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# OLLI Life

Honoring  
our soldiers on  
Memorial Day  
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May 2024

Learning, Laughter, Friendships  
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute @ Furman

Issue 22

## THE LINE

Sally Adkins

They lined up,  
boys stretched to men  
by the crisis of war.  
They lined up  
unaware of destiny,  
borne by their  
love of country,  
hate of oppression.  
Stripped of their clothing  
and shorn of their hair,  
they were garbed  
and barbered  
so they “matched.”  
Unseen were the things  
each one also bore;  
the mother’s tear

That dried on his cheek  
and never left,  
the warmth  
of a sweetheart’s hand  
that remained clasping his,  
the family’s love  
that circled his head  
like a protective halo.  
Finally prepared for battle  
and whatever would come,  
they lined up again.

For all those who served  
or will serve . . .  
from a grateful Sally Adkins



Editor’s note:

This poem, and photograph, was originally published in the Spring 2012 special edition of *Gray Matters*, celebrating the OLLI @ Furman veterans of WWII.

Thank you to Gary Aten who was able to locate this photo in his (probably vast) archives from years as editor of *Gray Matters*.

## Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Nancy Kennedy



As we were talking about this issue of *OLLI Life*, editor Jean Hess showed me an article from the spring 2013 issue of *Gray Matters* (the predecessor to *OLLI Life*). That article gave a recap of the Fall 2012 OLLI member survey. Jean thought it might be interesting to compare then and now. I agree, so I took a look at our most recent survey (Fall 2022) as well as some current numbers. Here's a snapshot:

In 2012/2013, OLLI had 1,518 members. We grew a lot from 2012-2020, then suffered some pandemic losses. We have recovered, and this year, we have welcomed 2,293 people to OLLI@Furman.

Then and now, History and Politics are favorite topics. In the 2022 survey, 60% of respondents marked History as a primary area of interest. The second most popular topic was fine arts, at 41%. The Curriculum Committee pays attention to this data as they set targets for the number of courses in each subject area.

The biggest differences come with tech use, which is not surprising. In 2012, more than 50% of respondents had a cell phone and more than 50% had a laptop computer. 44% were on Facebook. Today, 94.4% of respondents have a smartphone and 54% are on Facebook. 92% said they have a laptop or desktop computer, and 67% use an iPad or other tablet device. 34% today have an Apple watch or similar. That wasn't even "a thing" in 2012!

Another big change is with the average age of our membership. In 2012, out of 509 respondents, 57% were under the age of 69. 58% were female in 2012, and 82% were fully retired. 716 completed our most recent survey (in 2022); 59.7% are female and only 25% are under 69. Our average age is increasing and the Long Range Planning Committee is working on the question of "why." Is it because people work longer? Live longer? Join OLLI and keep coming? Wait to join OLLI because they are busy with other things like taking care of grandchildren? It's an interesting question and one we will continue to examine.

continued on next column

There are certainly other changes. I'm not sure any of us knew about the program called Zoom. (I just looked it up—a test version of Zoom launched in August, 2012.) Now, we are offering multiple classes via Zoom and will continue as it allows us to reach more people.

And finally, the question everyone asks: Are we the biggest OLLI? Not quite. Based on 2022-23 survey data, OLLI@Furman was the 5<sup>th</sup> largest of the 125 OLLI programs across the country. Does bigger mean better? I think so, because all of you come to OLLI bringing your lived experiences and new ideas to share with everyone here. That makes our program priceless for everyone. Thank you.

### Happenings

OLLI Happenings, a vibrant tapestry unfolds,  
Tuesday's Lunch & Learn, wisdom untold.  
Discover Greenville's secrets, embrace its allure,  
OLLI's embrace, an experience pure.

Math and Physics, Biology's song,  
SIGs for the curious, where minds belong.  
Singers' melodies, golden era's delight,  
Consort Recorder's harmonies, a symphonic flight.

Chimes ring out, a year's end near,  
German SIG forms, language to steer.  
Furman's farm beckons, nature's call,  
Greenville's chorale, memories enthrall.  
OLLI's pulse beats, in every melody's sway,

Kimbrough Jennings  
April 2024



Congratulations to Kimbrough, OLLI's poetry contest winner!

Thank you to everyone that submitted an entry. They were all wonderful.

