

December 2023

THE OLLI INSIDER

News for OLLI members at The University of Alabama in Huntsville



EXPLORING AND LEARNING

Clockwise from top left: Newest MIG is Hiking & Biking; profile subject Rick Heeth with wife Cheryl at Mount St. Helens; Maple Hill Cemetery walk; Nancy and Bob Darnall have traveled to all seven continents; touring the Port of Huntsville; Teacher Appreciation Day cake and music by Bob Carroll.



Osher.uah.edu

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OLD DOGS, CHILDREN AND WATERMELON WINE



Sometimes I have no choice but to drop everything and turn up the radio — such as when I hear these words: “ ‘How old do you think I am?’ he said. I said, well, I didn’t know. He said, ‘I turned 65 about 11 months ago.’ ”

Thus begins a ballad by the late, great Tom T. Hall, in which he quotes the man as saying, “Ain’t but three things in this world that’s

worth a solitary dime, but old dogs and children and watermelon wine.”

That song has fascinated me since it was new half a century ago — back when Hall’s description of the man as old and gray did not faze me. Sixty-five *did* seem old at the time.

Hall met the man in a Miami bar outside the 1972 Democratic National Convention (the one that nominated George McGovern). Centenarian George Burns also recorded the song and put it in his album “I Wish I Was Eighteen Again.” You can find both versions on YouTube.

Friends have observed correctly that the song is unduly cynical. The “old” man says that “women think about themselves when menfolk ain’t around, and friends are hard to find when they discover that you’re down.” I know many women and friends who are better than that.

And after hearing the song, I tasted watermelon wine and found it too sweet. But listen to what he says about old dogs and children:

“Old dogs care about you even when you make mistakes. God bless little children while they’re still too young to hate.”

I think about Atticus, the border collie mix who worshipped the ground Patrice walked on, even bestowed some affection on me, and lived to be 15 or 16. I think about the children I’ve seen on four continents — bright-faced and eager to take in the world and engage with other people, oblivious to religion, prejudice, politics and all the other things that divide adults. For children, the present holidays are magical: You get what you need simply by asking, and goodness is rewarded.

In a local church recently, ponderous hymns and a sermon about life’s travails were competing for attention with a toddler who found the smallest things to be wondrous. He was roaming cheerfully, collecting ballpoint pens from the backs of pews. He may have been the day’s most uplifting lesson.

Tom T. Hall’s old man was a lifelong learner (“I tried it all when I was young and in my natural prime”). He had figured out the value of unconditional love, idealism and treating people right. That song is always worth a timeout from whatever I’m engaged in.

Inside *The Insider*:

In his president’s column, John Mason discusses “six phrases that genuinely happy people use every day.” In his military history column, John writes about Americans who were treated brutally by immigrants in this land of “liberty and justice for all.”

Clay Williams takes a year-end look at where OLLI has come from and is going. Membership and opportunities are growing. Sue Chatham continues her series on OLLI’s 30-year history, telling us where the artwork in the OLLI classrooms came from. Nancy Darnall, Linda McAllister and Jane McBride write about 30th-anniversary events on the horizon, the next one being a chance to learn more about how OLLI operates.

Leah Black reminds us that some member interest groups keep going while the rest of OLLI takes a holiday break. Chris Stuhlinger and Steve Jones update us on the newest MIG, for hiking and biking. Chris writes about two tours and a nature walk scheduled in January and February.

Glen Adams’ profile subject this month is Rick Heeth, who coordinates and trains class facilitators, serves on the OLLI board, and organized the 328 sets of DVDs that members can borrow free.

Jane McBride and Ed Bernstein remind us about 2024 travel opportunities in California, Georgia, Ireland and Iceland.

Bob Carroll reflects on the not-so-humble American robin, which profits by cooperating with other birds despite its often-selfish behavior. And don’t miss Bob’s rewrite of “The Cover of ‘Rolling Stone’ ” on the photo page about Teacher Appreciation Day.

May you enjoy the holidays as much as a child or a dog — preferably *with* a few of both.

Steve Stewart
Editor, The OLLI Insider

During a trip to Scotland in October, Patrice and Steve Stewart met this sheep-herding border collie. The dog looks a lot like their longtime pet Atticus, who never herded sheep but loved his people even when they made mistakes. (Photo by Betty Koval)



HAPPINESS IS A CHOICE!



Happiness is a choice, but that doesn't mean it's easy.

When we're stuck in a constant loop of fear, loneliness or negativity, it can be tough to make ourselves cultivate a positive mindset or even be happy. Often, taking that step can be as simple as how we speak to people — ourselves included.

Here are six phrases that genuinely happy people use every day:

1. "I get to ..."
2. "What was your rose?"
3. "Tell me more ..."
4. "... yet."
5. "Will this matter a year from now?" and
6. "I will focus on ..."

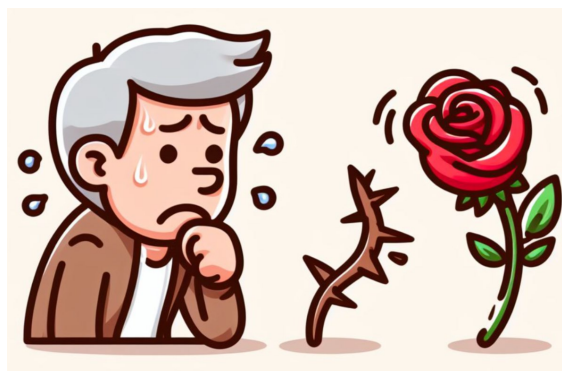
Now, I didn't come up with these phrases. They were in an article I read while at the Osher Institutes National Conference a few weeks ago. But they struck a chord that I wanted to pass along for you to think about as we begin the holiday season.

One of the benefits of being your president is that **"I get to"** spend time with all of you each and every week. It's not a duty; it's a choice. And no matter how I might be feeling at the beginning of any day, physically or mentally, coming to OLLI and spending time with all of you is guaranteed to improve my feelings. What about you?

