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OLLI E-News
The electronic newsletter for members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University



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SUMMER SURVEY SAYS...

From the executive director



By [Thom Clement](#), Executive Director

AS OF THIS WRITING, 310 OLLI MEMBERS HAVE RESPONDED to the survey whose link was provided by email on Jun 15 and in E-News on Jun 19. Full sets of survey results will be provided to the chairs of each resource group to use in planning future program offerings. As promised, I'd like to provide you with a summary of the responses and a little bit of preliminary analysis.

Section 1 – Questions About Registration

- 90.2% of the respondents indicated that they had used the online system for summer 2009 registration. As might be expected, this percentage is significantly higher than the actual percentage of members who used the online system, which was 66%, an all-time high.
- 72.3% registered on their own home computers; 2.5% registered via computer at an OLLI site.
- 66.1% of those registering online indicated that they had no problems. 16% responded that they had minor problems that they figured out themselves. Approximately 3.5% indicated that they had some major problems using the system, with the most common problem related to selecting and adjusting priority levels.

Section 2 – Questions About OLLI Courses

- 68% indicated that there were some summer term courses that they wanted to take but for some reason could not.
- 42 members said they could not take all of the courses they wanted because of scheduling, i.e., courses were offered at the same time or were offered at a time that conflicted with travel or other plans. A couple of sample comments: "...Life conflicted, not another course..." and "Hard choices – lots of good options."
- 67 members listed courses they wanted to take but could not because of space limitations (they were waitlisted). Among the most common courses listed here were F402 (The Bloomsbury Group), F703 (Iran Update), and F302 (Brief History of Mankind).
- 99 members took the time to list at least one course that they would like to see repeated in a future term. Some of these responses gave general descriptions, such as: "Anything with Diane Coppage," "Most anything about movies," "Anything with the National Park Service," and "Supreme

Court. "Many others were very specific: "Writing Your Life History 2," "Wisdom of the Body" series, F702 "America and the World," "AARP defensive driving," R408 "Huckleberry Finn," and L812 "Eating Locally: What is Organic?"

Thank you so much for taking the time to complete the survey. This is an important way that the voice of each member can be heard as we strive to strengthen the outstanding services and program that we have at OLLI.

MIDNIGHT SUN AT SUMMER SOLSTICE

Photo from Norway on the Arctic Circle



OLLI MEMBER DEBBIE HALVERSON IS IN NORWAY. She sent us this picture of the midnight sun taken last week on the Arctic Circle at the summer solstice while Debbie was on a boat trip from the Lofoten Islands to the mainland of Norway.

OLLI MEMBERS WANTED TO DISCUSS HEALTH CARE

Mason meeting on Mon, Jul 27

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THE HEALTH-CARE DEBATE? George Mason University is gathering together a diverse group of individuals to participate in discussions during its public engagement meeting on Mon, Jul 27, and would

like some OLLI members to attend. The event will take place in Mason Hall from 4:30 to 6:30 and will focus on the long-term budget effects of our current health-care system.

If you would like to participate, please contact Jeremy Milliken, Graduate Research Assistant - Public Administration, George Mason University, via email (JeremyMilliken@gmail.com) or phone (717-579-0359).

Following are links to two relevant documents that OLLI members interested in health care may wish to read.

- [Congressional Budget Office: Options for Controlling the Cost and Increasing the Efficiency of Health Care](#) (16 pages, pdf); and
- [The Concord Coalition: Escalating Health Care Costs and the Federal Budget](#) (15 pages, pdf).

NATIONAL SECURITY SPEAKER AT LOUDOUN

The Obama National Security Strategy



Course L704, "The Obama National Security Strategy," Thu, Jun 25, at the Loudoun campus, featuring retired Brig. Gen. John Johns. Photo by Suzy Jampoler.

LAST WEEK OLLI MEMBERS HAD THE OPPORTUNITY AT LOUDOUN to hear retired Brigadier General John H. Johns, U.S. Army, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense, and later a professor at the National Defense University, Fort Leslie J. McNair, Washington, DC. Brig. Gen. Johns discussed the Obama National Security Strategy and contrasted it with the Bush strategy

of the past eight years.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

The recent New Members Coffee



Slideshow: New Members Coffee at Tallwood on Fri, Jun 26. Photos by Gordon Canyock.

