The
OLLI INSIDER
November 2026
News for OLLI members at The University of Alabama in Huntsville











BIERGARTEN, SUNFLOWERS, GHOST WALK, STORYTELLING AND OLLI



Clockwise from top left: Absorbing German culture and space history (and raising money) at the Biergarten; meeting Bernard Osher, the philanthropist behind OLLI; Betsy MacKay telling a story; walking with Twickenham ghosts; enjoying sunflowers at Hubert Family Farms; Randy Boyette, the subject of this month's Insider *profile. (Photographers include Sharon Hill, Linda McAllister, Glen Adams and Alison Toney.)*

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OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE
OLLI at UAH

From the Editor







Betty Koval in Decatur with Francesco Arezzo of Italy, who was 2025-26 president of Rotary International; Steve and Patrice Stewart with Michael Mulhaul (left) of New Jersey, 2025-26 president of Kiwanis International; a sign at a community service center in South Africa, visited by travelers from OLLI at UAH on Aug. 28.

ROTARY VS. KIWANIS AND ALABAMA VS. AUBURN



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

Rivalries can be fun and productive.

My OLLI friend Betty Koval and I are on opposite sides of the rivalry, if that's what it is, between Rotary and Kiwanis. Betty is a Rotarian, now serving as president of the Decatur Daybreak Rotary Club. I am a member of the Decatur Kiwanis Club. My wife, Patrice, has been editor of the statewide Kiwanis newsletter for about 32 years.

Recently, international dignitaries for both Kiwanis and Rotary attended club meetings in Decatur. Betty and I invited each other to these meetings.

In the larger picture (as Betty has told me), Rotary and Kiwanis are on the same team. Both want to improve their communities and the world — with local projects such as improving schools and parks, and worldwide ventures such as wiping out polio and maternal neonatal tetanus.

Kiwanis reminds me of another rivalry — Alabama vs. Auburn — because it was a recurring fun conversation in my first Kiwanis club in Monroeville. Jack Whetstone and Tom Kennedy somehow became spokesmen for the two sports teams, and they would pick at each other.

When Alabama was scheduled to play football in Auburn for the first time in decades, Tom deadpanned that it would no longer be necessary to bring hubcaps into the stadium because Auburn was safe from crime. (Ask me about my favorite Auburn joke, which was told by an Auburn man. It might be a bit ribald to repeat here.)

I hope Alabama and Auburn are also rivals on consequential subjects such as teaching, research and service.

OLLI has rivals, too. LearningQUEST comes to mind. To do well, we must continue to serve our members and the community well.

Inside *The Insider*: Marsha Langlois suggests that you can make somebody thankful in this season by giving an OLLI membership ($40). She and David Moore met Bernard Osher, whose giving made OLLI possible nationwide.

Chris Stuhlinger and Alison Toney note that their 2026 OLLI events are now history, but we can look forward to 2027. Marie Arighi says getting involved in OLLI leadership, such as the Curriculum Committee, is easy if you are willing. Writer Alison Toney and photographer Patricia Haag report on courses about music and food.

This edition contains reports from the member interest groups on books and hiking and biking, as well as Suezy Proctor's proposal of a MIG for writers. Clay Williams says one thing that makes him smile is what happens outside classes, including the holiday party on Dec. 8.

David Sayre offers details about OLLI travel opportunities, including next year's trip to Japan. We have more pictures from the tour in southern Africa. Donna Berger shares recipes and announces that this semester's last Leisurely Lunch will be Nov. 3.

John Mason notes that the Declaration of Independence was designed to persuade both Americans and citizens of the world. Roxanne Pennington reminds us of the patriotic photo contest now underway.

Lisa Brunegraff previews two November bonuses — on brain science and the late Sallie Smith's campaign against toxic coal ash. Smith is an inspiring example of paying it forward for future generations — as is Maudine Holloway, the subject of a new book by OLLI member Dale Clem. Glen Adams profiles Randy Boyette, who is the OLLI board secretary as well as an advocate for cardiac patients.

From the President





Marsha Langlois (front row, second from left) and Monnie Anderson (fifth from left) met as first-graders in Monroeville. When they reunited in Minnesota, Marsha told Monnie about something she had discovered since they last saw each other: OLLI. At right is a packet you can use when giving someone an OLLI membership, which costs $40 a year (photo by Madyson White). The packet is available in 103 Wilson Hall.

GRATEFUL FOR OLLI



By Marsha Langlois
President
OLLI at UAH Board of Directors

I attended the Osher Institutes National Conference, held Oct. 5-7 in Eagan, Minnesota. Two representatives from each of the 124 OLLI groups across the country attended, along with staff from the National Osher Resource Center.

I was privileged to meet Bernard Osher, who started it all (see the photo on Page 22), as well as Mary Bitterman, president of the Osher Foundation.

Before the conference, I had heard Clay Williams, our program director, say, “If you know one OLLI, you know one OLLI.” Meeting OLLI members from across the country reinforced the truth of that statement.

I didn’t encounter another OLLI group that functions exactly like ours. The Osher Foundation’s guidelines allow each group considerable autonomy, giving programs the freedom to meet the needs of their local members.

Several breakout sessions and roundtable discussions shared best practices from other programs. Participants talked about ideas that had worked well for their OLLIs, along with the challenges they are facing.

Before the conference, I already believed that our OLLI functions well and has a great staff. I came away with those opinions reinforced!

After the conference, I visited a childhood friend. We’ve known each other since first grade (please don’t do that math!). The last time we saw each other, in 2020, I didn’t even know OLLI existed.

During our catch-up conversation, I realized I might need to apologize for continually mentioning OLLI activities. I almost felt as though I were giving a sales presentation! That realization brought home just how much OLLI has enriched my life since I was given an OLLI membership.

As I think about Thanksgiving and the many things I’m grateful for, OLLI certainly makes my list.

If you enjoy OLLI, consider giving a membership to someone you think might enjoy it, too. Stop by the office, and the OLLI staff will prepare a lovely packet that makes the membership a special gift.

Events Committee



Water aerobics on Oct. 2 at Huntsville Aquatics Center were conducted in a heated indoor pool with jets. See pictures from other events on the next four pages. (Photo by Chris Stuhlinger)

WRAPPING UP FALL EVENTS; ONWARD TO THE SPRING

By Chris Stuhlinger and Alison Toney

Events Committee Co-chairs

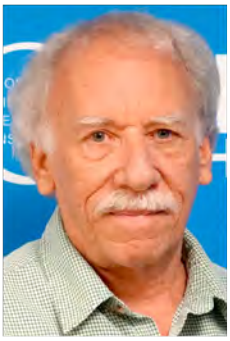
Our final event for the fall semester has been completed (an Oct. 23 visit to Oral Arts Dental Lab, which we will report on in December). There are no more events scheduled for November or December.

Many thanks to all members who attended and supported our events! And special thanks go to our wonderful committee members who plan and organize events for OLLI members

Now we're looking forward to spring semester and more exciting and educational events. Co-chair Alison Toney will preview those events in the December *Insider* issue.

