Spring is coming. Time to transition from full-bodied wines to lighter ones. Bernie has a recommendation from the Rhone area in southern France. Check it out. Page 12. It will make you say, “oh la la.”
The OLLI Council met March 9.

President Greg Peters extended special thanks to Sally and Alan Bornmueller for coordinating events and activities to celebrate our FULIR/OLLI 25th anniversary. Thanks to the “Treat Committee” which will host twenty-five random treat events; to Jan and Dave Johnson for organizing the successful Trivia Night in March, and to the Social Committee for decorations.

Sonya Hammond Curriculum Chair, reported changes in sub-committee chairpersons:

- Pat Hicks is now Chair and Tim Henry Co-Chair, for Current Events, Business and Finance;
- Kevin Morris is Chair for Arts, Culture and Music/Literature;
- Dave Beisser is Chair for Health, Fitness and Exercise - Hiking;
- Roger Wheeler is Chairperson for History;
- Tony Nedved is Chair for Science and Math;

- Bernie Showman is Chair for Religion and Philosophy.
- Leader/s are needed for the Language Chair, and members are needed for the Health & Fitness committees.

Social Committee Chair, George Hammond, reminded us to save Tuesday, May 22, for the Annual Celebration Luncheon.

Chris Efner, Member at Large, reported that 23 - 25 active SIGS (Special Interest Groups) have met during recent and current terms. Our newest is the Cribbage SIG and fastest growing looks like the Pickleball SIG.

OLLI Director, Nancy Kennedy, announced that Sally Greigore, on the OLLI office staff, will resign this month to join her husband in a job relocation to North Carolina. Thanks, Sally, for your many acts of helpfulness and kindness. Also, reports Nancy, we have 2305 current members for total year and currently 1557 enrolled in Spring classes.

Dear OLLI scholars,
The most important thing you can do on registration day if a course you want is full is to get on the waitlist. It doesn’t cost a thing, and it often helps you out. Definitely, get on it!

1. Members drop classes all the time, and as soon as a spot opens up, we call the next person.
2. If there is space in the classroom and the instructor agrees, we will increase the size of the class.
3. If we can move to a larger room and the instructor agrees, we will increase the size of the class.
4. In rare cases, we have actually added a second section of the same course. (Remember our instructors are volunteers, so this isn’t always an option.)
5. For some of our small, very popular classes (art, iPhone, and cooking, for example), we will go to the waitlist first the next time the same course is offered and partially fill the class with people from the waitlist before general registration begins.
6. Waitlists tell us that we need to offer the course again, so it is helpful to know how many people were interested in the course.

Still have questions? Come see me….my door is always open!  

Sincerely, Nancy Kennedy, OLLI Director
If I were a bird, I'd be SINGING…

Thanks for your comments about our January issue. We ❤ FEEDBACK!

“I love the sharpness of the text and layout. . . very OLLI!” JA; “I did the job for a year …and appreciate how easy you make a difficult task look.” CI; “I like the OLLI ‘I’ being a candle.” GA. Linda M. called us “one the “funnest newsletters…ever.” Dara loves the Jam On Pickers, and what Bob Shannon says, “You don’t know what you don’t know until you jam with others who do know.” (Yes, we know.) Greg says, “Great balance of informative and fun pieces.” Sarah says, “Finished reading your book review…and wanted to tell you what a great job you did.” (High five for Diana). Ed loves all the pictures and the way the columns are many sizes and shapes. “Nice article on John Thompson!” Jim S. “I like the new title, new look of the newsletter.” Chris T.

OLLILife accepts one 250-word 11th-Page Essay per issue. (See Lynda Fredsell’s essay, p. 11). Send inquiries to sue.renault@gmail.com

IMPROVing With Age SIG by Diana Miel

Improvisation is the creation of something without preparation.

