Thanks to Nancy Kennedy for her work in loading *Gray Matters* to the website. She also arranges for the hard copies to be made. Thanks also to Sue Renault, Carole Eisen, and Nancy Williams for proofreading this edition.

Holy cats! I usually am begging y’all to contribute to *Gray Matters*, but the response to requests for travel articles for this edition was almost overwhelming! I think you will enjoy reading the contributions as much as I did. Just a quick look to the left at the travel destinations shows you the variety of places OLLI members have been. Thanks to all who contributed.

Speaking of contributions, I would still like to have articles, photos, and poems to include. Submissions should be as a Word or Pages document, or as a JPEG file for photos. Contact me at 864-294-6371 or e-mail me at garyaten@bellsouth.net.

Some of you noticed the date on our last issue was wrong, stating it was January 2012, instead of 2013. Our apologies. This led to the quick termination of our fact checker, I. Don Noh, for incompetence. He has already secured a new position with *The Onion*. We have high hopes for his replacements, May B. Tru and May Knott, who come to us from *Mad Magazine*.

I just heard that OLLI @ Furman registered over 100 new members for the spring semester! That is more than the total number of members during FULIR’s first year. For you newbies out there, FULIR (Furman University Learning In Retirement) was OLLI’s predecessor, and the beginning of learning in retirement at Furman. Truly Amazing!
Many OLLI members told me they think the courses offered at OLLI are exceptional. This is a direct result of the committee’s efforts, but I think few understand how the committee operates. Currently it identifies and schedules approximately 325 courses and events per year. That in itself is quite an accomplishment performed by about 50 people. But, we should also understand the process. Many suggestions are submitted for courses, but few contain any thoughts on who can teach them. Instructors typically are OLLI members, retirees from the community, non-profit organizations, or civic-minded companies or individuals. The process starts with an interesting topic on which to instruct, but that’s really the easiest part. OLLI does not pay its instructors, so often that is the first cause of rejection. Then of course our term length is eight or nine weeks. Many prospective teachers say they could do 1.5 hours or even twice that, but they are not prepared for eight or nine-week courses, especially if they work full time. Our OLLI members are also a great resource, with almost endless knowledge from work experiences, hobbies, or other interests, but this does not necessarily include any teaching experience or confidence in that area.

So how does the Curriculum Committee fill these 325 or so courses each year? I would have to say with great dedication, inventiveness, and enjoyment. The subcommittees are focused on their areas of interest. They watch the newspaper, the internet, local publications, educational institution news, the arts, and politics, anything that might result in a potential course direction. They offer potential instructors a state-of-the art facility in which to teach, students guaranteed to be interested in their topics, and assistance, especially if they have not taught before, in putting together their course from the Faculty Support Committee. They tell them of the experiences of others who, hesitant at first, are now teaching repeatedly at OLLI, often with a number of different topics. They tell them of many instructors, both experienced and not, who claim they learned more from their students than the students learned from them. We ask them, “Wouldn’t you like to be able to say you are teaching a class in a program for senior learning at Furman University?” And of course, we remind them there are no tests, no papers to grade, and, in general, the students provide no discipline problems (we hope)!

So being on the Curriculum Committee of OLLI is challenging, but I believe every committee member will tell you it is personally very rewarding and fun. In spite of this, our turnover is constant as people relocate or must leave the committee for other reasons. So, thank goodness, OLLI members keep coming forward to join the team and help us keep our 325+ courses going each year. Wouldn’t you like to be part of this team? All current team members are listed on the OLLI website by subcommittee area of interest. Contact one in a subject that appeals to you, and he or she will be glad to discuss what the committee does in detail, and help you determine what role you can play on the team.
Under the leadership of OLLI instructor, Dale Grote (Ph.D. in Classics at UNC Charlotte) ten OLLI members flew to Athens, Greece in February 2008.

The first three days were spent exploring Athens. It was easy to walk from the hotel to the Agora, the administrative and economic heart of democratic Athens, and on to the Acropolis to see the world-famous Parthenon, dedicated to the goddess, Athena. Also nearby was the National Museum, known as one of the most comprehensive collections of Greek antiquities in the world. Then the group was off by bus to Eleusis, Corinth, and Nafplio, stopping to see archeological sites and ancient ruins. Dale was always on hand to relate the history and importance of the sites the group was seeing. Nafplio has been called the most beautiful city in Greece and the group wouldn’t disagree. Here there was time for shopping, dining, and just enjoying the water views of a bay off the Aegean Sea.

From Nafplio the group took a 30-minute bus ride to Epidaurus and its ancient theater, built during the fourth century B.C. and renowned for its perfect acoustics. The OLLI visitors couldn’t resist testing the acoustics on their friends at the back of the theater. Then the group was on the road again, heading north to the legendary city of Agamemnon, Mycenae, which contains many of the best royal tombs. Another two hours found the group in Delphi, the location of the sanctuary of Apollo, the god of prophecy, whom the Greeks consulted for advice for more than 1,000 years. There was one more stop in Greece before taking a flight to Istanbul. Just outside of Athens is Cape Sounio, the site of a temple to Poseidon, and the place to see a spectacular sunset. The OLLI group was not to be denied – the sunset was indeed beautiful.

