20%

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

Curriculum Committee

THINK INSIDE THE BOX

No, no, you say — we're always being asked to think "outside the box." Well, hear me out.

First, a little background for those who might not know me. I've been an OLLI member since 2015. Why did I join? My mother had been a member way back in the 1990s when OLLI was named the Academy for Lifetime Learning. She joined because it was a way for her and my stepfather to travel; they both also took a lot of courses. The travel bug, however, never laid eyes on me.

So, when I got laid off from Intergraph Corp. in 2015 after 30 years, I decided to check out OLLI courses. And then I decided the Curriculum Committee was a nice place to land. Get to help plan course offerings? I was sold!

My mother was mystified. "Why ever do you want to do that?" she asked.

"Well," I responded, "all those courses you took over the years — they had to have come from somewhere. Someone had to recruit and plan all that before you could march into the classroom."

So I started going to OLLI Curriculum Committee meetings. After a while, I started working with History & Government (H&G) discipline chair Cliff Lanham on offerings in his area, and, when Cliff asked for me to be made a co-discipline chair for H&G, I was all in.

Several years after that, when Cliff stepped back from his role on the Curriculum Committee, I was thankful that he'd taught me the ropes while not having to work a fire drill.

Teaching has its rewards

So — now back to "thinking inside the box." In my years of being discipline chair, I've heard the same type of comment over and over again from my instructors: They learn so much themselves and find it so enjoyable to prepare a course for OLLI. It's a way for them to become enriched, too. After all, no one is doing this for the money!

So, my approach is always to get to know my instructors and find out what makes them tick — what they get excited about. And then find a way to make that work. I'm "thinking inside the box" of what my instructors want to do. And that is always my focus.

Have an instructor who likes to travel at certain times of the year? Work with that schedule and note when to reach out to him/her again. Have an instructor who needs a break to take care of personal business? See if he/she might want to offer a compressed course (twice a week). Or reach out again later when it's more convenient.

Have an instructor who's just too tied up with other things



Birgit Stensby (left), who wrote this article, at open house with Miriam Nixon, also a member of the Curriculum Committee. (Photo by Steve Stewart)

right now to make it work? Make a note to contact him or her next term. Have an instructor with an interesting topic who's a bit shy about actually teaching? Maybe a summer short course or a bonus is the ticket.

Have an instructor who really prefers to teach a course in another area? That's OK; I'm not proud. I can send the instructor the syllabus form and then reach out to the discipline chair in that area to ask him or her to follow up.

The key is to get organized and keep good notes. The absolute last thing you ever want to do is "forget" a conversation you had. And when you have a lot of instructors, it's easy to forget, especially at our age. When you're looking out ahead by a year or even more, it's even easier to forget.

Staying organized

I keep a notebook, where I list instructors' names and possible courses I've discussed with them and when they'd like to teach. It's all organized by term. When that term arrives, I can just flip to the appropriate page and work the list.

Over time, I can also look back to when an instructor last taught a course. And, if I have to be away from my discipline chair duties for a while (as I was during the fall term of 2025), it's easy to take this notebook and pass it on to someone else and ask them to finish the job. And I'm so lucky to have John Syster as that backup (understudy) person for the history area.

So, when it's time to submit a syllabus for the requested

(continued on the next page)

Curriculum Committee

THE POWER OF NEW VOICES: WHY YOU SHOULD TEACH

Teaching an OLLI course gives you a pressure-free opportunity to share your passions with curious adult learners without the burdens of grading, homework or administrative stress.

Every vibrant community thrives on fresh perspectives, and OLLI is no exception. While our community is already rich with knowledge, its true vitality relies on the constant introduction of new voices. Stepping up to teach a course isn't just about sharing what you know; it is a powerful catalyst for personal growth, deep connection, and community integration.

When you volunteer to lead a course on a subject you love, you unlock a profound sense of purpose. At OLLI, your unfiltered passion is your greatest asset.

There is an unmatched feeling of success when you watch a complex concept click for an engaged room of peers. When students truly connect with your material, it creates a pure validation loop. Their genuine appreciation transforms your initial excitement into lasting confidence, proving that your unique perspective is both valuable and needed.

This boost in confidence frequently sparks a wonderful snowball effect. Excelling in the classroom acts as a safe, supportive sandbox to test new ideas and presentation styles. Soon, the positive reinforcement from your initial sessions gives you the courage to branch out and teach other, entirely new topics.

Beyond personal confidence, teaching is the single most effective way to broaden your acceptance and deepen your roots within the OLLI community. Stepping to the front of the room serves as a beacon, instantly drawing in a "tribe" of like-minded individuals who share your specific obsessions. You stop being just a face in the crowd and become an integral thread in our local social fabric.

As you get to know the members, a beautiful momentum



During open house Aug. 7, Suezy Proctor (right) discusses two fall courses that she will be teaching. (Photo by Steve Stewart)

builds. Those who take your initial classes become your strongest advocates. Word of mouth spreads quickly through the hallways. Before long, you will find eager students approaching you to ask about your next session or encouraging you to teach more often on an array of different subjects. You seamlessly transition from a participant to a highly requested, cherished fixture of the community.

If you have been holding back, wondering if your voice matters — it does. Our OLLI community grows stronger and more tightly knit every time a member shares their passion. Take that step, submit a teaching proposal, and discover the incredible community, confidence and fulfillment waiting for you on the other side of the lectern.

Suezy Proctor
Skills & Hobbies Discipline Chair

THINK INSIDE THE BOX, cont from previous page

term, I reach out to the instructor again to make sure that the plans are still on track. If they are, I send them the syllabus form and then monitor to make sure it is received back by OLLI so that it'll get on the schedule.

I would feel awful if an instructor just forgot to fill out the form, didn't complete it all the way, or somehow missed sending it in on time, and then got dropped from the schedule. So, in the weeks before the deadline, I become

something of a "pest."

My work is not done until OLLI tells me they've received the syllabus back. I won't know the details of which dates or times or how many sessions an instructor requested; I just want to know that it arrived.

And yes, sometimes you have to make yourself a pest to ensure something isn't overlooked or lost. Those of us who have been discipline chairs for a

while know that things like that happen. Every time I think I've seen it all, it turns out I haven't — or maybe a plan changed and I wasn't aware. Things happen, and plans may change.

Want to learn more about life on the Curriculum Committee? Just come to a meeting and see if it's for you. We'd love to have you join us!

Birgit Stensby
History & Government
Discipline Chair

Curriculum Committee

TERRARIUMS: SELF-CONTAINED INDOOR GARDENS

By Roxanne Pennington

Do you like the idea of houseplants, but the best they ever look is on the day you buy them? There is another option.

A terrarium is a low-maintenance, self-contained indoor garden. During the summer term, OLLI offered a one-day course, "Terrarium House for Your Home," which was taught by Kitt Campbell off campus at Botanica Huntsville, 414 Governors Drive SW.

Each student was provided a glass container and lid to create a closed-type terrarium. We each had a cup of small rocks, which we poured into the bottom of the glass container; then we added a layer of potting soil.

The next step was to select two or three small plants. Once we selected and planted plants in our terrarium, we had the option of adding an interesting stone, a twig or other embellishment.

Some terrariums were minimalistic; some were abundant. Each terrarium was unique and beautiful.

Mixing plants with a variety of foliage colors, textures and heights creates an interesting and visually appealing ecosystem. It's important to match plants to the terrarium type, open or closed.

Since we were creating a closed terrarium, we used moisture-loving plants. The lid traps moisture, creating a high-humidity environment ideal for tropical plants like ferns, mosses,



OLLI members learned how to create and maintain terrariums during a summer course. (Photos by Roxanne Pennington)

fittonia and Chinese money plants. These small, compact plants can be found at most garden centers, grocery stores and home improvement stores.

Terrariums prefer bright, indirect light. If the soil still looks dark and damp, don't water. If the terrarium does need water (every month or so), use a spray bottle

to lightly mist the soil.