LAST FRIDAY NEW OLLI MEMBERS SOCIALIZED with current members, including President Emmett Fenlon and several Board members, and indulged in goodies furnished by the Hospitality Committee at the New Members Coffee. Executive Director Thom Clement then gave an informative briefing about OLLI, and Program Committee Chair Kathryn Russell explained the heart of OLLI -- how programs are created by member/volunteers in the various resource groups.

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DEPARTMENTS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A forum for members to voice their views on OLLI matters

WE ARE HAPPY TO PUBLISH your brief letters about OLLI and, if a response seems appropriate, we will include an OLLI response from the executive director or the applicable officer or committee chair in the same issue. Submit your letter via [email to the editor](#) or submit it as a "letter to the editor" via the [online suggestion box](#) or the suggestion box in the

Tallwood Social Room. To be published in a given Friday's issue, the editor must receive the letter no later than 7:00 pm on Monday so that any applicable OLLI response can also be published. Letters can be published anonymously but you must include your name and email address or phone number so we can verify that you are an OLLI member.

OLLI poet Mike McNamara's ode to the Dirty Knee Club

Dear Editor:

John Woods' illustrated story in the last E-News re the Garden Makeover by the Dirty Knees folk again shows the great work they do here at OLLI. I'd like to add my views, in verse (below).

-- Mike McNamara, OLLI member

The Dirty Knees Club: A Congratulatory Ode

Their clothes may smell quite odd, like earthy Fairfax sod,
And their hats may have *siphonactera* (fleas).
Some need bi-focal glasses to tell the weeds from verdant grasses;
But Lord love them, they've got dirty, dirty knees.

Killing *digitaria sanguinalis* without a shred of malice,
Just some love; and like the ever-present bees,
Tending tiny flowers in all sorts of days and hours,
On their hands and very, very dirty knees.

They often say, "Hy-drangea" to every floral strangea,
With Osmocote and topsoil if you please,
Fingering *taraxacum* -- with trowel (and nipping thumb),
They're members of the Club called "Dirty Knees."

OLLI folk who're new may suppose this garden grew,
Itself, viz.: "Only God can make a tree,"
But our OLLI'd still be sterile, to visit at one's peril,
Without the ones who bent the dirty knee.

Let some critics rant and rave, over things like "Burma Shave,"
And planting costs, to seek financial ease,
To them I'd just say, "Pardon -- but it's time to leave The Garden
"To The Cherubim who guard it -- the ones with Dirty Knees."

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EYE ON RESTON

An update on Reston matters



By [Al Roe](#), OLLI Reston Coordinator

AS THE COORDINATOR OF OLLI IN RESTON, I wish to share some thoughts with you...

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute is one organization with three learning centers, Tallwood, Reston and Loudoun. They are bound by the same mission - to serve a certain segment of the senior population within Northern Virginia. OLLI has a great history and a proud heritage and certainly we want to continue to build on our successful foundation. We must remind ourselves that we are today what we have never been in the past. OLLI is a volunteer organization; it is up to each of us to contribute to OLLI's continued success. It is also necessary that the proper relationships be established between the three learning centers. OLLI has limited resources, and we must share them effectively.

For all our members attending programs in Reston, I thank you for your support; with your help our future is bright.

TOPICS OF INTEREST

1. OLLI will have a booth at the Reston Festival on Sat and Sun, Jul 11 and 12. Volunteers are needed to staff the booth. If you wish to volunteer, please contact Janet Cochran. Sign-up sheets are also in the classrooms.
2. The Lunch Bunch will meet on Wed, Jul 15, at 1:00 at the Jasmine Cafe at Lake Anne. You will find sign up sheets in the classrooms or contact Ken Ruttenberg.
3. Course R106: Greater Reston Arts Center CEO John Alciata will be conducting a two-session program on Tue, Jul 21, and Tue, Jul 28, at 10:00. The session on the 28th will be held at the Art Center. Art lovers won't want to miss this program. Register online at the Member Portal or contact the OLLI office if you want to attend.
4. Bridge Clubs at Reston and Loudoun are being considered. If you are interested, please contact Ed Mentz.

