

OLLILife

Long live learning!

MAY 2022 - Issue #15

Dr. Peterson inspires us for the journey ahead

May 17, 2022 - Special guest, Dr. Ken Peterson, Furman VP of Academic Affairs and Provost, told OLLI luncheon guests about Furman's Pathways Program. He spoke like a proud father, explaining how the Pathways Program matches new students with mentors and advisors; how Pathways students find new friends to help them over the hurdles of college life, prepare for leadership, seek internships, and explore all the skills they will need to pursue a fulfilling journey forwards. Narrowing his focus on the senior OLLI students looking back at him, he challenged us to seek the same tools the Pathways young people learn: *Make Choices that will enrich your life!* He inspired us; and a soft "Yes, yes," filled the air. We were like kids at college graduation discovering we have the power to bring our best selves to the rest of the journey. Thanks, Dr. Peterson.

by Sue Renault, outgoing editor

OLLI Director Nancy Kennedy and Council President Bob McGrath attend Osher Leaders National Conference

NANCY NOTES:

In late April, OLLI Council President Bob McGrath and I had the privilege of attending the Osher Institutes National Conference. Each of 125 OLLI programs across the US sent one staff member and one volunteer to this conference, which is held every 18 months. The Osher Foundation covers the costs of the conference, and it's a great time for learning and idea-sharing. This year's conference was in Broomfield, Colorado. Bob and I found time before the conference began to pay a quick visit to Rocky Mountain National Park, where we saw elk, deer, a big horn sheep, a mountain goat, and fresh snow *in April!*

Bob and I each attended breakout sessions covering topics like technology in the classroom; diversity, equity, and inclusion; strategic planning; leadership; and more. There were plenary sessions, including a really good one presented by Dr. Louise Aronson, geriatrician and author of *Elderhood: Redefining Aging*,

Transforming Medicine, Reimagining Life. I particularly appreciated her take on language used to describe older adults and her advocacy for good healthcare for all ages.



Enjoying the conference: Bob McGrath, OLLI @ Furman Council President; Nancy Kennedy, Director of OLLI@Furman; Bernard Osher; Mary Bitterman, President, Osher Foundation

CONTINUE NANCY'S NOTES ON PAGE 2

To all: **OLLILife** is looking for an editor to replace retiring editor Sue Renault. Contact Nancy Kennedy to learn more: nancy.kennedy2767@furman.edu

★ **OPTIMIST:** Someone who figures out that taking a step backward after taking a step forward is not a disaster, it's a cha-cha-cha. *Robert Brault*

SIGNING OFF: THANK YOU FROM THE EDITOR



Dear *OLLILife* readers and contributors,

In recent years, I have had three life-changing experiences. One

was bad: pain and cane, surgeries, hobbling, and feeling blue. The next, in 2017, was very, very good: becoming OLLI's newsletter editor and finding the world's best crew of volunteer writers. Approximately twenty people — writers, proofers, photographers, those who told stories, and those who let us tell *their* stories — contributed to each of our fifteen written issues (this doesn't even count the *live broadcasts* we pulled off during COVID). The OLLI staff pitched in, as well! This computes to more than 300 volunteer "touches" pulling

off four *OLLILife* issues a year for the past five years. Talk about *volunteer power!* I told a home health interviewer not long ago, "This job keeps me engaged, learning, and *healthy*." He agreed that doing what you love and loving what you're doing *is*, for sure, one of the tips of aging well. The third "act" was devoted to reclaiming my health and mobility, starting with two-minute bike rides, building to a mile, and, in 2020 (Yes, *that* year) joining friends on a 300-mile trek along old train rails and towboat paths, Pittsburgh to Washington, DC. This physical recovery was not achieved just through grit and hard work. It was *attached* to the second experience, the *OLLILife* one. I do not exaggerate when I say, "**OLLI** and the Swamp Rabbit Trail — gave me back my life."

Thank you to every special OLLILife friend whose helpful hands created more than just a newsletter, but a story.