Overwatering is the most common problem. Trim any plants that are growing too large, and remove any yellowing or dead leaves.

Personally, I have my terrarium in the kitchen, but I think it would add life and charm to an office or any space.



TICKETS AVAILABLE FOR 2 STAGE SHOWS

OLLI has tickets reserved for two Broadway Theatre League productions in the Von Braun Center: *Waitress* on Sept. 27 at 1 p.m. at \$75 each, and *A Beautiful Noise* (a Neil Diamond biographical musical) on Nov. 22 at 1 p.m. for \$77.

All seats are in Orchestra 2. Call 256-518-6155, and mention OLLI. There is no limit on the number of seats an individual can purchase at group rates while tickets are available.

Curriculum Committee

ARTISTRY OF ALBUQUERQUE, TAOS AND SANTA FE



Left to right, top to bottom: Canyon Road in Santa Fe, Old Town Albuquerque, Taos pueblo, and another view of Canyon Road.
(Photos by **M.Bucka, Chris English, Karol M. and VitaleBaby**)

Attend free Oct. 16 talk about upcoming trip to New Mexico

Jean Krieger, leader of OLLI's Artist Studio Member Interest Group, will present a talk describing the itinerary of OLLI's forthcoming Road Scholar trip "The best of New Mexico: Santa Fe, Taos and Albuquerque." Her talk will take place Friday, Oct. 16, from 10:30 a.m. to noon in Wilson Hall. The lecture is free and open to all. Topics will include artistic sites to visit and whether each site is included in an official group tour or is an independent option. The lecture will highlight artistic history, characteristics of pottery or crafts, and important artists in varying locations. Also included will be recommended sites to visit with locations and, if possible, hours. The trip will be Nov. 9-16.

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256-539-0961

Thrilling
2026-2027
Season

HBC UNPLUGGED
NIGHT SONGS & UNDER THE OCTOBER MOON
October 23, 24, 25, 2026

THE NUTCRACKER
WITH HUNTSVILLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
December 11, 12, 13 2026

DANCER'S CHOICE SERIES
BLACK BOX STUDIO PERFORMANCES
February 12, 13, 14 2027

THE FIREBIRD...AND MORE
MARK C. SMITH CONCERT HALL
April 16, 17, 18, 2027

SPONSORS: Arts Alliance, Arts Therapy Technology, Inc., Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, THE CONN FAMILY FOUNDATION, THE DANIEL FOUNDATION, HUNTSVILLE The City of Culture, HUNTSVILLE BALLET ORCHESTRA, REDSTONE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, PEI LING CHARITABLE TRUST

News From UAH



Sign up for something rewarding, as these members were doing during open house Aug. 7. Registration can be accomplished online, as well as in 103 Wilson Hall (shown here). (Photo by Steve Stewart)

FIND YOUR PURPOSE



This past July, I was fortunate to attend the 2026 Southern Regional Conference for Learning in Retirement at the University of Georgia in Athens.

I have attended this conference in the past, and it's always nice to catch up with fellow OLLI staff from across the Southeast. There were several worthwhile sessions, but the one I took the most from was titled "Loving Longevity through Lifelong Learning."

As we all know, there is no user manual for retirement. Many people work in their chosen profession for 40-plus years, get excited to retire, and then struggle on what to do next. Too many people substitute their routine of going into work for simply camping out at home for long periods of time.

We all know lifelong learning provides so many benefits. Lifelong learning gives us community, which saves us from social isolation. It also provides important cognitive stimulation to keep our minds fresh and hopefully assist us in warding off assorted mental dementias.

But perhaps the biggest plug for lifelong learning is that it helps us find a new sense of purpose in our lives now that our professional careers are over. Besides simply needing

something to get us out of bed each morning, a basic structure for our day-to-day activities, lifelong learning can go beyond that to guide us on what we are to do now with the remaining years of our life.

What can be our legacy? How do we share our wisdom? What can we give back?

The OLLI fall 2026 Course Guide can help you find that purpose. Take a course you would not normally take. Join a member interest group. Travel to an unknown land. It is my hope that OLLI helps you find your purpose going forward into the future.

Courses for our fall semester start on campus the week of Sept. 14. Make sure you wear your OLLI badge and hang your 2026-27 parking permit on the rearview mirror of your car. Traditional UAH students will be in class as well, so we advise you to get to campus early to find a parking spot.

We have lots of new OLLI members who will be joining us for their first time this September, so I hope our veteran members extend a warm welcome and display what a welcoming community we offer here at OLLI.

Final reminder that OLLI offices will be closed for Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 7. We are looking forward to a wonderful fall semester!

Clay Williams
OLLI at UAH Program Manager

Registration Corner

NO MORE ZOOM LINK HIDE-AND-SEEK



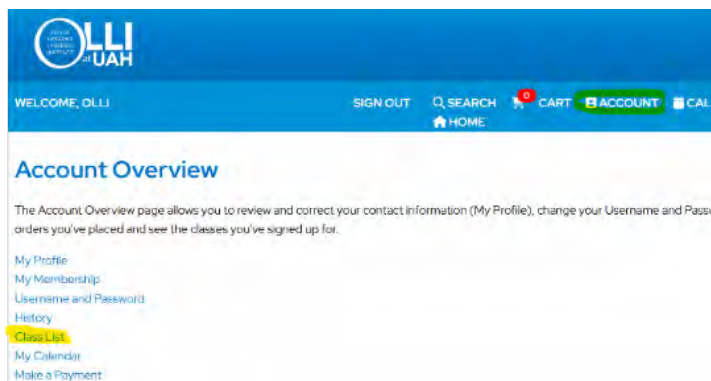
About 109 lost emails ago, you got that reminder from OLLI about your online class with the Zoom link attached. Where did it go off to? No idea; the computer gremlins ate it soon after you read it.

That doesn't help you now. The class starts in 10 minutes, and your computer is still booting up. What's an OLLI Zoomer to do?

Calling the office is always an option, and we can resend you the email, but probably better than that is to go into your online account and locate your meeting link — as soon as your computer finishes booting up.

A quick how-to:

Log into our registration system (<https://tinyurl.com/uah-olli-registration>), and click on the account link to get the following menu:



The Class List link will list your classes for the semester. (You can also go back to previous semesters to view what you've taken previously on this page.) The highlighted area will show your Zoom meeting link if you have a class with an online aspect to it:

SKU	TERM	TITLE	INSTRUCTOR	CLASSDATES	TIME	BUILDING	ROOM	STATUS	MEETING LINK
SU26MEM010701	Summer 2026	OLLI Membership - 12 Month		05/20/2026 - 07/12/2026	12:01AM - 12:00AM			Dropped	
SU26COB123001	Summer 2026	One Piece at a Time: The Americanization of the Gulf Coast	Mike Burr	07/15/2026 - 07/15/2026	1:35 PM - 2:45 PM	Online	Zoom Meeting	Registered	https://uah-uahsystem.zoom.us/j/8212593600 Meeting ID: 821 2593 6000
SU26COC123201	Summer 2026	The Weaver's Press: Creating My Own Books from Start to Finish	Florencia Campos-Correa	07/15/2026 - 07/15/2026	9:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Online		Dropped	
SU26COC123602	Summer 2026	Travel Here to There and Back Again	Nancy Darnall	06/09/2026 - 06/19/2026	3:00 PM - 4:30 PM	Online	Zoom Meeting	Registered	https://uah-uahsystem.zoom.us/j/84168475083 Meeting ID: 841 684 75083
SU26COC124501	Summer 2026	When the Nation Mourned: Presidential Assassinations in American History	Richard Rhone	07/01/2026 - 07/28/2026	1:30 PM - 2:45 PM	Online	Zoom Meeting	Registered	https://uah-edu.zoom.us/j/86329227789 Meeting ID: 863 292 27789

OLLI Zoom links are good throughout the entirety of the course and are always available to reference on your Class List page in your OLLI registration account.