Event recaps

Sunflowers at Hubert Family Farms, Sept. 25 — Sunflower season was in full bloom at Hubert Farms in New Market for this OLLI Event. Members heard firsthand, from the owner and his





wife, about the history of the family farm, current farm practices, and some exciting future plans for the farm. Members wandered through the dazzling fields of sunflowers, zinnias, cosmos and marigolds, and filled their buckets with beautiful flowers to take home.

Biergarten under the Saturn V, Oct. 1 — For the fifth year, OLLI at UAH was the beneficiary of the U.S. Space & Rocket Center's charity fundraiser event. OLLI President Marsha Langlois presented an overview of the OLLI program to the hundreds of public attendees as they enjoyed schnitzel, bratwurst and beer. Several OLLI members staffed the OLLI information table, and the OLLI Public Relations Committee held a drawing to give away three OLLI memberships.

Water aerobics at Huntsville Aquatics Center, Oct. 2 — Several OLLI members participated in a low-impact water aerobics workout, which was conducted in the instructional pool at Huntsville Aquatics Center.

Twickenham Ghost Walk, Oct. 15 — OLLI members enjoyed a fun seasonal event at the Twickenham Ghost Walk. The evening included a stroll through the lovely Twickenham district, where the docents shared stories from its history sprinkled with some haunted tales.

Guntersville Museum, Oct. 17 — Our group met for a hearty lunch at Wintzell's Oyster House in Guntersville, followed by a visit to the Guntersville Museum to learn about the history of the city and the lake. Included were displays about Native American artifacts, local personalities and the TVA dams.

Events Committee

DAZZLING FIELDS AT HUBERT FARMS, SEPT. 25

















(Photos by Chris Stuhlinger, Roxanne Pennington and Alison Toney)

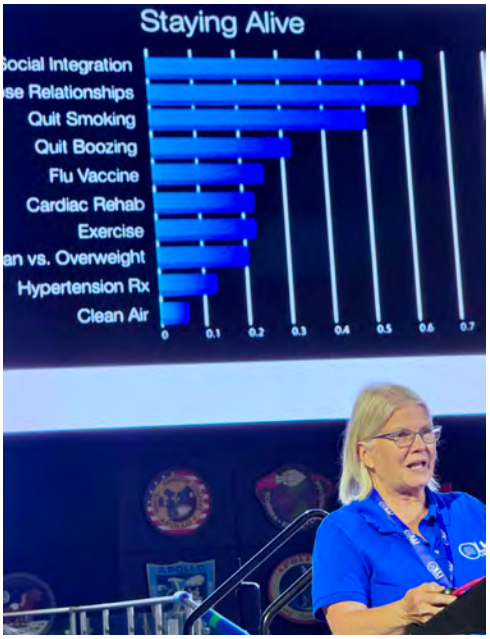
Events Committee

BIERGARTEN AT SPACE & ROCKET CENTER, OCT. 1

OLLI board President Marsha Langlois described OLLI to the hundreds attending the Biergarten, including many who were not members of OLLI. Authors were there: Melvin Croft and John Youskauskas, *Come Fly with Us: NASA's Payload Specialist Program*; and Valerie Neal, *On a Mission: The Smithsonian History of Women Astronauts*.















(Photos by Sharon Hill, Steve Stewart, Chris Stuhlinger and Madyson White)

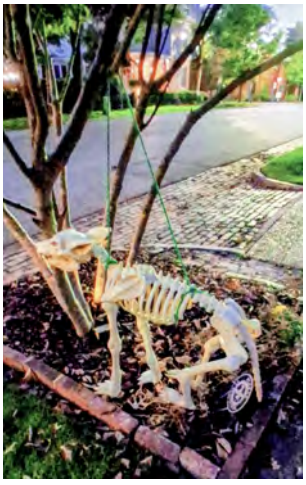
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HUNTSVILLE'S TWICKENHAM GHOST WALK, OCT. 15











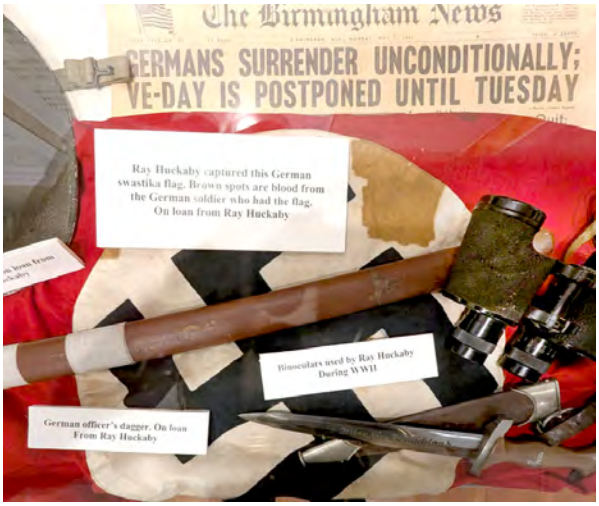


(Photos by Glen Adams and Chris Stuhlinger)

Events Committee

GUNTERSVILLE MUSEUM TOUR AND LUNCH, OCT. 17















(Photos by Suezy Proctor and Chris Stuhlinger)

FIGHTING TOXIC ASH, UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN



By Lisa Brunegraff

Fall Bonus Coordinator

We have two bonuses in November, including a super bonus. Each one starts at 11 a.m. in Chan Auditorium. Admission is free, but please sign up at https://tinyurl.com/bonuses-fall-26.

The public (OLLI members or not) is invited to the super bonus. Invite a friend to attend as an introduction to OLLI.

Nov. 6 — "Sallie's Ashes" super bonus; presenters, Diane Thomas and Savan Wilson

These presenters from Coal Ash Action Group of the Mobile Bay area will be showing the documentary film "Sallie's Ashes" and answering questions.

When toxic coal ash threatens her beloved Mobile Bay, Sallie Smith of Fairhope recruits two fellow retirees to take on Alabama Power and the state's environmental regulators.

"Sallie's Ashes" is an award-winning documentary (about 40 minutes) on Smith's efforts to raise awareness about a toxic unlined coal ash pit at Plant Barry. The sludge poses significant environmental and public health risk due to groundwater leakage of coal ash pollutants and potential for a major spill. The plant's unlined ash pit holds 21 million tons of toxic waste — one breach away from disaster.

The documentary claims that despite this, Alabama Power intends only to cover the ash in the unlined pit alongside the flood-prone Mobile River, which flows into Mobile Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. As time runs short for Smith due to cancer, these women work to spread awareness of the urgent need to protect their beloved bay for generations to come.



The late Sallie Smith (The Instigator) is on the left. Diane Thomas (right, aka The Researcher) and Savan Wilson (center, The Techie) will present the documentary "Sallie's Ashes" at 11 a.m. on Nov. 6. "Sallie Smith saw the environmental time bomb ticking 25 miles upstream from Mobile Bay: 21 million tons of toxic coal ash separated from the river by a single dirt dike," UAH's Ann Marie Martin wrote in a news release. "So, this grandmother battling terminal cancer organized her friends and took on an industrial giant. … 'Sallie's Ashes' has taken awareness of Smith's campaign far beyond Alabama and her circle of friends." Smith was a college classmate of OLLI member Jane McBride. Read the UAH news release at https://tinyurl.com/sallie-coal-ash. (Photo from "Sallie's Ashes" via UAH)

Nov. 20 — brain science; presenter, Ginger Campbell, M.D.