Another choice is to be happy for today. We should all enjoy every one we have; we're certainly not guaranteed a tomorrow. So take a minute every day and think about what the best part of *your* day was. Ask yourself, **"What was my rose?"** Better yet, ask your neighbor, or call a friend or family member and share those roses together.

At the same time, as someone once said, remember that into every life a little rain must fall, so we need to realize that each day may also bring us a little of that rain — a **"thorn"** if you want to maintain the metaphor. We're going to experience both. Our choice is how we react.

Think about this: How often do we actually mean it when we ask someone, "How's it going?" I know that I do it often as nothing more than a mindless greeting, not really expecting an answer or, worse, not really wanting one. So, starting today, **I get to** choose that, when I ask someone how their day is going, I'll be really asking, "What was your rose?" or **"What was your thorn?"** (the worst part of your day). I'm going to take a minute to stop and listen to the answer and try to actually make a human connection with that person. Just by listening, maybe we can change someone's thorn to a rose.



What are you going to focus on — the best things that happen to you, or the worst?
(Art generated by Microsoft Bing Image Creator)

And you know, sometimes our response to that person's reply may need to be **"Tell me more."** Simply saying, "Tell me more" lets that person know you're willing — wanting, even — to listen, which allows them to keep processing their feelings and thoughts, while also deepening your relationship and bringing you even closer. Sharing is always a win-win opportunity.

Here's another way to fight negativity. How often during the day do we all think about doing something and then say to ourselves, "I can't" or "I don't" or "I'm not"? Then we talk ourselves into *not* doing something we may well have enjoyed.

Try to add the phrase **"... yet"** to any sentence you started negatively. Even if it's just said mentally, the word helps pry open a door that our brain is trying to slam shut. It introduces the possibility that we can do it, if only at some time in the future: "I'm not qualified to be an OLLI volunteer ... yet."

Do you ever find yourself stressing out over all the minutiae in your life? Then try using this one: **"Will this matter a year from now?"** How many of those little, insignificant things do we burden ourselves with every day that could benefit from this thought?

It's easy to zoom in on the worry of the moment like being 10 minutes late for a meeting, forgetting where you put your keys, or not getting a reply on a text to a friend, and use that to go into a downward spiral. That kind of thinking just adds unnecessary stress to our day. So when you start down that path, ask yourself: "Will this matter a year from now?" If not, then think about "what your rose was" or what you "get to do today" instead.

(continued on the next page)

HAPPINESS IS A CHOICE!, CONT



And finally, decide what ***"I will focus on ..."*** today. Distraction and decision fatigue can be real barriers to happiness. The good thing is, we have a choice as to how we handle them.

So reduce your options. Instead of jumping from one thing to the next, take a minute and choose *one* thing you will focus on tomorrow, either at the beginning or end of the

day. Achieving that one small goal is one small step you can take to tell yourself, "I get to ..." enjoy my life filled with genuine happiness. Make that choice. Let's enjoy our lives instead of filling them full of negative and unnecessary vibes.

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

P.S. Also, thanks to having this space, "I get to" wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season! Make your choices so that everything you and your loved ones do turns into a rose. And don't forget to tell them how much they mean to you.

John Mason
President, OLLI at UAH Board of Directors

'MOCKINGBIRD' PERFORMANCE, RECEPTION SCHEDULED FEB. 18

OLLI members will get a discount and a reception for the Broadway Theatre League's production of "To Kill a Mockingbird" on Sunday, Feb. 18.

Aaron Sorkin wrote the stage script for the Pulitzer-winning novel by Alabama's Harper Lee. Richard Thomas portrays lawyer Atticus Finch. Members of the cast or crew will attend the reception.

The reception will start at noon and the performance at 1 p.m. in Mark C. Smith Concert Hall at the Von Braun Center.

OLLI tickets will cost \$70, discounted from \$77. Buy tickets by calling BTL's Pennie Wood at 256-518-6155 and identifying yourself as an OLLI member.

More information is at tinyurl.com/olli-mockingbird.



*OLLI memberships and tuition are perfect holiday gifts for friends and family! Visit **osher.uah.edu/giftcertificate** to see options ranging from \$20 to \$50.*

CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2023 - JANUARY 2024

Dec 7 | Thu | 5:30 pm | In-Person

**Event: OLLI Holiday Party
Conference Training Center**

Join us for the OLLI holiday party. Food, music and fun. See you there if you signed up. (Nov. 28 was the deadline).
Presented by Social Committee



**Spring Semester starts
the week of January 29.**

**OLLI offices and UAH Campus close
Friday, Dec 22
Normal business resumes on Tuesday,
Jan 2, 2024**

Jan 5 | Fri | 10:0 am | In-Person

**Event: OLLI Spring Open House
Wilson Hall**

Join us for the back to school Open House. Watch for more details in the January *Insider* and the OLLI *eNews*.

Presented by Curriculum Committee

**Did you know that at age 70.5,
you are eligible to make a
distribution from your IRA
directly to support
OLLI?**

Benefits include:

- Your distribution will not be taxed.
- You may give up to \$100,000 annually or \$200,000 for a married couple!
- At age 73, your distribution will offset the Required Minimum Distribution.
- You can direct the gift to the area of your choice.
- The distribution could lower your tax bracket.



uahlegacy.org/#getintouch

**KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST
EVENTS AT
[OSHER.UAH.EDU/OLLIEVENTS](https://osher.uah.edu/ollievents)**

EVENTS COMMITTEE

NEW EVENTS FOR A NEW YEAR



Another year is almost over, and many of us are planning for the upcoming holidays.

We had good attendance at our events this fall, and it's always good to see new members participate! We concluded our fall events schedule at the end of October with the Port of Huntsville tour and the Maple Hill Cemetery walk (see recaps below).

Listed below are the new events scheduled for January and February 2024. And we have several additional events planned for the rest of the spring semester (see future newsletters).

Included below is some information below about a few non-OLLI holiday events scheduled for December in the Huntsville-Decatur area.