The links in this picture are no longer valid, but as you can see, they do stay in there in perpetuity.

Of course, if you miss a class, there's usually the recorded option that pops up in the affiliated Google Classroom a couple of days later.

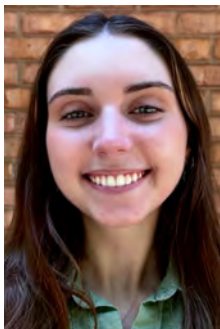
If you need help logging into your account, please feel free to call or stop by the office (103 Wilson Hall). I'm more than happy to show you how this feature works.

Till next time ...

Anelisse Westmeyer
OLLI Registration Coordinator

MEET OLLI'S MARKETING AND DESIGN SPECIALIST

Madysen White is taking over some of Justin Clay's duties for OLLI. He resigned to become a UAH faculty member. Here, she introduces herself:



By Madysen White

I am originally from Birmingham, where I studied graphic design at The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

I later earned my master's in library and information sciences at The University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa), which led me to my role as library marketing and communications specialist at UAH's

Salmon Library in November 2025.

I am happy to now also be serving as the new marketing and design specialist here at OLLI.

In my role, I will be creating the print and digital materials you see throughout the year, including the annual course guides, flyers and signage, as well as social media content and periodic emails for members.

I will also be out and about at events and courses, taking photos and getting to know the OLLI community firsthand.

As I settle into this new role, I am so excited to be a part of OLLI and look forward to supporting its growth and mission of championing lifelong learning!

Member Services Committee

HELPING MEMBERS NAVIGATE OLLI



OLLI at UAH has over 1,000 members! The goal of the Member Services Committee is to welcome all OLLI members, answer questions, and help direct members to their classes.

Do you remember your first day of classes at OLLI? Hopefully, there was someone to greet you with a smile and direct you to your classroom.

My first challenge was to find the OLLI office and get my parking permit. I was grateful there was a friendly lady who actually walked me to the office. Her kindness made a lasting impression.

Volunteers are needed the first two weeks of class from Monday to Thursday, Sept. 14-17 and Sept. 21-24, between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Whether you have a half-hour before or after your class or you can dedicate a couple of hours, we could use your help.

Please go to the OLLI member services office (formerly called the volunteer office) at 151 Wilson Hall to sign up on the posted schedule, or email olli.info@uah.edu.

You will be asked to either staff the member services office, stand by the whiteboard and direct people to classes, or guide them to the OLLI business office for parking passes and



OLLI volunteers help to orient new members in 116 Wilson Hall during fall open house on Aug. 7. (Photo by Steve Stewart)

registration.

Even if you're not able to volunteer in September, please be aware of anyone who may need assistance. Thanks for helping new OLLI members feel welcome.

Annual photo contest

Each year Member Services holds a photo contest open to all OLLI members. In honor of our country's 250th anniversary, this year's theme is "USA 250: Celebrating American Culture."

Photos should reveal some aspect of our culture and may incorporate red, white and/or blue. Photos taken between June 2026 and April 2027 are eligible.

Submissions will begin in November, and judging will take place at the end of April. Winners will be announced at the OLLI banquet in May. Good luck!

Roxanne Pennington
Member Services Committee Chair



SUPER BONUS WILL FOCUS ON HAZARDS OF COAL ASH

OLLI's super bonus on Nov. 6 will be a showing of the documentary "Sallie's Ashes" in Chan Auditorium at 11 a.m. This film is a documentary about Fairhope's Sallie Smith and her quest to raise awareness about toxic coal ash that threatens her beloved Mobile Bay. The Coal Ash Action Group will present this film. OLLI's Friday bonuses, including this one, are open to all members at no charge.

Travel Committee

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES WILL SOON INCLUDE JAPAN



Things are starting to really get going. As we get closer to the departure dates, our trip leaders will be getting the word out and enticing all of you travel connoisseurs with trips that are great. Stay tuned!

We have fantastic Travel Committee members who have itchy feet for going to exciting places. Over the next couple of months, we will provide details of new, exciting travel experiences

How about traveling to one of the most vibrant and exciting countries in the East? We have a trip in the works to Japan. (Aren't these the best travel people in the world?!)

Check the bulletin boards and the newsletters or the OLLI website's travel page (<https://tinyurl.com/olli-travel>).

For 2026

- **The best of New Mexico: Santa Fe, Taos and Albuquerque** — Nov. 9-16, 2026. Explore the best that New Mexico offers: 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>.

For 2027

- **The best of Arkansas: Little Rock, Crystal Bridges and the Ozarks** — May 9-16, 2027. Arkansas is "the Natural State," swathed in vast forests of oak, pine and hickory and adorned with rivers winding down from the Ozark Plateau and Ouachita Mountains to the mighty Mississippi. Discover these and other pristine natural treasures of Arkansas, and encounter the great cultural gifts enshrined in its cities and towns. Experience the Clinton Presidential Library and Museum in Little Rock, and find yourself immersed in Ozark traditions and music. To express an interest or request information, go to <https://tinyurl.com/olli-arkansas-27>. Or contact

A visit to Peenemünde's rocket research facility will be part of OLLI's May 15-24, 2027, trip exploring the historic relationship between Alabama and Germany. Technology from Peenemünde, as well as some of the scientists who worked there, helped the United States to develop its space program from Huntsville.



The historic Junction Bridge spans the Arkansas River in Little Rock. OLLI's group trip "The best of Arkansas: Little Rock, Crystal Bridges and the Ozarks" will take place May 9-16, 2027

Jane McBride.

- **The historic relationship between Germany and Alabama** — May 15-24, 2027. From Alabama to Germany and back again — the threads connecting these two places are woven through triumph, innovation and transformation. This curated journey traces the remarkable ties between the Heart of Dixie and modern Germany. Walk through Berlin's Olympic Park, where Oakville's Jesse Owens defied Nazi ideology with four gold medals. Explore Peenemünde's rocket research facility, birthplace of technology that launched America's space program from Huntsville. Learn about the Berlin Airlift, when Alabama airmen helped save a city. And tour Hamburg's Airbus plant, mirroring Mobile's operations. Discover how Alabama's story intersects with Germany's across continents and generations. To express an interest or request information, contact Lisa Brunegraff or visit <https://tinyurl.com/olli-germany-27>.

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



Travel Committee

ONWARD TO GREECE BY MOTOR COACH AND SHIP

This is the second of three monthly articles by Steve Goodman, who led an OLLI group tour of the Dalmatian coast and Greece from April 25 to May 9. Last month's article introduced the whole trip and focused on the three-day pre-trip to Slovenia.



By Steve Goodman

The base trip began on a Sunday with a walking tour of Zagreb and its Upper and Lower Old Town. We had regional specialties including stuffed

cabbage at our welcome dinner in a restaurant and followed the dinner with a walk through the hidden 350-meter Gric Tunnel, built in 1943. The tunnel served as a bomb shelter during World War II and the Croatian War of Independence. Today it is a tourist attraction with events such as concerts and holiday festivals held inside.

Monday, we took an hour bus drive north to the baroque city of Verazdin, the capital of Croatia from 1767 to 1776. The capital moved to Zagreb after a fire burned down much of the city. In Verazdin we visited and tasted the food at a local farmers' market before meeting our local guide for the day.

Some of us visited the city museum and then had hot chocolate at the



Lunch at a family estate included tasty Klipic rolls. The recipe was provided.

outdoor cafes in the city square. Their hot chocolate is famous for being able to hold a spoon upright without sinking. We had our lunch and a brief winery cellar tour with grappa and cheese dipped in pumpkin seed oil at a family estate. With lunch we enjoyed the very tasty, elongated Klipic bread rolls, a specialty of the city dating back to the 18th century. We were provided with the recipe.