Actually, real life is improvisation — we plan our day and then stuff happens; we have contacts with people. There’s no script and no rehearsal. That's IMPROVing with Age. We play games and create scenes from suggestion: locations (stuck in an elevator), characters (a pickpocket and a nun), and first lines (when you look at me like that, it makes me think you're up to something). Comment from the group: “It's full of surprises, and fun! Laughter is good for the soul...and brain.”

For more information about the IMPROV SIG, contact Diana, diana_Miel6@gmail.com

The right answer is YES! Winners and all others at OLLI's first-ever TRIVIA NIGHT, March 6, declared this event A WINNER. Thanks, 25th Anniversary funsters and social committee helpers.

IT'S A TIE! Congratulations, Kathy Brown AND Muriel Rowley, March winners of OLLILife’s campaign to save trees and $$$. Remember to bring YOUR mug to class. Send us YOUR MUG SHOT. Winners get an OLLI mug!

HOP ABOARD OLLILife

If you enjoy Jim Hammond’s column, let us know. If Lori’s column sent you off to Yellow Ginger, tell us. If you want to say something about hearing loss, just do it! If YOU have a special FULIR or OLLI memory, tell us.

sue.renault@gmail.com
2018: WHAT WILL YOU CELEBRATE?

*Georgia and I will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary on April 20. We have been with FULIR/OLLI since 1999. Wayne Halli;
*Lynda Fredsell: My 80th birthday;
*Muriel and Glenn Rowley are celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary;
*Karin Purvis, a recent emigre from Germany, at 25, was struggling to adjust to the commercialism and consumerism of the US;
*Lori Dillon is a four-time survivor of cancer, celebrating 30 years of overcoming;
*Twenty-five years ago, Tom Johnson returned to the US from Frankfort, Germany where he had been employed for 3 years;
*Mary Foley was here at FULIR taking classes 25 years ago;
*When she was 25, Chris and Dudley Tower were in the Peace Corps in Malaysia;
*Tom Buto was living in Erie, PA, raising six kids and traveling internationally every week for his British employer.

That's HISTORY: Addition of “old folks” to the campus scene didn't sit well with Furman students by Emily Fuhrer

It's hard to believe but neither the press, history nor student opinion was on our side in the 90s when "old people" invaded campus intending to move in. A school newspaper editorial suggested resistance to integrating "old" with "young."

Proof that time, opinion and stereotypes have changed in twenty-five years: Furman students in the OLLI office, Furman professors teaching OLLI classes; and always as you enter the physical activities center for a workout, a door is opened by a smiling, fit, sweaty student welcoming you to their world.

Gary and Judy, What were YOU doing 25 years ago?


“We are REALLY, REALLY social!”

Bob Howell (OLLI president, 2011-2012) recalls some of the earliest discussions with architects as all sought to reflect dreams and needs for a new building. The architect stood at his “white board” with sketches. “No,” we said, “We are a social group. Need more room to gather.” After another round, the architect presented another drawing. “No,” the committee said again. “We are social…really social.” Another round or two later when the architect dropped his preference for classrooms over open space, and overcame reservations about opening a large classroom onto the main lobby (sound issues), and the committee once more declared their need for a big gathering space, the new design was accepted. If you love hanging out in the big open space of the Herring Center, thank Bob Howell and his team of early visionaries.
Are you DEAF for heaven’s sake?

Mary became a recluse. Her hearing loss was so profound she could no longer follow conversations or engage in simple sociability. Her life became small and sad.

I saw Mary recently for the first time in a couple of years. She was chatty and engaging. With tears in her eyes, she told me, “I got my life back.” She’d had a cochlear implant followed by a year of hard work learning to translate electronic “dinging” sounds from her implant into words and language.

My husband Lance, though not as disabled as Mary was, wears hearing aids to amplify sounds. Still, he misses a lot of conversation around him. When he asks me a third time or when I must repeat something a third time, we are both chagrinned.