Join us as Dr. Ginger Campbell explores the ways neuroscience is unraveling the mystery of how our brains make us human.



On Nov. 20, Dr. Ginger Campbell will present insights about human behavior.

Based on her long-running podcast "Brain Science," this talk will help you understand both your own behavior and the behavior of others.

Not only is Dr. Campbell a retired physician, but she is also a pioneering podcaster. In her podcasts "Brain Science" (2006-2023) and "Books and Ideas" (2006-2020), she showcases her passion for making science accessible to listeners of all backgrounds.

She was inducted into the Podcast Hall of Fame in 2022, and she wrote the book *Are You Sure? The Unconscious Origins of Certainty*. Dr. Campbell also enjoys playing tennis, walking outdoors, reading and learning new things.

Bonus Presentations

INTUITIVE: STARTING AND RUNNING A BUSINESS

A.R. “Rey” Almodovar, a professional engineer who is co-founder and chief executive officer emeritus of Intuitive Research and Technology Corp., presented a bonus on Sept. 25 titled “From Engineer to Entrepreneur: Building a Company that Solves Real Problems.” His company, headquartered in Huntsville, helps customers solve challenges through engineering and innovative thinking.















(Photos from Sue Chatham, Patricia Haag, Suezy Proctor, Madyson White and the speaker)

Bonus Presentations

THE FINE ART OF TELLING A GOOD STORY

Tales were told during a bonus Oct. 9 related to the annual Athens Storytelling Festival, which was held Oct. 22-24. Tim Chasteen (upper left) is a festival board member who serves as the liaison for master storytellers. Leah Oakley (top center) is president of the board and was emcee for this year's event. At bottom right, they are with bonus coordinator Lisa Brunegraff. OLLI members told stories during the bonus, including Betsy MacKay (top right and bottom left).















(Photos by Linda McAllister and Suezy Proctor)

JUST SHOW UP, SHARE YOUR IDEAS, AND SAY YES

By Marie Arighi

I walked into my first OLLI Curriculum Committee meeting not really knowing what to expect.

I had been invited to serve on the committee, and I thought: "Sure! That sounds interesting." So, I showed up. Seems innocent enough, right?

Well … by the time I walked out of that meeting, I had agreed to write an article for the newsletter *and* somehow had become chair of the hobbies and leisure discipline!

How did that happen?

Apparently, getting involved at OLLI is *very* easy!

All kidding aside, that first meeting was an eye-opening experience for me. I have enjoyed taking OLLI courses, but I had never really thought about everything that has to happen before those courses appear in the catalog. I guess I thought they just magically appeared!

Now that I have had a peek behind the curtain, I realize there is definitely no magic involved. There are people — and lots of planning, emails, phone calls, ideas, scheduling and coordination.

The Curriculum Committee works well in advance to put together the courses we enjoy each term. Members are looking for interesting topics, finding instructors, discussing ideas, and trying to create a variety of opportunities that will appeal to all kinds of interests. And believe me, there are a *lot* of interests at OLLI!

That is actually one of the things I love about it. We all come from different backgrounds, careers and life experiences, and now we have the opportunity to learn simply because something sounds interesting.

Want to learn about history? There's probably a class for that. Art? Travel? Music? Science? Technology? Or maybe something that falls under hobbies and leisure? I apparently know someone you can talk to about that now!

Becoming part of the Curriculum Committee has already given me a much greater appreciation for the work that happens behind the scenes. The next time I open the course catalog, I know I will look at it a little differently.

Every class listed started with an idea. Someone had to suggest it. Someone had to find the instructor. Someone had to make the call, send the email, coordinate the details, and help turn that idea into a class. And much of that work is being done by OLLI members volunteering their time.



Marie Arighi learned that getting involved in OLLI leadership is easy — and that people, not magic, accomplish OLLI's goals. (Art by ChatGPT, using her self-portrait)

That brings me back to how I ended up at that meeting in the first place. Someone asked me to get involved. I said yes. And that really is how simple it can be.

You don't have to know everything about OLLI. You don't have to have years of experience. You don't even have to walk into the room knowing exactly what the committee does. Trust me on that last one!

You just have to be willing to show up, share an idea and maybe say yes when someone asks for a little help.

There are so many ways to become involved with OLLI, and I'm quickly discovering that being part of what happens behind the scenes can be just as much fun as attending the classes themselves.

Of course, I've also learned one other valuable lesson: The next time someone invites me to an OLLI meeting, I might ask what positions are open *before* I walk through the door!

Then again … where would be the fun in that?

Curriculum Committee





Andy Kruspe (left photo, from a previous OLLI event) taught Irish traditional music to OLLI members (right photo) at Lowe Mill Arts and Entertainment during the fall term. (Photos by Steve Stewart and Roxanne Pennington)

EXPLORING IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC



By Alison Toney

During the fall term, OLLI students had the opportunity to explore Irish traditional music with Andy Kruspe from the Irish Drum Center at Lowe Mill Arts and Entertainment.

Topics included fundamentals of form and tune styles, video clips of sessions and concerts, and an introduction to notable artists and bands of the genre. The class listened to some of the instruments used in traditional Irish music, including whistles, fiddles, uilleann pipes, harp, banjo, concertina, guitar, bouzouki, and bodhran (traditional Irish drum).

Class members listened to reels, jigs, slip jigs, airs, ballads, drinking songs and political songs, and the differences were discussed. Two sessions were devoted to a hands-on experience with the bodhran, when they learned to play a reel and a jig.

Kruspe is a professional performer and teaches private students, as well as at school clinics and in workshops all over the country and internationally.

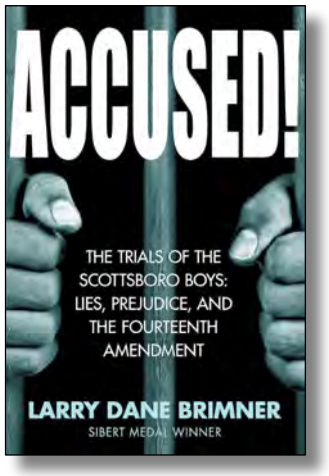
You can hear him playing the Irish drum in two local performances of "Come From Away" with Independent Musical Productions (www.imphuntsville.org) and Theatre Huntsville (www.theatrehsv.org). He also organizes concerts of folk artists from several traditions in a small theater setting at Lowe Mill (idchsv.com).