Tuesday, we took the bus to the town of Zadar, where we would first board our ship, the M/V *Athena*. In the first century B.C., Zadar became an important part of the Roman Empire. However, before reaching the city, we stopped for a 2-mile hike at the

UNESCO World Heritage Plitvice Lakes National Park, known for its 16 interconnected lakes and 90 waterfalls. Some of us took the longer walk down into the canyon while others took an easier route with a scenic view of the stunning turquoise, emerald and blue waters from above.

Wednesday, we had our Day in the Life experience with a local family, when we learned about their everyday life and visited inside their home. This is a feature of all Overseas Adventure Travel itineraries. We were divided into multiple groups. Our group visited the garden and farm of our host, where they grew fig trees. We toured their production area, where they made different jams. We had a hands-on activity in which we packed their marmalades made from figs, mandarins and plums.

Back on the ship, we had our captain's welcome dinner, the crew introduction, and a "Name that Tune" party hosted by our two tour experience leaders, Petra and Ivo. Overnight we sailed to Split, Croatia.

Thursday, we awoke in Split, a UNESCO World Heritage site and

(continued on the next page)



Gric Tunnel, once a bomb shelter, is now a tourist attraction. Corinth Canal connects the Ionian and Aegean seas.



Travel Committee

DALMATIAN COAST AND GREECE, cont from previous page

home to the retirement palace of the Roman emperor Diocletian. Diocletian reigned from 284 to 305 A.D. and is best known for dividing the Roman Empire into four parts to improve governance and stability. This ultimately led to the East-West split, later defined by the Eastern Byzantine (Greek-speaking, wealthy) and Western Roman (Latin-speaking, struggling) empires. Diocletian abdicated his throne due to age and illness. This was unprecedented in Roman imperial history: Most emperors either died in office, were assassinated, or were deposed, but Diocletian chose to retire voluntarily. I specifically chose this tour for OLLI because I was told Split is one of the best-preserved medieval towns in all of Europe.

We sampled the best of their prized local chocolate and shopped for Adriatic coral jewelry. Some of us took an optional tour of Jewish Split. Split has the oldest Jewish cemetery in Croatia. In the afternoon, back aboard the ship, we had the first of our three learning and discovery lecture slide shows about Josip Broz Tito and Yugoslavia. In the evening, we had our home-hosted dinners, where we learned about the life of the locals.

Friday, we arrived on the island of



The starting line at the Olympic stadium for the 200-meter dash.



The UNESCO World Heritage Plitvice Lakes National Park contains 16 interconnected lakes and 90 waterfalls.

Korcula, located between Split and Dubrovnik. On our guided walk, we stopped at the house where Marco Polo was born. We walked to a hill above the city, where we had a great view of the town below and took one of our many group photos. After lunch on the ship, we took a tour of the ship's bridge, where we observed the operation of the wheelhouse and the navigation aids. Our second lecture as we sailed to Dubrovnik was on the topic of the breakup of Yugoslavia and the homeland war of Croatia.

Saturday was our first of two days in the walled city of Dubrovnik, the Pearl of the Adriatic. After the general group city tour throughout the Old Town, we walked steep stairways to reach the top of the city wall (timed entry). Some of us toured the Dubrovnik Jewish Synagogue and Museum, where artifacts taken from Spain during the Inquisition of 1492 were on display. Others took a boat to visit the nature preserve on Lokrum Island a short distance offshore or visited the Rector's Palace, the seat of government between the 14th century and 1808. After dinner aboard the ship, we had a movie night with popcorn.

Sunday was the second day for more optional tours and exploration of

Dubrovnik (due to its popularity), or simply a day of leisure. Some of us hiked the city walls or visited the town of Ston, where salt pans still are operating today, and later continued to a tasting of raw oysters and mussels followed by a visit to a winery.

Some of us visited the Dubrovnik Ethnographic Museum, located in a historic granary built in 1590, known for its unique underground storage pits. This museum provides an immersive experience into the daily life and traditions of Dubrovnik's inhabitants throughout history. An excellent temporary exhibit on their long maritime history was on display.

Dubrovnik is well-known through the HBO series "Game of Thrones." In the TV show, King's Landing was filmed at and represented by Dubrovnik, with a heavy dose of computer-generated imagery. On this tour, fan highlights included the walk of shame from the grand Baroque-style Jesuit stairs that lead up to the Church of St. Ignatius and the Jesuit College — one of the most famous places for tourists exploring Dubrovnik. Restaurants on this street offer a "walk of shame" burger on the menu.

Outside the Old Town city walls, steep
(continued on the next page)

Travel Committee

DALMATIAN COAST AND GREECE, cont from previous page

steps lead to the top of Lovrjenac Fortress just outside the western wall of Dubrovnik. On the way back to the port before returning to the ship, some visited the Red History Museum, the first museum in Croatia dedicated to everyday life in socialist Croatia from 1945 to 1991. Its artifacts included books by and about Vladimir Lenin, Karl Marx and Josip Tito, typical homemaking at the time, and an actual Yugo automobile. After dinner back on the ship, our executive chef Chris taught us how to make Greek moussaka.



**The ruins of Olympia, where the Olympic flame is still lit to begin each Olympic torch relay.
(More photos are on the next page.)**

On Monday we sailed to Montenegro through the scenic Bay of Kotor. We had a guided tour of the walled city of Kotor and its local market, followed by free time in town. Some of us tried the local Niksicko (Nik) beer with pizza, followed by gelato. We returned to the ship to continue to the town of Saranda in Albania. We learned a new acronym from Petra: SCAN. SCAN means Senior Citizen Afternoon Nap. We have widely adopted this term post-cruise. In the evening we were entertained before dinner with a port talk about Albania with singing and dancing by the crew after dinner to close the day.

On Tuesday morning, we arrived at Saranda, Albania. It is dominated by narrow streets and apartment construction pretty much everywhere you look. After a short bus ride, we met our local guide at Butrint, an ancient Greek, Byzantine, Roman and Venetian site of archaeological ruins located in a national park. There is much Venetian-Italian cultural influence along the entire length of the Dalmatian Coast.

After returning from Butrint, we took a walk along the seaport promenade of Saranda. Our tour guide gave us a bonus experience. After some Albanian ice cream on the promenade, we sat down for Albanian lamb on the spit prepared by a local taverna for our group.

After returning to the ship, we set sail for the short trip to the Greek island of Corfu, located just off the coast of Albania. We had a group lunch and free time. The after-dinner entertainment this evening was a local folklore show performed by a visiting Greek couple who taught us some traditional Greek dances. We all shouted, "Opa!"

Wednesday on Corfu, we took the bus to a viewpoint high above the scenic bay, and had coffee and snacks before a

discovery stop at a kumquat factory. We saw a short movie on how liquor (and candy) is made from the kumquat fruit and tasted and purchased some of their products. We headed to Corfu town, where we had their classic Greek sofrito, a traditional dish consisting of thin slices of veal or beef that are simmered slowly in a flavorful sauce. The cuisine of Corfu is influenced by the Venetians, who occupied the island for four centuries, and by Italy in general because of its proximity to the island.

Corfu, one of the seven Ionian islands in the northwestern part of Greece, is the one closest to Italy.

In the afternoon, we had an ice cream party served on the sun deck. In the evening we had our captain's farewell drinks and dinner before returning to our cabins to pack for disembarkation the next day.

On Thursday, we looked forward with great anticipation to sailing through the narrow 4-mile Corinth Canal, which connects the Ionian and Aegean seas, on the way to our hotel in Athens. Because the canal was undergoing maintenance, we instead docked at the port of Patras on the northern Peloponnese. After we disembarked the ship, a bus took us to the ancient archaeological site of Delphi at Mount Parnassus. Here our local guide took us on a tour of the museum of Delphi and a visit through the ruins, where we took a group picture at the Temple of Apollo. We were told the oracle answers were intentionally vague so the advice or prediction of the future could be interpreted any way you wanted. We were impressed by the extensive sea of olive groves below that seemed to go on almost forever. After lunch, we continued to Athens and checked into our hotel.

