Gray Matters

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE @ FURMAN

Fall, 2014 Edition
EDITORIAL RAMBLINGS

Gary Aten

Wow! The start of a new academic year and I feel the pressure to say something meaningful and profound, but the inspiration has not come to me. There are lots of things I could wax poetic on, but I fear I have said them all before. Actually, the word “poetic” should probably not be used in conjunction with any writing I do. Our wonderful Herring Center, the enjoyment of learning, meeting old and new friends, our staff, our teachers, the wide variety of classes and events, and our volunteers have all been the subjects of previous comments. They are all part of the colorful patchwork that is OLLI @ Furman. So just wrap yourself up in that quilt and appreciate the array of experiences as you go through the year.

Gray Matters is always looking for contributions, including poems, artwork, and photos. We are especially interested in writers who would like to create articles of interest to our readers. If you have ideas for submissions, we welcome your input.

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Time to get back on my soapbox again. A lot of you know what’s coming. You have the ability to save OLLI @ Furman operating costs and help the environment at the same time. Reduce the use of paper cups by bringing your own cup or mug for coffee, tea, or chocolate. IF you must use a paper cup, and we all forget our own once in a while, remember to empty it and put it in the recycling container and NOT in the trash. I know it’s HARD, but you can do it. I know you can.

Thanks to Carole Eisen, Sue Renault, and Nancy Williams for proofreading this issue. Also, our Gray Matters transportation experts were indispensable this summer. The team was headed up by Minnie VanDriver and included Rex Galore and Carson Rhodes.
DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

Welcome back! I hope you enjoyed the summer and are looking forward to a new term at OLLI. As I write this, we are just 7 days into the registration period for Fall Term, and already 1,108 people have registered for classes. I'm sure that number will continue to climb as we approach the beginning of the term, so you can look forward to catching up with your OLLI friends and making a lot of new ones!

This summer’s Southeastern Lifelong Learning Conference, hosted by the OLLI at UNC-Asheville, was a terrific learning opportunity for 3 staff members and 16 OLLI members. We brought back good ideas to further strengthen this organization (plus some fun ideas for new programs) and will be working over this next year to implement some of those.

Another exciting event this summer was the hiring of Heidi Wright to serve as Volunteer Coordinator and Office Manager. Read more about Heidi on page 8, and stop by her office to meet her. She is wonderful addition to our staff. I think you will all enjoy working with her.

I assumed the role of Director May 1 and have spent the summer learning more and more about the inner workings of OLLI. I appreciate all of the offers of help, the meetings to explain different committees and programs to me, and the great support I’ve felt from so many of you.

I hope you will stop by my office if you want to share an idea for OLLI, or just to say hello. OLLI @ Furman is an outstanding program because of the member support it enjoys, and it is a privilege to be a part of that. Have a great Fall Term!

DAVE GALLEMORE POETRY

A Beginning

Recently embarked newlyweds, Still tentative, Stroll at sunset along the ship’s promenade, Hamburg behind, the Mediterranean ahead.

They stop at the rail And for the first time view as one The light on the distant line Kiss And go inside.

Inanimate Object

If you made me an inanimate object You would make me a shoe With a sole for a soul A tongue that won’t talk And a heel for your blaming.

I’d be forever tied up in knots On a tree in your closet.
Sonya Hammond, Nancy Kennedy, and I were invited to speak at the August 2014 Furman University department chairs’ meeting at the Herring Center. Brad Bechtold, Executive Director of Continuing Education, hosted the meeting. We were able to showcase the OLLI @ Furman program and our outstanding facilities to a receptive audience. It was also an opportunity for us to address requests from OLLI students to offer more courses taught by Furman faculty.

I was pleasantly surprised to discover Furman faculty taught 46 OLLI courses during the past 5 years. In addition, there have been other courses where Furman faculty or Furman students have participated in one or more classes. We were able to report these observations and list specific benefits of this collaboration for OLLI and for the Furman faculty. We also highlighted a number of potential opportunities to build on this foundation and create a greater level of interaction between OLLI and the Furman undergraduate departments. The meeting concluded with our request for the audience to identify other mutually beneficial opportunities.

We have already received several suggestions, so be on the lookout for more courses taught by Furman faculty members and students. With great anticipation, we also await opportunities for OLLI students to become more involved in undergraduate programs.