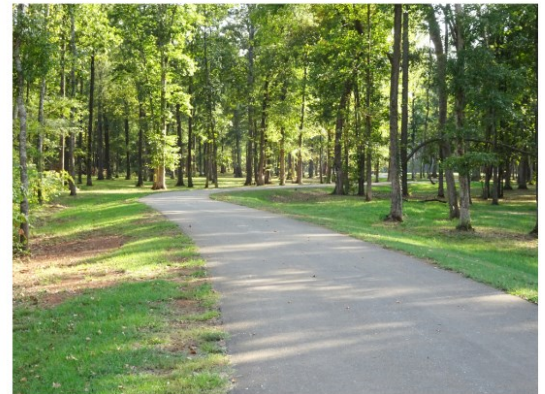
Happy holidays to all!

Recap of recent events

- **Port of Huntsville tour** — The Port of Huntsville includes the International Airport, the International Intermodal Center and the Jetplex Industrial Park. Tour attendees learned about each component of the port Oct. 27 during an informative indoor presentation, followed by a van tour of the airport and cargo facilities. Plans are underway to expand and improve several areas of the port.
- **Maple Hill Cemetery walk** — Members visited the cemetery Oct. 28 and learned about several significant and historic gravesites of government officials, artists, businessmen and businesswomen, and other prominent citizens in the oldest and largest municipal cemetery in continuous operation in the South (since 1818).



Huntsville-Madison County
Emergency Management Agency



OLLI event locations in January and February.

OLLI events for January and February 2024

(NOTE: All events require pre-registration and a completed waiver/release form.)

- **Friday, Jan. 26 — Emergency Management Agency tour** (downtown Huntsville), 2 to 3 p.m. The Huntsville-Madison County Emergency Management Agency is a city-county government agency serving the population that visits, works and lives in Madison County. Learn how the agency provides emergency preparedness for natural, manmade and health hazards and how the hazards' effects can be mitigated. OLLI member participation is limited to the first 30 registrants.
- **Friday, Feb. 23 — Dynetics tour** (Cummings Research Park East, Huntsville) 10 to 11 a.m. Dynetics was founded by Dr. Steve Gilbert and Guntersville native Herschel Matheny in 1974. It was one of several newly organized local enterprises located in the city of Huntsville's zoned research park district (now known as Cummings Research Park East). Some of you may have been students of Dr. Gilbert at either UAH or his professional development luncheons in the Teledyne Brown Engineering cafeteria. Dynetics has grown to be a leading provider of advanced, mission-critical services and solutions to the U.S. Government. Their tagline is "Designing and building modern solutions from seafloor to space." OLLI member participation is limited to the first 25 registrants.

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EVENTS COMMITTEE

NEW EVENTS FOR A NEW YEAR, CONT

- Saturday, Feb. 24 — **Nature Walk at Elgie's Walk Greenway** (south Huntsville), 10 a.m. to noon. Enjoy a leisurely nature walk on this greenway between Bell Mountain Park and Grissom High School. The 2-mile paved walking trail leads through fields and woods and has an optional loop around a lake. This greenway will become part of the 70-mile Singing River Trail between Huntsville and Decatur. (This event will also be listed as a Hiking & Biking MIG activity with the same registration link.)

Selected holiday events (non-OLLI) in the Huntsville/Decatur area

Huntsville/Madison area

- Until Dec. 24, Christmas Light Show at Toyota Field
- Until Dec. 30, Galaxy of Lights at the Huntsville Botanical Garden
- Dec. 1-3, North East Alabama Craftsmen's Association Christmas Craft Show, Von Braun Center South Hall
- Dec. 1-10, times vary, "A Christmas Carol," VBC Playhouse
- Dec. 5, 6 p.m., Huntsville Christmas Parade, downtown Huntsville

- Dec. 8-10, times vary, "The Nutcracker," VBC Mark C. Smith Concert Hall
- Dec. 9, 5 p.m., Madison Christmas Parade, Dublin Memorial Park
- Dec. 14-17, times vary, Alabama Youth Ballet Theater's "Nutcracker," VBC Playhouse

Decatur area

- Dec. 2, Decatur Christmas Parade, downtown Decatur
- Dec. 9, Historic Decatur Christmas Tour

Chris Stuhlinger
Events Committee Chair



NEW MIG: HIKE AND BIKE WITH LESS RED TAPE



Join the new Hiking & Biking Member Interest Group that will start in the spring semester of 2024, and enjoy a simplified procedure for completing the waiver/release forms.

Activities will include hikes, nature walks and bike rides in the greater Huntsville area. For the past few years, these activities were part of the Events

Committee offerings, but after one more "joint" event/MIG activity in February (to help with the transition), those activities will instead be offered by the new MIG.

We plan to offer three to six MIG activities per semester for OLLI members. MIGs usually operate more independently, so members should sign up to "join" this MIG to receive updates and announcements and registration links for upcoming hikes, nature walks and bike rides.

Since the announcement of the new MIG in the November newsletter, we have received approval from UAH to allow members of the Hiking & Biking MIG to agree to the waiv-

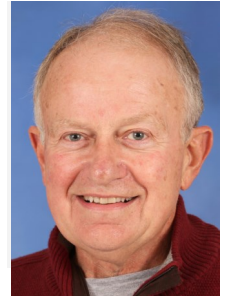
er/release form one time (preferably when they join the MIG) to cover only hiking, nature walk and biking MIG activities as long as their OLLI memberships are valid (which will be verified).

Separate waiver/release forms will no longer be required for each individual Hiking & Biking MIG activity. Separate and individual waiver/release forms will continue to be required for other OLLI events and activities.

Sign up to join and be added to the Hiking & Biking MIG email distribution list (and complete the waiver/release form) at forms.gle/6M5BoaWX9Z4TLugE9. Also, look for announcements of upcoming Hiking & Biking MIG activities in the weekly eNews and the monthly *Insider* newsletter.

