



OLLI *News*

UConn
WATERBURY

Volume 16, Issue 1

Feb. 20, 2015

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Connecticut is an academic cooperative that provides older adults with opportunities for intellectual development, cultural stimulation, and social interaction

WELCOME TO SPRING AT OLLI!

Welcome to spring! – sort of. The past few weeks have brought back inglorious memories of the February not so many years ago when there were 17 snow storms in a month that boasted only 28 days. Let's face it, it's cold, it's wet, and it's miserable – outside, that is. The warmth here at OLLI however, cannot be denied. We just concluded a winter session that was record breaking in its number of courses and attendance and lucky in its ability to side step some pretty horrible weather events. We did not have to cancel or postpone one single winter class! OLLI members and presenters held classes at 10 AM *and* at 1 PM for the first time in our history of winter sessions. This is yet another successful paradigm shift in operations in our eight years. We also held one course on Wednesdays at 1 PM, which would be our second foray into working outside of the usual OLLI class schedule.

We look forward to spring, to the awakening of our quest for the freshest of air, and the greenest of pastures. However, we are not intimidated by New England winters. So as we begin our spring session in the winter, we start today with a visit by the Mattatuck Drum Band, the oldest Fife and Drum Band in these United States. See them in their true form on Saturday, March 7th at the Waterbury St. Patrick's Day Parade. Learn more about them at OLLI Café today.

An infusion of new courses and new presenters who have discovered the excitement of this vibrant community promises to set the stage for a stimulating spring session. Please note that there are still seats available in some courses. Keep looking through our courses online, where they are most accurately listed. Finally, pass the word! Tell a friend about OLLI. We would be happy to welcome more people like you!

OLLI WELCOMES HDFS INTERNS

The OLLI program is delighted to interface with other departments at the University of Connecticut whenever we have the opportunity. This spring, OLLI at UConn Waterbury extends a welcome to 2 special people. Ana DuVerge and Marisela Perez are two University of Connecticut students who are interested in working with the OLLI community. They are students of the UConn Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) Department, fulfilling a Field Work requirement.

Both Ana and Marisela will be with us on Fridays during the spring session. During the course of their important work, which they will document in writing, they may observe a class in full or in part; they may seek to conduct face-to-face interviews with individuals or groups of members and/or presenters (facilitated by OLLI staff); they may ask for completion of voluntary surveys; or they may sit in on a committee meeting to observe our self-directed organizing.

Please join the OLLI staff in welcoming Ana and Marisela to our spring session. We are always happy and proud to be included as a component of the education of UConn students.

Aleta E. Staton, MA, Coordinator

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)



OLLI TRIP TO RISD AND JOHNSON AND WALES CULINARY ARCHIVES

The first OLLI trip of the spring semester will leave the St. Anthony's/DOT parking lot (Prospect) May 13, 2015 at 7:30 and will stop first at the Culinary Archives at Johnson and Wales College.

At the Providence campus of Johnson and Wales, there will be a guided tour of kitchen utensils that your grandmother loved and might have given you a few of her pieces.

I wonder if they have a copy of the A-frame-like grater that guaranteed every potato you grated would be tinged with a bit of your blood?

If you are like me and never had a chance to tour the White House, this tour will allow you to gaze at memorable dinnerware from the president's house plus other treasures.

Our bus will take us to Federal Hill known for its many great restaurants. Try one of them for lunch or bring your own. After lunch, our tour bus will move on to the Rhode Island School of Design for a guided tour of some of its varied artworks, textiles, silver, glasswork and ceramics the museum possesses. There are 86,000 pieces of artwork for you to enjoy.

There is a splendid collection of early American needlework. Pieces by artists such as Picasso, Monet, Manet, Andy Warhol and Paul Revere pieces are on display.

The cost of the trip is \$79 for OLLI members and \$89 for non-members. New OLLI Travel Committee guidelines say once the trip has been announced, non-members can immediately sign up for the tour.

Estimated time of return to the Prospect parking lot is 7:30 pm.