After a 45-minute flight, the group found itself in another world, Istanbul, Turkey. With the backdrop of spectacular architecture and the sound of the calls to prayer several times daily, it was impossible not to feel as if you had arrived in a special place indeed. Here the sites included the Hippodrome, the Blue Mosque, Agia Sophia, and Topkopi Palace. Istanbul is famous for its amazing Grand and Spice Bazaars, so shopping was on the agenda.

One of the highlights of the trip occurred on the last day, as our leader, Dale, decided the group was sufficiently travel savvy to be left on its own to do some exploring. The intrepid OLLLites headed across town to find the port on the Bosporus and a tour boat that would take them on a river excursion. With the help of many friendly locals they made their way and were able to talk a boat operator into taking them on the desired excursion. What a wonderful way to end a grand trip - on a boat with OLLI travel mates, viewing the sights of Europe on the west and Asia on the east.
THE GRAVE AT NEWBRIDGE-ON-WYE, WALES

Sally Adkins

His stone rises soldiered among short ranks of similar size and style--slope-shouldered by over a hundred years of Welsh winter winds and rain sieved from worried skies. Ashen-pebbled, its face clutches rows of lettering made almost indecipherable by wear and Welsh spelling. "David Jarman" This upright, heading a rectangle matted with tan, tangled thatch--this stone sharing the steely November air of Newbridge-on-Wye--is all that reminds the now of the then--of David Jarman--shepherd of sheep weaver of words persuader of people great among good believer rebel David Jarman, My great-great-grandfather who lies in the grave at Newbridge-on-Wye and lives in me.

WORLD WAR II VETERANS: OLLI WANTS YOU!

Gary Aten

Since our World War II edition came out last spring there have been many new members, and there may also be perhaps someone we missed. If you were not included in that special edition, were a member of any of the services during WWII, and are willing, we would like to share your story. Please contact me at: 864-294-6371, or garyaten@bellsouth.net. If you have not read the WWII edition, I urge you to access it on the OLLI @ Furman website under the News from OLLI and Gray Matters tabs.
Whenever I said that I was going to or had been in Estonia, the responses varied from “Where? That’s near Gastonia? It’s in Russia?” to just a polite nod. A few people were aware of the location but had relatively little knowledge of the area, as I myself did.

I have come to the conclusion that when people experience a traumatic event, they either cannot stop talking about it or they say nothing. That is how my parents were. They never discussed their life there, the war, or the escape from Estonia, and growing up, I never asked too many questions. However, a few years back, learning about my heritage became a growing interest to me, so I decided to visit Estonia. I could not find any organized tours that satisfied my agenda, so I became my own travel agent. I decided to make Tallinn, the capital, my home base. I began to read all the travel guides I could find to determine which hotel would give me the best access to what I would like to see. I discovered a history of over a 1000 years right at my doorstep. The hotel I selected was across the street from one of the entrances to Old Town Tallinn, with its 11th and 12th century walls and towers.

Good walking shoes were an essential for its cobblestone streets and alleyways. Public transportation with buses, trolleys, and trams was inexpensive and easy to use to explore more distant locations. An additional advantage is that the city is entirely WIFI friendly, making my IPOD very useful as a GPS, translator, Skype, and monetary exchange convertor (though this was not as important since the country had adopted the Euro in January 2011). From my research, I discovered a country and its language that should have disappeared long ago because of its turbulent history. I gained a sense of pride to have been part of such a proud and determined people who never gave up hope to be a free and independent country.
There are several groups who do "work vacations," such as Earthwatch, Biosphere, Responsible Vacations, etc. I go to their websites and find an expedition and sign up. I've been on a white rhino expedition in Kenya, to the rainforest in Peru, helping koalas in Australia, and will be with elephants in Thailand. You literally work the whole time. It's incredible fun.

I went to Southern Australia in April 2012. We did tracking and other scientific “stuff” with koalas. We captured the 10 koalas in the study to collar them, weigh them and assess their appearance. We used a plastic bag on the end of a very long pole. This frightened the koalas (they are not bears) and forced them to safety - by climbing down the tree. The scientist wrapped a noose around each of their necks (it had a knot so it couldn't possibly choke them) and that kept them from climbing back up the tree. When on the ground, we placed them in sacks so we could work with them. We placed a radio collar (so we could track them) and another collar which followed their movements. We weighed them, took a general look at them, and then released them.

Koalas are very lazy creatures and have been confused with sloths because of their slow movements. While they look adorable, they can be very aggressive when caught. Their claws are meant to grab onto trees, and they are razor sharp. You can see from the first picture that this koala almost got away from me, but the scientist, Deslie, is next to me, and she prevented the escape. We worked every day of the 9 days we were there - tracking koalas and their dung, recording and tagging gum trees (they eat these), and observing and recording koala behavior.

