Spring, and an older person’s fancy turns to their bucket list. My bucket list, or the lack of one, occurred to me as I was planning a trip to the normally cloudless West to maximize my chances of seeing a total eclipse of the sun this August. I have never seen and eclipse, but it was not on my list of things to do until I heard about it last year. While there are other things I would like to experience, I have never formulated a list. For a while, I was uncertain whether to just keep a few things in the back of my mind or to develop a concrete list. What I decided to do was jot a few things down but remain open to adding anything that strikes my fancy. That way I can have the best of both worlds. I can move toward achieving some long-term goals but not neglect the possibility of doing interesting things I never considered.

Speaking of the eclipse, it will be on August 21, and the path of totality goes through Greenville in mid-afternoon.

Wear your name tag! Turn off your cell phone! Clean up your spills! Man! It’s always something isn’t it? There are good reasons for these requests just as there is a good reason for asking you to bring your own coffee cup. We spend a lot of money on paper cups, dollars that could be better spent on other OLLI programs and supplies. If you do need to use a paper cup, give it a rinse and put it in recycling. It only takes a few seconds.

If you are reading a hard copy, remember, Gray Matters is on the OLLI website. By reading online you can see the issue in full color and expand the type size and images if you wish. Just click on “Member Resources” and then “Gray Matters” to view this issue and past editions.

Carole Eisen, Sue Renault, Judy Aten, Jean Blank, and Nancy Kennedy proofed this issue. Heidi Wright puts the issues on the website and arranges for the printing. The rest of the OLLI staff and Brad Bechtold also check the content. Special thanks to all our contributors. Thanks also to our natural history experts: our oceanography expert Caesar Choppy, and our ornithologist, Seymore Robins.
CARSON DEPARTS,  
SALLY ARRIVES

It seems we just got to know her, but Carson Ruffrage (left) is leaving us for a position in the Furman Housing Office. While we are sad to see her go, we are happy that Sally Gregoire (right) is taking over as our OLLI Department Assistant. You can read more about Sally on page 5. We wish them both the best in their new positions.

SHOULD I VOLUNTEER FOR A COMMITTEE?

George Hammond

I have been a member of OLLI since spring 2012. When I joined, I had no idea what OLLI could do for me. Yes, I took a couple of classes, enjoyed them, learned a few new things, and met a few people. But I still wasn’t sure what OLLI could do for me. Then, one of my new friends nominated me to serve on the OLLI Council. I got elected; that was a surprise. It was only then that my questions started to have answers. The first thing I realized: It is volunteers who make OLLI what it is today. While we have a great staff that is part of Furman, we, the members of OLLI, are the ones who make it happen. We teach the classes, we attend and put on the events, we take the pictures, and we hang the pictures that we all enjoy. We are OLLI. We make the wheels turn. We are the volunteers.

I have now volunteered for over 3 years. I served on the Finance Committee, and presently I am on the Social Committee. By volunteering to be on these committees, I gained more knowledge about how OLLI works and interacts with Furman. Volunteering gives me an opportunity to offer suggestions, and, in some cases, these suggestions become a reality.

As I stated, I am on the Social Committee, and we have been busy creating events for you to enjoy. There was the “Cruisin’ with OLLI” car show, our own Chautauqua event, and we cheered on the women’s volleyball team. We set up and took down Christmas decorations. We have two events coming up: on March 16 – a social event around the Read & Explore book, One Foot in Eden; on March 24 – a mystery dinner theater. While these events may not interest you, you may have an idea for an event. It only takes you to make it happen. You can be a volunteer for OLLI, which is now more than 2000 members strong. Every committee always needs volunteers, and there are many committees for you to join. All you need to do is talk to a staff member, and they will happily steer you in the right direction. So, if you want more answers about OLLI, the best way to get them is to volunteer.
Three years ago, Susan Marie Frontczak portrayed Marie Curie at an OLLI event. On February 4 she returned to the Herring Center as Eleanor Roosevelt. The presentation was wide-ranging, but one thing that most people knew little about was Roosevelt’s work on the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights, accepted in December, 1948. Thanks to all who worked on this event and the reception beforehand.