Member Interest Groups



NEXT TOPIC: SCOTTSBORO BOYS

When the OLLI Reads MIG met Oct. 14, Sam Campbell (right) led the discussion about *The Atomic City Girls* by Janet Beard. The Nov. 18 topic will be *Accused!*, Larry Dane Brimner's book about the Scottsboro Boys. The MIG meets at noon in Wilson Hall, and all OLLI members are welcome. (Photo by Glen Adams)





WHAT'S FOR SUPPER? LEARN AND EAT

Walter Thames — chef, owner of What's for Supper?, and caterer for OLLI's annual dinner, among other events — taught a fall-term course called "Cooking from Scratch & Eating Well" in the OLLI lounge. The food prepared and eaten during four afternoon classes included French, Cajun and Italian. The French dish pictured is ratatouille. (Photos by Patricia Haag)







WHAT IT IS TRULY ALL ABOUT



By Clay Williams

OLLI at UAH Program Manager

Some of my favorite times working here at OLLI take place immediately after classes end.





Top: Leisurely Lunch on Oct. 6, 2026. Bottom: Holiday party on Dec. 10, 2025. (Photos by Suezy Proctor and Marsha Langlois)

Instructors are still answering questions from inquisitive students, and OLLI members are walking out together talking about a variety of issues. Some are discussing the classes they just attended. Others are discussing whether to get a cup of coffee or lunch, and others are simply asking each other about family, their homes, past careers or, heaven forbid, current political issues.

It actually makes me smile (yes, I do smile from time to time) to witness these happy and joyful interactions.

Politics aside, these interactions are really what OLLI is all about: OLLI members discussing interests with fellow lifelong learners. Social interaction is a vital part of one's total health picture. As we grow older, we are often concerned with our physical well-being, but our mental and social health is just as important. In fact, these portions of our health have a direct impact on our physical health as well.

So I share these profound words of wisdom to encourage members to take advantage of the full benefits of OLLI. Yes, register and take thought-provoking courses, but more importantly, enjoy being part of a community of lifelong learners who share common interests and a desire to stay active and continue to challenge their minds and bodies.

Attend gatherings where members get together and socialize. The OLLI lounge is a great place to interact, whether before or after classes and bonuses, or even first thing in the morning for a cup of coffee. Join us for Leisurely Lunches. Attend a special program or tour. Join a member interest group. These are the best ways to make connections and boost your mental and social well-being.

I am convinced that if I asked 100 OLLI members about their favorite memory of OLLI, it would not be a course they took but rather an interaction or event they attended. It's the connections we make with others that truly last and resonate with us forever!

Speaking of social events, OLLI has a fun one coming up in December. We hope you join us for our annual OLLI party on Tuesday, Dec. 8, at 5:30 p.m. at the Conference Training Center on the UAH campus. Enjoy food, fellowship, drinks and dancing. It is always the event of the year. Sign up at **https://tinyurl.com/olli-events**.

As your classes conclude, please take the time to complete evaluation surveys that are emailed to you.

Besides giving instructors feedback on how to improve their courses, the information helps OLLI staff and the Curriculum Committee plan for future semesters.

The fall semester officially concludes on Nov. 20. OLLI offices and the UAH campus will be closed on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 26 and 27, in observance of Thanksgiving.

And for those eager for news on next year's courses, the spring 2027 Course Guide will be available in mid- to late December. Our spring open house is set for Jan. 8. More details will be coming soon.

Member Services Committee

SUBMIT YOUR PATRIOTIC PHOTOS FOR CONTEST



"Moonlight & Clouds, Owens Cross-roads" by Sue Farbman won first place in OLLI's 2026 photo contest, whose theme was "Nightlights."

The Philip Flowers Memorial Photo Contest is 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 end April 30, 2027. Read submission details on the OLLI website at https://tinyurl.com/2027-photo-contest.
- Winners will be announced at the OLLI banquet in May.

—Roxanne Pennington
Member Services Committee Chair

Community Resources

2 EVENTS OFFER HELP WITH STRESS DISORDERS

By Roxanne Pennington

Several OLLI members are former military, law enforcement officers, firefighters, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, nurses and other medical personnel. These heroes may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or continuous traumatic stress disorder (CTSD).

There are two events to consider that may be helpful: a twice-monthly support group and a one-day GY6 event on Dec. 7.

Joe Defillipo had a 28-year career as firefighter. He suffered trauma. At home, his wife felt that she was walking on eggshells. Along with Brian Moran, the chaplain at Huntsville Veterans of Foreign Wars, Joe and Kim Defillipo have launched the support group for veterans, first responders and their family members.

"Most people experience four to five traumas in their lifetime, such as a death of a spouse," Joe said. "First responders experience 2,000 to 4,000 traumas, including things they see and jobs they are paid to do. You had to be hyper-vigilant to stay safe. They are never taught how to turn down that hypervigilance."



Kim and Joe Defillipo are helping launch a support group for veterans, first responders and family members.

Trauma affects the mind and the body. Learning how to control cortisol spikes, the stress response, is important. "The parasympathetic nervous system puts the brakes on," Joe said. "You are not broken if you have PTSD or CTSD."

This group meets at the Cove Church (in the Well building to the right) on the second and fourth Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Cove Church is in Hampton Cove at 366 Old Highway 431, Owens Cross Roads. For further information, email OLLI.info@uah.edu.

GY6 (Got Your Six) is an organization that helps first responders, active military, veterans and their families find support for the soul and spirit wounds that can come with service. Through workshops, peer support, books and practical resources, GY6 helps you understand what you're carrying, build resilience, and take your next step toward healing.

GY6 Live is a one-day, interactive workshop on Monday, Dec. 7, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Toyota Field Event Center. Tickets are $37 and include lunch and training on the new GY6 resource. For more information on this event, go to www.GY6.online/1207#.

JAPAN TRIP INFORMATION MEETING WILL BE NOV. 20



By David Sayre
Travel Committee Chair

We are working on a new section of the travel portion on the OLLI website that will be bringing the latest developments on travel opportunities.

These trips are coming up but need a little bit more definition. So stay tuned for our up-and-coming travel opportunities for 2027 and now 2028.

The travel webpage is **https://tinyurl.com/olli-travel**. Find travel adventures there, on bulletin boards, and in *The Insider* and *eNews*.

How about traveling to one of the most vibrant and exciting countries in the East? We have this trip in the works:

- **Experience Japan!** — Aug. 19-Sept. 1, 2027, with an optional three-night post-trip extension. Nanda Journeys has curated another exciting adventure for our OLLI travelers with this journey of culture, connections and discovery. Visit Tokyo, Kyoto and Hiroshima, with an optional extension to Osaka, to learn about centuries-old history and traditions. Visit temples and shrines, and meet the locals. Participate in music and crafts workshops and a tea ceremony. Witness a sumo match, ride the bullet train, and cruise Lake Ashi for scenic views of Mount Fuji. Visit a fish market, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum, and much more. The cost per person for the main trip is $7,499 (double occupancy, land only). For a detailed itinerary and registration information, contact Chris Stuhlinger.

On Friday morning, Nov. 20, join a Japan trip orientation session in Wilson Hall and via Zoom with Nanda Journeys. The session is scheduled for 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Please let Chris know if you plan to attend in person or remotely.

In 2026, the following is our last opportunity to put on some travel experience and miles before the holidays:

- **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. To express an interest or request information, contact Jane McBride or go to **https://tinyurl.com/olli-nm-2026**.