We had one spare afternoon, and Deslie allowed us to climb the trees. Only one other person volunteered. In one picture you can see my orange helmet - way up in the tree. We saw other very cool stuff - like kangaroos, wallabies, and many charming Aussie birds. I got acquainted up close with four leeches (they were on someone else, but I plucked them off).

Even though it was fall in Australia, I dressed in four layers. The ocean we could see was the Pacific and the next land mass was Antarctica.
Who are the “Dixie Chicks”? If you said a country music group, you’d only be partially right. They are also a trio of women, of diverse backgrounds and varying ages, who probably never would have met if not for the OLLI program at Furman.

In the fall of 2010, these women – Kathleen Allen, Barry Gilmer, and Carol West – all signed up for OLLI’s Nature and Landscape Photography class, taught by Bob Howell and Alan Weinberg. What brought them together initially was a shared interest in photography and a love of nature. They soon found other common bonds, however, including a love of history, literature, and learning new things, as well as a shared lively sense of humor.

Returning to the Nature and Landscape Photography class in the spring of 2011, they rekindled their friendship and soon began discussing the idea of taking a trip together. In the fall of 2011, the three women – two veteran travelers and one rookie – took a Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel) trip to photograph Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon, and the north rim of the Grand Canyon. It was on this trip to Utah and Arizona that a Road Scholar participant coined the name “Dixie Chicks” and a legend was born.

In the past year, the “Chicks” have traveled to St. Augustine, Florida to photograph birds at a rookery and to Black Mountain, North Carolina to attend a wildlife and nature photography workshop. Just recently, they headed west again on another Road Scholar trip, this time to Sedona and Flagstaff, Arizona. They are already making plans for more “Dixie Chick” trips next year. While the goal of these trips has always been to bring home beautiful photos, the best souvenirs have been the wonderful memories filled with fun and friendship!
Dick Lambrecht

RETURNING FROM A FAMILY REUNION IN WISCONSIN LAST SUMMER WITH MY TRAVELING COMPANION AND CHIEF NAVIGATOR ALICE LATIMER, ALICE GRACIOUSLY ALLOWED ME TO PURSUE THREE OF MY FAVORITE INTERESTS: LAKE BOATS, STEAM ENGINES, AND RAILROAD HISTORY - ALL AT ONE TIME!

WE DROVE TO MANITOWOC TO CATCH THE LAST COAL-FIRED, STEAM-DRIVEN BOAT ON THE LAKES, THE CAR FERRY BADGER. THE BADGER WAS BUILT IN STURGEON BAY, WI IN 1952 FOR THE C&O RAILROAD AND OPERATED BY SUBSIDIARY PERE MARQUETTE RAILROAD. IN THOSE DAYS, THE C&O DID NOT HAVE TRACKAGE RIGHTS INTO CHICAGO, AND RUNNING AROUND CHICAGO WAS EXPENSIVE AND TIME CONSUMING. THUS THE CARS (RAILROAD CARS, NOT AUTOMOBILES) WERE FERRED ACROSS THE LAKE SAVING TIME AND MONEY. IN THEIR HEYDAY, THERE WERE 14 CAR FERRIES PLYING LAKE MICHIGAN. NOW, SINCE RAILROAD CONSOLIDATION AND MODERN SIGNALS WITH COMPUTER-CONTROLLED SWITCHING YARDS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED, THE CAR FERRIES ARE, LIKE BUGGY WHIPS, HISTORY.

THE BADGER WAS Laid up in Ludington until two investors, against the advice of colleagues, decided to restore her in 1990 and return to the ferry business with automobiles and trucks rather than cars. The Badger, with her Steeple Compound Uniflow engines and Foster Wheeler coal-fired boilers, is now honored by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers as a mechanical engineering landmark.

Beside the automobiles, she loaded trucks carrying tower sections for wind turbines. We were told the sections were made in China and shipped to New Orleans, transferred to Mississippi river barges, and brought to Wisconsin for transfer to trucks. Three trucks were loaded: the first was 187 feet long and weighed 235,000 pounds. The tubular tower section was (I’m guessing) 10-12 feet in diameter and 100 feet long. Six axle dollies were bolted to each end of the tube and pulled by a standard road tractor. The other two sections were slightly smaller.
Did you know the Marvin Book Nook is available to all OLLI members? Come peruse the shelves and choose a book or two to borrow and enjoy. There are no sign out sheets and no deadlines on returns.

There are sections for Fiction, shelved by author; Political Science by author; Science by author; History by author; Biography by person; Philosophy; Humor; Cookbooks and Gardening; Science Fiction; Classics; Religion and Self-Help; and Hobbies - something for everyone.

To return a book, simply leave it in the return basket located by the windows.

To donate books, leave them by the return basket. We ask that magazines be no older than 12 months, and any health-specific books be no older than one year. Our Cookbook, Gardening, and Science Fiction sections are in need of donations.

