

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

Does it seem that the autumn colors are more vibrant and lasting longer this year? especially oaks.

In an article from the Old Farmers' Almanac George and Becky Lohmiller ask the questions, "Why do autumn leaves change color? What types of trees and weather produce the most vivid fall foliage? Not all leaves turn vivid colors in the fall. Only a few of our many species of deciduous trees – notably maple, aspen, oak and gum – produce stellar performances for our annual autumn spectacular in North America."

According to them, "Several factors contribute to fall color (temperature, precipitation, soil moisture), but the main agent is light, or actually the lack of it. The amount of daylight relates to the timing of the autumnal equinox.

As the autumn days grow shorter, the reduced light triggers chemical changes in deciduous plants causing a corky wall to form between the stem and leaf. This layer eventually causes the leaf to drop off in the breeze. As corky cells multiply, they seal off the vessels that supply the leaf with nutrients and water and also block the exit vessels, trapping simple sugars and leaves. The combination of reduced light lack of nutrients and no water add up to the death of the pigment chlorophyll, the "green" in leaves. Once the green is gone, two other pigments show their bright faces. These pigments, carotene (yellow) and anthocyanin (red). Browns in autumn leaves are the result of tannin, a chemical that exists in many leaves,

Sugar trapped in autumn leaves by the 'abscission' layer is largely responsible for the vivid color. some additional abscission layers are also manufactured by sunlight acting on the trapped sugar. This is why foliage is so sparkling after several bright fall days and more pastel during rainy spells. In general, a wet growing season followed by a dry autumn filled with sunny days and cool frostless nights produces the most vibrant palette of fall colors. Of course, if freezing temperatures and a hard frost hits, it can kill the process within the leaf and lead to poor fall color. Also, drought conditions during late summer and early fall can trigger an early shutdown of trees as they prepare for winter, causing leaves to fall early from trees without reaching their full color potential. Some level of autumn foliage changes in many regions in North America. However, it is the northern tier of states, especially New England, that hold the jackpot for leaf peepers.. A combination of the right climate, light conditions and an abundance of the tree varieties that hoard colorful pigments come together there. While tradition has it that Columbus Day weekend is when the color peaks in New England, the mythical maximum occurs in northern Maine in mid to late September and travels south, reaching the Connecticut shore by late October."

That's the science. Enjoy the beauty!

www.almanac.com





OLLI CAFE

Friday, October 30
Learning meteorology
Sam Kantrow

Sam Kantrow has been a meteorologist for six years, including four at WTNH in New Haven. Come listen to him discuss the ins and outs of meteorology, including the tools, the tricks, and what it's like to be on television.

Friday, November 6
Bravo Waterbury
Calida Jones

OLLI's Trip to the 9/11 Memorial Museum

It was a beautiful clear day with blue sky overhead as we started our trip to the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum in NYC – almost as if to invoke a vision of the strikingly blue sky on the actual 9/11/2001 and the ironic contrast between its beauty and all the horrors of that day, indelibly seared in our memories. On our way down, our Friendship Tour guide, Eve Magoon, gave us a good overview of how much care was given to all the planning of the museum to honor the memories of all those who lost lives that day and all who were injured, in addition to all who served in saving lives, and the people that were closely involved. We were happy to go at a time when we got to see the first of the new Trade Towers completed as well as the museum and Memorial Pools outside.

On arriving in NYC we first stopped to have lunch. On disembarking the bus, by chance we ran into a Chinese celebration in the street which afforded us a very colorful show complete with a large colorful Chinese dragon. Then we walked a little further for lunch in Little Italy with some shopping on the way. With so many Italian restaurants on the street, the hardest choice was choosing which one, as all were great and had “A” ratings by the city.

After our lunch our driver brought us to the locality of the 9/11 Museum. On our short walk in we admired a large bronze plaque on the side of a building dedicated to fallen firefighters of 9/11 and firefighters who still serve NYC – definitely impressive. On reaching the Memorial Plaza, and entering the museum, we noticed the dignified, somber impression of the layout. Everything was displayed in simplicity against concrete walls and many times afforded you viewing angles from different heights as you looked over balconies and escala-



tors going down different levels below street level giving you the chance to see the tops and bottoms of large pieces. One such piece was a girder that was painted with all the different departments of first responders that day and the number of how many died from each department. Another impressive piece was a massive wall constructed of squares of different colors of blue that bring to mind the color of the blue sky that day with the large words in the center “No day shall erase you from the memory of time.” (Virgil). A section of the museum was devoted to portraits of all who perished in the Trade Centers and at the Pentagon, Shanksville, and on the four planes that day as well as those who had perished in the previous bombing of the Twin Towers in 1993. Another whole section was dedicated solely to the timetable and events of that day. This section brought back memories of just how long that day seemed to us all, event by event. Obviously this is just a sampling of all the different displays that we took in as there were many more having to do with that day.

As we exited, we came upon the Memorial Pools set at the exact square footprint of the original two Twin Towers. Engraved on flat surfaces surrounding these are all the names of those who perished. It is truly moving to stand next to all these names while watching the water falling into the interior while also noticing flowers left on individual names here and there. New tree plantings enhanced this area, including one tree, a callery pear, that was saved from the grounds that day now called the “Survivor Tree”.