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KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

How to contact OLLI

HERE IS A READY REFERENCE on how to contact OLLI. For email addresses and phone numbers not listed below, please consult the online

Membership Directory (log in to [Member Portal](#)).

- President: Emmett Fenlon ([email](#))
- Executive Director: [Thom Clement](#), phone 703-503-7866
- [OLLI Office](#), phone 703-503-3384
- Tallwood Administrator/OLLI Registrar: [Maria Buczek](#), phone 703-503-3384
- Board members: See [Organization page](#) (to send an email to the entire Board, send it to the [office](#) or the *OLLI E-News* [editor](#), and your message will be forwarded to all members of the Board)
- Committee chairs, resource-group chairs: See [Organization page](#)
- Suggestions: [Online suggestion box](#)
- Letters to the editor or letters to Ms. Ollie Ettakit (etiquette matters): *OLLI E-News* Editor [Rod Zumbro](#), phone 703-569-2750

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MASON HIGHLIGHTS

Other Mason events



By Helen Ackerman, *OLLI E-News* Staff Writer

- **Farmers' Market.** Fresh produce and homemade treats from local growers at weekly market. Wed, Jul 8, 11:30 to 3:30. Parking lot K for summer, easy parking.
- **Summer Social.** Featuring a Summer Social Trivia Challenge, prizes and free food. Wed, Jul 8, 3:00 to 5:00, Johnson Center, Bistro.

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

Non-class events at OLLI for the next two weeks

THE FOLLOWING LIST covering the next two weeks is extracted for your convenience from the master calendar maintained by the office (see [Upcoming Non-Class Events](#) to view the real-time OLLI online calendar used by the office). *Note: Board, committee, resource-group and 'membership-type' meetings/events below are **highlighted in bold**. OLLI members are welcome at all Board, committee and resource-group meetings (except during executive sessions).*

Fri Jul 3 **OLLI Closed** for July 4th Holiday
 Mon Jul 6 10am Bridge Club - TA-3
 Tue Jul 7 11:30am Knitting and Needlework Club - Lake Anne Church
 Fri Jul 10 10am Recorder Consort - TA-2
 10am Travel Club - TA-1
 11am Homer Group - Social Room Annex
 Mon Jul 13 10am Bridge Club - TA-3
 10am Book Club - TA-2
 Tue Jul 14 11:30am Knitting and Needlework Club - Lake Anne Church
 Thu Jul 16 11am Fiction Writers' Club - Location TBA
 Fri Jul 17 10am Recorder Consort - TA-2
 10am **Board of Directors Meeting** - TA-1
 11am Homer Group - Social Room Annex
 Sat Jul 18 1pm OLLI PC Users Group (OPCUG) - Tallwood

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About *OLLI E-News* and the member/volunteers who produce it



Rod Zumbro
Editor



John West
Deputy Editor



Barbara Kyriakakis
Associate Editor

Review Team: Gordon Canyock, Michael Coyne, Barbara Kyriakakis, John West, Susanne Zumbro

Database Manager: Barbara Kyriakakis; **Photo Editor:** Michael Coyne

- **About this newsletter.** OLLI's weekly newsletter, *OLLI E-News*, is emailed to current OLLI members with email addresses on Fridays. When classes are in session, printed copies of this newsletter are distributed in classrooms. Comments, suggestions or complaints? Please contact Editor [Rod Zumbro](#) or Communications Committee Chair [Gordon Canyock](#).
- **Submissions.** We encourage members to submit news items, articles and photos for this newsletter. **The deadline to the editor is 7:00 pm Wed** (7:00 pm Mon for letters to the editor for which an OLLI response is appropriate) for that week's issue; **submissions earlier in the week are strongly encouraged and greatly appreciated.** Please limit articles to about 250 words. Submit material via email to Editor Rod Zumbro (email

rzumbro@gmu.edu).

- **Read the latest issue early.** The new weekly issue of *OLLI E-News* is posted to the OLLI Web site Thursday evening. Read it by visiting <http://www.olligmu.edu/pubs.htm#enews>, where you will find a list of the last 12 issues; click the latest issue listed.
- **Viewing or searching past issues.** Your options for finding items in past issues of *OLLI E-News* include viewing the [last 12 issues](#); [searching the content](#) of ALL issues for any word or words; and [searching our archive](#) of all past issues by date or issue number.

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