Look for special features such as Staff Picks, Sectional Features, and Reader Favorites in the coming weeks. Come and enjoy this wonderful part of the Herring Center.

MONDAY HIGH COUNTRY HIKERS

Photo by Greg Peters
Ellen Hilderbrand died on January 5, 2013. In her time at OLLI, she enjoyed the Eaton hiking group and Kristi Barton’s yoga classes. Ellen earned a MA degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and worked with inmates at the SC state prison, a sheltered workshop in Boston, and at King College and Northeast State Community College in East Tennessee. As a Master Gardener in East Tennessee and South Carolina, Ellen donated hundreds of volunteer hours. After living in Hong Kong for four years, Ellen became an expert in Tai Chi and studied Shao Lin martial arts. She was a loyal member of Greenville Unitarian Universalist Fellowship and was devoted to social justice and equality for all people. She was married to Ron Hilderbrand and had two daughters, Nell Eden and Susan Noel, and one granddaughter, all of Nashville. She will be remembered as a caring and fun-loving person and will be missed by many.

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 (8 or 9 lines) to the Tributes editor, Connie Irby (connieirby@charter.net). Please emphasize the significance of the deceased to OLLI.

People, People, People! What is it about recycling the paper cups you don’t like? Remember, the paper cups should be emptied (sinks and water fountains are close by everywhere in the Herring Center) and placed in the recycling bins, NOT in the trash bins. If you stop for a cup on the way to the Herring Center, use it the rest of the day, and, if it is paper, then empty and recycle it. Styrofoam take-out cups can be washed and used several times before they need to be thrown away. Better yet, bring your own cup from home and eliminate the waste and cost of the cups. Come on! Be green and get with the program!
DEDICATED TEACHERS

We value all of our OLLI teachers, but some of them go above and beyond to get their classes in the mood.

Mike Broder in his 1812 - Growth of America class appears at left.

Linda Kelly (left) and Linda Russ (right) in the America in the “Roaring Twenties” class are below.

Editor’s note: A quote I heard, “I’ll tell you what. If those Linda girls were teaching a class on the phonebook, I would take it. They would find a way to make it fun and interesting.”
HOW I LEARNED MY TRAVEL TIPS

Joy Eaton

Duct Tape: When I went to pick up my suitcase at the carousel in Venice, the suitcase handle was broken. Now how do you maneuver a suitcase into customs and on to a bus? Well, a trusty friend popped out his pencil that had a generous amount of duct tape wound around it. Duct tape saved the day. In fact, it held that handle on the suitcase until I arrived home. So my first tip is to wind duct tape around a short pencil and keep it handy.

Maps: When I was on a trip visiting eight Caribbean islands recently, I took many bus rides into the interior of the island to see the sights. I happened to have a tour book which had a small map of each island. I tore the map out of the book and took it along. It was so easy to follow our journeys along the coastline mountains or the interior. Taking just the paper map was so easy. It didn’t take up any room and gave me the references I was looking for.

Eye Witness Guides: When visiting large foreign cities it is very easy to become disoriented. I don’t want to spend time reading paragraphs of directions. My answer to this dilemma was finding the Eye Witness Travel Guides. In a city like Paris, where there are many districts, it became easy to remain oriented with the pictorial maps. The picture looks at the area from above, streets names are visible, and there are highlights with small pictures and brief verbal descriptions.

Flying Home: Catching the flight home can present problems. First, allow yourself enough time. Second, if you are on a cruise ship, you can select to disembark on your own. These folks get off FIRST. So if you pack luggage you can manage, it is easy to do: you go through customs first, you get transportation to the airport first, and come home relaxed.

Packing: When it comes to packing - LESS IS BEST. It always amazes me how little I need when traveling. I don’t mind a bit of hand washing, which allows me to use a small suitcase. I do fold my clothing in a package. All shirts are laid on top of each other and folded into one bundle, which I place in a Hefty zip-lock bag. This way I can compress the size of the bundle. Again - LESS IS BEST.

Health: Keeping healthy is the only way to enjoy a trip. Be rested before you leave; when traveling by air, keep your nasal passages moist; and wipe every surface you might be touching with a sanitizing wipe, as they are not cleaned between flights. Do stretching as frequently as possible. If someone near you is coughing and sneezing request a different seat. Drink plenty of water, and remember that alcohol and caffeine dehydrate.
In 2011, we had the privilege of traveling to Greece and Turkey. We found it very helpful to visit them in the same trip, because of the many ancient and more recent connections between the histories of the two countries. For example, both had numerous cities of importance in ancient Rome that also played key roles in the development of Christianity (e.g., Athens, Corinth, and Thessaloniki in modern Greece, and Constantinople and Ephesus in Turkey). We visited all of these ancient and modern cities, as well as the region of central Turkey known as Cappadocia, which was also important in the development of Christianity.