THE BEST ADVICE I EVER RECEIVED

Kathy Roed

The best advice I ever received was from my dad when he dropped me off at college for my freshman year. I was a "Navy brat" who moved around quite a bit as a child. I went to three high schools. My life was one of many transitions, and I often found it a challenge to participate in a lot of typical high school activities because I knew I'd soon be "on the move" again. Trying to come up with activities I'd participated in for my college applications was a real challenge! Knowing that I'd be in one place for 4 years (Wells College, a small liberal arts college for women in upstate NY), the last words I heard from my dad as he dropped me off at my new dorm were: "GET INVOLVED!"

I did exactly that and have been EXTREMELY involved in volunteerism and leadership roles in my school, home and work communities wherever I have lived. I have been blessed with a very enriched and fulfilling life as a result!

A SHOT FROM THE PAST

Several years ago Bill Kellett and a dog he met on the trail both enjoy the view. Photo by Ron Lawson.
If Sally Gregoire looks familiar she ought to! Sally used to volunteer in the OLLI Office while she took classes with us. She’s back in the office again but no longer as a volunteer. Sally is the newest member of the part-time office staff!

Sally's last name (pronounced Gregwar) is French Canadian. She and her spouse, Damon, come from the same community in Vermont where they both grew up. In fact, Sally met Damon at the drugstore where they both worked in the summer to help pay for their college educations. Sally's family members were farmers and maple syrup producers. Her future mother-in-law owned a fabric store, which is still going strong 56 years later (although the merchandise has changed).

The English major (Sally) married the accounting major (Damon) and they decided to go adventuring after their graduation. Armed with the fantastic sum of $1,000, they loaded up a U-Haul and headed away from Vermont’s frigid winters to the warmth of North Carolina where Sally enrolled in UNC Charlotte, determined to earn her master's.

A jack of all trades, Sally took some temporary jobs to keep them afloat - from working at an office job to selling and fixing bikes at a local shop. Four years later she took on a full-time job that ended her graduate school career: mother. They moved around a lot, and whenever they moved, here came another little one … three of them in 4 years and five different states. Before South Carolina, the Gregoire family resided in North Carolina, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

A friend of Damon’s asked if he would like to take a job in Greenville. The town Damon remembered from a previous visit wasn’t all that great, but they drove down to take a look. That was 17 years ago, and the vibrant community they saw was nothing like the unimpressive town they had seen before. They’ve been here ever since.

Not long after their relocation, a friend asked the stay-at-home mom if she knew anything about computers. Yes, she did. That turned into a job that allowed her to work from home for the next 7 years. When Damon retired from his executive position in Rock Hill, Sally decided it was time to get out and be around people.

That was when she discovered OLLI. Sally rode her bike on the Swamp Rabbit trail to OLLI and worked as an office volunteer while taking two classes: pen and ink and quilting. By then all three of her children were in college: a daughter at Boston University, a son at Coastal Carolina, and her oldest daughter at UNC Chapel Hill.

Four years ago Sally’s father was diagnosed with Alzheimers. She headed back to Vermont to help care for him until he died. Now back home in Greenville, Sally calls OLLI a blessing. She says the best thing about it is its mission, allowing mature adults to stay active mentally, physically, and socially.

When asked if she had a final statement to make, Sally declared, “Vermont maple syrup is better than Canada’s!” Once a Vermonter always a Vermonter, and once a member of OLLI it’s hard to stay away.
Furman University is not an agricultural and technical school, yet, nestled behind the Shi Center, there lies a very productive ¼ acre farm. Growing sustainably and organically, the farm produces some of the fresh vegetables, fruits, herbs, and edible flowers for the dining hall each growing day.

“Furman has one of the longest histories with sustainability of any college campus in the country,” said Dr. Angela Halfacre, former Director of the David E. Shi Center for Sustainability, in an article in a past issue of Business View Magazine. The Furman Farm was developed as part of the sustainability program in 2008. Built on the former women’s tennis courts, the garden has grown and flourished, forever changed from compact clay soil to the 46 rows of vegetables and the bordering fruits, herbs, and flowers.

Manager of the Furman Farm and fourth-generation Greenville county farmer Bruce Adams is the magic behind the farm’s success. On his grandfather’s farm, every family member had an important role in caring for hogs, mules, chickens, cows, turkeys, and two Tennessee Walkers. Everyone contributed to the making of molasses from cane, peanut butter from peanuts, butter from milk, their own lye soap, and the countless bushels of vegetables sold from the shade of the porch. Nothing was wasted, everything was recycled, and you cared for the land because it sustained your life.

