Well, OLLI members, it is that time of year when we reflect upon the work we have accomplished during the 12th year since the founding the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Waterbury UConn. First of all, thanks to Mary Ann Martin and Mary Peitler for the preparation they do every week for their columns on our instructors and the arts scene in Connecticut. I want to thank Nancy Blomstrom for her ability to keep the committee organized. Also, I would like to thank those who volunteer to catch my "errors" in each edition of the newsletter. The Newsletter Committee thanks Evelyn Marshak, Ann Rompre and others who contributed travel pieces from the very active Travel Committee which helped to put a little local color on those pages. We also thank those friends like Sheila Morissette who contribute to the jokes or any other sections of the Newsletter. Thanks to President Ira Mickenberg for his humorous and encouraging words of wisdom. We are also grateful to those who make suggestions or criticisms, and we hope that we have lived up to your expectations in presenting what is happening in our OLLI community. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to OLLI Coordinator Jenna Ryan for all her work in putting the Newsletter out each week and to Director Fiona de Merell for her suggestions and comments.

Artwork and photography produced by OLLI art classes throughout the ’18 -’19 academic year will be on display for the first time at Five Points Gallery in Torrington this summer from June 25 to July 8. Stop by and check out all of the hard work our members have put into their masterpieces! To learn more about Five Points, visit http://www.fivepointsgallery.org/ Five Points Gallery, 33 Main Street, Torrington

Just because the semester has ended it does not mean that OLLI is ended. There are some trips from the Travel Committee to enjoy. Summer school starts May 30. The Book Club and the Photography Club meet through the summer. Consult the OLLI brochure for times and places. The Garden Club is planting the beginning of the fall harvest and always need volunteers. OLLI Café ends this semester today at noon with OLLI Appreciation Day - a Celebration of You! which will honor our outstanding OLLI instructors, volunteers, and students.

Have a great summer! See you in the fall!
Upcoming OLLI Travel

Spring/Summer – 2019

6/04 - 06/2019: Fingerlakes – member cost $561 (dbl/triple); $691 (single)
8/18/2019: Tanglewood/Naumkeag – member cost $135

Fall – 2019

9/17/2019: Beauport Princess Cruiselines/Gloucester, MA - member cost $107
10/1-4/2019: Ocean City, MD – member Cost $585pp (dbl/triple); $731 (single)
10/22/2019: Murder on the Bellevue Express, Newport/RI – member cost $116

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.)
RSVP: osher@uconn.edu / 203-236-9924

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.
OLLI BOOK CLUB

May 20: Ruthless Tide by Al Roker
June 17: The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd
July 15: The Ensemble by Aja Gabel

The Book Club meets the third Monday of every month in Room 102 @ 1:00 PM. Come by!

OLLI PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

OLLI Photography Club Trips for Summer 2019

Saturday May 25th The Bronx Zoo, return train fare and general admission from Bridgeport leaving at 8:43 am. Starting at $27.00

Saturday June 20th Norwalk Maritime Museum. Includes Rail fare starting at $40.95 leaving Waterbury station at 10:02am.

Saturday July 20th The Bronx Botanical Gardens return train fare and general admission from Bridgeport leaving at 8:43 am. Starting at $43.75

Contact Tim Padgett (t.padgett@hotmail.com or cell 475-689-6069) for more details. Through summer, the OLLI Photography Club will continue to meet the last Friday of each month in Room 119 from 2:30-4:30pm.
Just for Laughs

A new missionary recruit went to Venezuela for the first time. He was struggling with the language and didn’t understand a whole lot of what was going on. Intending to visit one of the local churches, he got lost, but he eventually got back on track and found the place. Having arrived late, the church was already packed. The only seat left was the one in the front row.

