

ZOOM TELECONFERENCING HELPS EXPAND OLLI@UGA'S LEARNING HORIZONS

By Larry Dendy

On a chilly morning in late February, several OLLI members who live at Iris Place retirement center gather in the center's activity room to attend an OLLI class.

Sipping coffee and munching snacks, they take comfortable chairs in front of a wall-mounted television screen as resident and OLLI member John Muthe cables his laptop to the screen. When John enters some computer code, the screen comes alive with the image and voice of retired Superior Court Judge David Sweat, who is in a River's Crossing classroom several miles across town.

For the next 90 minutes the residents enjoy a presentation by Judge Sweat about treatment courts and therapeutic justice, which are alternative approaches to sentencing people to jail or prison. At the end of his talk the judge even asks the Iris Place viewers if they had questions.

The residents were participating in a Zoom class, a remote delivery format OLLI is using to not only make classes available to OLLI members at places other than River's Crossing, but also to bring expert teachers at distant locations into OLLI classrooms.

Zoom technology (also known as Zoom teleconferencing) enables the transmission, through the Internet, of information from one place to another in real time. The word "Zoom" is actually the name of a company that provides tools, systems and services for the technology. Clients use Zoom for such things as webinars, conference calls, on-line meetings and other forms of long-distance on-line communication including—in OLLI's case—transmission of educational instruction.

Because the University of Georgia is a Zoom client, OLLIthrough its affiliation with the College of Education--has free

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\$25 FOR 25 CAMPAIGN COMING SOON

Have you enjoyed your OLLI experience? In celebration of OLLI@UGA's 25 years and the desire to move forward in the best position possible, members will soon be invited to participate in the \$25 for 25 campaign for a new endowment.

OLLI leaders and members tasked with finance responsibilities recently came together to formulate a new endowment specifically designed to sustain the organization's operations.

Tim Meehan, executive director, explains how the new endowment will differ from the already existing Annual Fund drive. "The distinction is very important. One was for today. The other is more of a rainy day fund for tomorrow. For the new endowment, we are looking for a large base of small-dollar <section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><text><text><text>

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WELCOME TO USING YOUR SMARTS

Welcome to Wesley Woods of Athens.

What's great about retiring in a college town? Everything! Not only does the University of Georgia offer cultural and sports (*Go Dawgs*!) activities, you can take classes through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)–classes designed for mature adults and ranging from Mark Twain to American Folk Art, from Tai Chi to Criminal Justice Reform. Just one more smart reason to choose *Wesley Woods of Athens*.

WELCOME HOME.



all the necessities--shopping, restaurants and entertainment. Minutes from the UGA campus (*and OLLI classes!*). Right around the corner from St. Mary's Health Care System.

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ZOOM TELECONFERENCING HELPS EXPAND OLLI@UGA'S LEARNING HORIZONS

access to the service (it's a staple in most UGA classes).

OLLI's Zoom system uses a camera mounted on the podium in an OLLI classroom that focuses on the instructor (or, in the case of Judge Sweat's class, a screen on which he is projecting a power point presentation). The camera sends the image and voice through the Internet to a remote computer connected by cable to a television screen.

The system can also receive transmissions from other places and project them on classroom screens. It was this capability that led Peter Balsamo to introduce Zoom technology to OLLI several years ago as a way to enrich the curriculum with classes taught by experts in other locations. "We already had the necessary equipment in our classrooms and this was a way for OLLI members to be exposed to leading experts who would otherwise never present to OLLI," Peter says. "Zoom makes it easy and simple to access these folks who all agree to present for free." The first Zoom class, presented by a professor at Washington University in St. Louis who is an authority on medical aid in dying, drew such raves from class members that Peter decided to enlist more Zoom speakers. They have included experts on such topics as ageism, immigration law, Baby Boomers and the future of health care for older adults.

"Members often come up to me after a presentation and say things like 'This was just like having the speaker in the classroom,'" Peter says. "I think we're just beginning to scratch the surface on how this simple and reliable technology can provide top-quality educational experiences for our members."

Proving his point, the current spring semester curriculum includes eight Zoom teleconference classes from speakers in places like Amherst College, Skidmore College, Washington University and the Deloitte Center for Health Solutions.