A Suggestion to our OLLI Travelers ~

When reserving a seat for one of our day trips, it is very important for you to get your reservations in as early as possible. If they have not received an adequate number of people (usually 35 or 40) for a day trip, Friendship Tours is required to start a cancellation process about 2 weeks ahead of the date of that trip. That means that, although we know many of our trips are popular and were planned because many members suggested them, if many people wait until the last two weeks, the trip you are calling for may already be cancelled. So please make sure to reserve trips early to make sure you get the trips you want. (Just a note – Of course, overnight trips need to be reserved much earlier.)

Ann Rompre, Co-Chairperson of Travel

The secret of happiness is to make others believe they are the cause of it.

Al Batt-Reader's Digest

OLLI POETRY COFFEE HOUSE

2nd Thurs at John Bale Bookshop –
10:00am

Contact Denise Whelan
(denisewhelan@yahoo.com)

For more information

OLLI BOOK CLUB

Contact: Nancy Via at nvia@sbcglobal.net

All meetings of the book club will be held in room 102D, UConn, Wtby at 1:00 PM
3rd Monday

February 16
March 16
April 20
May 18
June 15

Still Life With Breadcrumbs
The Omnivore's Dilemma
Being Mortal
Underground Girls of Kabul
Tomlinson Hill

Anna Quindlen
Michael Pollan
Atul Gawande
Jenny Nordberg
Chris Tomlinson



OLLI CAFE

HISTORY OF THE MATTATUCK DRUM BAND WITH BILL PIERPONT

The Mattatuck Drum Band is the oldest fife and drum band in the United States with continuous membership since it was organized in 1767. It is a senior ancient band whose members seek to perpetuate the music, traditions, and heritage of the founders of the State and Country.

Feb 27 MILLIONS OF PENGUINS, ANTARCTICA, SOUTH GEORGIA, AND THE FALKLAND ISLANDS WITH BETSY AND PAUL MCELVANE

News from the Travel Committee

The interim between semesters has brought some new policies about for OLLI Travel that we hope you will find helpful. One of these you will find in all the OLLI Newsletters. This is a listing entitled **Upcoming OLLI Travel** of all confirmed future trips with the date on which they will take place and their cost. You will find this framed in a box shape. We hope this will be convenient for you as a quick guide to see what travel is coming up both in this semester and the next when you may not have seen a flyer.

Also new is an added section on the OLLI website. It is a link from the Travel section to **Frequently Asked Questions about OLLI Travel**. This covers a wide variety of questions that we have been asked and others to which we think that you may possibly want an answer. To get to it, go to www.oli.uconn.edu on the internet. Once there, click on the word **Membership** under the words Osher Lifelong learning Institute. This will bring you to a page listing the benefits of membership. **OLLI Trips** is the 5th one down in the bulleted list. Click on the blue words **OLLI Trips** and you will be brought to a page listing all upcoming trips with other pertinent information. At the end of the paragraphs at the top of the page you will see the words **Frequently Asked Questions about OLLI Travel** in blue. Click on this and you will be at the page containing all the different questions and answers. Check it out!

Lastly, as of this semester, all trips are open as soon as they are made public to not only OLLI members but also to any of their guests who are not members. This cancels the policy of non-members being put on a wait list for a brief period of time. Of course, non-members will still pay a slightly higher price for the trip - \$10 extra for day trips and \$20 extra for overnight trips within the US. We hope this will be one way to make it easier for you to have a travel companion. If not, check out the new **Frequently Asked Questions about OLLI Travel** on the OLLI website where we have also addressed travel companions in another way.

As always, Happy Traveling from the Travel Committee!
Ann Rompre & Gen Delkescamp, Co-Chairs



JKF Library and Boston Harbor Cruise

If all you can think of is snow mounds visible in the Greater Waterbury area, then close your eyes and picture yourself on a 90 minute cruise around Boston Harbor, The date for the trip is on June 3, 2015 and the snow will be gone for sure.

This is the second OLLI trip of the spring semester June 3, 2015 and the bus will leave the St. Anthony's/DOT parking lot in Prospect at 7 am and make its first stop at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston

The Presidential Library designed by I.M. Pei, belies that the current stunning landscape overlooking the sea was once a dump. With contributions by 30 million people the library was dedicated on October 29, 1979.

The Kennedy Library and Museum has seven permanent exhibits including one dedicated to the first lady, Jackie Kennedy, which includes some of her clothing.