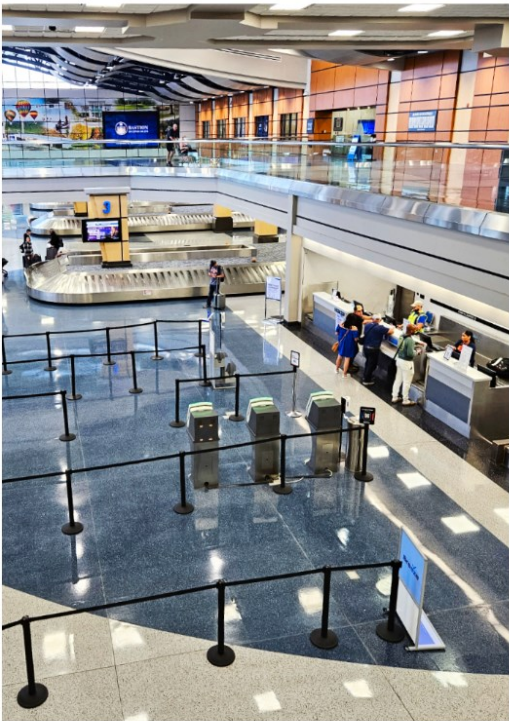
See you on the trail!

Chris Stuhlinger and Steve Jones



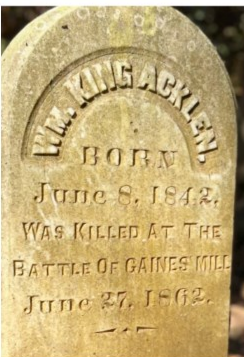
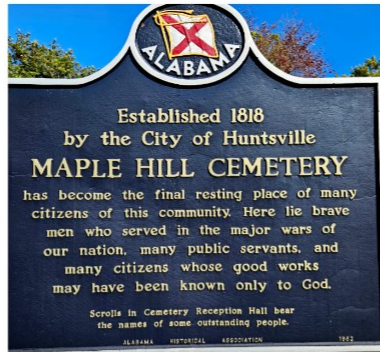
THE AIRPORT IS JUST A PART OF THE PORT

Port of Huntsville officials — including Kevin Vandeberg, chief operating officer, and Mary Swanstrom, public relations manager — gave OLLI members a briefing and a van tour Oct. 27. Huntsville International Airport, which is part of the port, has snowplows, rarely needed in Alabama. The port also includes the International Intermodal Center and the Jetplex Industrial Park.



(Photos by Helen Crawford, Patricia Haag, Steve Stewart and Chris Stuhlinger)

MAPLE HILL CEMETERY WALKING TOUR, OCT. 28



(Photos by Helen Crawford, Patricia Haag and Chris Stuhlinger)

HOW A BIRDBATH RESEMBLES THE OLLI LOUNGE



Turdus migratorius. If I were the American robin, I would be thoroughly offended by my given Latin genus and species, but it is what it is. However, the American robin is a fascinating bird.

Firstly, it can be found in all states (excluding Hawaii), all Canadian provinces, and Mexico. It has a lore at-

tached: Spring has arrived when the first robins appear in your yard. And then, an item I just learned this past year: Robins are “Bullies,” mean ones at that!

“What?” you say. Yep. Bullies, with a capital B. This past summer we observed a robin that would perch close by and patrol our hanging tray feeder just outside the kitchen window. Pity the finch, titmouse or chickadee that came in for a seed. Bully robin would swoop down and chase them off! Having never observed this behavior, my wife and I did some quick internet research and, sure enough, it is a common behavior. Apparently, it is more of a territorial issue as opposed to “get away from my food” because robins are not seed eaters, per se.

But that all changes come autumn. The one-time antisocial, solitary robin becomes group-oriented in preparation for the flock migration southward. One morning recently, while enjoying my morning coffee standing in the sunroom, I noticed our birdbath was inundated with robins! And they were tolerating one another and even a red-bellied woodpecker and finches that had joined them. Reminded me of the OLLI lounge!

What gives? Self-preservation. In late spring and summer, it’s all about reproduction and sustaining the species. Competition for territory and food is high on the list. But come autumn, robins obey the adage of strength in numbers. Long migration ahead; let’s join together.

Upon further investigation, I noticed that the bare crowns of our cherry trees were full of robins, all taking turns dropping down to the birdbath for a drink. The record number was 11 at the rim simultaneously! Eventually they all took flight in unison to move on to another neighborhood or another backyard, pick up some more members, eat, drink and be merry. At some point the flock takes flight for a much longer duration moving southward.

In a nutshell, the life cycle of *Turdus migratorius* is solitary — relational — solitary — relational in order to survive. Which brings us to humans, specifically OLLI members.



An American robin singing in a Tennessee hollow. These birds can be antisocial bullies, but competition gives way to cooperation at migration time.
(National Park Service photo by Will Elder)

We are relational beings. Sociologists will point out the crucial connections to our survival; think about it. And learning is a prime example of relational benefits. Simply said, learning is more likely when done together; that is what OLLI is all about.

When I taught high school science, I encouraged my students to form study groups — meet at a coffee shop and share with one another. Such methodology is proven more effective than solitary studying. We all discovered this during our college days.

So, fellow OLLI members, don’t be an American robin of spring and summer. Rather, come to the birdbath and quench your thirst for knowledge.

Encourage your friends to join us, and seek out peers willing to teach. The spring course guide will be out later this month, so grab copies and pass them out. And don’t forget to invite people to OLLI Open House on Jan. 5!

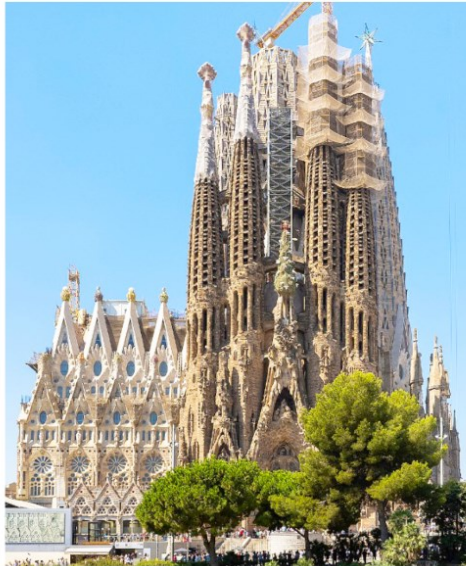
Have a great holiday season!