Last fall OLLI expanded the use of Zoom to transmit 13 classes from River's

Crossing to Iris Place, where 25 OLLI members live. Twenty-four classes are being offered in the current semester and more are expected this fall. Plans are also in the works to send Zoom classes to other retirement centers in Athens. "There's no reason why this can't be adapted to meet members wherever social lifelong learning is being promoted," says OLLI Executive Director Tim Meehan.

Along with more evening and Saturday classes, Zoom is another way OLLI is responding to members' requests for more class options, Tim says. And there's another benefit: Zoom classes reduce pressure for classroom and parking space at River's Crossing.

The Iris Place OLLI members, many of whom no longer drive or have mobility problems, can't get enough of Zoom. "It's therapeutic," says Diane Schmidt, who serves as host for most classes. "It's mindchallenging, it helps us interact and learn new things and gives us an opportunity to do things we otherwise couldn't do. We love it."



Chuck Terry

Membership Committee chairperson Dawn Torcivia, standing, provides information to help new members easily transition into OLLI during one of the recent orientations.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OLLI@UGA is a place where we want everyone to be able to learn and express their thoughts.

Tim Meehan

As the Spring Semester is up and running, it's a good time to take a moment and reflect on just a few tips for making classes meaningful and enjoyable for everyone in attendance.

Sometimes in the heat of debate and discussion, we all say things that we don't mean (or at the very least, say things in a way we regret). We may do it because we don't realize how our words or actions could affect our classmates, or we feel defensive and lash out.

Our 1,600-plus members bring with them a rich and wide range of backgrounds and interests. If we all agreed, many of the classes would be dull. Appreciating that other members have the right to disagree and disapprove (while defending our right to say it) is important. That does not mean we can shout the proverbial fire in a crowded theater.

We are all curious. Respecting the instructor's preference for Q&A time benefits everyone and helps avoid the class running long and not allowing the instructor to cover all the material they have carefully prepared. Better yet, many of our instructors will stay after class for a few minutes of further discussion. If you have questions, it is likely that other class members do, also. Please don't monopolize the question time.

Every member has a stake in the future of OLLI@UGA so we can continue growing, learning, and debating (respectively). As we think ahead to what OLLI will look like in five, ten or even twentyfive years, please think about contributing to our \$25 for the next 25 years fund, building up an endowment to cushion us against unexpected forces. More information is found in this issue of OLLI Times.

Now, let's get back to class.

OLLI OFFICE UPDATES

By Shelly Magruder

Payments

As you all know, we have grown! Membership is close to 1,600 and we are offering about 270 classes this semester. Along with more growth comes more registrations, transactions and cancellations. Because of this growth, we are moving away from taking credit card numbers over the phone and in person. We're doing this for three reasons:

(1). The large number of transactions takes a good amount of our time to process payments and we only have one dedicated line for credit card transactions.

(2). The current registration system does not charge you when you're waitlisted for a class and we move a lot of folks off waitlists, which creates a large number of transactions that need to be paid.

(3). We would like to put control of your credit card back in your hands since we have an easy way for you to pay your open orders with our new registration system.

We also take checks and cash as payment and have installed a **locked payment box** outside of the OLLI office. Please use it instead of handing payments to OLLI staff. Envelopes and pens are provided for you to write your name, what you are paying for -title of class etc.--and the amount before dropping in the locked box. Or you can mail your check payments in the envelope if you prefer.

We will still continue taking paper registrations, including credit

card numbers, for the initial, beginning-of-semester registration and throughout the semester if you feel you are unable to utilize the online registration system. And we will happily help you through the process of paying online if needed.

Our goals in updating our payment procedure are to be more efficient, utilize our software to its maximum potential and most importantly, assist members in meaningful ways.

How-to Videos

Ryan Robinson, our member services coordinator, has created some YouTube "how-to" videos to further assist you. They will be posted on the OLLI website home page under "How to Join" tab. Included are videos on how to register for new membership, how to make a payment, and how to register for OLLI Comms. Several more are in production to answer your frequently asked questions.