My friend David is totally deaf and often relies on his wife to “sign” what someone is saying. David and I swim laps at the Y. If we happen to finish at the same time, we greet each other with a cheerful “hello,” or “well done,” but have never exchanged a “real” conversation.

More than sixty percent of us 70+-year-olds have a hearing loss, men more than women. Their world can be lonely and painful — and inhabited by others who are impatient and irritable. A hearing-impaired friend told me, “People are not sympathetic because they can’t see our disability. We look like we should be able to hear you, for heaven’s sake!”

Travels with OLLI

Romain Wildlife Refuge by Sue Renault

In February, OLLI travelers visited Bulls Island at Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, off the South Carolina coast. On the “interior” tour, they learned that Palmetto trees are really Palmetto grass. They began their “bird lists” with oyster catchers, brown pelicans, hawks, and other of the 293 species in the maritime refuge and saw ancient shell heaps deposited by Native Americans over two thousand years ago. In Alligator Alley, photography buffs got a big one!

Day two was a walk on the beach, shell collectors' heaven. Our guide, Ian, never missed an opportunity to give a nature lesson. We learned the mating habits of horseshoe crabs and the eating habits of whelks, predatory mollusks who can drill holes through shells and eat the soft bellies of bivalves (it’s a valve-eat-valve world). We hiked to the “boneyard,” where hundreds of oaks, cedars and pines are strewn along a three-mile stretch of beach: another photographer’s delight.

OLLILife wants FEEDBACK about your experience with hearing loss. In 80 words or less, tell us: “Here’s what I’d like friends (family, teachers, etc.) to know about me and my hearing loss.” Let’s continue this discussion in our May issue.

sue.renault@gmail.com

Special thanks, Seth Harrison for creating this tour; Scott Withrow who lent assistance; and Heidi Wright, OLLI staff.
Ed Mues, How will you celebrate your 101st Birthday on April 15?

For much of his life, Ed Mues has enjoyed oil painting and recalls fondly the special pictures he painted for each of his grandchildren when they were born and that they still treasure today. Now, almost 101 and a recent new member, he is honing different skills in OLLI's Pen and Ink class. He’s also keeping his curious and very active brain engaged by exploring current events with classmates in OLLI's Great Decisions class.

Ed lives at The Cascades. He says, “When I first arrived in the Greenville area, I knew I would enjoy the beauty of South Carolina, but I didn’t realize then how very much I’d enjoy the warm, friendly people I would meet here.”

He tells us birthday number 101 may be fairly relaxing after last year’s party celebrations in Florida, Maine, and South Carolina.

(Hey, OLLI classmates, don’t forget to shout out some noisy good wishes to Ed on April 15).

Sandy is the loving mother of a grown son and daughter and has five grandsons. She is especially close to her son’s 6-year-old boy, who lives near by. Five years ago the widowed Sandy married again and now resides in Travelers Rest. When the food service’s unpredictable work schedule began to wear on her, Sandy decided it was time to try something different and joined Furman’s custodial services assigned to the Herring Center. Now that she knows which days she will work late, Sandy has a dinner date on campus with her spouse some of those evenings.

Her favorite thing about Furman is its dedication to a green environment on campus. Her favorite thing about OLLI is the Book Nook. Sandy’s an avid reader and peruses its shelves regularly for another good read. Sandy appreciates the opportunity to look after the Herring Center; she recalls our former home in the trailer near the Furman playhouse and knows how much the Herring Center means to us. In turn, we appreciate her dedication to OLLI’s needs.

Gary & Judy introduce Sandy Dills

Herring Center custodian Sandy Dills has worked at Furman for nineteen years, having left the faltering textile industry for a position with Aramark food services.

Even though she’s experienced tough times, Sandy’s never lost her positive outlook. While she was working for Aramark, her house burned to the ground. She says Furman treated her like family and provided an apartment on campus until she found another home.