Veni, vidi, vici.

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

TRAVEL NOTES FROM ALL THE CONTINENTS

OLLI members Nancy and Bob Darnall described their travels on all seven continents during a bonus session Nov. 3. They brought home some of these photos: Antarctica (top left and center left); Sagrada Familia, Barcelona, Spain, Europe (top center); Terra Cotta Warriors, Xi'an, China, Asia (center right); and Barumini, Sardinia, Italy, Europe (bottom right).



THANKING OLLI TEACHERS FOR FALL SEMESTER

Teacher Appreciation Day on Nov. 10 at Trinity United Methodist Church recognized OLLI's instructors for fall semester.

Bob Carroll, curriculum vice president, presented holiday ornaments he made from black cherry. He also sang his version of "The Cover of 'Rolling Stone' " by Dr. Hook & the Medicine Show. Bob's song was about the OLLI course guide: "Wanna see my picture on the cover ... Wanna grab five copies for my children. ... We got lots of friends growing old together so we never have to be alone. We keep getting smarter but we can't get our picture on the cover of the OLLI guide." Amal Johnston, who is OLLI's belly-dancing teacher, and her students also entertained.



ANOTHER YEAR GONE BY



It is hard to believe that we are approaching the end of another calendar year. Like so many years, 2023 flew by. Seems like we were just getting ready to start the spring 2023 semester, and yet here we are winding down the fall and preparing for another holiday season.

With the end of the year approaching, I thought it an appropriate time to take a few minutes to talk about

what has transpired over the past 12 months or so.

Membership at OLLI continues to grow. At the beginning of 2023 we had just eclipsed the 700 mark, and with a month to go we are heading toward 850 with our goal of 1,000 in our sight. We have persevered through the challenges of COVID and are moving forward.

Offerings for our membership continue to grow. A year ago, our fall and spring semesters featured between 40 and 50 courses, and nowadays we are proud to present nearly 70. In addition, each semester features more tours and events as well as fabulous bonus presentations. Travel opportunities are rising, and there are more member interest groups (MIGs) than ever.

Your OLLI staff and organization have undergone some changes.

We now report to the Salmon Library, and Director David Moore is eager to assist OLLI in reaching new heights.

Staff has grown to better handle the needs of a growing membership. This includes a full-time marketing and design specialist (Justin Clay) who can focus all his energy on promoting OLLI and a student worker (Jacob Bruce) who helps set up and monitor classes and assists with many behind-the-scenes tasks.

Finally, we are in the middle of our yearlong celebration of 30 years of lifelong learning. We had a great kickoff in August with Homer Hickam and a packed house for our super bonus about the James Webb Space Telescope. A



Happy holidays from your OLLI staff, including (from left) Clay Williams, program manager; Justin Clay, marketing and design specialist; Alice Sammon, program coordinator; and Anelisse Westmeyer, noncredit registration office coordinator.

few more events are in the works, so keep an eye out for details. It has been a great 30 years, and we are excited for what the next three decades hold.

Speaking of the future, OLLI staff is finalizing details on the upcoming spring semester. The semester starts the week of Jan. 29.

Spring Open House is Friday, Jan. 5, from 10 a.m. to noon, and it is the perfect time to meet instructors and the board and learn all about what the new semester has to offer. Please make plans to attend. Keep an eye on the website, as the spring course guide should be available later this month.

REMINDER: OLLI offices and the UAH campus will be closed for the holidays starting on Friday, Dec. 22. Normal business resumes on Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024.

Happy holidays and happy new year!

Clay Williams
OLLI at UAH Program Manager



OLLI memberships and tuition are perfect holiday gifts for friends and family! Visit osher.uah.edu/giftcertificate to see options ranging from \$20 to \$50.

MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE



Get together and get hands-on with Mah-Jongg, Artist Studio and other MIGs.
(Photos by Steve Stewart)

SOME MIGS STAY ACTIVE DURING HOLIDAYS



Well, classes are over for now, and the holidays are quickly approaching. While there are parties and family get-togethers to keep us busy, many of us may miss getting together with our OLLI friends.

Don't worry, though. You can still come play bridge and mah-jongg, practice tai chi, or bring your art or craft projects to do at the Artist Studio group. These MIGs, or member

interest groups, will still be meeting during the break between terms.

Tai Chi meets most Friday mornings at 9 a.m. Bridge and Mah-Jongg meet Fridays at 1 p.m. The Artist Studio MIG will meet Dec. 1, 8 and 15 from 2 to 4 p.m.; Jan. 5, 12 and 19 from 2 to 4 p.m.; and Jan. 26 from noon to 4 p.m.

Dine Out will begin again when the new term starts in January. This was popular during the last term. Information on the new Hiking & Biking MIG appears on Page 7 in this *Insider*.

Also, other activities, like game days, are being planned. You can gather with friends, bring snacks to share or, maybe, just sit around and chat. Check the *eNews* for more information.

This break between terms is a great time to get some fabulous photos taken for OLLI's annual photo contest. The deadline is April 1, 2024, so you have plenty of time to take that winning shot.

There are some great prizes for the winners. This year, the topic is "Reflections." These can be "physical" reflections or maybe even "mental" ones. You can get detailed information about entering the contest at tinyurl.com/olli-photo-contest.

Maybe you or someone you know would be a great photo contest judge. Please let us know if you are interested.

Have a wonderful holiday season.

Leah Black
Member Services Committee Chair

FOOD AND FROLICKING AT THE PARTY ON DEC. 7



*Sleigh bells ring, are ya listening?
A beautiful sight. We're happy tonight
Walkin' into OLLI party time!*

Yes, it's time to get together, have some fun, and welcome the holidays.