For those of you who did not get the chance to take this wonderful trip, try to make the trip someday on your own. It is a very well done museum, designed with a lot of thought, dignity, and creativity that connects you to all who perished or served that day and preserves their sacrifice in our nation's history. Also, the visual stimulation of taking in NYC itself is an added bonus.

Ann Rompre

OLLI POETRY COFFEE HOUSE

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

Contact Denise Whelan (denisewhelan@yahoo.com)

For more information

MEET YOUR PRESENTERS

Gabriella Brand was pursuing her Doctor of Modern Languages degree at Middlebury College when she decided, quite literally, to be a clown.

She joined with a friend to become part of the French Buffoons, an experience she has never regretted. She and the friend swapped roles regularly with one playing the clown who spoke and the other portraying a French mime who never spoke but expressed ideas without verbalizing.

“The clown would explain or tease or interact with the audience” while the mute mime would act out expressions, such as an idiom. The purpose was to show a humorous aspect of French language learning. “We toured to enliven the teaching of foreign languages” through the use of skits and other activities.

A lover of words, Gabriella drily observes it’s not easy to convey meaning with your face in clown makeup. Beyond being a performer, Gabriella felt she learned a lot with the French Buffoons. They had to learn about budgets, scheduling and other business functions.

The pair presented shows from Montreal to Washington, D. C. to students in middle school up through graduate school. Gabriella had an epiphany. “I fell in love with middle schoolers, their vision and spirit; and I fell out of love with teaching college age students.”

Recognizing that she didn’t want to be a higher education academic, Gabriella stopped working on her dissertation, “the best thing I ever did.” She knew then that, “I am not a straight line person. That hasn’t been my life.” Her life’s journey has taken her on pilgrimages and has seen her succeed as a prize winning writer as well as become a Unitarian lay minister, who preaches and ministers to parishioners in the Virgin Islands for four to six weeks annually..

After being one of the French Buffoons. Gabriella’s focus changed to teaching middle school students. During her career, she has taught many languages, including French, Spanish, Latin, Italian and English. Over

time, Gabriella has served as Middle School Head, Cheshire Academy, and Middle School Head at Foote School. She also was Acting Principal of Ezra Academy, which served kindergarten through eighth grade students.

She herself has a diploma from the University of Neuchatel, Switzerland, a bachelor’s degree from Antioch College and a master’s from Middlebury College.

Gabriella’s life changed sharply yet again in 2005 when her sister-in-law died, which “had a big impact on me.”

She decided to make time to pursue long-term goals, including going on pilgrimages. She began with the Camino de Santiago (the Way of St. James), walking about 500 miles from St. Jean Pied de Port near Biarritz in France, to Fisterra, Spain. Going on pilgrimage allows the pilgrim to think, to meditate and appreciate the local culture, according to Gabriella. Another major pilgrimage was the Shikoku 88 temple pilgrimage on the Japanese island of Shikoku, where Gabriella walked 900 miles.

Gabriella, who now works as a consultant on curriculum and teaching methods, is a prize winning writer who says, “I’ve been very lucky.” Her work has appeared in such publications as *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Room Magazine*, *Step Away*, the *Citron Review* and many other venues. One of her pieces, “Burning My Boots at Cabo Fisterra” that grew out of her experiences on her first pilgrimage, won second prize in the “I Must be Off 2015 Travel Essay” contest where her work faced international competition. She also was nominated in 2014 for a prestigious Pushcart Prize, an American literary prize sponsored by Pushcart Press.

At OLLI Gabriella loves sharing language and culture with interested adults at OLLI. She has taught many OLLI courses. The current one is “Lost in Translation: A Short Story of Words that Got Away.” She was very excited to learn two of her OLLI students who took her course on pilgrimage have since done the Camino de Santiago. —**Mary Ann Martin**

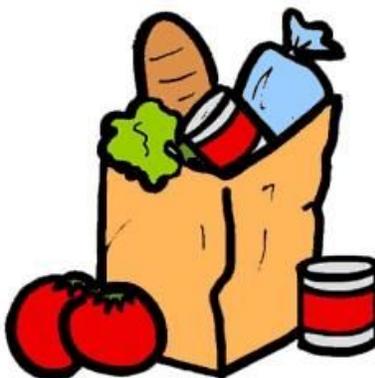


OLLI THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE

The month-long OLLI Clubs and Activities Committee Thanksgiving food drive is continuing. It is anticipated that this year's donations will surpass last year's 700+ total.

Non-perishable bottled and canned food items, including cereal, crackers, assorted canned vegetables and soups, boxed stuffing mix, coffee, peanut butter, jellies and jams, pasta sauces, etc. are needed to fill the pantry at the Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries. From there, all OLLI donations will be boxed and given to needy families in the Waterbury area.

All food donations can be brought to the OLLI members' table located on the first floor, concourse area, opposite the UConn book store. On behalf of the Clubs and Activities Committee a very sincere thank you is extended to all OLLI folks who support this community endeavor.



Save the date – November 13 – 2:15–3:45 pm! Do you attend an OLLI afternoon class from 2:15 to 3:45 pm? If not, please plan to join your fellow OLLI members in the Multi-purpose room at that time for a special presentation. As part of OLLI's Arts Celebration Day on the last day of Classes, several OLLI members will be presenting dramatic readings of brief new, original plays written by them. OLLI poets whose poetry has appeared in a recent issue of Voices and Visions will accompany these OLLI playwrights. Save the date and become part of this outstanding cultural and artistic event.