Through much of the history of these two countries, many Greeks lived in Turkey and vice versa. But, after the end of World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, a massive exchange of individuals of Greek and Turkish origin was agreed upon by the governments of the two countries. An estimated two million people were forced from the land of their residence. The effects can still be seen today, in that virtually no Greek Orthodox population remains in Turkey nor Turkish Muslim population in Greece. Before visiting the two countries, we had no idea of this recent history.
This was a tented safari with game drives in open 4-wheel-drive vehicles and included walking and canoeing. We had two Zimbabwe guides, one for Hwange National Park and the other for Mana Pools National Park along the Zambezi River.

A typical day began with a 5 o'clock call for breakfast and into the bush for a game drive by daybreak. The first morning our guide hurried us through breakfast while asking if we had heard all the night noise; he indicated it was a herd of Cape Buffalo and we needed to get going. We followed our guide and tracker circling down wind for about an hour finding an outcrop of rock and sat quietly waiting. Soon a herd of 300 to 400 Cape Buffalo slowly walked by followed by a haze of dust. We later found a pride of 12 lions who had taken down an elephant the night before. Several of the older male lions had their fill and were lying around sleeping, younger ones were taking their turn eating, and one pair were mating. Lions mate for 3-4 days and copulate 30-40 times during a day, so there was obviously much to watch.

While driving around we saw elephants, warthogs, cheetahs, giraffes, impalas, baboons, kudus, zebras, waterbucks, jackals, hyenas, and many others. One dark evening while returning to camp, we approached a lion walking in the opposite direction, I could have reached down and touched him as passed our vehicle. At the second camp, we saw a rhino, hiked in the bush among elephants, and watched a pair of young bull giraffes fighting.

We then flew by bush plane to Mana Pools and our initial camp along the Zambezi. We were able to track a large pack of wild dogs and get near some large bull elephants. We spent three days canoeing among hundreds of hippos and saw crocodiles and numerous other animals.

The safari was followed by a trip to Victoria Falls and Cape Town. This was my second safari, the first included several camps in Botswana. Both safaris were arranged by The African Adventure Company located in Ft. Lauderdale.
In September, Lance and I took a hiking vacation in southwest Ireland. The group consisted of five Americans, three Canadians, and one English woman, along with their Irish guide. We were the oldest in the group.

On the first day of hiking, we stoked up with a huge Irish breakfast complete with bangers, bacon, and brown bread. Then we were off to Dursey Island, population 8. Access to Dursey is by cable car, large enough to hold six adults or one cow. The ride affords a breathtaking view of the dangerous waters far below. On land, more spectacular views awaited us as we climbed our first 12 miles through the heather, gorse, and rain.

The group worked its way by van up the western coast during the week, staying a couple of days in each location to explore some of Ireland’s famous trails around the Ring of Kerry, Killarney National Park, and other adventure sites, always enjoying our encounters with the paint-marked wooly sheep that inhabit every Irish slope and always challenged by the daily rains that turned hiking trails to muck.

Sunny memories prevail, though: eating wild berries along overgrown trails, facing down stubborn cows in the middle of narrow roads, a pint of Guinness at the end of a 10 - 12-mile trek, happy glimpses of sunshine teasing us intermittently, hearty Irish songs sung by tavern bands, and the fellowship of intrepid hikers weary and proud of the hills we left behind.

At left, Lance and Sue in the cable car. The hiking guide, Christopher, holds the door.

For information about their hiking group, visit: walkinghikingireland.com
I'm new to the OLLI family. I am 65, and have always sought new experiences. Now that I'm retired, I finally have enough money to do the things I always dreamed of doing, but never had the finances. The kids being grown and out sure helped! I was always a good swimmer, and I found ocean swimming much easier and much more interesting. I did several snorkel adventures, but the lack of bottom time was frustrating. I tried snuba, to see if I could handle the regulator and 25 feet. Snuba is a combination of the words snorkel and scuba, and is performed by diving while attached to a pressurized air hose about 30 feet long. I liked it, but the hose length was limiting.

I decided at age 64 to go for my scuba certifications, which I completed. I did a neat 15-dive trip to Bonaire, a small Dutch island about 50 miles off Venezuela, in 2012. I just got back from a 17-dive week in Cayman Brac. Cayman Brac (Brac is Dutch for bluff, or the high end of the island - 120 feet) is now British and about 75 miles south of the center part of Cuba. These were all dives that were done from a boat where you gear up and step in off the back or stern, and climb aboard a ladder. This is far safer than the walk-outs, or shore diving. In those cases you have to walk from the shore, trying to time the waves and avoid sharp coral. Also the currents are usually stronger and can push you away from dive points or even out to sea. The cost, including air and all meals and tips, was $2800.00.

The rooms were really nice, and the beach and water were great. Three guides went with the group on every dive. They knew all the best places to look and kept us all very safe. We did three dives each day for five days and two more the last morning. Most dives averaged 80 feet, only four to 100 feet. All the divers used Nitrox in their tanks so our wait times in between dives were only about 50 minutes. As a group, we flew to Grand Cayman on a large plane and then took a 10-seater in shifts the 90 miles to Cayman Brac. It was a wonderful adventure!