Nancy's Conference Notes continued from p. 1

There was a time that each OLLI shared their "woo hoo"—something that happened at their OLLI over the past 18 months that was a great event worth sharing. We shared information about the Curriculum Rally held this fall, and have already had at least one OLLI contact us to learn more.

A highlight was being able to say hello to Bernard Osher. His generosity has provided financial security for our program along with 124 other OLLIs across the country. And he is the epitome of the importance of lifelong learning, attending this conference at age 95.

However, what might be the very best part of the conference is the unscheduled time, when attendees are able to meet peers and learn best practices from each

other. I fully enjoyed being with "my people," other directors that I've gotten to know over the years. Especially after two full years of pandemic conditions, it was helpful to be with fellow directors to talk about our best next steps as we emerge from the pandemic. I'm grateful for the opportunity to attend.



Nancy Kennedy, Director

WINE-GROWING 101: Global warming unsettles old expectations



During the growing season, grapes need sunny warm days, cool nights, and enough rain to maintain the vines.

At harvest time, clear skies are desired.

As you can imagine, the weather does not always cooperate. In the spring, the buds begin to grow on the vines and if heavy frost and freezing temperatures damage the buds, the vines will not produce grapes. Too much rain and not enough sun during the growing season will cause the grapes to be watery with not enough sugar and flavor to make wine.

When the weather is too hot and dry, the grapes will wither and fires can occur. If there is too much rain and cold at harvest time, the crop will not be harvested at the peak time.

Global warming has impacted all of these problems, and today we see growers purchasing vineyard sites in cooler climates such as Canada or even Norway. Meanwhile, in France, they have begun growing new grape varieties that can tolerate the higher temperatures.

Thanks, Bernie and Cindy, for five years of delicious wine blogs! **OLLILife** Editor

LYNNE'S JOURNAL: Following another "prompt" challenge from OLLI writing instructor Marcia Moston, Lynne Nachman recalls life's stages and events by the shoe choices she made along the way. One step at a time.

For years my father took my sister and me to Cincinnati, Ohio, to buy school clothes. The visit included a trip to Poll Parrot for new saddle oxfords. The black and white lace-up shoes were a childhood staple. No flip-flops or flimsy shoes for our coddled feet.

When I reached junior high school I branched out to include Capezio flats and stylish penny loafers.

Shoes in high school and college were more fashionable. Oxfords were not cool. Flats went better with skirts and sweater sets. For dances and parties, shoes with plastic heels were the rage. I had shoes "dyed to match." Needless to say, this was not about comfort. After dancing all night I had to soak my feet.

I got married in 1960 and moved to New York City. My mother-in-law introduced me to I Miller shoes. I had become a matron who wore Jackie Kennedy style dresses, leather pumps, and Margaret Gerald flats. Little white gloves accompanied these.

We moved to Greenville in 1965. I continued to wear pumps and white gloves. This all changed in the 70s. Boots became popular and so did mini skirts. Fads took over practicality.

Years later after multiple moves and shoes, I have changed to comfort. I've come full circle. Now shoes include foam inner soles and crepe outer soles. My shoe rack includes Keens, Merrill's and other comfy styles. I always loved my shoes but I was never a "shoe-aholic" ... definitely no Imelda Marcos. My shoes and I have moved through life one-step at a time. Now more than ever they are a reflection of who I am: dressed for comfort.

OLLILife readers: What shoe memories do you have? Tell us about your fave high school footwear. I once owned a pair of blue suede shoes! *Editor*



In April, Martha Severens delighted OLLI learners with an interactive Bonus Event about American artist Georgia O’Keeffe. *Simply terrific!* (both Martha and Georgia). by Anne Doyle

Georgia O’Keeffe was born in Sun Prairie, WI, in 1887 and died in Santa Fe, NM, in 1986 at the home of her assistant’s family. During her life she was a student of William Merritt Chase and Arthur Wesley Dow; painter of still lifes, landscapes, and flowers; teacher of art at Columbia College, South Carolina; wife and model of well-known photographer Alfred Stieglitz until his death in 1946. His strong, sensual photographs of her captured the mystery in her face and gave her the exposure that would further her career.