Dec. 7 is the date, 5:30 to 8:30 is the time, and the Conference Training Center is the place.

We're having a buffet dinner with Parmesan chicken, roasted pork and delicious garden salad. Sides include steamed brown rice and roasted sweet and spicy root vegetables. And last but not least, choose from pecan pie or red velvet cake for dessert.

Our bar will include wine and beer — your choice.

Best of all, DJ Ted Cannon will entertain us with great music and keep the dance floor hopping. Ted said he likes to DJ for OLLI because we are a lot of fun.

Let's make this a special occasion! See you there if you signed up (Nov. 28 was the deadline).

Marilynn Szecholda
Chair, Social Committee



Good times at last year's holiday party.
(Photo by Steve Stewart)

FESTIVAL OF TREES (AND OPPORTUNITIES)

Visit the North Huntsville Public Library to see its second annual Festival of Trees set up by nonprofit organizations, showcasing their services and opportunities. Jill Stewart, public relations chair, is decorating OLLI's tree in the right photo. The trees will be there through the holidays and as late as Jan. 8. The address is 3011 Sparkman Drive NW. (Photos by John Mason)



CALIFORNIA, GEORGIA, IRELAND AND ICELAND



It's not too late to have a sunny vacation in the middle of January 2024! Check out OLLI's great-value trip with Road Scholar to museums and gardens of southern California by clicking

tinyurl.com/olli-ca-art. You may also contact Nancy Darnall through the olli.info@uah.edu email address if you have questions about this trip.

You may be wishing that you'd registered to travel with OLLI at spring break visiting some of Georgia's most charming barrier islands. Go ahead and place your name on the wait list at Road Scholar, as space occasionally becomes available. See contact information at tinyurl.com/olli-ga-islands. You may contact Jane McBride through olli.info@uah.edu if you are interested in this trip.

We hope that you are considering OLLI's "Ireland in Depth" trip with Grand Circle Travel that occurs July 13-27, 2024. That is a perfect time of year to visit the Emerald Isle and even better when accompanied by OLLI friends. See tinyurl.com/olli-ireland-in-depth. You may also contact Linda McAllister through olli.info@uah.edu.

Don't miss the opportunity to travel with OLLI to exotic Iceland, "Land of Fire, Ice and Lights," in September 2024. Nanda Journeys of California is conducting the trip, and Chris Stuhlinger is OLLI's coordinator. Chris reported in mid-November that there were 25 registrations, leaving only five spaces. See trip details at tinyurl.com/olli-iceland-fire-lights. If you would like more information about this trip, and/or the link to the Nov. 1 webinar recording, please contact Chris Stuhlinger through olli.info@uah.edu.

For details, meals, inclusions, itineraries and reservations on all trips, please click this link or paste it into your browser: tinyurl.com/olli-travel-2024.

Also, please feel free to request that any of the trip coordinators get in touch with you should you have questions or suggestions. Use olli.info@uah.edu.

Even if you have no thoughts of traveling next year, take a look at the travel brochures, as you are sure to learn something.

We welcome seasoned and curious travelers to the OLLI Travel Committee. Your inputs are always welcomed. And don't forget, we want to feature your own private travel adventures in this space in *The OLLI Insider*.

Jane McBride and Ed Bernstein
Travel Committee Co-Chairs



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Donating appreciated stock is one of the easiest ways to support OLLI!

- You can give more.
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For more info, contact tammy.eskridge@uah.edu

uahlegacy.org/#getintouch



Blarney Castle in County Clare, Ireland — from the travel brochure for OLLI's tour in July 2024.



Rick and Cheryl Heeth at Mount St. Helens in Washington state in 2022; and with son Tom and daughter Jennifer at an Everglades airboat ride in south Florida in 2023.

RICK HEETH FACILITATES CLASS FACILITATORS

Every OLLI course, of course, needs an excellent teacher, which OLLI has plenty of. But it also needs an able facilitator, the person who keeps us up to date on what's going on in the course and what's going on in OLLI.

Rick Heeth has not only been a dependable volunteer for the job, but is also now the facilitator coordinator/trainer. He helps Program Coordinator Alice Sammon line up a facilitator for each of the many OLLI courses, trains them and writes their weekly announcements. Rick is the subject of this month's profile.

Rick was born and raised in Jacksonville, Florida, a rare fourth-generation Floridian. His father co-owned and ran Heeth Brothers Seafood, which was started by Rick's grandfather. His mother was a registered nurse, who left nursing to raise Rick and his three sisters.

As a boy, Rick had many interests.

"I always liked science and math in school," recalled Rick. "History, too. I was also involved in sports, mostly football. In high school, I wrestled and I competed in the shot put on the track team. I sang in my church choir and my high school glee club. I flew model rockets, and I built plastic model kits, which I still do.

"Growing up in Florida in the '60s, we got to witness the early rocket launches from the Cape (Cape Canaveral). With my interest in science, I wanted to be an astronaut. But in those years, you had to be under 6 feet tall, which eliminated me in my early teenage years. Beyond that, I just wanted to do something in science."

To pursue that goal, Rick majored in chemical engineering at Auburn University, which led to a job at 3M.

"I was a process or manufacturing engineer at 3M in Decatur for almost 39 years," said Rick. "My job was to oversee the various production processes assigned to me. Our products were mostly batch operations to make chemicals needed by other divisions of the company. For example, we would make an adhesive for another 3M location, where it was coated on some type of tape.

"Our product lines as well as our product assignments changed over the years, which made the job interesting because there were always new challenges and new things to learn."

After Rick retired in 2016, he and wife Cheryl moved to Hampton Cove. OLLI evidently was eager for Rick to join. They mailed him a catalog while he was still working.

What attracted Rick to OLLI?

"I've always loved learning new things, and OLLI fits that need perfectly," said Rick. "And being relatively new to Huntsville, I found it a good way to meet new people."