In 2027 and 2028, in addition to Japan, we have trips to Arkansas, Germany and Oregon:

- **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 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 immerse yourself in Ozark traditions and music. For information, go to **https://tinyurl.com/olli-arkansas-27**. Or contact Jane McBride.



The Hozomon Gate at the historic Senso-ji Temple in Tokyo. Japan is a 2027 OLLI travel destination.

- **The historic relationship between Germany and Alabama** — May 15-24, 2027. The connections are woven through triumph, innovation and transformation. This curated journey traces the 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. Contact Lisa Brunegraff or visit **https://tinyurl.com/olli-germany-27**.
- **The faces of Oregon: Mount Hood, Columbia River Gorge and Astoria** — June 2028. Exact dates have not been determined. On daylong field trips, discover the natural beauty and human history that make Oregon a state of wonder. Take in city highlights like the International Rose Test Garden, then explore the natural wonders outside the city, from the rugged Pacific Coast to the dramatic Columbia River Gorge to the volcanic Cascade Mountains.

Each journey will be accented by interesting, interactive activities, enhanced with interpretation from the program instructor.

Never let curiosity fade! Contact David Sayre, other members of the Travel Committee, or coordinators for the trips through **olli.info@uah.edu**.

Travel Committee

OLLI'S TRIP TO AFRICA, AUG. 21-SEPT. 6

An archaeological dig was in progress when OLLI members visited the Cradle of Humankind in South Africa. Human fossils older than 3 million years have been found there. Other activities included touring downtown Cape Town, painting with pigments scraped from rocks, cooking and then eating, land safaris, touring an environmental garden, and relaxing at a lodge.











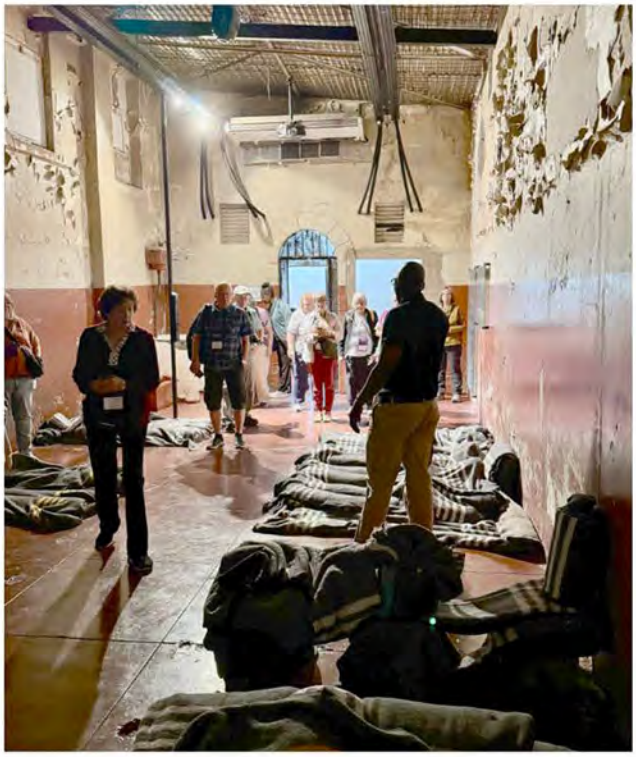




Travel Committee

DIVERSE PEOPLE MOVE FORWARD IN SOUTH AFRICA

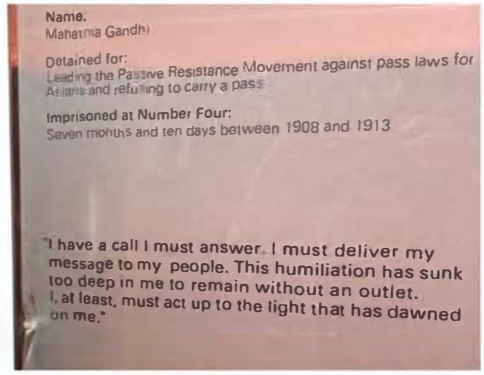
South Africa's flag symbolizes diverse people converging into a common path forward. Travelers from OLLI at UAH learned about the nation's history in August and September while visiting museums, prisons and communities. Christo Brand (on the right in the picture below) received gifts from OLLI's Chris Stuhlinger after speaking. Brand was Nelson Mandela's jailer and became his friend. Mandela (1918-2013), a Black man, was an activist who became president after 27 years in prison.























SEEING AFRICA BY LAND, AIR AND WATER

OLLI travelers visited Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, and some flew in a hot-air balloon. There and in South Africa and Botswana, they visited a seashore and took river cruises and land tours (see animal photos in last month's *Insider*).















(Africa photos this month and last month came from Marie Arighi, Helmut Stahl, Patrice Stewart, Steve Stewart, Chris Stuhlinger, Tilman Stuhlinger, Alison Toney, Cynthia Turner, and several who contributed to a group WhatsApp feed.)

Social Committee



The last of the free weekly Leisurely Lunches for fall semester will take place Tuesday, Nov. 3, in the OLLI lounge (152D Wilson Hall) and adjacent rooms. This one was Oct. 6. (Photo by Suezy Proctor)

ENJOY ITALIAN-THEMED LEISURELY LUNCH ON NOV. 3

By Donna Berger
Social Committee Chair



The fall semester has been a flurry of activity.

The Social Committee had one themed lunch each month. We kicked off the weekly Leisurely Lunches in September with a Mexican-themed lunch and had a German-themed lunch in October.

The final Leisurely Lunch for the fall semester will be on Nov. 3 with an Italian theme.
It is heartwarming to see members socializing and enjoying the food.

We added requested recipes to our monthly article last month and have included two more recipes this month. We hope you enjoy trying these recipes at home.

When you are on campus for classes, be sure to stop by the lounge. The coffee pot is usually on, and conversation is always welcome!

Chicken cordon bleu casserole

1 8-oz. package wide egg noodles
2 cups chopped cooked chicken
8 oz. cubed cooked ham
8 oz. cubed Swiss cheese
1 10.5-oz. can cream of chicken soup
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup sour cream
2 tablespoons butter
1/3 cup seasoned bread crumbs
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Lightly grease a 9-by-13-inch casserole. Cook noodles; drain and transfer to the casserole dish. Top noodles with chicken, ham and Swiss cheese. Mix together cream of chicken soup, milk and sour cream; spoon over noodle mixture in the casserole dish. Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat; cook and stir breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese in hot butter until crumbs are well-coated, 2-3 minutes. Sprinkle over casserole. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Linzer torte bars

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup margarine or butter, softened
1 cup powdered sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 cup ground walnuts
2/3 cup red raspberry preserves

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Mix all ingredients except preserves until crumbly. Press two-thirds of mixture in ungreased square pan, 9 by 9 by 2 inches. Spread with preserves. Sprinkle with remaining crumbs. Press gently into preserves. Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool completely. Makes 48 bars.

Apricot linzer bars: Substitute ground almonds for the ground walnuts and apricot preserves for the raspberry preserves.