Parking Tags

If you are attending a class at River's Crossing and need to pick up a parking tag, arrive about 20 minutes early for your class if you are picking up on the day of class. In the past we have asked members to show up a few minutes early for class to get their parking pass. But foot traffic has increased and we need more time to serve everyone and make sure you get to class on time. Of course, if you got a parking tag in the fall, you don't need another as it's good through the end of July 2020.

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS: CAROLYN ABNEY

By Ann Allen

As OLLI@UGA continues to celebrate its 25th anniversary, we want to spotlight another of the many sponsors who have contributed to our success: Carolyn Abney.

"When OLLI decided to offer sponsorships, I was the first sponsor to sign up. I've been a sponsor ever since," remarks Carolyn.

There is more to the story. In 2008, after 16 years of living abroad, Carolyn and Randall Abney came home to Georgia. Feeling that Atlanta had gotten too big, and attracted to the attributes of a university town, they settled in Athens. "Eleven years later we are still so pleased with our decision," she says.

Neighbors kept mentioning OLLI during their first summer here. "So we went to the Holiday Inn Express on registration day and signed up. The rest, as they say, is history." Over the next decade, Carolyn and Randall took classes and served as instructors for courses ranging from the artist Caravaggio to olive oil and antiquarian books. Carolyn served as OLLI secretary for three years. Carolyn had retained her Georgia real estate license while abroad and eventually decided to join Keller Williams Greater Athens. "The National Association of Realtors has many designations that agent members can obtain and I have several," she says. "One is Certified International Property Specialist. This enables me to combine my international experience with my real estate skills to help foreign nationals make the challenging transition from life in one country to another."

The majority of Carolyn's business comes as a result of her special training as a Seniors Real Estate Specialist. "I am very dedicated to helping people age 55 and over transition out of big family homes into ones that are more age appropriate. Each situation is different and presents an opportunity for a new experience. I work really hard for 'my people' and am rewarded with their appreciation."

Being an OLLI sponsor enables Carolyn to give back to--and help create a future for--an organization that has offered much personal enrichment for her and those she serves professionally.

JACOBSON FINDS PAINTING INSPIRATION IN TRAVEL

By Ann Allen

According to Dortha Jacobson, travel provides the perfect opportunity to photograph scenes for later use as a resource for painting. "It not only helps to reinforce the experience but also serves as a pictorial journal," she explains.

A collection of Dortha's paintings from a recent workshop in Monhegan Island, Maine, is on display in the OLLI office area. "Our instructor guided us to various sights, spent time demonstrating techniques, and then encouraged us to begin our own interpretation," Dortha says. "It was wonderful to stand in front of our easels, listening to the sounds of



Chuck Murphy

Dortha Jacobson displays her landscape paintings in the OLLI offices.

water splashing against the rocks, feeling the wind and sun, and watching our canvases take shape."

Other paintings in the exhibit are from trips to Spain, Alaska, Southwestern

national parks, and the local area. The photos Dortha took in Maine now join hundreds of others waiting to be painted. "My life is rich with anticipation," she notes. "My concern, however, is so many pictures, so little time."

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Spring Semester is well underway and River's Crossing is humming with activity.

I was curious about how the addition of 40 classes would be received by our members. Was it too many? Would our parking lot be able to handle more traffic at peak class times? After being in a few classes over the first two weeks, it seems to have worked out well. There is a mix of new and repeat popular programs to balance each other. Hats off to those who recruited the 280 classes



Chris Jones

and to staff that juggled the classrooms and various scheduling requests to make it all work.

I hosted a couple of classes recently and used the opportunity for an informal survey. I asked if there were any new members and if this was their first OLLI class. There were new members in each class. Speaking to them afterwards, the new members said they enjoyed the class and met people near them.

Every time I'm at River's Crossing, I see at least one committee meeting in progress or some representatives of a committee or SIG planning or working on an activity. There's always a member getting assistance from staff in the office or on the phone. Thank you to our volunteer committees and our staff for all you do to serve our members.

Two other groups that are quite active at this time are the recently reactivated Long-Range Strategic Planning Committee and the Nominating Committee.

The long-range planning committee, chaired by Susan Dougherty, and her team are busy conducting interviews with individual members, committee chairs, and staff. They are also analyzing various organizational reports and data before preparing recommendations. I know that some of you have been interviewed already. We appreciate your participation and support of this effort. If you would like to be interviewed, please let Susan know.