Where I was born and where and how I have lived is unimportant. It is what I have done with where I have been that should be of interest.
Georgia O’Keeffe

Many have seen her closely focused, sensual, erotic, paintings of flowers; some judged them to be obscene and representative of a woman’s body. She thought those reactions were strange. Her landscapes and still lifes include Canyon, Texas; New York City; Lake George, New York; Rancho de Taos, New Mexico; Ghost Ranch, New

Mexico; the Chama River, The Black Place, and finally Abiquiu, where, from her house, she could view the Pedernal, a narrow mesa in Northern New Mexico.

Through images and her extensive knowledge of the artist, Martha Severens gave us a comprehensive view of O’Keeffe’s phenomenal body of work, ranging from sensually-portrayed Jack-in-the-Pulpit flowers to bleached cow skulls to whimsical views of clouds from an airplane.

Martha Severens was curator of the Greenville County Museum of Art for seventeen years. She’s been a frequent speaker at both FULIR (early years of Furman’s Learning in Retirement) and our current OLLI program. (From OLLI’s Spring catalog)

FOR FUN:

I before E, except when your foreign neighbor Keith receives eight counterfeit beige sleighs from feisty caffeinated weightlifters (sign outside Chapman’s Bookery, Ferndale, CA)

Shoutout to everyone who can still remember their childhood phone # but can’t remember the password they created yesterday. You are my people! (Durry’s Board of Wisdom, Facebook)

OLLI member, long-distance hiker Lance Renault figures he's hiked about 5000 miles since he turned 70. (He's now 81). This fall he'll add another 500 to his log when he hikes the French end of Spain's famous El Camino Trail.

OLLI reporter Marie Eldridge tells Lance's story.

As a young man, Lance Renault loved to hike in Los Padres National Forest in his home state of California. He never guessed that when he turned 70 long-distance hiking would become a passion

Who would choose to trek up and down 12,000-foot peaks for weeks, carrying a 45-pound pack, and challenged by heat, cold, rain, snow and fog? Ask Lance Renault. From 2010 to 2018, he hiked more than 4,400 miles in places like the Appalachian, Colorado, John Muir and Pacific Crest trails and the Camino de Santiago in Spain.

As a young man, Lance loved to hike in Los Padres National Forest in his home state of California. He never guessed that long-distance hiking would later become a passion. Fast forward to 2010, when Lance, nearing 70 and living in Greenville, decided to graduate from day hikes to weeks-long hikes. And where better to begin than on the legendary Appalachian Trail.

Beginning in April 2010, Lance and friend Keith Block logged 1,111 miles from Georgia to Pennsylvania. A year later, Lance returned. He hiked solo for weeks, until he reached Vermont and met Terry O'Brien, the man who would become his longterm hiking partner. The duo finished the journey together, summiting Mt. Katahdin in Maine after an all-day trek in fog and sideways rain. Appalachian Trail, Part 2, 1,067 miles, check.

During the next six years, Lance hiked more than 2,200 miles. His favorite - the John Muir Trail - follows the Sierra Nevada range from Yosemite to Mt. Whitney in California and includes five mountain passes over 12,000 feet. He conquered the Colorado Trail from Denver to Durango and the Pacific Crest Trail in Washington, Oregon and Northern California (1,552 miles) in four installments. Other than a hospital visit

for a high fever in Pennsylvania and a helicopter rescue in Washington due to a broken ankle, Lance has remained injury-free.

What is Lance's formula for success? Good genes, trail research, detailed planning and top-quality, ultra-light equipment, "along with some useful tips from REI employees." A compatible hiking partner is also very important. "Terry and I are well-matched and make a great team," he said. "We start each day with a prayer and have some spiritual conversations along the way."

In 2018, seeking a change in scenery, Lance and Terry hiked 475 miles across Spain on the Camino de Santiago. "It's flatter, busier and attracts many international hikers," he said.