His grandfather also taught him the value of relationships. “Relationships,” Bruce says, “are what I work to develop and maintain.” This is exhibited daily in the interaction between the work-study students and the hired student managers who tend to the garden. Sophie Friis, a freshman and sustainability major and the young assistant farm manager, told us that despite growing up in downtown Greenville, she always wanted to be a farmer. Haley Disinger, the assistant compost manager, works with Sophie and Bruce to schedule the 18 student workers, the Furman lab classes and the many community volunteers – balancing all the needs of the farm while making sure everyone enjoys the process.

They have developed a relationship with Bon Appétit, the current food service in the Furman dining hall. This year, 100% of the food grown in the garden will be prepared and consumed on campus. The pre-consumer waste is returned for composting as is the post-consumer waste, including protein. Harvested trees, office paper, collected leaves – all are returned and composted. Last year 30 tons of compost were produced using container bins, in-row
composting, compost tea, and “in vessel composting,” which can, in 3 days, compost pre- and post-consumer food that would have taken 30 days in conventional bin composting.

Yes, the Furman farm grows organic vegetables, fruits, and herbs. But, more than food, this farm grows teamwork, camaraderie, work ethic, pride, shared responsibility, and service to the community. Under the direction of Bruce and his two assistants, the students are learning how to be aware of the needs of the consumer; how to prepare the soil; how to plant, weed, harvest, wash and package the produce; and then how to deliver the restaurant-quality product to the consumer. But that is not all. The pre- and post-consumer waste materials are then collected and turned to compost and utilized for the future growth of plants.

The students are also given the responsibility of the health and security of the farm. Bruce remembers a day when a visitor was politely asked by a student to remove his dog from the posted garden and calmly, firmly, and in a supportive manner was told that for health reasons no animals were allowed. He was offered the opportunity to tie his dog near the garden and return to the tour and ask the students any questions. Bruce stresses that these students are income-producing farmers. He is moving them from training in our garden to the larger community of the future.

Farming methods change every growing season. Methods are evaluated and adjusted based upon the previous season’s results. Last year, after a visit to Greenville Tech’s aquaponics demonstration, students researched the idea, drew up plans, and developed a system for aquaponics within the borders of our existing farm. You can see this process currently under construction. If you peek in the window of the greenhouse, or “high tunnel,” you will see four large plastic containers buried 4 feet into the soil. Above these containers you will see an A-frame construction that will soon hold PVC pipe with 1,000 - 4” holes that will house a variety of young greens and other fast-growing vegetables. There will be 1,320 gallons that fill the containers in addition to 1,000 gallons of water circulating in the PVC piping. To complete this ecosystem, prawns will live in the tanks, providing organics to the water. When complete, students will check the air temperatures, the water temperatures, the water pH, and will feed the prawns. Bruce said “This will be a self-producing ecosystem that is natural, inclusive, and a notch above organic soil gardening.”

Visit the garden. Experience the magic. Ask the students about their work. Stop by the dining hall and enjoy the food that is truly farm to table. Bon Appétit!
TRIBUTES

Barbara Leimsieder

Tributes Editor

David Sauer

by AY Brown

OLLI has lost a good friend with the death of David Sauer on December 14, 2016 at the age of 80. Dave’s interest in Shakespeare led him for several years to make the 2-hour round-trip from the Tryon area to John Crabtree’s class at OLLI. Dr. Crabtree welcomed Dave’s lively skepticism about the Bard and the added dimension that it gave to the classes. Like all of us, Dave was impressed by the richness that OLLI gives to our lives and by its growth far beyond what we imagined a few years ago. We shall miss the congenial intellect of our good friend, Dave Sauer.

Elizabeth Cusick

by Natalina Ferlauto

Elizabeth Cusick was a long-time member of FULIR/OLLI. Her favorite classes were Shakespeare with Dr. Crabtree, film with Scott Henderson, theater, and art history. She also loved to play bridge and enjoyed other social activities with FULIR/OLLI. Before we moved into the Herring Center, her health deteriorated, and she stopped attending classes. She died on December 26, 2016 at the age of 86.