## Behind the Scenes with OLLI Committees: How they all work together to keep OLLI the success it is, and how they keep an eye on the future! by Kathy Roed, Council President



I would like to take this opportunity to highlight just a few of the ways your OLLI Council members have been hard at work to ensure the highest quality OLLI membership experience ever! This year an

emphasis has been placed on increasing communication between the Executive, Finance and Administration, Long Range Planning, Curriculum Committees, the OLLI Director, and other staff members. This is resulting in aligned goals and objectives and targeted efforts in a number of key areas.

In the Fall, Council members engaged in a thorough review of the 2022 OSHER National Survey results with Furman OLLI member, and OSHER survey developer, Jack Hansen, to ensure that our Council engages in data-driven planning and decision-making going forward. Among other key findings, we learned that our OLLI at Furman program would benefit from recruiting younger members and course topic preferences for this demographic were identified. In addition, preferred learning methods for OLLI at Furman members were noted (in person 80% and Zoom/hybrid 20%).

This year, under Grady Jordan's leadership, the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) developed new Vision and Mission statements; worked to coordinate the roles and missions between LRPC, Curriculum, Finance, Executive Council, and our OLLI Director; and aligned our program with Furman University's mission. The LRPC continued to examine ways to address the needs of OLLI members who live on the eastern side of the county by offering courses at the Cascades and Rolling Green Valley communities and exploring other potential options for off-site programming. In addition, the LRPC looked at ways to market our program to the 50s and 60s population in our community and developed a PowerPoint presentation about the OLLI at Furman program and presented it to one of The Cliffs communities in February.

This power point will be used in future presentations to 55+ communities and to other targeted groups such as local realtors.

Under the leadership of co-chairs Sally Bornmueller, Tony Caruso and staff member, Alex Fagan, the Curriculum Committee (CC) has recruited a record number of new instructors this year bringing a wide range of exceptional new course offerings to our program. For example, for the current Spring term alone, we are offering 44 new courses and have 17 new instructors. Additionally, in collaboration with the LRPC, the CC has examined the issue of waitlists, Herring Center classroom utilization by weekday and time period, and identified the importance of reaching out to more Furman faculty and students to increase our course offerings.

Finally, during the Winter term, At Large Council members Ken Baxter, John Bissell, Gayl Glover, and George Hammond, were engaged in a project to explore OLLI programs at UNC Asheville, the University of Delaware, the University of Richmond, and the OSHER National Resource Center website. The purpose of the project was to learn ways we might enhance our own OLLI at Furman program. A site visit to UNCA to meet with the OLLI Director and key volunteers as well as Zoom calls with other OLLI programs were made. Key findings were summarized and have been shared with the appropriate Furman OLLI committees and staff members. Based on this research, it is abundantly clear that we continue to have one of the VERY BEST OLLI programs in the country thanks to the tireless efforts of our OLLI staff members and OLLI volunteers!

Wishing you all the best as we close out another outstanding year for our OLLI at Furman program!

Happy Summer!

**Kathy**

## OLLI Players Perform “Steel Magnolias”



A review by Mary Robert

This past March, a transformation came to The Herring Center. Room 110 became a beauty salon in Chinquapin, Louisiana. The set depicted a salon in 1980 and was created by Fred Mertz and Larry Watts, decorated by Diana Manley, and staged by Jan Davis. The support of all the Olli Players made this play a success.

Audiences were transported to the 1980s salon through the brilliant direction of Francine Hachem. The play, written by Robert Harling, tells the story of a group of unlikely friends who use their collective strength to navigate life.

The characters include Truvy Jones, played by Mary Robert, owner of the salon and dispenser of advice and lots of hair spray. Clairee Belcher, played by Miriam Agosto, former mayor’s wife and wealthy entrepreneur. Annelle Depuy Desoto, played by Libby Dasbach, is a newcomer to town,

runs the Mental Health Clinic in town and the mother of Shelby Eatenton-Latcherie, played by Gayl Board Rein, the strong-willed young woman who has been plagued all her life by health issues. Despite the risks, she has chosen to live a “normal” life, much to the worry but support of her mother.



Libby Dasbach (striped shirt), Mary Robert, Gail Board Rein, Miriam Agosto  
Barbara Weiner, Shawn Dunham - Photo by  
Mary Robert



Mary Robert, Gail Board Rein, Miriam Agosto, Shawn Dunham, Libby Dasbach - Photo by Alex Fagan

is innocent and vulnerable and needs help. Ouiser Boudreaux, played by Barbara Weiner, who is famous for her permanently cranky philosophy and the fact that she is richer than God. M’Lynn Eatenton, played by Shawn Dunham, is the serious and beloved woman who

This play brought to life the daily problems, joys and sorrows that women face. It managed these issues with humor, anger, love, and strength. These women shared emotions openly with each other. There was no doubt that these women, one and all, were *Steel Magnolias*.