To cut the bars into triangles, first cut into squares, then cut each square diagonally in half.

Member Interest Groups

OLLI WRITERS' ROUNDTABLE — SOUND INTERESTING?



By Suezy Proctor

Reading and critiquing other writers' work builds objective editing skills and strengthens your own writing craft.

The purpose of a writers' roundtable is to provide a structured, supportive environment where writers can practice their craft, receive constructive feedback, and improve their skills through drafting, peer review and revision.



(Illustration generated by artificial intelligence)

The key benefits of critiquing others:

- **Developing objectivity** — It is hard to spot pacing issues or weak dialogue in your own writing, but easy to spot them in someone else's.
- **Sharpening editorial skills** — Analyzing another person's structure or word choice builds a technical vocabulary that you can instantly apply to your own revisions.
- **Teaching constructive feedback** — Explaining why a transition fails or a scene drags moves you past vague reactions into precise problem-solving.

The values of receiving critiques include:

- **Revealing blind spots** — Readers catch confusing elements, weak hooks, or inconsistent character arcs missed during drafting.
- **Building resilience** — Regular critique helps you separate your self-worth from your text, making it easier to handle rejection and editorial notes.
- **Creating accountability** — Deadlines and peer expectations push you to generate pages and finish works-in-progress.
- **Obtaining subjective advice** — Peer feedback reflects personal tastes rather than absolute rules; bad groups push prescriptive formulas or try to rewrite your style.

But there is a risk of homogenization. Over-relying on a workshop can lead to "workshoppy" fiction that caters to the group instead of your unique voice.

Establishing clear rules for workshopping keeps critiques constructive, protects the writer's confidence, and ensures everyone gets actionable advice. The standard framework relies on rules of engagement split between the reviewers and the author.

Here is a link from the OLLI website that describes the process for forming a MIG: https://tinyurl.com/mig-guidelines.

If you would like to take part in the process of forming the OLLI Writers' Roundtable MIG, let us know! Your response will guide our direction. If interested, please email Suezy Proctor through OLLI.info@uah.edu.



OLLI AT UAH LEADERS MEET THE OSHER BEHIND OLLI

David Moore and Marsha Langlois met Bernard Osher (right) while attending the Osher Institutes National Conference, held Oct. 5-7 in Minnesota. Bernard Osher, 99, is a businessman, philanthropist and community leader who founded the Bernard Osher Foundation in 1977. The foundation supports Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes nationwide.

David is director of UAH's Salmon Library and a member of the local OLLI's board of directors; OLLI comes under the library in UAH's organizational structure. Marsha is president of the OLLI at UAH board. (See her column on Page 3 for more information.)

Member Interest Groups



Visit Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge's walking trail (left) in November; see the wintering cranes and waterfowl in December. (Photos by Chris



2 NATURE WALKS AT WHEELER WILDLIFE REFUGE

By Chris Stuhlinger and Steve Jones

Co-Leaders, Hiking & Biking MIG

We have scheduled two more nature walks this semester, one in early November and the other in early December. See the descriptions below.

Both activities will be at Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in Decatur, but at two different locations.

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.

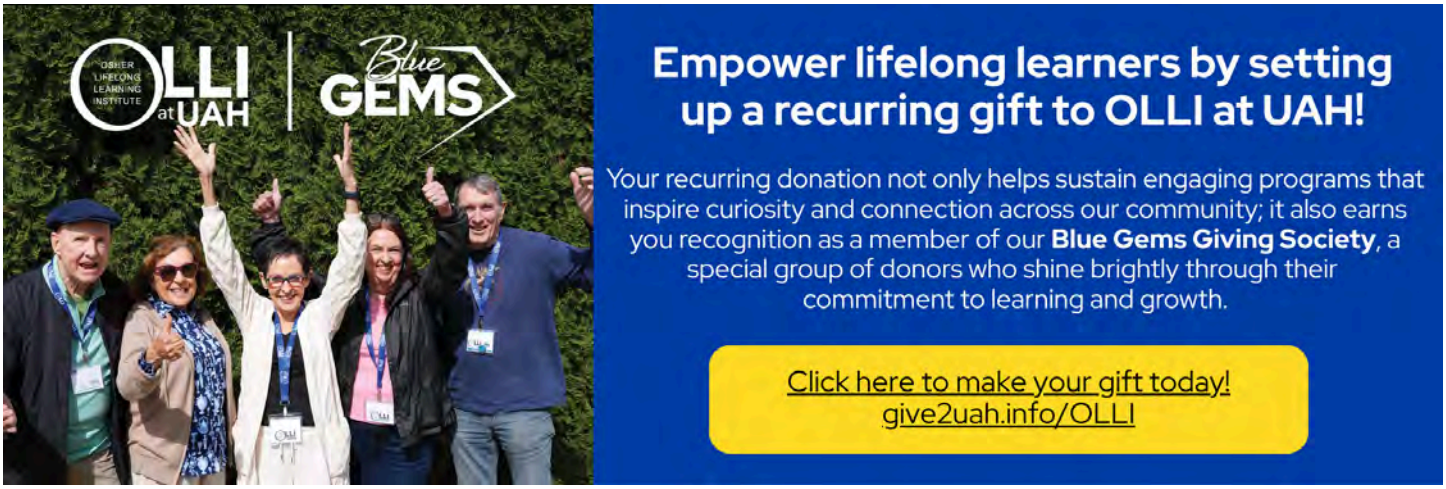
Join the MIG:
https://tinyurl.com/hike-bike-mig



November and December activities

- Saturday, Nov. 7 — **Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge nature walk and bike ride**, 10 a.m. to noon. We will explore the hiking and biking trail near the entrance to the refuge visitor center. The easy trail leads through and by a variety of habitats, including woodlands, farm fields and waterways. Choose to walk or ride a bike.
- Tuesday, Dec. 8 — **Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge nature walk**, 10 a.m. to noon. Stroll through the visitor center to learn about the refuge and its wildlife. Then view the annual gathering of wintering waterfowl, rare whooping cranes and thousands of sandhill cranes. Several blinds allow visitors to get a closer view of the birds. Afterward, enjoy a short walk on the nearby Atkeson Cypress Trail and boardwalk.

See you on the trail!



WALKING THE MADISON COUNTY NATURE TRAIL

The Hiking & Biking MIG took a walk Sept. 27 on the Madison County Nature Trail, which is on Green Mountain.



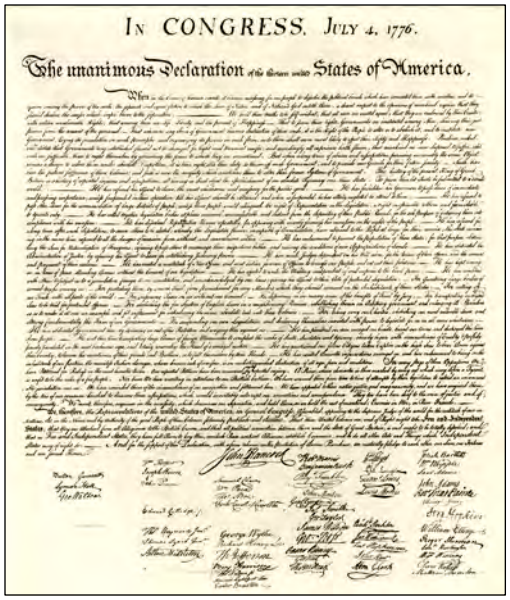






(Photos by Chris Stuhlinger)




IN CONGRESS. JULY 4. 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.