Another exhibit is of the Oval Office which revolves around the American Civil Rights movement during Kennedy's 1000 day presidency.

Another features items given to JFK by various heads of state or handmade items created by his admirers.

The space capsule used by Alan Shepard, when he became the first American in space is on loan to the library until 2016. Admire this treasure in the space exhibit area.

Another collection within the complex, contains the documents and belongings of the author, Ernest Hemingway. After a meeting between Hemingway's widow, Mary, and Jackie Kennedy, a decision was made to donate the author's effects including the hand-written draft of Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises*.

Our chartered bus will transport our travelers to the Quincy Market which offers a variety of lunch opportunities and stores.

After lunch is over, relax and enjoy a 90 minute cruise around the historic Boston Harbor.

Cost for OLLI members is \$86. Cost for non-OLLI members is \$96. Under new Travel Committee guidelines, an OLLI member and his/her friends can now register as soon as the trip is announced.

Call 1 800-243 1630 for reservations.

Upcoming OLLI Travel

5/13/15-Culinary Arts Museum/RISD Art Museum-\$79pp

5/22 - 5/31/15 – Best of London & Paris (see flyer for pricing)

6/3/2015- Best of Boston (JFK Library & Cruise) - \$86pp

6/7 - 6/9/2015 – Ogunquit/Strawbery Banke (overnight)- \$397pp dbl

9/16/2015 – NY Botanical Gardens (Frida Kahlo's Garden) - \$75pp

9/27 - 30/2015 – Niagara Falls (overnight) - \$510pp dbl

All prices (except for London/Paris trip) are member prices. Non-members are charged a slight surcharge. Call Friendship Tours for information and reservations. (1-800-243-1630). Mention OLLI Travel

To reserve the London/Paris trip call Road Scholar toll free at (800) 322-5315 and reference Program #19674

OLLI GARDENING PROJECT (OGP)

November 11, 2014

The OGP began in 2013 when a group of volunteers gathered in March in a classroom on the UConn Waterbury campus to listen to a visionary lay out plans for the year. He planned to use 40 raised beds in Fulton Park in Waterbury to grow produce from seeds. We would harvest the produce and deliver it to a local soup kitchen. Volunteers would work either Tues or Thurs for several hours. Work would begin at 9:00 but as the days warmed up we would start as early as 7:30AM. This was a course with no grades. This was a physical project with no pay and no raises. In fact we had to pay to take the course. The success of this course the first year depended on whether or not volunteers would work through the summer harvesting produce. The visionary leader Nunzio Defillipis had done this previously at other locations and expected half of the volunteers to drop out early and most to drop out by late summer.

The trials and tribulations of the first year have already been documented. Locks and keys had to be procured. The chain link fence had to be repaired. Water from the city of Waterbury had to be turned on once the missing pipes were replaced. Our work started in March when we worked with gloves and wool caps, half of us preparing the soil and the other half tending to the seedlings in the hot house.

The doubters among us did not believe that from tiny seeds we could produce and deliver fully grown vegetables.

Sure enough through the year we produced a couple of tons of delicious vegetables. The unit of weight was not pounds or kilograms by Nunzio-pounds. This was an estimated weight confirmed by at least two gardeners. A major effort was spent fighting hoards of woodchucks and various insects which welcomed us into their community by attacking our produce.

Once the season got under way a dedicated contingent of the volunteers developed a sense of purpose and camaraderie. Fulton Park garden was converted from a serene though neglected, natural paradise to one invaded at least twice a week by boisterous seniors. These seniors then followed the visionary leader to the soup kitchen and cooked the produce. The mystery of cooking for hundreds of people disappeared when we learned that you used very large pots, washed and cut up every vegetable you could find, add garlic and olive oil and serve with a fresh salad and garlic bread made with hot dog rolls. The food was delicious and was appreciated by the soup kitchen guests.

Ira Mickenberg
Part 1 of 2 on OPG



NIAGARA FALLS, CANADA September 27 - 30, 2015 (Sun. - Wed.)

(\$510 pp double/triple; \$650 single; nonmember surcharge \$20)

There has to be a reason why millions of visitors from all over the world come to see Niagara Falls. The setting is spectacular! The famous Horseshoe Falls are on the Canadian side, with the American and Bridal Falls on the U.S. side. It is a sight to behold many times over.