The Nominating Committee is hard at work on its task to produce a slate of candidates for the Board and Officers for election this spring. A call to the membership for nominations for persons interested in and willing to volunteer was recently published. The Nominating Committee will carry out its due diligence to meet with and interview interested parties. This is an important process as we move toward our next fiscal year.

Our OLLI is very energetic! Thanks to all those who make it happen.

Chris Jones





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OLLI PLAY READERS WELCOME PARTICIPANTS

By Beth Roberts

A theater lover can, of course, read a play on her own, quietly, to himself. But the text of a play is meant to be spoken and heard. The OLLI Play Reading SIG members meet once a month to read through a play, or part of a play, taking turns at characters and lines. We've done one-act plays in a single meeting and longer plays stretched over successive months. We do not claim to be actors (although several members of the group have some experience), and we have no props or costumes, but we read as effectively as we can. Everybody gets a chance to read, and it's interesting to hear characters in more than one voice and one interpretation. We enjoy bringing the play to life!

The Play Reading SIG meets at Holy Cross Lutheran Church on the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

PICTURE THIS! MEMBERS SHOW AND TELL

By Gary Whiting

PictureThis! is the OLLI SIG for anyone who likes to take pictures, regardless of skill or type of camera gear used. We love to explore photography together and share our knowledge and experience.

Our members include beginners, amateurs, experienced photographers and every level in between. Some of us use pro-grade equipment, some use point-and-shoots, and nearly all of us use our smartphone.

We meet once monthly and enjoy a "member showcase" to share photos and have a presentation on a topic related to cameras, technique, editing, or sharing photos online. We occasionally venture out to a local photographer-friendly venue for a "walkabout" where we can practice and refine our skills.

Picture This! meets at River's Crossing from 4:30-6:00p.m. on the second Monday of each month. For more information, contact Gary Whiting through OLLI Communications or email him at garyewhiting@gmail.com



OLLI SHARED INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)

How to Connect

Exclusively for members, OLLI SIGs provide an easy way to, well, come together and share an interest on a regular basis. Not sure if you want to join? That's okay. Attend a meeting and check it out. And remember that there is no extra fee for joining a SIG.

For more information:

Click on "Shared Interest Groups" at the top of the www.OLLI@UGA website homepage.

Every SIG is listed. Click for a short description.

To connect with a SIG:

To receive notices of meetings and other SIG information, click on "Sign In/Members Area" in the top right hand corner of the www.OLLI@ UGA web page.

Next, click on the red "OLLI Comms" button. (If you have not signed up for OLLI Comms, you'll want to do that first at <u>https://olli-uga.mn.co</u>).

In the left-hand column, click on SIGs/ Committees.

Scroll down until you see the SIG(s) that you are interested in and click "Request Access".

Chuck Murphy

CLAS

Spring Semester 202



Ann Allen

The Supersonic X59 plane, weather dynamics, and manned and unmanned space exploration were just a few of the topics discussed by Jack Hansen in his class, "NASA: Current Missions and Future Horizons".



Ted Montagne

Chuck Murphy dresses appropriately for his class, "Insomnia: This Class May Put You to Sleep".



Ann Allen

Betty Jean Craige, left, talks with Judy Krummow, right, after her luncheon talk about writing mystery novels.



Alan Black

Cindy Karp shared her memorabilia and experiences from the original and anniversary Woodstock festivals during her class, "Woodstock Revisited".

SSES

o is off and running!



Ryan Reynolds

Elizabeth Bartlett utilizes modern teaching tools to help participants discover their artistic talents in her watercolor painting class.



Dr. Michelle Nuss, dean, gives OLLI members an onsite tour of the Augusta University/University of Georgia Medical Partnership campus in Athens.



Susie Haggard

OLLI members posed around a vintage 1965 Caterpillar bulldozer after touring the Athens Caterpillar manufacturing plant. Established in 2013, the plant employs some 1,400 workers and produces about 48,000 mini hydraulic excavators and small track-type tractors that are shipped throughout the world. Situated on 265 acres in Clarke and Oconee counties, the plant represents a \$200 million investment in the local economy.