So as not to make a fool of himself, he decided to pick someone out of the crowd to imitate. He chose to follow the man sitting next to him on the front pew. As they sang, the man clapped his hands, so the missionary recruit clapped too. When the man stood up to pray, the missionary recruit stood up also. When the man sat down, he sat down. During the preaching, the recruit didn’t understand a thing. He just sat there and tried to look just like that man in the front pew. Then he perceived that the preacher was giving announcements. People clapped, so he looked to see if the man was clapping. He was, and so the recruit clapped, too. Then the preacher said some words that he didn’t understand, and he saw the man next to him stand up. So he stood up, too. Suddenly, a hush fell over the entire congregation. A few people gasped. He looked around and saw that nobody else was standing. So he sat down.

After the service ended, the preacher stood at the door shaking the hands of those who were leaving. When the missionary recruit stretched out his hand to greet the preacher, the preacher said in English, “I take it you don’t speak Spanish.”

The missionary recruit replied, “No, I don’t. It’s that obvious?”

“Well, yes,” said the preacher. “I announced that the Acosta family had a newborn baby boy, and would the proud father please stand up.”

Hello, OLLlites… Our latest copy of Voices and Visions is filling up, but we DO need more submissions from you. Art, prose, poetry, thoughts, maybe some of your thoughts about a class you took this year that sparked your imagination and curiosity. Let us know.

The deadline for submissions will be May 15th, 2019... and we don’t want to extend it if we don’t have to. Please consider sending us your thoughts and submissions. If you were a registered OLLI student anytime in 2018 or 2019, your submissions are welcome. Remember, you retain all rights to your work, so it can be published elsewhere.

Send your contributions to:
UconnOLLIreview@gmail.com AND lizhanahan@aol.com.

Write on!

The Voices and Visions Committee thanks YOU!
Summer Somethings

by Mary Fitzpatrick Peitler

Another wonderful semester at OLLI ends. We all come to OLLI from different places, perhaps for different reasons, but I know that we all take so much away every year when May rolls around. I love studying in a classroom – I always have – but must admit that my favorite part of OLLI is the socialization aspect, getting to know new people, and through committees and clubs giving back to such a terrific institution. I've had a great year once again, taking classes on the history of China from Ted Welsh, learning about Southeast Asian economics and culture from Roger Levy, and discussing the question of race with Maurice Mosley. I have the opportunity through the newsletter to share some of my personal experiences wandering through the world of the arts and what I've learned there. (Thank you, editor Bob Grady, for your patience with me and deadlines!) And best of all, through my involvement with the Leadership Council was able to travel to Scottsdale Arizona for the OLLI National Convention! All these things help keep my brain going and growing, and I am so grateful to OLLI and to all of you.

So, what should we do this summer? Well, first of all, if you can, take a summer course! OLLI offers quite a few during the month of June - I've had some of my most enjoyable experiences in summer school. No parking woes and the atmosphere is quiet, easygoing and it's a great time to enjoy lunch in the courtyard!

LOTS of local and regional theater takes place in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Some fun things in my upcoming calendar include Castle Craig Players of Meriden who are performing "Lend me a Tenor" starting this weekend and “Quartet” at Theatreworks, New Milford. A troupe close to my heart is the Saint Peter's Players who will be doing one of my favorites, Bye Bye Birdie, in July. They have the good fortune to be able to utilize the state-of-the-art Nelson Hall Theater at Elim Park in Cheshire. Air conditioned and very comfortable, this theater is open to the public and hosts many different kinds of entertainment year-round.

Friday and Saturday night Concerts on the Green are offered in so many towns. Those in New Milford have been going on for decades thanks to their Commission on the Arts. Bring a picnic supper, a chair, and you will experience small town life at its finest! And it’s free!

Farmer's markets are also sometimes opportunity to enjoy the arts with artists also showing their wares. Consider taking a day trip to a farmer's market, a local historical museum, and lunch or dinner out at one of Connecticut's many wonderful farm to table dining establishments.

