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 OLLI’s 2018 Spring Semester!

In the past couple of years, the term “Super-agers” has become the new buzzword when talking about positive aging. Super-agers are defined as “robust in body and mind, with a wide social circle.” I think this neatly defines OLLI’s combined purpose of providing stimulating classes with a strong social emphasis. Everyone at OLLI is a perfect example of how it’s never too early or too late to be a super-ager!

Since the New Year, we’ve had many positive developments at OLLI. Jenna Ryan, our OLLI Coordinator, graduated with honors in December 2017. We also have two new team members: Laura Rendon and Nicole Caron. Everyone on the team is a reason for OLLI’s success and growth. Congratulations, Jenna, and welcome, Laura and Nicole!

Other changes this spring include the opening of Starbucks across the street from the main campus. Pick up an ID card from the OLLI office and enjoy your coffee at tax-exempt prices. We’re also excited to be expanding our “OLLI footprint”: “Unearth Your Roots” is our first OLLI class to be held in the UConn Waterbury Rectory Building (just above Starbucks). Use of this building will allow us to expand course offerings as we continue in our 11th year.

Another new development is our sharing sessions for presenters. We had a great time welcoming our new presenters on February 9th, and will follow up with a review session in May. All presenters are welcome to attend and share successes and ideas from the semester.

“The Greening of Waterbury”, led by Nunzio Defilippis, is now in its sixth year, and received a generous $6,000 grant for 2018 from the Connecticut Community Foundation. If you enjoy a little exercise, great company, and doing good, sign up soon! All produce goes to local food banks and soup kitchens.

We’re especially grateful for your continued commitment to OLLI. Watch out for upcoming information about how your donations support the OLLI at UConn experience, and easier ways for you to give.

And finally, the OLLI team would like to give a special thank you to the entire UConn campus, UConn Waterbury campus director Dr. William Pizzuto, the Leadership Council, and ALL our volunteers and contributors, whether you serve on committees, teach classes, or share your OLLI experiences in your communities. Here’s to a fabulous spring semester!

Fiona de Merell
Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Connecticut

99 East Main Street
The Newsletter is always looking for content from our readers. This may be in the form of original work or items you have found interesting and may wish to pass on to others. We always welcome any suggestions you may have to improve the newsletter or criticisms of it. The Newsletter exists to inform and entertain our readers.

Contact Bob Grady at yvoorg@aol.com or any OLLI staff member.

Man’s mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.

Oliver Wendell Holmes
What do you know about Coal Mining?

Our trip to Scranton to visit the Lackawanna Coal Mines will open up a whole new world of information for you. To give you a glimpse of some of the culture and vernacular you will learn about on the trip, try your hand at the quiz on coal mining. See if you know the answers to the questions below. (The answers are listed below the Icon.)

1. A “nipper” (or “trapper”) is
   a. A miner who chips at the hard coal pieces to make nuggets
   b. A young boy who waits at the trap doors to open or close them for the miners going in or out with loads of coal
   c. A boy too young to work in the mines and therefore just pulls coal away from the mine

2. A “windy shot” is
   a. An explosion that fails to break the coal
   b. A large draft of air that came down through the mine when the trap door is left open
   c. A miner who gets too loud with some drinks after a day at work

3. A “Little Red Wagon” is
   a. The cart that the miners used to take out the coal
   b. The car that the miners went into the mine in
   c. A traveling toilet that they had at some mines

4. Miners were called
   a. Muckmen
   b. Underground Savages
   c. Dirt Faces

5. A “breaker boy” is
   a. A young boy whose job it was to detach impurities from coal
   b. A young boy who lead the horses or mules into the mine
   c. A young boy who helped pull carts of coal from the mines

6. A “puter” is
   a. Small ponies used to transport water to workers
   b. A child worker who pushed trucks of coal
   c. A cave-in

7. One of the most dangerous threats to the miners is the leakage of which poisonous gas into the mine?
   a. Argon
   b. Sulfur hexafluoride
   c. Hydrogen sulfide

8. What was the danger of poisonous gas in the mine?
   a. It was flammable
   b. It could cause hyperthermia
   c. It could cause hypothermia

9. If a miner survived the explosions, poisonous gases, flooding and other disasters that occurred in the mines, many succumbed to which of the following afflictions, commonly known as “Black Lung Disease”?
   a. Kaposi’s sarcoma
   b. Pneumothorax
   c. Pneumoconiosis

10. In the early days of the mining business, what age was a boy considered old enough to work in the mines?
    a. 16
    b. 14
    c. 12

Pick up a flyer on the Lackawanna trip and join us on June 11th – 12th 2018!

Answers to the Coal Mining Quiz

1 – b
2 – a
3 – c
4 – a & b
5 – a
6 – a
7 – b
8 – c
9 – c
10. – b

Please Note – All OLLI Trips will depart from and return to the Chase Parkway DOT Commuter Lot, Waterbury. Maps of this Departure Area are available on the OLLI Information Table in the main hall.