TRAVEL STUDY

ENJOY SPRING AMONG RHODODENDRONS AND MOUNTAIN SCENERY

By Joan Zitzelman

Hamilton Gardens, Brasstown Valley Resort, and Tallulah Gorge State Park are the featured destinations for a day trip on May 6 coordinated by the OLLI Travel Study Committee.

First, participants will walk along paths of blooming colors and species of rhododendrons as they look down on a lake surrounded by mountains at Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge. Citizens of Hiawassee who contribute endless volunteer hours will be on hand during this visit to the largest rhododendron garden in the southeastern United States.

Next, the group will travel a short distance to Brasstown Valley Resort for lunch and views of the highest mountains in Georgia. On the way back to Athens, there will be a stop by Tallulah Gorge State Park, with an opportunity to view exhibits explaining flora and fauna of this area of the Appalachian mountains, some of the



Atlanta Magazine

Hamilton Gardens

oldest mountains on earth. Tallulah Gorge is considered the deepest canyon east of the Mississippi River, and trails near the Visitors Center give views of the river that carved this landscape.

The day trip includes charter bus transportation, admission fees and lunch at a cost of \$119 per person. Register for the trip in person at the OLLI offices, by a paper form mailed in with check, or online at olli.uga.edu (once on the

website, navigate to the upper right corner Members Area, sign in, click on Travel, scroll down to trip).

For questions or more information, contact Joan Zitzelman, 706-546-6345; jzitzel@bellsouth.net.

NOTE: At the time the March issue went to press, there were only a few spaces left for this trip.

\$25 FOR 25 CAMPAIGN COMING SOON

Continued from page 1

contributions (\$25) rather than larger contributions by a smaller number of individuals."

A full distribution from the Osher Foundation is not assured each year if market declines occur, Tim notes. Also, as OLLI@UGA membership increases, income from the Osher Foundation covers fewer expenses.

A second endowment, managed internally, will also contribute to keeping membership and course fees affordable, help cover special unbudgeted expenditures, and strengthen current and future staffing needs.

Information about how OLLI@UGA members can easily participate in the \$25 for 25 campaign will be communicated in early April. The campaign will run through May 16.





By Lois Alworth

The OLLI Hospitality Committee has been busy developing and carrying out fun events for members to enjoy. Here's a recap and a look at what's coming up.

More than 60 members gathered at the Porterhouse Grill on Dec. 31, 2019, for a gala New Year's Eve luncheon that included good food, great conversation, and an assortment of prizes. The annual Valentine's Luncheon on Feb. 12 was held for the first time at Trump's Catering. About 50 members enjoyed beautiful decorations and a delicious buffet. A St. Patrick's Day luncheon is slated for March 13. These luncheons are the perfect way to meet other OLLI members in a casual setting. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

Looking ahead:

The **Spring Beerganza** will be April 16 at Southern Brewing Company in Athens. The fun starts at 5:00p.m. There will be beer, non-alcoholic drinks, pizza, and snacks. Registration details are forthcoming.

The **OLLI Annual Meeting** is not a Hospitality Committee event but we do

help with it. This year's meeting will be May 15 at Piedmont Athens Regional Medical Center.

The next **Lifelong Learning Fair** will be August 7.

The Hospitality Committee is always looking for members who enjoy planning events. We meet on the second Monday of each month at 10:00a.m. on the fourth floor of Wesley Woods. We recently welcomed new member Emine Kumcu. Contact Sue Flemming, committee chair, flemmism@ptd.net for more information.



Ann Allen

Hospitality Committee members greet attendees. From left: Ruth Hunt, Jeanne Davis Blair, Karen Martin, Nona Hinkle



Ann Allen

From top right: James Haynes, Susan Haynes, Richard Swatich, Natalie Clapp, Bob Yorczyk, Beatrice Yorczyk, Sue Flemming, Peggy Thompson

ALL THINGS CHAUTAUQUA CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

By Art Crawley and Terry Kaley

The new All Things Chautauqua SIG kicked off its inaugural event, "Athens Winter Chautauqua Celebrating Black History Month – The Black American Experience" on Feb. 23 at the Athens Clarke County Library. The program featured a documentary about Rosa Parks and a panel discussion with three prominent African American Athenians: Broderick Flanigan, artist and community activist; Dr. Freda Giles, Professor Emerita of Theatre and Film Studies and African American Studies, UGA; and Dr. Dawn Bennett-Alexander, J.D., Associate Professor of Employment Law and Legal Studies, UGA. OLLI@UGA is a community partner of Athens Chautauqua.