Audiences filled the house for each performance and found the production professionally delivered and a rewarding experience.



## Remembering OLLI Newsletters through the years

Dave Gallemore

My, how things change! Olli Life for example. OLLI (Osher LifeLong Learning Institute) once known as FULIR (Furman University Learning in Retirement) has had a newsletter since its founding in the early 1990s.

Once known as Gray Matters and printed via mimeograph, it has morphed into OLLI Life, a glittering, professional looking publication in full color published four times a year, presently under the hand of Jean Hess and her staff. Like the expression “it takes a village to raise a child”, it takes a good leader and capable staff to get articles written, proofed and delivered both in print and online editions.

Past editors include Bill Greene, Dave Gallemore, Connie Irby, Judy Aten, Gary Aten, and Sue Renault with numerous contributions from members. And, lest we forget, there are the beautiful and timely photographs from a wide swath of photographers, among them, Bob Howell, Alan Weinberg, and Greg Parker. Each edition was proofed by a director, Sarah Fletcher, Lucy Woodhouse or Nancy Kennedy. Other people involved either as subjects or writers are Dr. John Crabtree, Dr. Gary Malvern Dr. Roy Greene, Dr. Scott Henderson and countless others.



Photo by Jean Hess

Although there had been remembrances of those who had passed away, Connie Irby assumed responsibility for the Memorials section during her time as editor.

Some highlights over the years were the special editions. Who can forget the Covid times and Zoom editions? One of the most notable articles was a side by side piece featuring Dr. Marisa Keeney, psychologist, and one of OLLI's founders, Roy Greene. There were two special

editions honoring veterans of World War II and the Korean War. And, slyly, there was that issue on April Fools day.

Sections on wines, travel, interesting people, comments from the director, registration information and,

of course, news to use, were always looked forward to.

All in all, OLLI Life has been the glue to keep us informed and inspired. Let's remember the effort put in by so many to make us proud of our newsletter and to thank Furman University for providing a place to learn and for their continued support.

**Dave Gallemore**



# Congratulations

## Lois Taylor



# OLLI Volunteer of the year!

## *Lois Taylor Remembers*



We can all look back at past issues of OLLI newsletters and be reminded of whence we have come, but Lois Taylor remembers firsthand.

After graduating from college in New Orleans, Lois served in the Air Force but did not have an opportunity to “see the world” as she had hoped.

Lois and her husband moved to the Greenville area in 2003 and that is when she joined OLLI. She started volunteering as an office helper at OLLI back when classes were held in the basement of Plyer Hall, or room 135 at Furman. Sarah Fletcher was Director, and OLLI was still known as FULIR. She continued volunteering during the trailer days and

then continued through the move to the Herring Center.

She states that she is not a “social butterfly” but just likes to help people. In addition to volunteering at OLLI, she volunteers at the Green River Library in Hendersonville and has been there every Monday since 2004.

During the time that I was with her at her Tuesday morning time slot at OLLI, she answered the phone and answered all questions posed to her, and also waited on people who came to the desk. If she was unable to help someone, she directed the person to someone who could.

Lois contributes her giving spirit to her upbringing and her faith. She donates food and water to the Triune Mercy Center in Greenville.

She also stays busy with her three kitties at home.

Thank you Lois for all of your years helping the staff and hundreds of OLLI members while at the OLLI front desk. You are a gem.

---

Jean Hess, author - Alex Fagan, photographer

**SENIOR LEADERS & SUSTAINABILITY SIG  
BATTERY & EYEGLASS  
RECYCLE/REUSE  
UPDATE**

**Vito Fiore**

As we come to the end of our spring term, I am pleased to report that the Recycle/Reuse Program for Batteries and Eyeglasses has been a huge success! If you recall, the Senior Leaders Alumni Group together with the Sustainability SIG began a recycle/reuse program for batteries and eyeglasses in January of 2024. The response to this program has been phenomenal,

with 438 pairs of glasses and 351 pounds of batteries collected for recycling and reusing.

Look for the collection bins in the lobby and drop your alkaline, nickel cadmium, and electronics batteries and your used prescription, reading, or sunglasses and plastic/metal frames (please no contact lenses, broken frames, or eyeglass cases) in the proper collection bin.