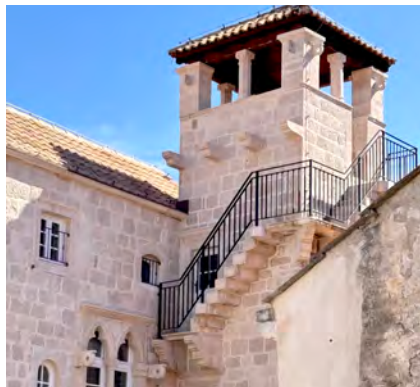
Saturday was the final day of the base trip. We took a bus to the Acropolis Museum, world-famous for housing archaeological artifacts and many statues found on the Acropolis (located on the street below the Acropolis itself). We stopped along the way at the stadium where the modern Olympic Games were held. After our tour of the Acropolis Museum, we returned to the hotel, held a farewell dinner, and packed for our return home or the Athens post-trip extension.

See more photos on the following pages. Next month's article: the post-trip to Athens and the Peloponnese.

Travel Committee

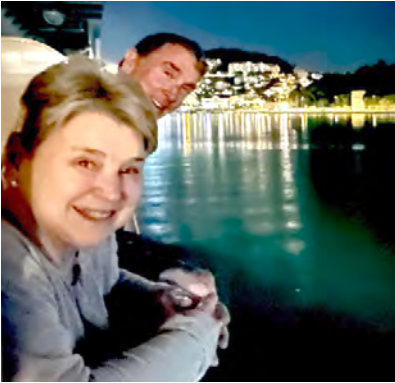
HISTORY AND GRAND SCENERY IN DALMATIA

Clockwise from upper left: Dubrovnik, Game of Thrones museum, the Jesuit stairs in Dubrovnik, the OLLI group in Corfu, Temple of Apollo at Delphi, Diocletian palace in Split, Marco Polo's birthplace in Korcula.
(See Steve Goodman's article and other photos on previous pages.)



(Photos on multiple pages contributed by Steve Goodman, Gary Klein, John Shimada, Kerri Geppert and Petra Elsayed)

People of OLLI



Bob and Nancy Darnall on OLLI's Dalmatian coast tour and at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Below, they are in Brecksville, Ohio, with friend Gratia Mahony (a former OLLI board president at UAH) and her daughter Jane.

SUMMER OF JOY

By Nancy Barnett Darnall

Each of the experiences in this article were shared with Bob Darnall, my rock for 37-plus years and my absolute favorite travel companion.

At the suggestion of Lauren Goodman, we took a road trip in July to Cleveland to meet the Goodmans, her sister Lesley and her cousin Karen — a mini-reunion of OLLI's Dalmatian coast tour. I had been to Cleveland to visit my happy place, the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, in 2013, triggering a desire to return ever since.

I credit that first trip with my awakening to what has become my OLLI series, "Soundtracks of Our Lives." I realized how important music had been in my life. Now as I create new OLLI classes, I delight in the music I know plus the discovery of music I missed. I have new ideas for OLLI courses.

The website for the Hall of Fame recommends 2½ to three hours to tour the museum. Who are they kidding? Bob and I spent an afternoon and most of a day there. We did not see, read or hear everything in the museum. We purchased a membership. Perks included 13 months' membership and an invitation to the 2027 induction ceremony. Maybe we will be able to take advantage of both.

In 2013, the special sixth-floor exhibit was "Rolling Stones: 50 Years of Satisfaction." Not having developed a full appreciation of their artistry, I don't recall much of that exhibit. I must add that we had already spent seven hours at the museum that day.

Back then, the Rock Hall showed a continuous loop of performances from the induction ceremonies since 1988, the inaugural year for the awards. Musicians who may never perform together again unite to honor inductees. I didn't find that loop; however, there is an excellent 15-minute show, "Power of Rock," which captures elements of the induction ceremonies. It ends with the legendary Prince



solo from "While My Guitar Gently Weeps," performed as the 2004 posthumous induction of George Harrison as a solo performer. YouTube also has this video and many others.

At the entrance to the main exhibit floor is "SNL 50," which includes a replica of the "Saturday Night Live" set, artifacts from musical performers on the show, and, best of all, over 1,800 musical performances available on smaller screens with headphones. Performances are indexed by season, artist name, and Rock Hall inductee status. I estimate each song at around four minutes, which means no one takes the time to listen to each one. We did enter one of the theaters for the 20-minute documentary "Ladies and Gentlemen ... 50 Years of SNL Music." Some of the scenes were never seen on the show.

Paul McCartney and Wings is the focus for the sixth-floor space this summer. This extensive collection from McCartney's personal archives is mind-boggling — billed as "the first major museum exhibition to explore the story of Paul McCartney and Wings — a defining force in 1970s rock that bridged the gap between the end of The Beatles and the rise of a new era in popular music." From family

(continued on the next page)

Social Committee

FREE TUESDAY LUNCHES WILL START SEPT. 22



Such a fun, lively time in the OLLI lounge! The Social Committee had a great time greeting so many at the open house on Aug. 7.

It was an opportunity for members to reconnect after the summer break and meet new members. Thank you to the committee for providing a variety of snacks! Next are plans for snacks for the first bonus on Aug. 28 and the new-member welcome lunch on Sept. 1.

Our first Leisurely Lunch of the fall semester is scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 22, between noon and 1 p.m. These free lunches will be held weekly until further announced.

Be sure and stop by the lounge when on campus for classes. Coffee and conversation are usually available!

Donna Berger
Social Committee Chair



The Social Committee provided snacks during open house.



OLLI FRIENDS STUDY AT CHAUTAUQUA

Alison Toney, Vanitha Singh, Linda McAllister and Cam Scales (left to right) connected with former UAH OLLI board President Gratia Mahony to engage with famous personalities such as Ken Burns and commemorate the 250th year of the United States. This was during the summer at Chautauqua Institution in Chautauqua, western New York, which has been a lifelong learning center since 1874. It focuses on the arts, education, religion and recreation. "The tranquil, beautiful setting is ideal for engaging in community to enrich our lives and continue to explore current issues," Linda said.

SUMMER OF JOY, cont from previous page

photographs, video clips, instruments, clothing and documents including handwritten lyrics and original artwork, the presentation provides a deep dive into the band that was Wings. Linda McCartney was a key element in the band's look and success. She, Paul and Denny Laine were the heart and soul of the band.

As *the* repository for rock 'n' roll, the Rock Hall features hours and hours of video of artists dating back to the 1940s and possibly before. A small section has recordings of the various opponents of rock 'n' roll. The technical improvements in video and audio quality for some of those is

amazing. Hundreds of clothing items, instruments, music and album covers, recordings, and other memorabilia keep the visitor moving and intrigued.

As much as I relished Cleveland, the summer's highlights also included the opportunities we had to visit old friends.

Summer 2026: the summer of shared experiences.

Nancy Darnall will teach "What?! You Again? Rock Bands and Performers Still Touring in 2025-26" on six Fridays from 8:30 to 10 a.m., Sept. 18-Oct. 23. It will be available in the classroom and online.

Member Interest Groups

ART FROM THE ANCIENT SOUTHEAST: SHELL CARVING

Shell carving was one of the most sophisticated art forms of the ancient Southeast. Carved shells revealed religious beliefs, long-distance trade networks and social hierarchy.

From A.D. 800 to 1500, Mississippian cultures engraved gorgets, medicine cups, and ornaments depicting symbolic figures, personal accomplishments and cosmological realms.

From A.D. 1500 to the 1830s, shell carving was an important ceremonial or decorative art form of the Muscogee (Creek) from Georgia and Alabama; the Choctaw from Mississippi and Alabama; and the Cherokee from Tennessee, North Carolina and Georgia.

Artisans cut, polished and engraved the shell surfaces with stone and stick tools. The most significant carved shells were from lightning whelks harvested from the Gulf of Mexico, but carving also included conch shells, quahog clams and freshwater river or lake mussels.