George Hammond

I have registered for my classes and am ready to go, but this year brings new challenges for me. Somehow, I said okay to being nominated to be an OLLI Council member, and, before I knew it I was elected VP of Administration. My primary role as VP of Administration is to ensure adherence to the budget set forth by Council. I am familiar with the Furman financial system and how it relates to the OLLI organization. This is probably somewhat more involved than being Class Treasurer in grammar school, but I am looking forward to this role.

I had the opportunity to attend a regional lifelong learning workshop at UNC-Asheville a few weeks ago, and I realized that our OLLI @ Furman program is not only an outstanding program, but also that we are a program that many other LLI’s aspire to be. Many individuals, far too many to mention, are responsible for making OLLI @ Furman the program it is today. We are so fortunate to have OLLI @ Furman. I know many of us realize what it means to us individually. Taking an OLLI class can be so rewarding. Not only can we learn something new, or see something new, or do something new, we make new friends, and we get to see old friends. Hey, it is like grammar school again, but even better – no tests. Help make my new role easier: Take many OLLI courses and have fun; you deserve it.
In 2014 more than 154,000 Latin students from 49 states and 17 foreign countries at all levels of instruction, including 24 colleges and universities, took the National Latin Exam, and we were absolutely thrilled to learn that all of our students who attempted the test won top awards at two levels! It doesn't get any better than that!

In addition, only 62 gold medals were awarded in South Carolina this year, and 4 of them are ours! We are so proud of all our students, those who took the test and those who did not. All share in this wonderful achievement, including Michael Kilgore, who is the co-instructor of Latin 101, exemplifying a dedication to lifelong learning.

Left to right: Linda Stone, Lee Wall, Karan Maxson, and Betty Burnett. First Place, Latin I Exam. All four won a gold medal. In addition, only one question was missed among the 160 answers of all 4! An absolutely incredible achievement.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Olliver joins Smokey the Bear to remind you:

ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT WILD FIRES!
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Elaine Brummett

As Council President (until May 19), let me introduce myself. For 5 years, I taught gross anatomy and embryology in New Zealand, Malaysia, and Salt Lake City before moving to Colorado, where I enjoyed hiking and outdoors life. My work with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission as a project manager for multi-million-dollar environmental restoration projects provided team building and management experience.

I moved to SC in August and joined FULIR in September of 2005. I joined the Curriculum Committee in the spring, led Walking Tours in Greenville Fall Term 2006 and the first Friday Bonus Tours (Northampton Wines, BJU Gallery) Winter Term 2007. After becoming the co-chair of Curriculum that fall, I continued heading the Bonus Events subcommittee. I have taught and/or organized classes, and served on Council for 2 years first as Member at Large and later as President Elect. OLLI has provided me with friends and interesting activities, including the greatly appreciated support given to me upon losing Mike so suddenly in 2008.

MY main goals for Council are to increase opportunities to add to the enjoyment and health of our members; promote getting to know other members; support Furman’s goal of sustainability; and increase communication at all levels, including Furman students and administration.

YOU, I hope, will often thank the instructors, staff, and volunteers who make OLLI @ Furman what it is. Smile and say hi; no, I probably don’t remember your name either, but that’s OK. If you don’t want to be on a committee, then please offer to help on a project, such as a social event. Also, continue to provide ideas and comments to staff and Council members.

You can contact me at: Ebrum301@aol.com Here’s to another great year at OLLI.

CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP

Incoming President of the OLLI @ Furman Council, Elaine Brummett, receives the presidential gavel from the outgoing president, Karl Sedlarz, at the Spring Luncheon.
OLLI @ Furman is fortunate to be able to look forward to the 2014/15 year with confidence and without major problems on the horizon. We have a great staff, a wonderful building, solid financials, and capable instructors who again will provide interesting classes on all manner of subjects. So, why worry about long-range planning?

In the absence of looming existential concerns we have the luxury to think about what we can do better. Remember, the better is the enemy of the good. For each term, our Curriculum Committee labors hard to look at and develop courses and matching instructors so that we always have great offerings for our members. We know that this works. However, some subjects, from philosophy to geography to science, do not always lend themselves to be studied with OLLI's limited instructor pool. This is where modern technology comes in. Most OLLI members have heard of and many have used, even within OLLI, the offerings of the "Great Courses" or "The Learning Company" and others. Recently, massive open online courses, or MOOCs, have entered the education arena and provide high-caliber and yet low-cost and flexible instruction opportunities.