Sandy Dills}

POEMS: A collection by Sue Miller, after a death in the family

Time is strange now.
No one walks in from another room
The hard day is now

Some hours have no shape.
Time is tangled, without light
We have lost our balance.

I understand now.
Time stopped Now reinvent each day. A new life.

Play a trick on time
Take a picnic to the hills
Walk the rough path.
Chinese friends will say with a touch of disbelief, “You learned Chinese painting in Wisconsin?”

It’s true. As a child growing up in Shanghai, Naining (“Nancy”) Yan, was interested in dancing, martial arts, and dramatic performances on stage. She could not imagine sitting still long enough to paint. It came as a totally unexpected opportunity years later when a friend in her martial arts class recruited her to fill an empty space in a group of painters leaving to study in the United States. There, in 1999, she met her teacher, Yien-Mei Cheng, a gifted artist who was working on her master’s degree at the University of Wisconsin. (Yien-Mei subsequently became a full art professor at a university in Michigan but returned often to Wisconsin on school breaks. She held solo exhibitions in museums and galleries in France, Japan, Taiwan, China, and the U.S.) She gave Nancy a special gift: a love of painting.

In 2005, Nancy joined the International Sumi-E Brush Painting Competition and Exhibition held annually in Japan and won awards almost every year she participated.

In 2014, Nancy and her husband retired to Greenville. Soon after her arrival she met OLLI member and instructor Ron Gillen during an “Open Studio” event. Nancy was looking for opportunities to continue developing as an artist. Gillen was delighted to tell her about OLLI.

She joined in 2015 and has since taken several art classes (“Gail Jones, Pen & Ink instructor, was a great encourager,”) and has also taught Chinese painting classes, Chinese fan dancing and a theatrical, performance style of martial arts.

Nancy’s work is on exhibit at the White Rabbit Fine Arts Gallery in Travelers Rest.

I’ve left scores of poems along the trail.
Like leaves sprung green from
Bud and branch in early spring,
They fell on breezes soft as dust
onto kudzu and robins’ wings,
Butterflies and tortoise shells,
onto my bicycle and over my bent shoulders.
Treasures that played on my tongue
like marbles and memories
still wrapped in melancholy;
still salty with tears.
I left words: cherish, thorny, whispering,
hush, royal, resurrected, redemptive.
Prayers and hymns.
Delicious images born in my heart
and sung to the rhythm
of wheels turning on the path,
Legs pushing pedals, air pumping lungs;
Pumping, rhyming, breathing, singing,
"Til I could hold no more
and let them go unwritten.
Scattered on greedy branches,
Buried in a squirrel’s stash,
Snagged on river banks and fences,
Hovering on a sun beam.
for the next traveler.
If you come this way, you may find them.
Or they will find you. Gather them:
Cherish, whisper, love, my friend. Listen.
I left them for you.
Recite the rhythm in your heart. SSR
John B. “Jack,” Barton graduated from Furman University. He taught at East Carolina University and then joined the U. S. Information Agency, serving in Washington DC, Peru, Nicaragua, Spain, Grenada and Brazil as Cultural Attaché and Press Officer. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1993 and lived in Greenville until moving to San Antonio in 2000. Jack died last December from complications due to Parkinson’s disease.

I met Jack in December 1972 in Managua, Nicaragua, when I went there to cover his role in the response to the devastating earthquake that struck the Nicaraguan capital. Jack was a Greenville native serving in the U.S. Foreign Service, and I was a photographer for The Greenville News. Jack showed me around the devastated city and put me up at his house. The brief trip was one of the great adventures of my life.

When I showed up at Jack’s house in Nicaragua in 1972, he had the news media of the world camped out in and around his home, that had not been damaged by the earthquake. I recall a BBC reporter remarking that they were paying hundreds of dollars a day for the services of a farmer and his truck, also untouched by the quake. I had hitched a ride on an Air Force C-141, riding with another reporter and a cargo bay filled with thousands of fresh body bags being given to the stricken country to help deal with the untold thousands of dead in the city. That first night, we sat around Jack’s dining table listening to the radio traffic between the Army units trying to stop looting and prevent the dictator’s overthrow.