Now, your travel committee invites you to join other OLLI members and friends on this next three-night, four-day guided excursion. The Country Inn and Suites in Canada will be considered home for the duration of our visit. Highlights of our guided tour of the Falls include driving along the Niagara Parkway in Queenstown, Ontario, where we can expect to view the Floral Clock, along with other famous local landmarks. Be sure to obtain our colorful flyer listing a complete itinerary. Included is ample free time for individual tastes and levels of activity.

Beside those fantastic sights, we will tour the quaint town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and stop at a local Winery in that area. Dinner on our last evening at the revolving Skylon Tower offers spectacular views of the Falls and the local surroundings. Before heading home, we will visit the famous Butterfly Conservatory, part of the Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens.

NOTE - PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP REQUIRED: A VALID U.S. PASSPORT

Don't miss out on this wonderful trip. Call Friendship Tours (860 243 1630) now for reservations.

MEET YOUR COUNCIL MEMBERS

Nancy Blomstrom, a member of the OLLI Leadership Council and co-chair of the OLLI Newsletter, is adaptable and creative. She has applied her talents in work as varied as teaching English in Thailand with the Peace Corps and working with welfare clients in Brooklyn, NY. “I move on; I don’t pine for what I did before,” the retired librarian observes when reflecting on her life filled with change and travel.

Nancy’s family lived on Ellis Island until she was six weeks old. Her father was a physician with the U.S. Public Health Service, who relocated from Ellis Island to Lexington, KY, where he had a new assignment. Over the years, the family moved many times because of her dad’s work.

A government major at Smith College, Nancy spent her junior year at the University of Geneva in Switzerland. “Your French had to be good” because classes were taught in that language. She sometimes was mistaken for a German, which puzzled her. She thought her accent when speaking French may have caused the identity confusion.

Nancy recalls her time in Geneva as a “kind of formative experience” that was life changing. She remembers taking a class about World War I where the professor took the students “day by day” through the events that took place in the weeks prior to that war. “He helped you to understand diplomacy.”

Excursions to other countries were part of the experience. Nancy wryly recalled going to Spain with friends where she had to be the driver because she was the only one with a driver’s license. Her main memory of that outing was “getting out of the rental place.”

Her senior year back at Smith went by quickly. Changing her mind about going to graduate school, Nancy applied to the Peace Corps and was accepted to go to Thailand in early 1964. She was sent to an intensive program in Hawaii to learn about Thai culture and the basics of the Thai language. In the language class, “you were just listening. I didn’t understand a thing!” until the teacher

handed out materials in print form and “the light bulb went on.”

In Thailand, Nancy taught students attending a teacher training college for two years. Most of the young people who completed the program returned to their villages qualified to teach pupils up to fifth grade. Nancy found it was good for Thai students learning English to be “exposed to someone speaking English as a first language.” She traveled as much as possible with Peace Corps friends when they had free time.

After Peace Corps, Nancy headed to Yale University to earn her master’s in Southeast Asian Studies and met her future husband, Peter, in New Haven. Although she was now planning to become a librarian, the newly-married couple moved to Brooklyn and Peter went on to get a master’s degree in public administration at New York University.

Nancy got a job as a case worker in the city welfare department and was assigned to the Bedford–Stuyvesant area. She had a case load of 75 families and was responsible for home visits. She found the people nice and worked hard to help her clients get appropriate social services. “This was a good experience for me” although she was mugged once “by a person with a sawed-off shotgun.” Police were called and to Nancy’s relief her purse was found with everything in it except for her cash.

The Blomstroms moved to Chicago, where their two daughters were born. Nancy earned her library degree from Dominican University. After they later moved, to Washington, Illinois, Nancy worked for the Eureka College library. Change came again when Peter took a job in Connecticut, and Nancy joined the staff of Housatonic Community College, Bridgeport, retiring as director in 2007. Now living in Cheshire, Nancy became involved in OLLI after Kathy Houlihan urged her to do so. At OLLI she likes that classes “really make you think” and enjoys meeting many interesting people. —**Mary Ann Martin**