During the coming year, I plan to focus (in collaboration with the Curriculum Committee) on these opportunities, not to replace human classroom instruction, but to take advantage of what they can offer, from availability to content and technical implementation.

I invite all OLLI members with an interest in this subject to contact me with a view of joining the LRP Committee and take part in a newly available way to further enhance OLLI's quality.

My email address is sedlarzkh@aol.com

Joy Eaton

Our family of five was traveling home from a long, exciting day near Seattle on Highway 99. Dad suddenly turned into a very small drive-in. Here we were being treated to a surprise milkshake. This was very unexpected. However, so was my first sighting of a television. There sitting on top of a shelf was a TV! Our necks ached from their extension of trying to view this marvel as we drove away filling ourselves with our delicious treats.

KOREAN WAR VETERANS WANTED

As most of you may know, we are interviewing present OLLI@Furman members who served during the Korean War, from June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953. Members need not have been on the ground in Korea during their service. If you are reluctant to participate, know that seven of your fellow OLLI members have already subjected themselves to this process, and there have been no major injuries. Seriously, if you were in any of the armed services during that time, we would like to include your experience. Please help us remember “The Forgotten War.”

Contact Gary Aten:

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MY FIRST TELEVISION EXPERIENCE
HOWDY HEIDI - MEET MS. WRIGHT

Judy Aten

You can’t miss our latest OLLI staff member. She’s the one with the warm smile on her beaming, delightfully freckled face. We had the pleasure of talking to her at the end of her first week with OLLI @ Furman. Heidi looks forward to meeting all of OLLI @ Furman’s members and is eagerly awaiting the beginning of classes and the opportunity to get to know all of us.

When we asked Heidi how she came by her singular name, she explained that her mother chose it. The day she was born in Middleton, Ohio, her parents had not yet decided on a name. They had picked out names for her four older sisters, but they couldn’t decide what to call this new baby girl. Her four older sisters were waiting to meet their little sister, and her perplexed father left the task of naming their daughter entirely up to her mother. A few days later, after getting better acquainted with her baby girl, her mother decided the infant looked like a Heidi. She does.

When she was 9 and visited her two older sisters who were attending Clemson, Heidi decided that it was where she should go as well. She enrolled in Clemson’s Parks and Recreation Department, earning a BS in Special Events, Community Leisure Services, and Travel and Tourism. She met her future husband, Jimmy Wright, at Clemson and married him a year and a half after she had moved to Greenville.

Heidi Wright’s philosophy of life is to make the community she calls home a better place to live by improving its quality of life. For the past 22 years, Heidi has worked for several non-profit organizations whose philosophy mirrors hers, taking time off between jobs when her children were born. While working at Greenville Events, she planned large festivals including Fall for Greenville and River Place Arts Festival, and was part of the team that developed Main Street Jazz. After taking time off to have her first child, Heidi went back to work at the burgeoning Children’s Museum shortly after it acquired the building that would become its permanent home. One baby later, she was back at work with the American Heart Association and later as a part-time employee with Greenville Hospital System's Pediatric and Hematology, Oncology Center, helping develop summer camps for its department’s patients. After her third child was born, Heidi took a slightly longer hiatus before returning to the workforce as a fundraiser for Meals on Wheels. When Furman advertised the opening in OLLI @ Furman, Heidi called Nancy Kennedy to learn about the position and the people it served. We all know how that turned out.

Heidi is the proud parent of four children, two girls and two boys; whose ages range from 15 to 8. Three years ago her father relocated to the Cascades, where he is now in the skilled nursing facility. Her spare time? She loves being with her family and doing things with them.

When you stop by the OLLI office to say hello to our newest staff member, don’t be surprised if she asks you about your favorite OLLI class. Heidi wants to know as much about us as we want to know about her. It’s clear she’s happy to be the newest member of our OLLI family.
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. North of the Mall
2. OLLI / FULIR members more than two years ago are probably very familiar.
3. North Village Housing area

Answer:

SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIFELONG LEARNING MEETING
Diane Lawrence

Nineteen OLLI @ Furman members enjoyed a full range of activities at the recent Southern Regional Conference, which was hosted this year by OLLI @ UNC-Asheville. More than 20 OLLI and other lifelong learning organizations were represented during the 3-day event at the end of July. Our delegation consisted of members, staff, committee heads, and OLLI Council members. Networking, sharing ideas, speaker sessions, break-out groups, and social activities filled our time.