Jack was calm amid the chaos, and allowed me to ride along with him in his VW Beetle as he went about his duties. He had special access to gasoline through the U.S. Embassy, at a time when fuel was almost impossible to obtain. (photo: Jack, center, in “tent city” for earthquake survivors)

After my trip to Nicaragua, I had no contact with Jack for two decades, during which my family and I lived for seven years in Asia and Europe. By 1993, we had returned to Greenville, and lived in the Forrester Woods neighborhood of Mauldin. One evening we returned home to find a phone message: “Jim, you probably don’t remember me, but this is Jack Barton. We met in Nicaragua.” It turned out he had retired and was living in our neighborhood, next door to a family who were mutual friends. One evening over dinner, they discovered they had this mutual acquaintance who worked for The Greenville News: me.

We had opportunities to revisit our encounter in that Central American capital 20 years earlier. I recall Jack remarking that the lifelong learning program at Furman, his alma mater, was a highlight of his retirement. After we both moved away from Greenville again, we kept in touch through Facebook, until his passing late last year. It saddens me deeply to know he’s no longer among us. Rest in peace, Jack.
The Place of Peace, a Japanese temple with warm wooden walls capped by a graceful tile roof, is in contrast to the neoclassical architecture of the rest of the Furman campus. Originally built for the Tsuzuki family in Nagoya, Japan, it was disassembled and shipped to Furman to be rebuilt by the original craftsman in 2008, a gift from the family. The family was successful in Greenville, having built The Nippon Center, which consisted of a restaurant and an educational facility called Yagoto.

Dr. James Leavell, a Furman professor of Asian studies and an OLLI instructor, recounts a history of the building as a mortuary building for the Tsuzukis. It would have contained black lacquer wooden tablets with the names of the deceased painted in gold calligraphy. In Nagoya, the family would have assembled on the anniversaries of the deaths to honor their ancestors. While the building is here on the north end of Swan Lake overlooking the Japanese garden, the tablets are in Japan.

The building and the Japanese garden illustrate the eco-centric basis of Asian culture. This tradition is steeped in philosophical monism - the view that all things in this Universe are deeply interconnected and, ultimately, are ONE.

The temple is open for meditation each Wednesday morning promptly from 7:20 to 8 am. Socks, preferably white, must be worn. Docents open the temple Saturday and Sunday, 1-3 pm when Furman is in session.

For five years, OLLI member Judy Bolton and her Sheltie Timmy have been bringing comfort and joy to patients and their families at the Hospice of the Carolina Foothills. They visit the hospice every other week for two to three hours. Timmy enjoys sitting on a patient’s bed and making direct eye contact. “Timmy has the perfect temperament for this,” says Judy. “At home he is the noisiest of our three dogs, but at the hospice, he is relaxed, gentle and calming.” If a patient is alone, Judy will chat. If family is visiting, Judy will stand back and let the patient and family members enjoy Timmy’s visit together. Often they reminisce about their own pets.

Although the volunteer position was a natural fit for Judy, a retired physician, she still had to train and pass a written test. “There are basic rules for the owner and pet to observe,” Judy says. To become a registered therapy dog, Timmy had to undergo observation and behavior testing while visiting children’s homes and nursing facilities. To remain registered, Judy is retested each year and Timmy undergoes a veterinarian exam. “It’s so satisfying to help bring a smile to a patient’s face and give the family a break in the day,” says Judy.
GOOD READING by Diana Miel

Mary Roach takes us from the upper end of the digestive tract to the nether, with side trips into history, medicine, fads and fashions, culture, and economics related to the conversion of food into waste.