Alan Black

Left to Right: Dr. Freda Giles, Dr. Dawn Bennett-Alexander, Broderick Flanigan, and moderator Kendell Turner

LONG-RANGE PLAN HELPS OLLI NAVIGATE THE ROAD AHEAD

By Susan Dougherty

Why does OLLI@UGA need a long-range strategic plan? The Cheshire Cat in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* said, "If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there." OLLI recently revived its Long-Range Strategic Planning Committee to help chart a successful road to travel for the next three years.

The work of previous long-range planning committees has helped OLLI achieve notable growth in membership, classes, SIGS and other programs. The current committee, which began work at the start of this year, will build on that success by assessing OLLI's strengths, examining areas that can be improved and identifying opportunities to provide better services for members.

In addition to studying data and reviewing historical documents, the committee will interview more than 30 leaders including officers and members of the Board of Directors, volunteers and staff members.

Committee members are Susan Dougherty (chair), Larry Dendy, Barbara Lewis, Lioba Moshi, John Songster, and Madeline VanDyck. OLLI President Chris Jones and President-Elect Cher Snyder serve as resources and observers. Tim Meehan, executive director, participates as an ad-hoc member of the committee.

The committee encourages input from OLLI members. Send comments, suggestions and ideas to Susan Dougherty at <u>susandougherty48@gmail.com</u>. We will report on our work at the OLLI Annual Meeting May 15. Implementation of a new long-range plan for 2020-2023 will begin this summer and the committee will remain active to help shepherd the plan into action.

BURNS DINNER IS A FESTIVE NOTE ON THE OLLI SOCIAL CALENDAR

By Ann Allen

More than 100 Athenians (most of whom are OLLI members) gathered on January 25th at Flinchum's Phoenix to celebrate the 261st birthday of famous Scottish poet Robert Burns. Included on the program were a bagpipe band performance, traditional foods and beverages, speeches, and poetry recitations. The evening concluded with everyone joining together in Burns' famous composition, "Auld Lang Syne".



Chris Gazlay

Bagpipers add to the traditional spirit of the dinner.



Cheryl Gazlay

From left: Smith Wilson, Ian Hardin, Chris Gazlay, Alex Patterson, Joe Neighbors

The set of th

The January 24 Lifelong Learning Fair at Georgia Square Mall provided a setting for members and visitors to explore all things OLLI inside and outside the classroom. Shown here are Jeff Engel, Becky Engel, and Jack Hagerman of the Splashdown SIG. The event resulted in 50 new memberships.

Chuck Murphy

OLLI@UGA would like to thank all its sponsors for their continued support.

We are always on the lookout for sponsors who would like to help our mission to lifelong learners in the Athens area. If you would like more information, please contact Tim Meehan (Executive Director).

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Sign Up for **The Boom Blast** and get weekly Publisher's Picks from **The Boom Calendar for Grown-Ups** at BoomAthens.com

Look for the print issue at OLLI and local grocery, retail, and medical locations.

The Boom Calendar has the most complete listing of places to go and things to do for the 50+ crowd.

PS. If you have an event of interest to those of us over 50, please enter it in the calendar. It's easy.

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Members enjoy our Saturday watercolor class. (Ryan Robinson)

Note on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

As the OLLI Times was going to press, we were faced with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the social disruption that came from it. The Board has cancelled all in-person events for the rest of the semester, so please disregard any dates and events included in this issue. We are in the process of putting together a list of classes that will be presented online, so please check the website for updates.

We are assessing how to continue committees and SIGs as we recognize the importance of keeping all our members engaged at this time of social distancing. Please bear with us as we move forward, do take social distancing seriously, and keep abreast with the most up-to-date information from the CDC. We hope to see as many members as possible online and especially on the other side of this pandemic.

Tim Meehan, OLLI Executive Director