Pictured are some of our OLLI @ Furman attendees of the Southern Regional Lifelong Learning Meeting who gathered for a recap session led by current OLLI @ Furman President Elaine Brummett. The recap session identified ideas attendees gathered at the meeting for possible use by OLLI @ Furman.
TRIBUTES
Barbara Leimsieder, Tributes Editor

Bob Calder
Bob Calder died May 12, 2014. He and his wife Marjorie were delightful members of FULIR and OLLI for most of 10 years. They were very appreciative of the efforts of course instructors, often sending personal cards with thank you notes. They have been sorely missed since 2009, when they had to stop attending OLLI because of Bob’s illness.

Alan Johnstone
After a valiant fight with Huntington’s Disease, Alan died on August 10, 2014. I first met him as leader of the discussion group at the Greenville Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. He was a dedicated high school history teacher and debate coach. Alan was a passionate activist and an enthusiastic OLLI student, especially in history classes. When he was stricken by the disease, he asked his daughter to drive him to OLLI. Subsequently, an aide would bring him in a wheelchair to classes. Even when he couldn’t speak any more, he could listen and smile to his many friends.

Paul Ziemer
Paul passed away on August 17, 2014. He and his wife Judith were still unpacking from their move to Greenville in 2007 when they attended the Spring Welcome Coffee and started attending classes that term. Paul was active in FULIR and OLLI, including serving as the Curriculum Committee chair and taking a wide variety of classes. A retired Navy pilot, Paul was interested in automobiles and owned a variety, culminating in his show-quality MG-TD. Many of us will miss visiting with Paul during breaks and between classes.

Johnnie “Mac” Walters
OLLI member Johnnie “Mac” Walters passed away June 24, 2014. A Furman graduate, Mac served as a navigator on a B-24 during WWII. He also served as the U.S. Assistant Attorney General and later the IRS Chief Counsel in Washington, DC. Mac was a successful lawyer in Greenville, joining FULIR shortly after his retirement. His war experiences were recounted in the Gray Matters World War II special edition in spring of 2012. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, and two sons.
James Robert Maxwell Alston, Jr.  

By Margaret Clark

Our friend and classmate, Max Alston, left us on June 9, 2014. Max enjoyed a long career with the US Department of Defense. He came to Greenville in 1969 as Associate General Counsel for Daniel Construction. Max was always ready for a good discussion, his ready wit making for a lively conversation. He was a lifelong student, had a great sense of humor, and was often seen, with his wife Jeannette, cheering on the Furman sports teams. We will miss him and will always remember his courage in facing health challenges.

Richard Holt  

By Barbara Leimsieder

Richard Arnold Holt died on June 29, 2014. He was born in Brooklyn, NY. He graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in civil engineering and was a retired structural engineer.

The Tributes section recognizes departed OLLI classmates, teachers, and staff who have enriched the OLLI program. We invite you to submit your name and contact information along with a brief notice of up to 125 words to the new Tributes Editor, Barbara Leimseider (bleimsieder@gmail.com).

Please emphasize the OLLI involvement of the deceased.

Thanks to Connie Irby, who was the Tributes Editor since this section started in 2010 until now, and edited the first two tributes in this issue.
excitement |ɪkˈsɪtmənt|

noun
— a feeling of great enthusiasm and eagerness: her cheeks were flushed with excitement | the excitement of seeing a live leopard.
— something that arouses enthusiasm and eagerness; an exciting incident: the excitement of the previous night.

You might not generally associate the word excitement with OLLI @ Furman. It seems to imply a wild activity, maybe fear, uncertainty, or something you have never seen or done before. However, a look at the definition reveals the words enthusiasm and eagerness. Those words certainly can be applied to classes you have registered for, to the beginning of a new academic year, to meeting new and old friends, and even to being involved as a volunteer helping to move the OLLI @ Furman program along. Thus, it is probably not hyperbole to say you are excited to start a new year. Do what you can this year to keep your level of excitement up and help OLLI @ Furman provide excitement for all our members.