I am connected with the Scuba Shop in Spartanburg. There are several shops in Greenville and one in Inman. They usually arrange all trips, and one of the owners goes with the group. They organize about four trips a year.
Where can you go within a 6-hour plane ride of Greenville to see monkeys, three-toed sloths, and scarlet macaws in the wild, and volcanoes? The answer is Costa Rica. In February 2013, my husband and I signed up for a Caravan Tour of Costa Rica. It is way more affordable for this 10-day guided tour than you would imagine.

Every day was very exciting and filled with activities. We got up early to a buffet breakfast. My favorite was the omelets. Then we boarded the bus and were off to an adventure like none you can have very many places on earth. Around noon we would stop for a buffet lunch with a large variety of selections and then on to more adventures with howler monkeys, caimans, and tiny humming birds. Then we enjoyed another delicious buffet dinner with a wide selection of foods. No one had trouble meeting his or her individual dietary needs. We also had no trouble going to bed early as we had a full day.

In 10 days we saw Poas Volcano, Aerial Volcano, Tortuguero National Park, and a butterfly garden; cruised the Tortuguero River, sighting exotic animals; visited a coffee plantation and a pineapple plantation; enjoyed natural hot springs; visited the Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge; hiked through the forest over hanging bridges; swam in the Pacific Ocean; and more.

The people of Costa Rica are friendly and our tour guide had a wealth of knowledge. The guides are college educated and devoted to making sure you learn about their country. The trip is very educational, as you learn about the culture, wildlife, and geography of this eco-friendly nation.

The accommodations were first-class with at least two 5-star hotels to enjoy.

Pictured here is a rare golden howler monkey with her baby. She is the result of two recessive genes and the only survivor of three born in this forest. Our guide was the person who discovered her and was given the right to name her. She is called Blonde. Howler monkeys are usually black.
Last spring I spent a few days in Sicily, specifically Siracusa, once one of the most important cities in the ancient world, and even more specifically, the island of Ortigia, the first part of Siracusa to be settled. I stayed at the Hotel Gutkowski on the eastern shore of the island, which consists of two old buildings restored in a rugged, bare-bones sort of chic. I was happy to be housed in the annex as its rooms feature views of the sea, and when my hostess opened the door to my room, the sea was the first thing I saw. To my left were some of the old fortifications of the island, the sea, and beyond that the mainland. To the right I saw more of the sea and the curve of the coastline lined with charming old buildings. I rose early each morning to catch the breathtaking sunrise.

Ortigia at first seems to be a labyrinth of small streets, many too little for cars, though never too tiny for Vespas! But, the layout begins to make sense fairly quickly, and while I won’t deny some confusion during my walks therein, Ortigia is a great place to wander, because it’s so small that you’re never lost for long.

On my first walk, I wandered west, first coming across the Piazza Archimede, named for the great Hellenic thinker Archimedes, who designed the defenses of Siracusa against the Roman onslaught in the early third century B.C. The Romans ransacked the place, and, alas, Archimedes was hacked to death by the conquerors. Rambling further west I came upon the Piazza Duomo, which has been called the most elegant square in Sicily. From the Duomo it was only a short walk to Fonte Aretusa, a freshwater spring, created, per Greek mythology, as Aretusa, a sea nymph, was about to be violated by a lecherous river god named Alpheus. He pursued her as she swam all the way from the Peloponnesus. Just as Aretusa reached Ortigia and the river god was about to have his way with her, the goddess Artemis transformed her into a spring just in the nick of time.

The Fonte Aretusa is the perfect place to watch the setting of the sun, and I arrived in time to do so, settled on a great table outside the Bar Alfeo, and ordered the aperitivo della casa, served with small bowls of peanuts, pistachios, and olives. The drink was a delicious concoction, made partly of blood-orange juice - perfect for the occasion, as it resembled the color of the setting sun!
PAM ROBERSON, A PERFECT FIT

Judy Aten

Pam Roberson, OLLI’s Faculty Liaison, joined our program after the start of the winter semester. Her last name is pronounced like Robertson without the “t.” A native of Camden, South Carolina, Pam moved away from SC in the late 80’s and returned to the state in the early 90’s. She met her husband, Andy, in high school when he was “the new kid on the block.” Pam earned a BS from South Carolina - Columbia in psychology in 1986.

After graduation from college she changed her wedding date to start work for Raycom Sports in Charlotte, NC, a production company that televised all the major collegiate basketball games nationwide. When Andy’s work required a relocation to Greenville, Pam found employment first at WSPA TV’s Flying Ace Productions, and later as a manager for a temporary staffing agency. Three years later, she became a stay-at-home mother, when the first of their three daughters was born. Pam filled her spare time doing volunteer work. Ten years later, after all three girls entered school, Pam found a part time position as the Marketing and Events Planner for Diligent Hands Gracious Hearts; an organization that provides free home repairs and yard work for the elderly, homebound, and handicapped.