Upcoming OLLI Travel

Spring Trip - 2018

3/03/18 – Metropolitan Opera House / Madame Butterfly – member price - $208pp
5/15/2018 – South Central Park / Circle Line Cruise Tour Landmark & Brooklyn Tour - member price - $98pp
6/11-12/2018 – Lackawanna Coal Mine Tour – member price - $297pp dbl & triple

Flyers available at the OLLI Information Table. All prices are member prices. Non-members are charged a slight surcharge that is listed on all flyers. Call Friendship Tours for information and reservations. (1-800-243-1630). Mention OLLI Travel. (Please do not call the OLLI Office.)
February 16
German American Bund Movement And The Town Of Southbury: Ed Edelson
Ed Edelson, the former first Selectman Southbury, was instrumental in creating a documentary about how the town managed to ward off the German American bund movement that wanted to build a large paramilitary training camp in the cattle town area. Using the documentary, Ed will talk about how the town responded to this movement and how and when a community should respond to groups that promote hate and fear.

February 23
Plum Island Overview | Jason Golden, Public Affairs Officer

OLLI Leadership Council
Council Members
OLLI officers are part of the Leadership Council, which is the principal representative body of the OLLI membership.

Council Officers:
President: Dr. Ira Mickenberg
Vice President: Mila Limson
Secretary: Pat Fahey
Assistant Secretary: Joyce Conlan

OLLI Café

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF GREATER WATERBURY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

WATERBURY, CT—Literacy Volunteers of Greater Waterbury is in need of tutors to teach adults basic English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills that open doors to employment, higher education, U.S. citizenship, and independence for every day.

What does this service mean to a local adult? Here are the words of Herman, an LVGW student: "I can fill out applications for jobs, medical care for myself and my children, legal matters, and many other things. I can read books to my children, which they enjoy and so do I. (Five) years ago I could not do any of these things. The literacy program and my tutor, Paul, have helped me to get this far and have changed my life for the better."

LVGW trains and supports volunteer tutors, who work with adult learners either one-to-one or in small groups for 1.5 hours once a week for a minimum of one year. Qualified volunteers must possess a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent, excellent oral and written English skills, good interpersonal skills, and an email address to receive program communications.

Since 1974, LVGW has offered free tutoring to adults in the Greater Waterbury area, including Beacon Falls, Cheshire, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Oakville, Watertown, Oxford, Plymouth, Terryville, Prospect, Southbury, Thomaston, Waterbury, Wolcott, and Woodbury. Currently, our greatest need is for additional tutors to teach at our Waterbury and Naugatuck sites.

For more information, contact Vanessa Vowe, program director, at 203-754-1164 or email Vvowe@waterburyct.org.

The LVGW Tutor Training Program 2018 is funded by the Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation.
OLLI artBeat  

By Mary Fitzpatrick Peitler

Spring into the Arts at OLLI

Welcome to another semester of OLLI artBeat! For those of you new to OLLI, every week I attempt a look at some aspect of the arts in Connecticut and the greater Metropolitan area. I’ll tell you about some interesting museum exhibitions, upcoming concerts and plays and fun towns to visit! I am pleased that I was able to get to the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Michelangelo exhibit last Friday. It was extremely well curated, focusing not only on his work, but that of his teachers and collaborators. Lesson learned: Don’t leave things I want to do to the last few days – it was beyond crowded. Insane is a more apt description!

I’ll start off this term with my semi-annual mostly tongue-in-cheek preview of Metropolitan Opera live streaming offerings. For those of you not familiar with this, the Met shows certain operas live in local movie theaters. Most OLLI members attend either the Warner in Torrington or Regal Cinemas in Waterbury. Nota bene: OLLI’s own Nunzio DeFilippis will be lecturing before the screenings at the Warner on March 31, April 14 and April 28. Arrive two hours early to enjoy an informative lecture by opera buff and teacher Nunzio!

La Bohème by Giacomo Puccini, 1896 – Saturday, February 24 at 12:30

Basically it is a series of character sketches showcasing Paris student Bohemian life, featuring Rudolphe the Poet and Marcel the Artist. Alas, they are cold and hungry! Rudolphe burns one of his manuscripts to keep warm! Merde! Just in time, their buddy, Schaunard the Musician, appears to share an unexpected windfall! Everybody, including the beautiful Mimi (who just happens to have a raging case of TB), goes out on the town to party! But is there a happy ending? Well, I can guarantee there’s a lot of singing…..

Semiramide by Gioacchino Rossini, 1823—Saturday, March 10 at 12:55

Where: Ancient Babylon
Who: The beautiful Queen Semiramide; the ambitious Prince Assure, her accomplice in the murder of her husband; the noble young man Arsaces whom she hopes to take as her lover (who, unbeknownst to her, is really her son!); Princess Azema, whom Arsaces really loves.
What: Murder, mayhem, and the dead king’s spirit returns to thicken the plot.
Ending: lots of bloodshed, but a light at the end of the tomb, so to speak.