The U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing printed this copy of the Declaration of Independence in 1976 from William Stone's 1823 copperplate engraving. In 1940, Howard Chandler Christy produced this oil painting of the signing of the Constitution.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WAS WRITTEN TO PERSUADE BOTH AMERICANS AND THE WORLD

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



By John Mason

If it is to work, a government must be supported and trusted by its citizens. Our system of education has always supported this idea, teaching us that our Declaration of Independence was the foundational birth certificate of what would soon come to be known as the United States of America.

Acting as our birthing coach, the Declaration told us that by declaring our national rights alongside the evolving idea that "all men are created equal," we were serving notice to the world that this new nation was severing all ties with Great Britain and entering global politics as a free and independent nation. But was it?

Today, we view our Declaration of Independence as a sacred statement of human rights based, perhaps, on its most famous phrase, and the one we're all familiar with: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Ahh, but that's in the second paragraph (modern newsmen might refer to it as lying below the fold). But its creators viewed its purpose entirely differently, primarily as a high-stakes political and legal manifesto designed to achieve very specific, practical outcomes — and *that*, they place up front in the very opening statement:

> **The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,**
> When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

Take a moment and read that paragraph again. That paragraph was a legal justification for treason. Its wording left no question, both legally and internationally, that the colonists, subjects of the British crown, were committing an act of treason against it. It clearly told the world that this rebellion was not simply one of reckless lawlessness, but a legitimate response to tyranny grounded in Enlightenment natural law.

(continued on the next page)

Constitutional Corner

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, cont from previous page

Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams were master political strategists who deliberately crafted this document to sway opinion. Modern political analysts view the Declaration as a highly structured and formal logical argument known as a syllogism consisting of a major premise, a minor premise and a conclusion. The argument the founders presented looked something like this:

> Governments are social contracts formed to protect unalienable rights; if they systematically destroy those rights, citizens have a moral right to alter or abolish them.
>
> King George III has committed a specific, empirical "long train of abuses" that violates this contract. …
>
> Therefore, the colonies are logically and morally justified in dissolving their political ties.

There were 27 "long-train" grievances in that minor premise, contained in four general categories: abuse of executive power and colonial self-rule, obstruction of justice and immigration, collusion with Parliament, and waging war and inciting violence. Those grievances (originally there were 28, but the 28th had to do with restricting the slave trade and Jefferson removed it prior to publication to appease Southern delegates) were a deliberate rhetorical trick, specifically bypassing the British Parliament and, instead, aimed directly and solely at King George III.

By arguing that the colonists had long owed their allegiance to a king who was now bent on absolute despotism, they framed the king, and not the Parliament, as the villain, manufacturing a clean legal and moral argument for ending relations while not ruling out the possibility of re-establishing them later under different circumstances.

This format, so precisely constructed, allowed the Declaration to be instantly recognized as a persuasive instrument on the world stage.

But the framers knew the new country could not survive without help; they also desperately needed money, weapons and military recognition from foreign powers, especially France and hopefully Spain, as well as the backing of the people here at home. Because persuading foreign monarchs to risk a war with Great Britain was a Sisyphean task, they had to demonstrate that theirs was a serious, organized and unified action, one fully committed to separation.

In achieving that, and perhaps as the key to the document's success, the founders clearly framed exaggeration, if not downright distortion, of historical events to build the narrative they desired. This was a document meant to persuade, not only the people of Great Britain and the world, but also their fellow Americans, many of whom were at that point still uncommitted as to which side they supported.

So by starting with a statement of sweeping, universal principles ("all men are created equal" and "unalienable rights"), they deliberately transcended local tax disputes over tea and stamps. They framed America's struggle as *humankind's* struggle against oppression, in a way intentionally designed to evoke sympathy and moral outrage in European courts and intellectual circles. In that light, the Declaration was also, for all intents and purposes, a highly successful propaganda tool.

Ultimately, the founders understood that they were drafting an instrument of persuasion to win a war of opinions both at home and abroad. That it successfully morphed into a timeless philosophical blueprint for human rights is a testament to the sheer brilliance of their rhetoric.

To further help explain that process, next month's column takes a look at how Jefferson, Franklin and the others crafted the Declaration to accomplish their goals by using epistemological (the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature, origin, scope and limits of human knowledge) logic of "the self-evident truths," and how language — words — serves to change political realities.



Come to OLLI's annual

HOLIDAY PARTY

Tuesday, Dec. 8

5:30 p.m.

UAH Conference Training Center

Sign up at

https://tinyurl.com/olli-events









Clockwise from top left: JoAnna and Randy Boyette at a "Queen with Adam Lambert" concert in Nashville in 2019; OLLI open house in 2025 at the ice cream truck; daughter Ashley, JoAnna and Randy at a Trash Pandas game; Randy representing OLLI at Madison Public Library during a newcomers' event; Mended Hearts accredited visitors at Huntsville Hospital Heart Center. (Photographers include Randy, Lori Walters and Renee Kump)



RANDY BOYETTE LEARNS AND SERVES AT OLLI WHILE SUPPORTING FELLOW HEART PATIENTS

By Glen Adams

We all know Randy Boyette as a genial fellow who is always willing to pitch in at OLLI, even serving on the Board of Directors and several committees. But there is an even more impressive side to Randy.

In 2017, Randy underwent a triple bypass heart operation, and during his recovery he was introduced to Mended Hearts, an organization that supports people who have had heart surgery. Randy became a member and for years has spent time each month visiting cardiac patients in the hospital. Randy is now president of the Huntsville chapter.

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

Randy grew up in the small town of Hamlet, North Carolina, an only child. His grandfather, father and two uncles worked for Seaboard Air Line Railroad. They still owned the 50-acre family farm, and Randy spent much of his youth hunting and fishing there.

Randy started piano lessons when he was in the fourth grade and continued them into high school. He was involved in the Latin, French, Science and Beta clubs and was also a member of the chorus and golf team. He filled his schedule with math and science classes, preparing for college.

"I attended North Carolina State University with no particular major in mind, so I entered the engineering pathway," said Randy. "I chose chemical engineering as a major and received my B.S. degree in 1971. College and big-city life offered many opportunities for growth that were new to a small-town boy. I attended many concerts and athletic events.

"Somewhere during my undergraduate studies, I decided to go to graduate school. The field of paper making beckoned, and I enrolled in grad school in the School of Forestry. In 1976 I was awarded a Ph.D. in paper science and engineering."

Unfortunately, the boy-to-girl ratio at North Carolina State was 12:1. That did not deter Randy. A Baptist women's college was down the road. There he met JoAnna Geffcken. Their romance bloomed, and in 1973 they

(continued on the next page)

RANDY BOYETTE, cont from previous page

married. And they are still married after 53 years.