What's next? The Chemin de Saint Jacques in Southern France. This 500-mile Camino route has fewer hikers and winds through picturesque villages, from Le Puy to the foot of the Pyrenees. "I'm excited," Lance said. "It's not over yet."



PHOTO: Lance and son, Zander, hiked North Carolina's 30-mile Art Lobe Trail together in one day, sun-up to sunset hiking. Zander lives in Colorado where he enjoys hiking the state's picturesque "fourteeners."



Botany Bay among South Carolina's hidden treasures

by James T. Hammond

Their branches lie tangled together on a pristine beach on Edisto Island, like dinosaur bones bleached by the sea water and sun. The dead trees, their bare trunks glistening in the light, are stark testimony to the inexorable rise of

the ocean on South Carolina's coast.

Botany Bay is one of South Carolina's coastal hidden treasures, a relatively new addition to public access at places where the

land meets the sea. A few other such places exist. Capers Island, east of the Isle of Palms is such a place. But to see it, one must hire or have access to a boat. There is no highway access to Capers. Another is the federally protected Bull's Bay preserve East of Mt. Pleasant. Boat tours can be arranged to Bull Island to see protected wildlife and shore.

Such treasures are few and far between because of the explosion of development on the coast, both public and private, that has either erased the natural feature of the land, or erected fences and gates to keep the public off the private lands.

Botany Bay is easy to miss, with minimal signage on the major highway leading to Edisto Beach. The only indication of its location is a typical road name sign that says in small letters Botany Bay Road, on your left a few miles before reaching Edisto Beach. A bumpy unpaved road leads to a parking area about a half-mile from the beach. Visitors are asked to sign in and record their visit and their departure.

Signs implore visitors to resist taking driftwood or shells from the beach home with them. Botany Bay is one of the

few places where a person can see what a beach untampered with by humans looks like. It's two miles of shore are valuable nesting areas for loggerhead turtles and shore birds.

Botany Bay is owned by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, which operates it as a wildlife management area. It comprises more than 4,000 acres of marsh, forest and agricultural land. DNR grows food crops that attract game birds.

But for non-hunters, the most breathtaking sight is the wreckage of giant trees that have been overcome by the rising seas. Many still have their deep roots embedded in the sandy soil that is now washed by salt water twice a day.

The property was given to the state by the will of the last private owner, with the stipulation that it be a protected wildlife management zone. It was opened to the public in 2008.

As we emerge from COVID lockdown and seek new natural treasures to renew our souls, Botany Bay is at the top of my list.



Photos by James T. Hammond

Reach James at

JTHammond46@gmail.com

Membership numbers are rising to pre-COVID highs and other good news from Spring Luncheon 2022

Past President David Johnson calls himself *the first Virtual President in OLLI history*. As soon as he took office, the OLLI office closed. The campus shut down; every classroom and social experience ended with a resounding thump.

David filled in for OLLI President Bob McGrath who was unable to attend OLLI's Spring Luncheon in May.

"I remember," he told us, "how shocked Barack Obama was in 2010 when the Democrats lost 61 seats in the house. I was thinking what was he complaining about? During my year as OLLI president, we lost 1300 members. 50%."

"But this is a new year."

Here is the good news reported by David and — in her State of OLLI address — by Nancy Kennedy:

Our membership has nearly reached the highs we were celebrating before 2020: 1899 members now. We were down to 60 classes during COVID, and this fall we are scheduled to offer 125 classes. We are financially healthy. ("We'd saved for a rainy day; and it rained," said Nancy. "We had resources.")

Both Nancy and David reflected the joy which we, staff and members, celebrated at this friend-filled event.

We're back!

Thank you, outgoing Council Members: Paulette Payne, Justin Smith, Sue Renault, David Johnson.

Thanks to continuing and new council members: Bob McGrath, 2nd year as president, Kathy Roed, president elect and VP membership; Kenneth Baxter and Gayle Glover, council members at large.

APPLAUSE, APPLAUSE FOR VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR, Cheryl Cotner, master of bonus events, creative breath within numerous OLLI activities.