At the upper end, she relates that our teeth act as a dam to contain our 2-3 pints of daily saliva production. One of the two kinds of saliva we produce is known in art restoration work as the best cleaner for delicate surfaces. She tells us that taste, as in personal preference for certain flavors, is very subjective, dependent not only on the mouth and nose, but also on ego. It's hard for people to discern quality by flavor, so they rely on price and appearance to make judgments. She informs us that "laundry detergent is essentially a digestive tract in a box." At the nether end, "the human digestive tract is like the Amtrack line from Seattle to Los Angeles: transit time is about 30 hours and the scenery of the last leg is pretty monotonous."

Editor: Who could have thought a reader could have so much fun traveling through the human digestive system. Go figure.

GOOD EATING by Lori Dillon

HEAD ON DOWN THE ROAD TO YELLOW GINGER FOR A GREAT ASIAN MEAL

Like Asian food? There’s a great restaurant just down the road from OLLI serving Thai, Korean, and Malaysian food. The name of the restaurant is Yellow Ginger, which is the Chinese word for turmeric. As turmeric is claimed to be the new wonder spice, how can you go wrong going to a restaurant by that name?

The menu is lengthy; after much vacillating, I decided on Pad Tai, which was served in a delicious tamarind sauce with just the right amount of heat. Ground peanuts, chilies and a slice of lime complimented the dish. My friend ordered Sesame Chicken, which was crispy and served in a tasty brown sesame sauce. Nice presentation.

Yellow Ginger is bright, quiet, and clean. Prices are reasonable and there is a special lunch menu.

Yellow Ginger Asian Kitchen is located at 2100 Poinsett Highway, Suite J, in Greenville. It is open every day, except Monday, from 11:00-2:30 and 4:30-11:00.

Editor: Maybe Yellow Ginger will make us smarter: Curcumin (in turmeric) boosts levels of the brain hormone BDNF, which increases the growth of new neurons and fights various degenerative processes in the brain (from healthline.com).

If Lori’s review sends you to Yellow Ginger, please send your feedback to us: sue.renault@gmail.com
OLLILife's 11th-Page Essay:  
LIVING IN THE MOMENT by Lynda Fredsell

It was the second day of an unexpected January snow storm which blanketed everything in sight with several inches of dry white fluff. The outside thermometer was stuck at just above freezing, and the eaves of the house were decorated with long dripping icicles. This cold snap put a wrinkle in my plans for the week. It looked like another day holed up inside with the cat.

Sun was pouring through the window as I sat at the kitchen table sipping my cup of coffee and scanning the morning newspaper. As I glanced out the window at the clear blue sky, I noticed three squawking blackbirds frantically chasing a large hawk that was searching for a quick breakfast at our backyard bird sanctuary.

The safflower feeders were crowded with cardinals while other family members waited their turn in the nearby snow-covered holly bushes. A red-bellied woodpecker with his black and white feathers and dark red hood flew off the hanging sunflower feeder when a white-breasted nuthatch crash landed upside-down beside him. I watched with delight as titmice and wrens, chickadees and house finches, juncos and doves all scratched about in the snow for seeds dropped from the feeders above.

It seems that birds have no sense of season – they are as active in wintertime as they are in warmer weather. I must confess, I have never been a fan of winter. But, as I observed the birds moving about easily in the snow, I realized that winter can be just as exhilarating as spring. Or summer. Or fall.

This year I will celebrate my 80th birthday. As I enter the winter of my life, I vow to savor every minute of it.

Want to comment on Lynda’s essay or give us your own take on Living in the Moment? Send FEEDBACK: sue.renault@gmail.com
Bernie’s Going for the Rhone Area of Southern France This Month.

These medium-bodied wines are a blend of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvedre grapes. There are many fine Rhone wines available and a popular choice is E. Guigal Cotes du Rhone. This wine is widely available at Total Wines ($14.99) and most grocery stores and wine shops (up to $19.99). Enjoy! (See Bernie’s advice online: www.scwijnjoe.blogspot.com)