Marine shells were obtained through extensive trade networks linking the Gulf Coast to inland communities. A few examples of inland Mississippian cultures are mounds from Etowah (Georgia), Shiloh (Tennessee), Emerald (Mississippi), and Moundville or Bottlecreek in Alabama.

Gorgets (engraved shell pendants) were decorative pieces worn around the neck as protective medicine, symbols of accomplishments or social status. Most people wore gourds, bones, teeth or small shell necklaces, but pieces made of marine shells or copper indicated higher social status.

Sacred medicine cups were ceremonial artifacts made from lightning whelks. Lightning whelk cups were sacred to Mississippian cultures and their descendants the Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws and Cherokees. Only lightning whelks were used in the black drink ceremony held before ballgames.



Shells, Cross-in-Circle, Grandmother Weaver (left), and Birdman. (Photos from Michael Barruel, Dan Townsend, Marc Carlson and Herb Roe)



The black drink brewed from yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) was a form of ritual purification through regurgitation. Also, lightning whelks were important to the Muscogee (Creeks) because it is the only shell that spirals to the left. The Muscogee do everything to the left because they believe the direction keeps the middle world in balance.

Most shells contained carved symbols giving insight into Southeast Native Americans' cultural beliefs. One popular symbolic image was Grandmother Weaver "Spider Woman," who symbolized the maternal Cosmic Creator. Grandmother spun the matrix of the universe and brought life, light (sun) or fire to humans.

More iconographic imagery included the Four Woodpeckers (associated with four winds who could extract illness); the Cross-in-Circle (ceremonial fire symbolized by four logs aligned to directions), and Butterflies (who had a dual role as pollinators and as

carriers of human souls). Another widespread design was the Birdman raptor who represented an aggressive, swift hunter, acting as an avatar for human warriors seeking strength and victory in combat. Birdman was also considered the Cosmic Mediator who bridged the sky (Upper World) and the earth; he functioned as a messenger carrying prayers up to the divine.

The tradition of shell carving artwork disappeared following the Indian Removal Act (1830) and the Trail of Tears (1838). However, contemporary artists from Southeastern tribes have revived the craft. Famous contemporary artists creating this artwork include Dan Townsend, Daniel Penton, Sandy Wilson and the late Knokovtee Scott, all from the Muscogee Creek nation. Other artisans include Howard Thompson (Chickasaw) and Antonio Grant (Eastern Cherokee).

Jean Krieger
Leader, Artist Studio MIG

Member Interest Groups



The lakeside Madison County Nature Trail is an easy 1.5-mile walk — mostly flat and mostly shaded.

JOIN SEPT. 27 NATURE WALK ON GREEN MOUNTAIN

Let's hope that temperatures will begin to cool off some in September and October as we resume our nature walks, hikes and a bike ride. We have one nature walk scheduled for September. We hope to see you on Green Mountain!

Join the Hiking & Biking MIG to receive details about upcoming activities. Sign up at the link below, and agree to the blanket release/waiver form. A valid OLLI membership is required to join the MIG and its activities.

Join the MIG:

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



1-3 p.m. Look for waterfowl on the lake, discover the covered bridge and old cabin, and explore the woods during this 1.5-mile easy walk along a mostly flat, mostly shaded crushed gravel trail.

Mark your calendars for these October activities:

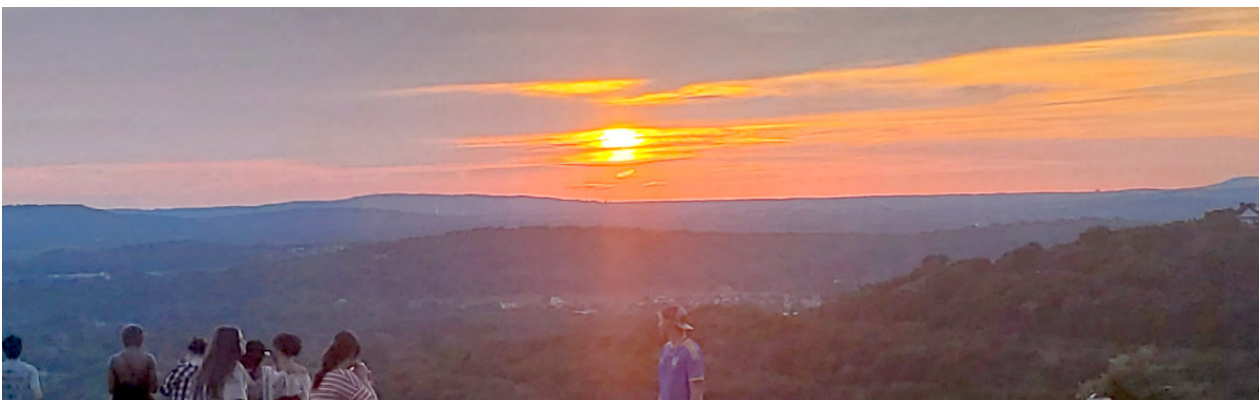
- Saturday, Oct. 10 — **Monte Sano Nature Preserve hike** (Huntsville), 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Oct. 25 — **Monte Sano State Park extended nature walk**, 1-4 p.m.

September and October activities

- Sunday, Sept. 27 — **Madison County Nature Trail nature walk** (Green Mountain, southeast Huntsville),

See you on the trail!

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



People enjoy the sunset from the Blevins Gap overlook on June 21, the summer solstice and the longest day of the year. (Photo by Chris Stuhlinger)

Constitutional Corner

FDR'S PROPOSED ADDITION TO THE BILL OF RIGHTS

"Constitutional Corner" columns are written in different months by John Mason and Mark Tenhundfeld.



By John Mason

As I'm sure you remember from last month's discussion of the origin of our Bill of Rights, I teased that there might be more to the story than first thought. So it was. Turns out that on Jan. 11, 1944, the country was introduced to the possibility of a new set of rights, one intended to provide economic security. And here's how it happened.

Prior to Woodrow Wilson, the President's Annual Message to Congress (now known as the State of the Union Address) was customarily delivered by presidents to Congress as written reports. This particular year, having just recently returned from a grueling trip to the Cairo and Tehran conferences, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was ill with the flu and chose to hearken back to those earlier times and send a written message to Congress. He then planned to read the message to the American people as a whole in a radio address from the comfort of the White House at a later date.

As was his custom, President Roosevelt selected short excerpts of the longer radio address that would be filmed as newsreels to be shown in movie theaters several days later to reinforce his most important points. Perhaps the most famous portion of the speech he chose to read for the newsreels proposed what he called "a second Bill of Rights" to provide a new level of economic security to the American people. To the best of my knowledge, no complete film footage of the entire Jan. 11, 1944, State of the Union speech was made or exists.

Roosevelt argued that the original political rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution had "proved inadequate to assure us equality in the pursuit of happiness." He asserted that "true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence," famously declaring that "necessitous men are not free men."

This platform was never formally codified into the U.S. Constitution, but it would go on to heavily shape the creation of the GI Bill for returning World War II veterans and also serve as the structural foundation for the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

So what exactly were these eight new provisions he called the "Economic Bill of Rights" that the president was urging Congress to implement? Simply delineated, they addressed:



"People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made." — President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jan. 11, 1944. (Photo from FDR Library and National Archives and Records Administration)

- **Employment** — the right to a useful, remunerative job
- **Income** — the right to earn enough for adequate food, clothing and recreation
- **Agricultural freedom** — the right of every farmer to raise and sell products for a decent living
- **Monopoly protection** — the right of businessmen to trade free from unfair competition
- **Housing** — the right of every family to a decent home
- **Healthcare** — the right to adequate medical care and good health
- **Social security** — the right to protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident and unemployment
- **Education** — the right to a good education.

But why?