Toward the end of summer take in something a little different in North Guilford - the Second Annual Bluegrass Festival will take place on Saturday, August 24 at the bucolic setting of Saint John's Church in North Guilford. You will enjoy wonderful bluegrass and also be able to explore the two local churches, atop historic Meetinghouse Hill where Lyman Beecher once preached. Congregational Church Annual Fair begins at 10 am, then amble next door to the concert at St. John’s at 4pm. Another very enjoyable outdoor experience.

Of course, don't forget to schedule at least one day trip to the Big Apple. I grew up in New York City, and I remember wonderful summer experiences. Statue of Liberty. Staten Island Ferry, lunch at the cafe at Rockefeller Center, the Empire State building, and of course Saint Patrick's. The new AAA magazine reminded me of a special place of interest, The Tenement Museum. So many of our ancestors, whether from New York or Connecticut, got their start in America in those buildings. What better way to honor them than a trip downtown to see how they lived?

All of these ideas and many more can be easily researched on line. Have a beautiful summer, art-filled summer. See you in September!
Learning to read opens the mind to new and wondrous adventures that spark the imagination and broaden knowledge. Reading books also can play a significant role in helping sick people get well, according to Mary M. Mahoney, Ph.D., an historian who has done significant research in the history of bibliotherapy, the use of books as medicine.

A woman who can’t remember when she didn’t read, Mary recalls being “a great fan of any book with an adventurous female lead at the center.” She cherished the American Girl books, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, and Little Women among others. Now she enjoys reading novels, the poetry of Mary Oliver, biographies and many more genres.

Today, Mary is a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Digital Humanities at Trinity College, Hartford, and a leading researcher in the history and use of bibliotherapy. She is writing a popular history about bibliotherapy in the United States. Eventually, she hopes this project “will empower readers to find meaning in books at a moment when the humanities are thought of as separate from the sciences including matters of health.”

In an email interview, Mary discussed how her own interest in using books as a healing tool began when she was 18 years old and a patient in a surgical intensive care unit. She finished the book she had brought to the hospital and asked her nurse for another.

Mary was puzzled at the choices presented to her: the book cart’s selection had “dwindled down to three titles: Gilda Radner’s cancer memoir, Fran Drescher’s cancer memoir and a history of the JFK assassination. I remember reflecting then on how and why anyone would consider these appropriate books for patients on this floor but (I) read them all.”

She began to wonder if “anyone tried to consciously apply books as medicine.” When a candidate for a doctorate in history at the University of Connecticut, Mary’s research led her to Civil War hospital newspapers which provided some of “the experiences of men confronting illness, injury, and disability and trying to make sense of the war” by reading those materials to which they had access. Still reflecting on her own experience, Mary wondered if medical history documented “therapeutic use of books.” To find an answer to that question, she sought information in records of insane asylums of the early nineteenth century, “some of which considered libraries part of the healing environment of the moral treatment they offered patients.”

Another source of information was the Library War Service in World War I. Her studies there resulted in Mary writing and curating an online exhibit, part of a display on World War I and bibliotherapy exhibited at Homer D. Babbidge Library at UConn, Storrs, in 2017. To access that online exhibit, go to www.booksasmedicine.com

As part of her research, Mary explored the experiences of librarians stationed in military hospitals to circulate books among wounded service personnel. In a guest blog posted online by the Archives and Special Collections Blog of the University of Connecticut, Mary described a wartime librarian’s note: “Men were brought in from the (World War I) front, self-control gone, nerves shattered. A compelling story would often calm them and start them on the road to recovery.”

Mary also is an accomplished teacher of history. “Having a conversation with people from another time is a powerful way to think about the received ideas that shape our own world and the ways we see ourselves in it.” Also, “I love research precisely because it allows me to take the curiosity that shapes my teaching into the archive to explore the history of ideas in medicine.”

And she adds a light note. “Historical research also allows for socially acceptable occasions when a person can read someone else’s diary and call it ‘research.’ As a childhood reader of Harriet the Spy, the thrill never gets old.”

During the Spring Term at OLLI, Mary taught “Books as Medicine: Reading, Writing and Reflecting on Therapeutic Reading and its Histories.”