MAIS OUI! Congratulations to our Great Decisions instructors and to Linda Hosek, recipients of OLLI grants to enhance their classes. The Great Decision folks will invest in additional subscriptions and class materials. Linda Hosek will attend a workshop in Paris on Street Photography.

TRAVELING ALONE *by BJ Shaw*

Do you have to stay home if you don't have a travel buddy who wants to go where you want to go, when you want to go there? "No," says travel enthusiast and *OLLILife* Travel Reporter BJ Shaw. "You have options."

Unless you're a free spirit who wants to make all arrangements yourself or to simply "wing it," traveling solo in a group saves you the time and hassle of doing all the planning. Most groups set their pricing based on double occupancy and charge a single supplemental if you're going to occupy a room alone. That may or may not be a deal breaker for you, but there is at least one travel group out there that advertises that they encourage solo travelers and do not charge the single supplement. Also, for some of their trips, Road Scholar will attempt to assign you a roommate and waive the single supplement even if they are unsuccessful.

If you do decide to travel without a partner, there are plenty of opportunities out there as most travel agencies are eager to fill their trips after they had few travel customers during the pandemic.

I have one additional piece of advice from personal experience. Be friendly, approachable and open to meeting new people in your group, especially if you're traveling by yourself. I took a solo trip with Road Scholar to Savannah a few years ago and met two sisters who were traveling together. Since then I've been on a trip to Arizona with one of them, and the other has contacted me about traveling with her. Bon voyage

*Do you travel alone? Let us know at *OLLILife* how you maximize your solo experience. Got tips?*

OLLI REMEMBERS...



Peggy Sauvain died April 4, 2022 at age 102 and four months.

She was the oldest member of OLLI, a native of Ohio, and a long-time resident of Greenville. She loved FULIR (Furman University Learning in Retirement)

classes, traveling and her church, Westminster Presbyterian. She had three sons, and the oldest, Ted Sauvain, is a current member of OLLI.

by Natalina Ferlauto



Josephine Lampton Sivewright

December 31, 1931 - March 15, 2022

A native of Mississippi, Jo met her husband in South Carolina. He was from Scotland and a Presbyterian, so she

changed her denomination from Methodist to Presbyterian. For many years she was a secretary at Westminster Presbyterian. Jo attended OLLI classes right up to the end of her life in winter 2022.

by Natalina Ferlauto

William (Bill) Spurgeon Farmer

April 4, 1930 - March 25, 2022



FULIR (now OLLI) was founded by a core group of "salt-of-the-earth" people and couples whose retirement from challenging lives and professions seeded what has become

this robust, resilient community. Bill, in the company and collaboration of beloved jolly others, not only inaugurated the program's hiking offerings, but initiated the 'joy in the journey' that is their singular experience.

The 'hills truly came alive' through Bill's steady, knowledgeable guidance, gleam in his eyes, and smile that gathered all in and along. *by Susan Thomas*



Joan Austin passed away Dec 24, 2021 at age 79.

OLLI was a big draw for Joan to retire from Maine to Greenville, along with family members who had settled

here previously. She liked classes instructed by Don Cockrill. South Carolina History was among her favorite subject choices. Joan also enjoyed Rogue Readers, line dancing and folk dancing. Her next endeavor was to have been pickleball. Joan was a joy to be with and is missed by family and friends whom she loved very much.

by Cindy Smithers

OPINION:

Is Normal What We Really Want?

by BJ Shaw, OLLILife reporter

"Getting back to *normal*" is a phrase we hear a lot these days as COVID becomes more predictable. The word "normal" is defined as "usual, typical, or expected," and it's hard to disagree that the last two years have been anything but that.

But, think about it: our normal changes regularly for much less dramatic reasons than a pandemic. A favorite restaurant closes; we notice a different one that sounds interesting. A good friend moves away; we run into a neighbor we haven't met before. Someone recommends a new author, or we think about a hobby we used to enjoy. Our favorite television series ends, or we see an ad for a different series to binge watch.

In short, changes to normal happen all the time, so there's no reason to want to just go back to it. While normal may sound comfortable, without change, wouldn't our lives be boring?