By January 1944, with Allied victory looking increasingly likely, Roosevelt was deeply preoccupied with what would happen when millions of service members returned home to an economy no longer fueled by wartime manufacturing. So his proposal was prompted by his concern of an urgent need to prevent the U.S. from slipping back into the Great Depression. He wanted to:

1. Prevent a postwar economic collapse, believing a permanent economic safety net was required to

(continued on the next page)

OLLI MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN BACK TO 1000 MEMBERS THIS YEAR, BUT HOW MANY NAME BADGES ARE IN THE OLLI REGISTRATION OFFICE AT THE MOMENT?

(GET THIS WITHIN 10 BADGES AND YOUR SCORE GETS +10 POINTS)



TRIVIA TIZZY: HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?

Trivia Tizzy at OLLI on Aug. 11 was entertaining and educational. Fifteen people were divided into five competing teams. Anelisse Westmeyer, OLLI registration coordinator, displayed categories and questions on the screen. The Solar Eclipse team earned first place and won some OLLI merchandise. Did you know the state “flower” of Maine is the pine cone? (Photos by Roxanne Pennington)

Constitutional Corner

BILL OF RIGHTS, cont from previous page

stabilize the peacetime economy.

2. Attack the link between poverty and fascism. He explicitly warned that “people who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made.” He viewed economic security as a national defense mechanism against domestic extremism and “rightist reaction.”
3. Achieve domestic stability, which he thought was necessary for “winning the peace.” He famously tied these concepts together by stating that “freedom from fear is eternally linked with freedom from want.” And,
4. Frame a postwar political agenda and establish a long-term vision for modern American liberalism. By framing economic needs — like healthcare, housing and education — as “rights,” he attempted to shift the national conversation from temporary government relief to permanent, fundamental citizenship guarantees.

Perhaps unfortunately, the Economic Bill of Rights was never adopted because of a powerful conservative coalition in Congress, shifting national priorities at the end of World War II, and ultimately the sudden death of President Roosevelt himself. While popular with the public, the proposal faced insurmountable political and ideological barriers that included a powerful, bipartisan alliance known as the Conservative Coalition.

The idea fundamentally clashed with traditional American

legal philosophy. The original Bill of Rights focuses on **negative rights** — protecting individuals by telling the government what it *cannot* do — as opposed to FDR’s **positive rights**, which required the government to actively provide material goods like housing, healthcare and employment that opponents labeled as creeping socialism or communism.

Coupled with a changing global situation shifting to Cold War anti-communism and his own declining health, he was unable to push the measure through before his untimely death. His successor, Harry S. Truman, lacked the immense political capital required to force such a radical restructuring of the American economy through a hostile Congress.

As a result of Congress not passing this “Second Bill of Rights” in 1944, economic security in the United States developed as a fragmented, statute-based safety net rather than a permanent, unified constitutional guarantee. Because these eight rights — such as guaranteed employment, healthcare, housing and education — were never codified as foundational rights, they remained vulnerable to shifting political majorities, inflation and subsequent legislative rollbacks. Those rights, enjoyed in nearly every other country in the Western world today, are, in the United States, under attack still.

Huntsville Then and Now

STRAIGHT TO ENGLAND, BUT FIRST TO NASHVILLE



By Lee Roop

We have to go to Nashville?

That was my immediate reaction to learning our vacation flight to England starts in the big city airport in Tennessee.

After this shoutout, I promise to leave aside the fact the flight is Going Straight to England! A dream is coming true for this man who grew up believing more good things originated there than

almost any place, ranging from Stonehenge to Shakespeare and Oxford and Cambridge to John, Paul, George and Ringo.

I know now that the world has a much larger jar of treats than I've tasted. But I started sampling with weekend days and nights in the Music City enjoying restaurants, museums, concerts and stores I couldn't find here.

Then.

New local restaurants like The Chop House have joined homegrown stars like Domaine South, and new clothing stores like Nordstrom Rack are either here or on the way.

Nashville always seemed ready for almost anything, with an airport where the world was a flight away. We're not there in Huntsville, yet, so going far and flashy still means going to Nashville, Atlanta, etc.

But Huntsville partisans still say there are good reasons to fly from here. It's a short hop on Delta to Atlanta, where planes go everywhere. You'll have checked your bags, so everywhere is a short and easy walk to your gate. You can also fly from Huntsville to D.C. and Chicago and grab a plane to anywhere.

Flights or no flights, it's still fun to jump in the car and head to Nashville — the Music City — for a meal, concert, museum or store. Parnassus Books is worth the drive itself. A stroll down Broadway may or may not be worthwhile if the crowds are too young for the liquor they've consumed. We've seen that, and it isn't pretty.

But the landscape between north Alabama and Nashville is beautiful with hills that seem to start at the Tennessee line and cows that seem bred with one side's legs shorter than the other for hillside munching.



Discovering Nashville is a step toward discovering the world. (Art by ChatGPT)

As beautiful and fun as Tennessee can be, you must drive home, perhaps in a tired or "happy" state that isn't best for driving. You can skip that drive now and visit bookstores like Snail on the Wall in Huntsville and restaurants as good as you'll find almost anywhere.

Am I serious or just a homer praising progress while ignorant of what's really out there in the world? I've seen a few places and will see more when my wife and I fly to England later this year.

I'm dreaming of places like the Bodleian in Oxford, "a library of legal deposit for 400 years." That means the stuff there is the real thing signed, sealed and delivered.

Think they'll let me touch anything? If not, no worries. I won't try to cheat. Just breathing that ancient air will be good for my brain. My lungs, maybe not, but good, definitely, for my heart.

This is what traveling can do — a shot of "happy" to head and heart — and that can be found without flying to England. But experience from other unique places teaches that the results from there will be, well, unique.

See you there and find out? We can meet in Nashville to get started.

NEW MEMBERS JOIN DURING FALL OPEN HOUSE

About 260 people attended OLLI's fall open house Aug. 7, including 85 first-time attendees. OLLI gained over fifty new members bringing the membership up to 1,091 total members by the end of the day. New UAH President Donald J. Leo (wearing the suit and tie in the top right photo) attended. Teachers promoted their courses, and students enrolled.



(Photos on these three pages by Patricia Haag, Sue Chatham, Roxanne Pennington, Suezy Proctor and Steve Stewart)

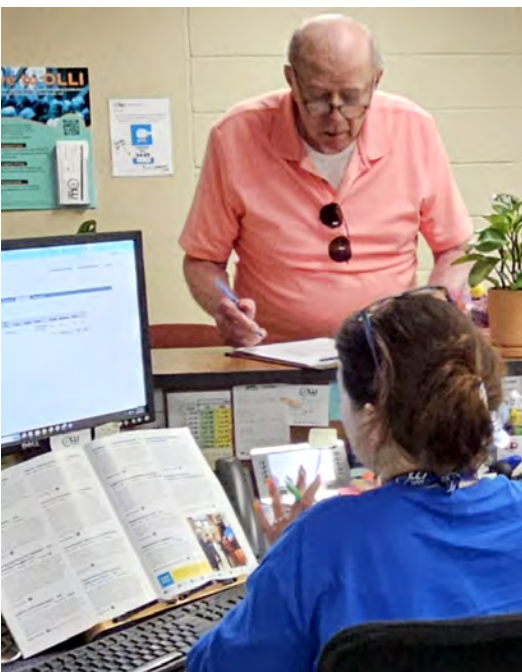
OLLI Life

BROWSING, MINGLING, SIGNING UP AT OPEN HOUSE



(Photos on these three pages by Patricia Haag, Sue Chatham, Roxanne Pennington, Suezy Proctor and Steve Stewart)

OPEN HOUSE: FROZEN TREATS, FOOD FOR THOUGHT



(Photos on these three pages by Patricia Haag, Sue Chatham, Roxanne Pennington, Suezy Proctor and Steve Stewart)

People of OLLI



John Syster describes the left photo as “two ministers with proper attire, bald heads and mustaches.” They are John (right) and Jimmy Nored, another retired United Church of Christ minister who attended church with him in Greensboro, North Carolina. The middle picture has John and grandson Jonathan with their heads lying down in front; behind them are (from left) daughter Nicole, wife Kathy, grandson Jeremy and son-in-law Andrew. At right, John rests during a hike in a Tennessee state park.