Kathy Sauvain

by Natalina Ferlauto

With Kathy Sauvain, who died on August 7, 2016 at the age of 69, it was for me a family affair. I knew her well before OLLI existed. In the early days of FULIR, I met Kathy’s mother-in-law, Peggy Sauvain, a wonderful lady who still survives Kathy. I think it was Peggy’s enthusiasm for OLLI that enticed Kathy to take classes. Her favorites classes were Southern literature, gardening, and health. The family affair continues with Kathy’s husband, Ted, who presented a very well-attended class on probate court and is now an OLLI member.

COFFEE BRIGADE MEMBERS WANTED

As you can tell by the picture at left, OLLI @ Furman’s coffee, tea, and hot chocolate are very popular. You can help make sure the supply is always available by joining the Coffee Brigade. There is no set schedule. Just help out when you are available and there is a need. Sally, or any of the staff members, will be glad to give you a quick instruction session.
VALENTINE’S DAY

Valentine’s Day included a singalong during lunch and many people wearing red. Left: As the audience sings, Jann Howell plays the piano, Bing Vick directs, and Sarah Fletcher coordinates the lyric projection. Right: Heidi, Sam, Pam, Susan, and Nancy caught in the holiday spirit.

DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

Nancy Kennedy

There has been much talk about the Furman Advantage on campus lately. The Furman Advantage is how the University is defining what makes a Furman education better than other colleges. Why would parents be willing to invest in a Furman education—what’s in it for their child? There are many good answers to these questions, and University staff, faculty, and administration will continue to explore ways to make the Furman experience unique and meaningful for each student.

There are lifelong learning programs at more than 400 colleges and universities across the country. Of those, 120 are OLLIs. Each is unique to its community, and many are very strong programs. But, what’s the Furman Advantage for OLLI?

**Furman is a great host.** The more I talk to directors of other programs, the luckier I realize we are. We are not charged for services we access on campus (marketing and facilities, for example). We don’t pay for parking. We have a home ON campus. The administration recognizes the benefits of having all of you on campus.

**OLLI members enjoy benefits all over campus.** $5 meals in the Dining Hall. Check-out privileges in the library. Discounted tickets to the Furman Theatre and Music Department events. Discounts at the golf course. Need I say more?

**Furman students are pretty cool.** The three who work in our office are smart, capable, and friendly, and they enjoy getting to know our members. I hear from you all frequently about positive interactions you have with students all over campus. And when Furman students teach a course or bonus event for us, we are all blown away.

**Furman faculty provide incredible courses for our program.** The sticker price on a Furman education this year is $63,584. OLLI members benefit from courses taught by some of the same faculty members for just $55.

You can do your part to help us maintain these advantages. Thank professors and students who teach our classes. Be courteous to staff in other buildings. Park in spaces designated for University guests, which includes OLLI members (coded orange). YOU are the face of OLLI on campus.
Last fall, OLLI @ Furman participated in a membership survey administered by the Osher National Resource Center. There were 12 OLLI programs included in the survey. These programs were carefully selected to give a representative sample of all 119 OLLI programs by including programs that were large and small, geographically dispersed, previously surveyed, etc.

The Long-Range Planning Committee, along with Jack Hanson, an OLLI @ Furman member who has assisted the National Resource Center with all its surveys, was tasked with reviewing and evaluating the survey results. We’ve compared the OLLI @ Furman results with our 2014 survey and the combined results of all 12 OLLI programs. The OLLI Council will use the results to address areas where we can make improvements in the program.

Responses were received from 639 OLLI @ Furman members. The female-to-male ratio at Furman was about 60/40 in both 2016 and 2014 compared to 67/33 for the 12 OLLI programs. The peak in age distribution at Furman in 2016 was the 70-74 range with 33% compared to the 65-69 range, which was higher in 2014. Looks like we may have gotten a little older. Roughly 90% of Furman members have a bachelor’s degree or higher. Furman had a slightly lower percentage of nonwhite participants (2.4%) than the average for the 12 OLLI programs (5.24%).