Thanks to all OLLI members for their continued support to help reduce waste by keeping these products out of landfills and finding new

life for these materials. Every little bit helps!

Special thanks to the Berea Lion's Club which is refurbishing/reusing the eyeglasses for their Recycle for Sight Program and to Staples Inc. for managing a free battery/electronics recycling program in the Greenville community.

Direct any questions to Vito Fiore at [vafbronx@gmail.com](mailto:vafbronx@gmail.com)

PS: I read that if you collect \$1Million in \$5 bills, the total weight of the \$5 bills would be just about 400 lbs!

Vito



Editor's note: For more information on how these eyeglasses are used, please see the article on page 8 and 9, by Kathie Burgess.

Photo by Jean Hess

Kathie Burgess

Imagine a village with no running water, no electricity, no nearby medical facility, and many children with no permanent home or source of food. This was the situation I encountered when I first visited Koreng Uganda, a country with 38 million people including 2 ½ million orphans. The children were dressed in rags, which was all they had. The nearest school was several miles away and required fees to attend as well as uniforms. So, these orphans and other vulnerable children did not have the opportunity to attend school.

I was not prepared for such overwhelming poverty with so many orphans. I asked Dr. Okwakol, our host for the trip, what I could do to help, and he said to start a ministry to obtain sponsors for the children so they could have food, clothing, and their educational and domestic needs met. Hands of Kindness Children's Ministry was born in October 2010. I went through a huge learning curve involving creating a Board of Directors, establishing 501(c)(3) non-profit status, and all the aspects of fundraising, and soon we began working to obtain sponsors for the children.

I received training from Southern Eye Associates to do vision screening so that we could provide glasses for the children and adults in Koreng. This was the first time vision testing had been offered in Koreng and they were ecstatic! The word traveled that vision testing and glasses were available free of charge.

People came from miles away and were lined up all day long as we did vision testing under the mango tree. That was 11 years ago and each year when we go to Koreng, the lines of people are still long, and we still do vision testing under the mango tree.

It soon became apparent we needed to build an orphanage (dormitory) for the children so they could have a permanent home. In 2014 we broke ground in Koreng with \$5000 of capital. It took 4 years, but the orphanage is huge and holds 112 children. Currently,



The dormitory for the children - Photo by Kathie Burgess  
we have 88 children living there and have space for 24 more as sponsors become available.

The dormitory had electricity via solar panels until they went on the electrical grid in 2021. Running water came from a huge well we installed, and showers were another first.



The children have houseparents, Michael and Cossy Okwakol, who are our Ugandan partners for the ministry. They provide loving care and guidance for them. We now have a school behind the dormitory and we have provided playground equipment, which is the only playground in the village. This is another first as these children have no toys whatsoever.

Next came the COVID pandemic which prevented us from going to Uganda for almost 3 years. During that time, we were able to raise \$60,000 for the medical center and last July we were able to make the trip to Uganda and dedicate it. It is fully staffed and has a delivery room, lab, and treatment rooms. Now our partner in Uganda tells us they need a surgery center for mothers needing C-sections and for injuries requiring surgery. We are in the process of fundraising for that and will have a golf tournament at Southern Oaks Golf Course on October 18. All golfers are welcome to join us by visiting our website!

Much progress has been made since our beginning in 2010. One of our team members raised money for a

tractor for the village, as all farming is done by hand. Eighty-seven children now have a safe place to live, with running water and electricity. They have food,

clothing, and attend school because they have the required uniforms and school fees. Our first sponsored child has graduated from trade school and has a job as a carpenter, another is a tailor, and others are training as nursing students. Every year

the carpenter returns to the village to work with us so he can pay it forward. The children have hope for a future as evidenced by their drawings. While our ministry is small, it is making a huge impact in the village of Koreng, Uganda.

If you would like to sponsor a child, play in the golf tournament, or make a donation to the surgery center, please visit our website,

[handsofkindnesschildren.com](http://handsofkindnesschildren.com)



Sponsored children in front of their elementary school. Photo by Kathie Burgess

Editor's note: Kathie Burgess is currently the secretary of the Berea Lions Club and will be their president in July. They are very thankful to OLLI members for the generous response to their request for used eyeglasses.