JOHN SYSTER’S CAREER AS A MINISTER GOT HIM INVOLVED IN CONSEQUENTIAL CURRENT EVENTS

By Glen Adams

We in OLLI think of John Syster as the self-educated expert on Abraham Lincoln and on the Salem witch trials, subjects on which he has taught courses, and as the leader of OLLI Reads. He will teach another course on Reconstruction after the Civil War, starting Sept. 15.

But before John made his way to OLLI, he spent a long career as a United Church of Christ minister that took him through experiences that involved some of the most serious events America faced.

The call to the pulpit ran strong in John’s family. His grandfather and father were both Congregational ministers, and both graduated from Bangor Theological Seminary. John and his brother Tom grew up like many preachers’ sons, hopscotching from church to church: Massachusetts; Chicago; Hastings, Nebraska; and Ankeny, a suburb of Des Moines in Iowa.

It was in Ankeny that John began his active life: He delivered newspapers, wrote for a weekly newspaper, wrestled, played the flute and baritone, and after the Congregational Church merged to form the United Church of Christ (UCC), became the first president of the United Church Youth in Iowa.

He spent the summer of 1963 caravanning. “This was a program of the denomination to train youth and young adults and send them out in groups of four to work in churches, church camps and children’s homes for six weeks,” said John. “We went to North Carolina. For a boy from Iowa, it was eye-opening. Pickets walked in front of restaurants. ‘Whites Only’ signs were on bathrooms and drinking fountains. The youth in churches were asking lots of questions.”

John spent his senior year in Shenandoah, Iowa, where his father had accepted a pastorate.

Like his brother, John went to Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, because it

gave UCC ministers’ kids half-tuition. John and 30 other freshman boys were housed in the basement of the girls dorm. The doors to the rest of the dorm were heavily chained.

John’s roommate through all four years was the son of the man who would eventually become the interim college president. So John was able to spend two years living in an apartment in the president’s house.

“I was a math major, a member of a fraternity, the head of the Religious Activities Council, a member of the Student Council, and for one semester ran the required weekly chapel service,” said John. (It was supposed to be the whole year, but John came down with mono.) And he graduated in three years.

John next enrolled in Chicago Theological Seminary on the south side of the city.

“My first year, I volunteered to ‘work’ at a house the seminary owned that was

(continued on the next page)

People of OLLI

JOHN SYSTER, cont from previous page

a clubhouse for the Blackstone Rangers, a street gang,” said John. “The theory was that the youth gang could be a force for good in the ghetto, working with youth and against crime. My job was to be in the house for four hours a week because the police would not raid the house if there was a white person there.

“I was sketching faces during that time. One day one of the older Rangers asked me to sketch him. He hung the sketch in his room, and soon I had a clientele. That work ended during Christmas break when no white person was in the house. The police raided the house and destroyed the toilets with sledgehammers. That was the end of the program.”

This was at the same time the Southern Christian Leadership Conference started Operation Breadbasket, which encouraged Blacks to buy from Black businesses. Jesse Jackson was the leader of the movement, and they often held meetings in the seminary dining room. From his dorm window, John saw such people as Dr. Martin Luther King attending the meetings. Jackson spoke at one of John’s classes.

John’s first call was to Union Congregational United Church of Christ: 570 members in a town of 1,300 people with no stoplights or McDonald’s. Most members were farmers.

After eight years, John and wife Kathy moved to Daytona Beach, Florida, where both the Syster daughters were born. As associate minister, John started an informal early service intended for the young but attended by all ages.

“I learned to preach without notes,” said John. “We served coffee and orange juice — it was Florida, after all — and doughnut holes. We started a day care and rejuvenated the youth group.” John also chaired a county board that dealt with requests from nonprofits.



John participates in a Madison scavenger hunt; the chapel at First Congregational United Church of Christ in Sarasota, Florida, where he served for more than 29 years.

John accepted a call to Sarasota’s First Congregational Church three years later. He would be at this church for more than 29 years. In 1985 he earned a Doctor of Ministry degree.

Here are some of the things John and the church accomplished in those years: served on the board of a senior living facility that the church started in 1963 and is still prospering; helped start New College, which boasted historian Arthur Toynbee as a professor and dorms designed by I.M. Pei; expanded the capacity of the sanctuary; bought a tracker pipe organ; helped support two seminaries; gave almost \$100,000 to buy land for new churches in Florida; started a bridge group that lasted more than 10 years and served as a senior citizens group; started a widowed person support group for members and nonmembers (the speech writer for President Gerald Ford found his second wife there); adopted a support group for gay youths; created with other churches a day shelter for the homeless that has operated for 30 years; helped form Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity with 20 other congregations; and partnered with LifeLink Corp. to build a 40-unit building for physically challenged adults.

Sarasota United found extra money for the local inner-city schools that allowed the schools to hire special reading tutors. It started a drug program for jail inmates by working with the Salvation Army. The program significantly reduced recidivism.

The LifeLink building was the first facility to offer apartments to people with AIDS. They started an adoption agency that handled 100 adoptions.

But now let’s go back a few years to when John met Kathy in Grinnell, Iowa, where John was serving a church internship and Kathy was a college student. Kathy helped John with the church youth group, and by the end of the summer they were engaged. They waited until they were done with school before marrying in 1972.

Kathy has a master’s in educational psychology and a Ph.D. in counselor education. She worked her entire career as a school psychologist.

It is rare for a minister to serve one church for 29 years, but John and family enjoyed Sarasota, and the church itself changed. When John arrived, there were few Black members, but by the end a sizeable

(continued on the next page)

The Last Word



UAH ATTENDEES AT LIFELONG LEARNING EVENT

These people represented OLLI at UAH during the Southern Regional Conference for Learning in Retirement on July 27-29 at the University of Georgia in Athens. From left are Marsha Langlois (OLLI board president), Steve Stewart, Patrice Stewart, Nancy Darnall (vice president for administration and finance), Bob Darnall (treasurer) and Clay Williams (program manager). Conference attendees came from OLLIs and other lifelong-learning organizations in the Southeast and other parts of the United States.

JOHN SYSTER, cont from previous page

portion of the church was Black and active.

In 2002, the church voted to welcome LGBT people. Two families left, and dozens of members joined. One gay male couple recently left the church \$11 million.

In 2012, John and Kathy decided to retire. They moved to High Point, North Carolina, where they lived on a lake and enjoyed kayaks they had built themselves. Kathy tutored children in the elementary schools, while John tutored adults in math and reading. John also tutored jail inmates.

Their daughter Nicole lives in Huntsville with husband Andrew, an engineer, and their two sons. Nicole works in a school program in Madison called Hippy.

Daughter Laura lives in Charlottesville, Virginia, with husband Greg, a professor in the University of Virginia Law

School, and their two sons. She works as an advocate for families with special needs children needing assistance in public schools.

In 2020, the Systers decided that because of COVID they needed to be nearer to one of their daughters, and they moved to Huntsville.

"It took us a year to find OLLI," said John. "We loved it from the start. At mealtimes our conversation is often about what we have learned in our classes that day."

Kathy is quite popular for the homemade treats she fixes for the people who take John's classes. John does not believe the treats have anything to do with the exceptional teacher evaluations he receives.

Thanks, John and Kathy, for all you do for OLLI.



Empower lifelong learners by setting up a recurring gift to OLLI at UAH!

Your recurring donation not only helps sustain engaging programs that inspire curiosity and connection across our community; it also earns you recognition as a member of our **Blue Gems Giving Society**, a special group of donors who shine brightly through their commitment to learning and growth.

[Click here to make your gift today!
give2uah.info/OLLI](https://give2uah.info/OLLI)