An interesting finding was the very high technology utilization at Furman compared to the 12 OLLI average and to Furman in 2014. Those computer/iPad/smartphone classes must be working. Another finding, which many of us anticipated, was that Furman had the highest percentage of people that had relocated in the past 9 years of all 12 programs surveyed (45.8%) compared to the 12-program average of 26.9%. The six most popular topics for courses are the same at Furman and nationally - in order, history, fine arts, current affairs, literature, religion, and health and wellness. However, at Furman, health and wellness was the second most popular area compared to sixth nationally. (Must be all those hikers.) When asked what about OLLI @ Furman has been valuable/important, the two most often stated responses were social offerings and broaden education.

The most important finding of the survey was that 98.5% of Furman members rank satisfaction with their overall OLLI @ Furman experience as exceeds/meets expectations. So, a giant THANK YOU to everyone who helps make our OLLI experience great. This includes the office staff, instructors, council members, hundreds of volunteers, and the members who contribute to the richness of our classes and programs!

The Long-Range Planning Committee includes Nancy Kennedy, Margaret Clark, Greg Peters, Alan Weinberg, Jane Chambers, Lance Renault, and Steve Davis.
Mike DuPre knew he wanted to volunteer, but he didn’t know where. Marie Eldridge (pictured at right) was certain that she wanted to work with elementary school children, but she could not decide which of many options to choose. Thanks to the Personal and Community Engagement (PCE) initiative, Mike and Marie have each found the best volunteer match for them.

The PCE, created by a group of OLLI members, helps simplify the process for OLLI members to engage in volunteer activities in the Greenville area.

“The original idea leading to the creation of the PCE is that older adults need to meaningfully engage with their environment in ways that are useful, challenging, interesting, and exciting – working at something they feel passionate about, helping them find new meaning and purpose, and improving their quality of life,” stated Dudley Tower, PhD, founder of the Dynamic Aging Program (DAP), which is taught at OLLI.

Mike and Marie are two of more than 40 OLLI members currently involved as new volunteers or as coordinators for 15 nonprofit organizations. At the Greenville Literacy Association, Mike started assisting adults with online classes in the computer lab. Today he is teaching a Career Pathways Intermediate Reading and Word Study ESL pilot program with a focus on English vocabulary development. “Both opportunities have allowed me to be engaged in volunteer activities, meet new people from other countries and learn about their country and customs,” said Mike. “PCE helped me figure out where to best use my time and talent, doing something I like.”

Marie mentors preschoolers weekly at the Frazee Center. She and fellow mentors take children to the library, local parks, museums and other child-friendly sites. “It is a rewarding experience, and I look forward to the smiles and hugs I get when I go to Frazee each week.” she said.

PCE Coordinators, OLLI members who are already volunteering, represent the non-profit organizations to OLLI members. “The PCE helps provide the opportunity for us to give back. It feels good walking away from an experience when you know you have made a contribution to your community,” stated Jim Carroll, PCE Coordinator for Harvest Hope Food Bank.

“PCE has certainly brought new purpose and meaning to my life,” said Jean Blank, program manager. “Volunteering creates a sense of connectedness, belonging, and worthiness that is essential to happiness in our later years and benefits those in need. Everyone wins.”

In the spring, the PCE Special Interest Group (SIG) will introduce new volunteer opportunities and discuss existing volunteer options for OLLI members interested in becoming meaningfully engaged in the community.

If you want to explore volunteer opportunities for yourself, or if you need more volunteers where you already volunteer, PCE may be able to help. For more information, go to www.PCEGreenville.com or contact Tom Nowlin at 912-660-1797 or thomasonowlin@gmail.com, or watch for announcements about the upcoming SIG gatherings.
Interested in a journey with Mike Svec and a small group to Prague and the Czech countryside? Mike Svec speaks the language, understands the Czech culture, and enjoys all aspects of Czech cuisine. This trip will feature morning group excursions, time in the afternoon to explore on your own, then regrouping for local culinary dinners. There are a number of OLLI members who took this trip with Dr. Svec in 2007 and thoroughly enjoyed their adventure as well as his OLLI class.