The Spring Luncheon at Younts Center on May 14th was well attended and great food was served!  
 Another OLLI success! Photo by Heidi Wright

**Thank you to all the wonderful contributors to this edition of the OLLI Life newsletter. We appreciate everyone!**

Writers:

**Nancy Kennedy** - Looking Back, Looking Ahead p. 2

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**Kathy Roed** - Behind the Scenes with OLLI Committees p. 3

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**Vito Fiore** - Senior Leaders and Sustainability SIG p. 7

**Kathie Burgess** - Hands of Kindness ps. 8,9

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**Esther Pittman** for Bill Garcia  
**Margaret Hafer** for Roger Miel  
**Natalina Ferlauto** for Liz Dubose  
**Nancy Kennedy** for Sarah Crenshaw

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**Kathie Burgess**  
**Heidi Wright**  
**Alex Fagan**  
**Jean Hess**



## OLLI Remembers



**Bill Garcia**, 71, died 12/17/2023

Bill Garcia was my dear friend for over 2 years, since the time we were both in an Olli class that contrasted two political philosophies. At that time, it was clear that he had an incredible depth of knowledge of history as well as the ability to independently analyze and make sense of what he read. Bill enjoyed many classes at OLLI and was even considering teaching a history class. He was a devoted grandfather and loved teaching his grandchildren.

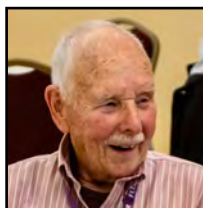
Tribute by Esther Pittman - Thank you

OLLI would also like to acknowledge the passing of:

**Denise Smith**, 65, June 1, 2023

**Carole Mauldin**, 87, October 24, 2023

**Barbara Fasullo**, 91, November 11, 2023



**Roger Miel** was 95 years old.

Roger was born in 1929 in northern France. He experienced enemy invasion of his country, evacuation, occupation, and then liberation. The first class he taught at OLLI was about that experience. Roger later taught French for nearly 10 years at OLLI, while taking courses in many other subjects, including pen and ink drawing which he particularly enjoyed.

One day while teaching his French class, there were tornado warnings and everyone was told to go to the basement. Students exited the classroom and turned left to go to the basement, but when Roger left the classroom he turned right and walked toward the outside door. People shouted to Roger that he was going the wrong way, that it was dangerous outside. Roger replied, "I'm not afraid of a tornado. The Germans, they bombed me; the British, they bombed me; the Americans, they bombed me. I'm going to go see the tornado!" Roger loved to learn and he loved to teach.

Tribute by Margaret Hafer and friends of Roger - Thank you

**Elizabeth (Liz) Dubose**, 91, died on 3/4/2024

She was the wife of the late Cantey DuBose, past president of OLLI/FULIR and beloved teacher of Pen and Ink classes. While Cantey was a Presbyterian minister, Liz was a lifelong educator and had a long career with the School District of Greenville County, rising to the level of Area Superintendent.

Liz and Cantey attended classes together and she helped him along when his health was declining. They had a long married life and both lived well into their nineties.

Tribute by Natalina Ferlauto - Thank you



**Sarah Crenshaw**, 84, died 12/28/2023

Sarah was an OLLI member since 2010. She was enjoying her retirement years attending classes at OLLI which required her to drive from Spartanburg. She enjoyed history classes and took several Bonus Events as well. She also enjoyed reading, traveling, staying active and on-the-go. Many who knew her mentioned her kindness and sweetness.

Thank you to OLLI Staff and obit from J. M. Dunbar F. H. & Crematory for these details.

# Jean's Final Thoughts

## Word of the Day - Qiviut

In addition to its softness, qiviut is also renowned for its warmth. It is said to be eight times warmer than sheep's wool, making it a perfect choice for garments in cold climates.

Qiviut (kiv'-ee-ute) is the delicate under-wool of the Arctic muskox.

This fiber is highly sought after due to its unique properties, which make it one of the softest, lightest, and strongest natural fibers in the world.

It is said to be softer than cashmere, and its fine, fluffy texture is often compared to a cloud. This makes it ideal for use in a variety of garments, including scarves, hats, and sweaters, as it feels soft and comfortable against the skin.



It would cost around \$1200 to knit a sweater from qiviut.

## Trivia Question

What model of car uses every vowel in the English language?

If you have any comments, suggestions or would like to submit an article, highlight a class or special event for OLLI Life newsletter, please contact Jean Hess, editor, at: [jean.hess66@gmail.com](mailto:jean.hess66@gmail.com)

Also, please consider sending in a "Word of the Day" or "Trivia Question" to be used on the "Final Thoughts" page of an upcoming issue of OLLI Life.