Once Kendall, her eldest daughter, began driving, she was able to help Pam chauffeur little sisters Kaleigh and Cambelle around, freeing Pam to look for full time employment. After all, there would be a need very soon for more money in the girls’ college funds.

Pam had attended some local agency meetings where Lucy made presentations about OLLI. When she learned about the full time position opening, she applied, and we all know what happened next, don’t we? Is Pam happy to be here? You bet she is! She is most impressed, not only by the tremendous amount of volunteering in our program, but also by the positive, warmth she encounters every day from the staff and the members.

Hers is an active family. The girls play soccer, her husband rock climbs, and Pam likes to ride her bike on the Swamp Rabbit Trail and run around Furman’s campus. So, if you see her familiar face around campus, give her a wave! More than likely, she’ll wave back!
We are growing and growing! As of mid-February, we had 1,372 OLLI members, the largest ever! And, we had 1,019 enrolled in the winter term, also a record number.

Who are we? Here are some preliminary statistics from the recent member survey:

591 OLLI members participated in the survey.

30% joined OLLI 3 to 5 years ago, 18% joined 6 to 10 years ago, and 14% joined more than 10 years ago.

14% are natives of Greenville, the rest moved here before or after retirement.

Asked to state four reasons for continuing to be OLLI members: 72% do so to be intellectually stimulated, 69% want to acquire new skills and knowledge, 40% want to take advantage of OLLI’s affiliation with Furman, and 34% want to socialize and meet new people.

Subjects of greatest interest are US and international history (42%), regional history (38%), contemporary issues (27%), recreation and exercise (25%), literature (24%), and health and wellness (24%).

15% are age 60 to 64, 35% are 65 to 69, and 22% are 70 to 74.

40% completed graduate school, 13% completed some graduate school, 30% completed college, and 15% attended some college.

Some of colleges and universities attended are Duke, Boston College, Purdue, Ohio University, Columbia University, Syracuse, Furman, Northwestern, Clemson, UCLA, Johns Hopkins, UNC Chapel Hill, Indiana, Harvard, Dartmouth, Vanderbilt, Yale, Michigan, Georgia Tech, Wyoming, South Carolina, Georgia, and Stanford.

98% are very satisfied or satisfied with their overall OLLI experience.

Many survey participants added comments and suggestions, and these will be reviewed by OLLI Council in the next few months. More information about the survey will be made available to all OLLI members soon.
FACTS FROM THE 1500s

Jean Churchill Krall

The following information came from the Anne Hathaway reproduction house in Victoria, British Columbia.

1. Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and they still smelled pretty good by June. However, since they were starting to smell, brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence, the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

2. Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice, clean water. Then all the other sons and men, then the women, and finally, the children. Last of all, the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could lose someone in it. Hence, the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

3. In the winter when the floors were wet, they spread thresh (straw) on the floor. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance. Thus, the "thresh hold."

4. Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top or "the upper crust."

5. Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait to see if they would wake up. Hence, the custom of "holding a wake."

Whoever said history was boring? Get out there and educate someone!
USEFUL WEBSITES - TRAVEL

Elaine Brummett

TRAVEL INFORMATION
Flight/room Reservations: bing.com/travel, or farecompare.com, or kayak.com
Check plane seating: seatguru.com
Check your rights: dot.gov/airconsumer/fly-rights
Tours: eldertreks.com or getours.com
Alaska cruise: clippercruise.com (800-325-0010) or linbladexpeditions.com (800-397-3348)
Cruises: vacationstogo.com

FREE APPS
hoteltonight.com - Great for a last minute booking at a discount.
hearplanet.com - A guidebook speaks to you about local attractions and historic sites.

INTERNATIONAL
Customs, passport, and visa information as well as a currency converter.
usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel/International.shtml
aa.com/i18n/travellInformation/internationalTravel/main.jsp

GENERAL
One article says buy tickets 6 weeks ahead of flight (never more than 3 ½ months ahead).
If possible, book your flight on a Tuesday around 3 pm.

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  Past the north end of the mall.
2  Within sight of the old OLLI building.
3  Pleasant sounds come from here.
4  Shares part of our new building name.
5  The sculpture is a harp.

Answer below:

Attached to McCalister.
The Nan Trammell Herring Music Pavilion.

23
Pam Roberson and Jessica Crumley, at left, are purported to be the first official “setters” in the new OLLI Chairs. However, we see above that Olliver jumped the gun and sat in one before it was stained and varnished. At any rate, the twelve upholstered oak chairs go well with the three oak tables in the Manly Lobby. Thanks to the many OLLI people who had a hand in building the tables and chairs. Special thanks to Dan Kappel, who ramrodded this effort.

Furman professor Timothy Fehler, at right, converts from mild-mannered teacher to “Super-Celt” in his OLLI class, “England and the Celtic Fringe.” The title of his Welsh tee-shirt was unpronounceable, but beautiful.