Immerse yourself in Prague, the ancient capital of the Kingdom of Bohemia. This travel program will take its time, so you can come to know the Czech Republic in a more intimate way. Walk the same streets as Holy Roman Emperors, saints, writers, composers, scientists, and occupying armies. Take time to enjoy some of the best beer in the world on the shores of the Vltava river listening to Smetana’s ode to that very river. Breathe in a millennium of culture, architecture, history, and music. The trip includes exploring the countryside of southern Bohemia with an overnight stay in Cesky Krumlov, one of Europe’s most picturesque towns and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

If you would like more information, please contact Heidi Wright in the OLLI Office. She holds your ticket to grand adventures: Heidi.Wright@Furman.edu

The first Read and Explore with OLLI has been a great success. Thank you to all the members who read the book and attended the events. A special thanks to the REO committee and OLLI staff who put the program together. There will be a complete report on our inaugural REO in the May edition.
The Curriculum Committee is the backbone of OLLI. Since education is our primary focus, the quality and integrity of our courses are key. The good people on the various subcommittees develop new classes that will have a broad base of interest and entice popular previous presenters to return for another class. The other committees support and complement the work of the Curriculum Committee and further enhance the ‘community’ of OLLI.

There are 12 ‘topical’ subcommittees listed on page 4 of the current OLLI Course brochure. Members of the Curriculum Committee also include the Travel, the Bonus Tours and Events, and the Lunch and Learn Committees’ members. Each subcommittee consists of a chairperson and co-chairperson who are aided by their members in procuring each term’s classes.

I am continuously amazed by the passion and dedication of these hard-working OLLI members. These are all volunteers who believe in OLLI and our mission. They appreciate feedback, good or bad, so that they can hone the offerings. This spring we are offering 104 classes and 36 bonus trips and events to accommodate OLLI’s growing enrollment.

The Curriculum Committee is composed of all OLLI volunteers. With over 70 members of varying degrees of involvement, there are always people cycling on or off their respective subject matter sub-committees. The Curriculum Committee welcomes new members. People with an interest in an area, whether acquired through their career or avocation, are encouraged to let their interest be known. Everyone on the Curriculum Committee started with no experience on it, so no one should be intimidated. We’d love to hear from you.

Sonya Hammond: ollisonya@gmail.com

Monday’s High Country Hikers pause for a break at an overlook. Photo by Greg Peters
As spring approaches, downtown Greenville beckons with restaurants, shops, people watching, mouse hunting, and other possibilities.
THE MYSTERY OF METAPHYSICS

Judith Isler

We are all separate and all one - Infinitesimal bits that hum in perfect harmony, concentrating on our own tunes, oblivious of the symphony we produce.

We are well-rounded and individual as blood cells which cannot know they take part in the great flowing river.

We buzz and flow, bump into one another, abrade and bruise, push each other along the corridor, ignorant and so beautiful.

WHERE IN FURMAN ARE WE?

This picture was taken on the Furman campus. Do you know where? How many hints do you need?

Hints:
1. At the north part of campus.
2. Close to the lake.
3. An article in this issue tells where.
4. Close to the Shi Center

Answer below:

Pergola at the Furman Farm
unexpected |ˌəəˈnikˈspektid|

adjective
not expected or regarded as likely to happen: his death was totally unexpected | (as noun the unexpected) : he seemed to have a knack for saying the unexpected.

This word occurred to me when participating in some of the Read and Explore with OLLI (REO) events. Gray Matters will present a full report on the REO program in the May issue, but let me mention a few things at this time.

Although some people had heard about a “Big Read” possibility, I don’t think most OLLI members expected the REO program when the academic year started. Curiosity was aroused when OLLI Notes announced it, and people became more and more interested. What was especially unexpected to me was the level of interest and participation. The first 100 books were gone early during the January welcome reception and more had to be ordered. An unexpectedly high level of participation was experienced during the events. The movie Wild River had to be shown twice, Ron Rash’s talk packed the Younts Center, and professor O’Neill’s presentation was well attended. At this writing I am still anticipating the REO celebration and looking forward to what REO has in store for the future.

OLLI @ Furman exposes us to many unexpected things. Most of us didn’t expect car shows or a mystery dinner theater, but here they came. Many times the OLLI classes hold unexpected information or discussion. Who knows what might be around the next corner in the trail while hiking, what skills you may develop in a class, what opportunities for volunteering may come your way, or what you have overlooked until you take photography class.

So, embrace the unexpected at OLLI @ Furman. In fact, add to it with your fresh ideas and participation.