Randy's first job out of school was in Jacksonville, Florida. "I was working for a chemical company that purchased raw materials from pulp mills," said Randy. "I spent my time working with various pulp mills to improve their operations so that they could produce more of the material we wanted to purchase. I got quite an education on how to deal with multiple levels of mill organization. We dealt with mills all across the Southeast, so I learned much about the region as I traveled."

Randy and JoAnna enjoyed Florida and its beaches and golf courses. They adopted their first dog, a dachshund.

But their Florida sojourn lasted only two years. Weyerhaeuser Co. offered Randy a similar job in research and development working with its own pulp mills. And thus the Boyettes found themselves driving cross country to their new home in Seattle. The natives were amused at the Boyettes' Southern accents. During their four years there, they took full advantage of the treasures of the Northwest. And they were there when Mount St. Helens erupted.

The first family addition arrived in 1979 when daughter Ashley was born.

Randy felt he wasn't suited to research and development, so in 1981 they packed up and moved to Columbus, Mississippi, where Randy would work at a new pulp and paper mill. They brought Ashley in the car, but the dog was able to stay in a hotel and then fly to Mississippi when the family was settled.

Thus would begin a stay of 27 years. "We were really able to settle down and focus on family and career," said Randy. "Our family expanded with the birth of our son Stephen in 1982. Over the years I moved up and about in the mill organization. At the managerial level, I was over technical, environmental and customer service at various times. My final position was as operations manager of the paper machine operation."

During these years, both children went off to college and earned master's degrees.

Jo and Randy both retired in 2008, Jo from her position as Girl Scout product sales manager. They bought a recreational vehicle and spent several years traveling to places like Yellowstone, Colonial Williamsburg and Townsend, Tennessee.

Both children married and started families in Huntsville. In 2013, Randy and Jo decided they needed to be in Huntsville, too. "We slowly settled in and have grown to love the area," said Randy. "We kept traveling and became involved with our four grandchildren as they grew."

In 2017, Randy developed heart problems that required a triple bypass. While recovering, Randy met the Mended Hearts. Randy attended his first meeting of Mended Hearts and has never looked back: "The ability to share and gather support from a group of people on the same journey as I was on was very meaningful. Now I visit patients recovering from cardiovascular procedures several times a month. Providing support to patients is very rewarding."

Randy discovered OLLI in 2019. "I was drawn to the idea of learning about things that interested me that I had never had time to pursue. The thought of making new friends was an added bonus."

Of course, in a few months COVID roared into town and on-site learning stopped. Randy persevered with Zoom and then after the pandemic signed up for even more classes.

"I enjoyed the atmosphere around OLLI and being with other members," said Randy. "It soon became apparent that I should give back to OLLI in some way since it had become such a significant part of my life."

Randy was elected to the board in 2024. In 2025 he became board secretary, a position he still holds.

"OLLI provides a place of free expression among a group of like-minded individuals from a broad perspective of life experiences," he said. "It provides a place to learn new things and meet new people while enjoying retirement. I look forward to remaining active in OLLI as long as possible."

Thank you, Randy, for all you have done and will do for OLLI.

15% DISCOUNT ON BALLET TICKETS

OLLI members can get a 15% discount on tickets for all remaining season performances of the Huntsville Ballet Company.

The 56th annual performance of *The Nutcracker* is scheduled for Dec. 11-13 in Mark C. Smith Concert Hall in the Von Braun Center: Friday at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday at 1 p.m.

Dancer's Choice will be performed on Feb. 12-14 in the ballet studio at 800 Regal Drive SW.

The Firebird and More will be presented April 16-18 in the concert hall.

Use the discount code OLQ when ordering tickets at 256-539-0961 or **https://huntsvilleballet.org/tickets**.

FRIEND'S LIFE INSPIRED DALE CLEM TO WRITE BOOK

OLLI member Dale Clem recently published a book about a friend who proves, he said, "that individuals, churches, and groups working together can substantially help others flourish and live in spite of difficulties."

The book is *A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out. Maudine Holloway: A Life of Service, Compassion and Seeking Justice*. The book is available from him, from amazon.com in paperback and Kindle formats, and from audible.com as an audiobook.

He said one motivation behind the book was his belief that individuals and groups can join together to make the world kinder and easier for those who struggle with poverty, addiction and mental illness.

"Maudine is an amazing person who at age 91 goes to work every day to continue to help others," Dale said. "Although she can look back on her life with the wonderful acknowledgment that she has done what she was called to do, she enjoys working and keeps going."

Maudine Holloway worked on behalf of people who struggled because of education, race and low wages. During the late 1950s and the 1960s when African American pastors were talking about civil rights, Maudine went door to door in Calhoun County, Alabama, to encourage others to get involved in the marches and win the right to vote, eat in restaurants and use public restrooms, as well as to persuade white businesses to hire African Americans.

In 1969 she became a United Methodist "Black community developer" and began a social agency now called Community Enabler Developer. Through this agency, she helped cool



Dale Clem's book is about a friend who, at 91, persists in her work for civil rights and against poverty, addiction and mental illness.

racial tensions, integrate the schools, get the city to pave streets, and persuade Gov. George Wallace to find resources to bring running water to a poor community. Maudine gave away food and clothing to thousands of clients each year and persuaded the city of Anniston to install street lights and facilitate job-training events. In Anniston, she helped build two United Methodist apartment complexes for seniors and persons with disabilities.

She has experienced injustice and prejudice. Her grandfather was lynched, and people have thrown things at her and yelled at her. But she has moved past her anger and has forgiven those who have oppressed her and others.

After a 40-year friendship, Dale shares their interactions and the wisdom she shared with him. She was one of the first Black persons to speak in white churches and win them over to support her work.

Clem also writes about her husband, Cleve, who supported her ministries and others through a nightclub on the "chitlin circuit" and illegal bingo. Although Maudine never approved of nightclubs or bingo, she supported her husband and helped turn the proceeds into meals for the poor, an after-school program for children, and support for women and girls.

For many years, Dale told Maudine that she should write the stories of her life, and she replied, "If God wants my stories told, someone will write them." After retiring as a United Methodist minister, Dale decided he would take on the task. To gain discipline to work on the book, he taught an OLLI course in 2025 that he called "Write On." It brought writers together to share what they were working on and receive feedback.

Dale's memoir *Winds of Fury, Circles of Grace* chronicles the 1994 Palm Sunday tornado. His wife, Kelly, was the pastor of Goshen United Methodist Church in Piedmont, which was struck by a tornado during worship. The storm killed 20 persons, including their 4-year-old daughter. He has also written *A Moment with God for Those who Grieve*.

His book *40 Days in the Wilderness: Reflection and Prayers Along the Appalachian Trail* is about a six-week backpacking trip in Maine and New Hampshire. He enjoys hiking and has now completed the entire Appalachian Trail, the Pinhoti Trail in Alabama, and several Camino de Santiago paths in Spain.