This bird feeder, on the Lineback Terrace, was donated by Clair Leimsieder. We look forward to spring, when we can set on the terrace and watch the feeding birds.
OLL@ Furman members donated 750 food items in less than a week in response to a request for help from the Salvation Army.

Dick Eaton wears his father’s kilt to Bob Dwyer’s Civil War class. You will have to ask them what kilts and the Civil War have in common.

Members of ConnieDuPre’s Mastering Mosaics class show how you can go from organized chaos (above) to finished art work (left) after instruction and practice.
OLLI ReSearch Grants were initiated in Spring 2013 to amplify the support that the OLLI membership provides for its instructors. Awarded in *odd numbered years*, the research grants will support our more seasoned instructors. The mission of the ReSearch Grants will allow our instructors to request aid in enriching their OLLI courses. Through the generosity of the Bernard Osher Foundation, limited financial support will be available for instructors to supplement their teaching materials. These grants are intended to enable OLLI instructors to expand their teaching capabilities through research and participation with other experts in their field.

Grants will only be made to those who have been OLLI instructors for a minimum of 4 terms and will be awarded in amounts not to exceed $1,500 per person. The committee reserves the right to award an amount less than requested. The types of expenses funded by the grants might include cost of attending workshops; participating in conferences; various research materials; and travel required to pursue fields of study.

OLLI instructors receiving grants will be required to share the results from their work with the OLLI membership within one year of being awarded the OLLI ReSearch grant. The grantees will be required to submit written evaluations of their experiences with both their projects and their sharing or outreach to the membership.

**Grant Application Requirements**

1. Applicants must have been an OLLI instructor for at least 4 terms (not necessarily consecutive).

2. Applicants’ proposed projects must be consistent with OLLI at Furman’s mission and vision.

3. Potential instructors or current instructors seeking funding for a different field of their current teaching topic* may not apply for funds from the ReSearch Grant. (They may apply for an OLLI ReSource Grant to develop other new subjects in *even numbered years*.)

4. Applications for grants are due April 5 and must be submitted in hard copy format. The Grant Committee will meet in April to review and recommend awards to Council. Grantees will be notified by May 1 the status of their application. The grants will be awarded at the Annual Spring Luncheon. Grantees are strongly encouraged to attend.

5. Grant funds will be used to reimburse grantees for documented expenses consistent with their approved applications, and will not be distributed prospectively. Grants may not be used for debt relief or for purchase of software or media materials that cannot be shared with the membership.

6. The grant will be funded when the applicant submits documented (original receipts only) expenses consistent with the approved application.

7. The outcome of each applicant’s project must be shared with the membership within one year of being awarded the grant.
8. Grantees must submit a written evaluation of their experience in carrying out their project that is due upon completion of sharing their grant funded research/experience with the membership. If this requirement is not met, grantee will be responsible for returning fifty percent of the grant funds received back to the program before he/she is able to teach again at OLLI.

9. An instructor who has been awarded a ReSearch Grant may not apply for another ReSearch Grant for two years after being awarded a ReSearch Grant.

*Several instructors choose varying topics along similar type genres or are established in several topic areas, they should submit a grant request under the OLLI ReSearch Grant.

A compressed version of the application is shown below. Applications are available in the OLLI Office.

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**OLLI ReSearch GRANT APPLICATION**

Name: 
Address: 
Phones: Home: Cell: 
E-mail: 
Education: 
  High School (Name and City/State) 
  College (Degree/Certificate & Major) 
  Post-Graduate (Degree/Certificate & Major) 

Work Experience: 

OLLI participation experience (minimum of 4 terms required):

Brief description of project: Optional materials, such as brochures discussing or depicting the project, may be submitted, but are not required.

Cost of Project: Amount requested from OLLI not to exceed $1500; committee reserves the right to award an amount less than $1,500. *Please attach a detailed budget of your proposal along with a project timeline.*

Describe how you expect this new research will add value to your class and your learning experience.

Note: All questions must be completed in their entirety. An Incomplete application will be returned to the applicant and not reviewed until completed. Upon completion of the project, a written report of your activity is required. Receipt of funding comes with the expectation that you are willing to share your experience and expertise with the OLLI membership.

Signature of Applicant: ______________________________ Date ______________

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THE LAST WORD: TRAVEL

This issue of *Gray Matters* focused on travel. After perusing the articles, it is clear OLLI members have gone to an amazing number of destinations and have participated in an impressive number of activities in their travels. However, in a broader sense, we all “travel” in our minds as we learn through attending classes, teaching, meeting new people, watching OLLI grow physically and organizationally, contributing to others, forging and changing relationships, and helping OLLI @ Furman continue to be an important part of the community. OLLI @ Furman is a volunteer organization, that is traveling forward with the help of many people. Consider being a volunteer, if you are not already, so you can help in this journey.

We leave you with this photo of a cruise ship at Grand Turk. With the cold weather we experienced in January and February, you can dream this as you wait for spring.