Cosi Fan Tutte (The School for Lovers) by Johann Wolfgang Mozart – Saturday, March 31 at 12:55

Two cavaliers, Don Ferrando and Don Guglielmo, believe their betrothed ladies Fiordiligi and Dorabella, are and always will be, completely faithful to them. Laughed at by the older, cynical Don Alfonso, they agree to put them to the test. Disguising themselves as officers of another regimen, they woo the ladies. What ensues when the fair ladies catch on? Well, I won’t say more except come and see the tables get turned. The moral: men, don’t ever think you are smarter than the women in your lives.

Luisa Miller by Giuseppe Verdi, 1849 – Saturday, April 14 at 12:30

Young Luisa falls instantly in love with Carlo, a stranger to the village. He is smitten as well, but turns out to be the disguised son of the Count (read town VIP) and his real name is Rodolfo. Multiple deceptions, blackmail, arrest, self-sacrifice for love, and no, I won’t reveal the lovers’ fate. Just that it involves two murders and a suicide. Wahoo, did I let that slip out?

Cendrillon by Jules Massenet, 1899 – Saturday, April 28 at 12:55

Massenet based this opera on Perrault’s 1698 version of the classic Cinderella fairy tale. It is pretty true to the story we all know, so I won’t recount that. I will definitely put this on my own calendar. It is the very first time the Met has mounted a production of this particular opera, and taking a look at the Met’s website really piqued my interest. I urge you to take three minutes to enjoy an interview with the leading lady, Joyce DiDonato, as she gives her take on the production and the true meaning of the Cinderella story. The costumes, scenery and props look absolutely amazing, and I am looking forward to seeing it. And, as we all know, it has a very happy ending!
JAPAN 2017 NOTES
By Barbara Uziel

In June 2017, I took a course at OLLI entitled “Japan: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow” presented by Dr. Roger Levy. I don’t usually take history courses, but I was planning a trip to Japan and thought the course might help prepare me for my trip.

The trip was great! We went with a tour company; it was a 2 week trip total...we added the post-trip extension to Hiroshima, which was very worthwhile. The guide we had was fantastic and shared enough of her personal life to give us an insight into the every day lives of the Japanese today.

The culture is so very different from ours—that is what I enjoyed the most. The politeness of the people There are still many instances where people bow! We rode the bullet train and a woman pushed a food cart through the train selling food. When she got to the end of the car, just before she pushed through the door, she turned around and bowed to the people she had just walked by. My favorite example of politeness occurred when we were taking a cable car up a mountain. The cable car held 30 people, according to the sign, so 30 people were allowed on the platform waiting for the car to arrive. When the car came and the doors opened, people entered. But there were still about 5 people standing on the platform. The car operator was standing behind these 5 people and just stood there and waited. Eventually the people on the car knew they had to make room for the extra 5 people, so they rearranged themselves, the 5 people got on, and the operator bowed to all and closed the car door. He never said a word or tried to push people in; he just waited and knew it would happen!

It is also an extremely clean country. Very surprising since there are almost no waste receptacles/garbage cans in public areas!! Not in parks, train stations, anywhere!! You are expected to take your garbage home with you!

There was not a scrap of paper on the ground anywhere, not even on the train tracks! Oh, another “cleanliness” issue-every restaurant has a large basket on the floor under each table for women to put their purses in! No need to leave them on the floor! Why don’t we do that?

Also, the safety of the country is amazing! Women don’t worry about leaving their purses out in a restaurant. People leave umbrellas outside stores, shoes outside shrines...no one worries about stealing!

Everyone is in Western clothes. We saw some young women sightseeing in traditional garb, (kimonos, etc.)

but learned that they had rented their outfits for $60/day for the occasion!

Some of their customs: no napkins anywhere! The restaurants either put a plate of wet washcloths (as you might get on an airplane) on the table or provide individually packaged “wash & dry”-type cloths. It was quite surprising. They ALWAYS push their chairs into the table when getting up! No dripping umbrellas allowed in shops or buildings; always a rack provided outside. “7-11” stores are all over and provide ready take-out food and a microwave!

Restaurants are totally specialized for one kind of food. There were ramen noodle restaurants, tempura restaurants, sushi restaurants, etc. One of their specialty dishes was curried pork cutlet, which was quite good and not spicy! Food was not as expensive as we thought. There were very expensive restaurants, just as there are here, but for the most part, we spent no more than we would at home for a meal. Pasta is popular there, with many kinds of sauces available.

Hiroshima was very interesting. The guide never mentioned “bomb,” instead she referred to the “air raid.” There doesn’t seem to be resentment against the Americans for dropping the bomb; interesting! There is only one building very close to ground zero that was left partially standing and that area is a whole memorial park geared to peace and hopes that it will never happen again. It was a very thought-provoking visit. The main lasting result of the bombing is that some people were/are afraid to have children because they don’t know if radiation might have affected their reproductive system...eggs, genes, etc.

We spent one night in a traditional Japanese inn (I think all tours do this) and were given traditional clothing to wear. Just so you might remember who I am, here I am with my husband (who never, ever wears socks!):