Besides being the facilitator-in-chief, Rick has served on the OLLI board for three years and has taken on the Herculean task of reorganizing the DVD library in the volunteer office. (The DVD library numbers 328 sets, mostly of the Great Courses series. They cover history, the arts, religion, science and much more. They can be checked out by any OLLI member in 151 Wilson Hall.)

Rick and Cheryl have been married 40 years and have a daughter, Jennifer, who works as a geospatial data analyst in Huntsville, and a son, Tom, who is a software engineer in Smyrna, Georgia.

Thanks, Rick, for the many things you do for OLLI.

By Glen Adams

THIS MOMENT IN HISTORY



The camp of Lakota Sioux Chief Big Foot three weeks after the Dec. 29, 1890, Wounded Knee Massacre, with bodies of Native Americans wrapped in blankets in the foreground and U.S. soldiers in the background. At right is a clipping from the Record-Union of Sacramento, California, dated Feb. 13, 1891. (Images from the Library of Congress; photo by Trager and Kuhn)



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

December: American genocide

On Jan. 3, 1891, newspaper editor L. Frank Baum, later the author of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," wrote in the Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer:

The Pioneer has before declared that our only safety depends upon the total extermination of the Indians. Having wronged them for centuries, we had better, in order to protect our civilization, follow it up by one more wrong and wipe these untamed and untamable creatures from the face of the earth. In this lies future safety for our settlers and the soldiers who are under incompetent commands. Otherwise, we may expect future years to be as full of trouble with the redskins as those have been in the past.

This editorial appeared only five days after one of arguably the most heinous atrocities ever committed on American soil, the massacre at Wounded Knee. Sadly, it was committed by immigrants to America against those who were, in reality, the true American native inhabitants.

Some might say that illegal immigration has been a problem here for longer than we are willing to admit.

In the 19th century, more than 250,000 Native Americans lived in the Great Plains — between the Mississippi and Rocky Mountains. In the late 1860s, using the precept of "Manifest Destiny," the U.S. government began to increasingly focus on its territories in the West.

Thousands of white settlers set out to conquer the region while the native populations were attempting to remain on the land they had occupied for millennia. Skirmishes between the U.S. government and the Native American populations grew increasingly frequent and brutal.

To quell some of the discontent, the Treaty of Fort Laramie was signed in April 1868, designating a large swath of lands west of the Missouri River as the Great Sioux Reservation. Within that territory, it specifically granted the Sioux the Black Hills, sacred grounds for both them (also known as the Lakota) and the Cheyenne peoples, as "unceded Indian Territory" for their exclusive use.

Not all of them agreed to go. And though many did move, they frequently traveled seasonally to pursue better hunting opportunities.

Then, in 1874, gold was found in those hills by trespassing miners. The U.S. government sent Gen. George Custer on the Black Hills Expedition, ostensibly to choose a location for a new Army fort, but more importantly, to investigate the area's natural resources. Custer's report boasted about the area's wealth, describing gold "distributed throughout an extensive area within the Black Hills" as well as "rich pasturage" for livestock.

This was all the government needed to renege on its agreement, so it redrew the boundaries of the treaty, and confined the Sioux people — traditionally nomadic hunters — to a farming lifestyle on the reservation.

This was a blatant abrogation that has been at the center of legal debate ever since. In 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the U.S. had illegally appropriated the Black Hills and awarded more than \$100 million in reparations. The Sioux Nation refused the money (which is now sitting in trust, worth over a billion dollars), stating that the land was never for sale.

(continued on the next page)

DID YOU KNOW ...? AN INSIDER'S LOOK AT MILITARY HISTORY, CONT

By fall 1875, over 15,000 hopeful miners had settled in the Dakota Territory. On Nov. 3, President Ulysses S. Grant met with his Cabinet and decided the Army would do nothing more to stop white settlers from entering the Black Hills.

In December the U.S. commissioner on Indian affairs ordered all remaining Sioux living outside the reservation to move there no later than Jan. 31, 1876. Despite the fact that this would have been a nearly impossible feat in the dead of winter, all who refused would afterward be considered hostile.

Those decisions marked the beginning of a 15-year series of wars between the government of the United States and America's oldest people, whom they were sworn to protect — a conflict that only finally ended with the massacre at Wounded Knee on Dec. 29, 1890. Surviving Native Americans were herded into reservations set up for them where they could be "civilized," and America could, much as they had done after the ratification of the 14th Amendment on July 9, 1868, once again brag about being the bright and shining light of liberty for the world's citizens.

What has actually changed since then? Very little.

Native Americans, as well as other so-called minorities, still suffer lives little changed. We know about our continued struggle for civil rights; in our lifetimes we've witnessed church bombings, governors standing at the doors of schools, the marches at Selma and Washington, the "I can't breathe" movement, the renewed 71-day siege of Native Americans at Wounded Knee in February 1973, and the April 2016 Dakota pipeline standoff.

Incidents like these and so many others prove that we still are no further along in our stated goal of "liberty and justice for all" than we were in 1891. Or 1850. Or maybe even 1619.

But now in the third decade of the 21st century, we have evolved, right?

Not yet.

So maybe it's time for us to re-evaluate ourselves. In the season where the phrase "peace on earth, goodwill toward men" rings on every street corner, let us strive to make that statement, once and for all, truly inclusive of *all* men. No. *All people*. Let the movement begin with us.

By John Mason

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE



Instructor Philip Flowers took his class on "Easy Steps to Better Nature Photography" for a field lab on Beaverdam Swamp Boardwalk on Oct. 31. Class member Steve Jones submitted these pictures, including some colorful, dangerously alluring poison ivy leaves.

PHOTO CONTEST, CLASSROOM ART AND MORE



This is the third of several historical articles by Sue Chatham, who joined UAH's Academy for Lifetime Learning 29 years ago, about a year after its founding. The Academy later became the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) continues evolving.

In 2009, the first long-range plan was developed and focused on 2009-14.

In September 2009, OLLI asked for volunteers to be audio-visual facilitators for the first time.

In November 2009, the first photo contest winners were announced. The theme was "Picturesque Scenes of Madison County." The winners were:

- First place — "Saturn V Rocket" by Tom Bryant
- Second place — "Water Feature at Bridge Street" by Mike Bilinski
- Third place — "Downtown from Big Spring Park" by Frances Ruiz

In 2009, the OLLI Christmas party was held at the Summit at Big Spring Park. The Summit was a large room overlooking Huntsville and void of any decorations of any kind. The social committee, chaired by Nan Case, did a wonderful job turning it into a beautiful event.

In January 2010, OLLI moved back to the renovated Wilson Hall. At this time there was a curtain separating the lounge from the 152C classroom, and the entrance to the lounge was through the 152C classroom.

In May 2010, the "OLLI Has Talent" event was held. OLLI members have many hidden talents.

In 2010, UAH's Continuing Education (CE) became Professional and Continuing Studies (PCS).

In fall 2010, the art placed in memory of Terry Schoper in Wilson Hall 152 and 152C was viewed by OLLI members for the first time. The art in Room 152 was selected to represent the many disciplines and activities that OLLI offers. The art in Room 152C has motivational messages to spur OLLI on to greater pursuits. Barbara Staggs and her committee framed and placed it in the classrooms.

In March 2011, the long-range plan was updated to focus on 2011-16.

Did You Know?

(From the April 2012 OLLI newsletter)

■ The senior age group is now, for the first time, the largest in terms of size and percent of the population in the U.S. This age group grew at a faster rate than the total population between 2000 and 2010, according to a 2010 census.



■ In the 2010 Census, there were approximately twice as many women as men at age 89 (361,309 compared with 176,689, respectively).

■ Comparisons across the nation's four regions in 2010 show that the South contained the greatest number of people 65 and older at 14.9 million, followed by the Midwest at 9.0 million, and the West at 8.5 million. The Northeast had the smallest number of people 65 and older at 7.8 million but also had the highest percentage of people 65 and older at 14.1 percent.

In July 2011, a door replaced the curtain separating the OLLI lounge and Wilson Hall 152C, and a door was added from the hallway as an entrance to the OLLI lounge.

In March 2012, OLLI hosted a "Blind Wine Tasting and Appetizer Challenge." As you know, **"we love to eat."**

June 2012, Lorrie White of the Member Services Committee suggested that the OLLI generic newsletter needed a name. Several suggestions were submitted by members, and the committee voted on them. Guess what! Lorrie's suggestion, **The OLLI Insider**, won! Also at this time, Lorrie, who had been editor of the newsletter for many years, was replaced by Joyce Pettis.

There are Academy/OLLI scrapbooks in the lounge. Information and the pictures came from the newsletters found in the scrapbooks.

The journey continues ...

By Sue Chatham

(See related photos on the next page)

THIS MOMENT IN HISTORY

IMAGES FROM THE ANNALS OF OLLI

Scenes from OLLI's history selected by Sue Chatham: A 2012 wine tasting; the Summit at Big Spring Park, scene of the 2009 Christmas party; classroom wall art placed in memory of Terry Schoper; winners of the first photo contest in 2009.



COMING SOON: INSIDE LOOK AT OLLI, ART EVENT

The OLLI 30th Anniversary Committee continues to work on events to celebrate our program. Next on the calendar are Inside OLLI, chaired by Linda McAllister, and an art event beginning in late March chaired by Jane McBride with the OLLI Artist Studio Member Interest Group as a substantial support wing.

Later in the year, we will have a special annual meeting in May at Burritt on the Mountain, as well as a summer picnic.

It is my honor to chair this group of talented individuals who make these special activities happen.

The committee is Bob Darnall, Betty Koval, Linda McAllister, Jane McBride, Jerry Pang, Janet Reville and Jill Stewart. President John Mason, Social Chair Marilyn Szecholda, and Membership Chair Leah Black round out the volunteers. Also critical to the planning and execution are UAH's Clay Williams, Justin Clay, David Moore and Alice Sammon.

Nancy Barnett Darnall
Vice President for Administration and Finance
OLLI at UAH Board of Directors

HAVE YOU WONDERED HOW OLLI WORKS?

- Have you ever wondered exactly how OLLI at UAH works?
- Do you have questions about who folks are?
- Who are OLLI volunteers, and who are the OLLI at UAH staff?
- How are folks elected to the OLLI board?
- What are board members' terms and responsibilities?
- How are teachers and courses selected?
- Do you want to know more about OLLI committees, events or MIGs?
- What are MIGs, anyway?
- Do you want to know more about how you can be involved?



The Inside OLLI Seminar in February 2024 will resemble events held in 2017 and (bottom right) 2019.



The 30th Anniversary Committee realized that we have not had an Inside OLLI Seminar since before COVID. Knowing that we have many new members, we plan to host an event in February to know you better and for you to know OLLI inner workings better.

On Feb. 9 at 10:30 a.m., we will convene in Wilson Hall with presentations planned to give you "inside" information about how OLLI functions.

You will hear from UAH at OLLI staff, as well as board members and other OLLI members. You will learn about OLLI courses, OLLI committees, OLLI history, finances and, most importantly, how you can help make it all happen.

A free lunch will be provided, and Inside OLLI will conclude at 1:30 p.m.

We hope you will leave as a well-informed OLLI member.

Signup opportunities will be available for our Inside OLLI Seminar in January.

Linda McAllister
Chair, Inside OLLI Seminar

TALK WITH ARTISTS; SEE MEMBERS' ART

As part of OLLI's 30th anniversary celebration, we look forward to an event on March 29, 2024, focused on the arts.

Initial plans include a conversation with well-known Alabama artists and a special exhibit of works by talented OLLI artists, to be held in the UAH Wilson Hall Art Gallery. If you create objects of art, please watch for details in upcoming editions of the OLLI eNews.

We want to showcase the works of many talented OLLI instructors and members who create art in various media.

Jane McBride
Chair, Arts Event