

HELPFUL LINKS

[ABCs of OLLI](#) | [Parking](#) | [Registration](#) | [Events Calendar](#) | [Past Newsletters](#)



Newsletter



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September 18, 2026

Table of Contents

UPDATES

- OLLI Member Focus Groups
- Foreign Service Journal

ACADEMIC

PROGRAMMING

- Fall Registration is Still Open!

- New Member 10% Discount

- Fall Semester Information

- Fall Book List

- Catalog Changes

LECTURES

- Fall Lecture Series

OLLI EVENTS

- OLLI Lunch Club

- Share Your Favorite Book Titles

- Fall Wine & Cheese Welcomer

- Hillwood Mansion in Holiday Splendor Tour

MEDIA

- OLLI Podcast

UPDATES

OLLI MEMBER FOCUS GROUPS

Your perspective can help shape OLLI's future! OLLI is seeking 20–24 members to participate in two different focus groups on Monday, September 28, and Wednesday, September 30. We want to hear what you value about OLLI, why OLLI is meaningful in your life, and your thoughts about charitable giving. You'll also have an opportunity to learn more about how OLLI is funded and what it costs to operate. We're looking for a range of perspectives—from new members to those who have been part of OLLI for many years, as well as those who have

and have not made charitable contributions to OLLI. This is a conversation, not a fundraising solicitation.

The focus groups will take place from 3:30–4:30 PM in person at OLLI. If you are interested in participating, please contact the OLLI office at olli@american.edu or 202-895-4860. We look forward to your participation in this important discussion.

FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

We are thrilled to share that OLLI at AU SGL, **Elizabeth "Liz" Shelton** has authored an article in the September/October issue of the *Foreign Service Journal*. Read the full piece here: [Curiosity Never Retires: Why Lifelong Learning Should Be in Your Future.](#)

The article highlights the value of lifelong learning and features stories from members—including contributors **John Barger** and **Xenia Wilkinson**—about how they joined OLLI at AU and how the experience has enriched their lives. Please feel free to share this widely with your networks!

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING



FALL REGISTRATION IS STILL OPEN!

There is still time to register for the fall semester or add another class! You can see the status of each (open or closed) on the OLLI website. The membership fee (\$330 for the semester or \$600 for both fall and spring) allows you to sign up for three courses before the lottery. Now that the lottery has passed, you can add a fourth by logging into your account. **The deadline to add/drop classes or request a refund is October 9.**

REGISTER

NEW MEMBER 10% DISCOUNT

Are you, or someone you know, new to OLLI or thinking about coming back after taking a break? Use the button below to register for the fall semester or share it with a friend. A 10% discount will be applied for those who are new or who have not taken classes in five or more years. Click "Register for Study Groups" and then log in or create an account. You will see the discount when paying for the session.

FALL DISCOUNT

FALL SEMESTER INFORMATION

For all fall semester registrants, please note the following:

- Classroom assignments will be included in the September 25 newsletter and on signage on the 1st, 5th, and parking garage floors when you arrive for the first day of classes.
- The Spring Valley Building is only accessible via PIN code. To accommodate OLLI members, the front door and garage entrance will be open from 9:00–10:00 AM, 11:00 AM–12:00 PM, and 1:00–2:00 PM and no PIN code will be required. *Please refer to your class assignment letter for the code if you need to enter the building outside of these times.*
- You can find **class handouts** and **class recordings** on the OLLI website under "Classes" and then "Semesters/Minis." You must be signed into your account to access both. We will be **recording** nearly every study group regardless of format. The recordings will be posted to the OLLI website **the following business day**.
- Skip the lines at the parking kiosk in the garage and download the **parking app** ahead of time: Look for the "Pay by Phone" app in your phone's App Store or Google Play Store. [More information.](#)

FALL BOOK LIST

Most fall semester books are available through Politics and Prose bookstore at 5015 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008. Politics and Prose offers OLLI members a 10% discount on books for courses. Below is a list of fall semester books that are not available at Politics and Prose, or available, but with special circumstances.

Not Available

601 *Vocabulaire progressif du francais. Niveau perfectionnement C1C2*

606 *Der Besuch der alten Dame*

611 *Sanskrit Manuel: A Quick Reference Guide to the Phonology and Grammar of Classical Sanskrit*

644 *Robert Frost: Poems, Prose, and Plays*

739 *Revolution and Its Past*

787 *Tree of Rivers: The Story of the Amazon*

806 *The Healing Art of Qi Gong: Ancient Wisdom from a Modern Master*

829 *Navigating Time: Toward an Interdisciplinary Theory*

861 *The Bible with Sources Revealed*

Available, No Discount

200 *Making Peace with Conflict: Using Neuroscience to Ease Difficult Relationships*

740 *Premodern Japan: A Historical Survey*

862 *Essential Epicurus*

Available with Prepayment

200 *Making Peace with Conflict: Using Neuroscience to Ease Difficult Relationships*

600 & 612 *Complete Italian Grammar*

Available with Prepayment, No Discount

589 *American Furniture: 1650 to the Present*

610 *Strada Senza Uscita: Learn Italian B1–B2*

CATALOG CHANGES

Class changes are available on the [fall catalog changes](#) page of the OLLI website and are updated as they occur.

LECTURES

FALL LECTURE SERIES

We are excited to announce the speakers for our upcoming fall lecture series!

Registration is required for all in-person lectures and will open at 10:00 AM on the Friday before each lecture. The registration link will be included in that day's newsletter. Each registrant may reserve **up to two seats**, and all attendees must be listed on the registration. To guarantee your seat, please arrive and be seated at least five minutes before the lecture begins. **Fall lectures will be held at OLLI, 4801 Massachusetts Ave. NW, in Room A on the first floor.** View the full speaker bios [here](#).



***Bob Blaemire, Unforced Errors: 15
Bad Decisions That Changed
American History***

Friday, October 2

1:30-2:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

Robert Blaemire began his political career in 1967 with Senator Birch Bayh (D-IN), eventually serving as his Office Manager and Executive Assistant. He later founded Blaemire Communications, a political computer services firm serving Democratic campaigns and progressive organizations nationwide. The company was acquired by Catalist in 2007, where he remained until 2016 before turning to consulting and writing.

Bob's book, *Unforced Errors: 15 Bad Decisions That Changed American History*, will be available for purchase and signing immediately following the lecture.



Dennis Ross, *The Iran War & the Failure of Statecraft*

Friday, October 9

1:30-2:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

Ambassador Dennis Ross is counselor and William Davidson Distinguished Fellow at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy and teaches at Georgetown University's Center for Jewish Civilization. For more than twelve years, he played a leading role in the Middle East peace process under Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton and later served as special assistant to President Barack Obama and as an advisor on Iran to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Dennis' book, *Statecraft 2.0: What America Needs to Lead in a Multipolar World*, will be available for purchase and signing immediately following the lecture.



Peter Buck Feller, *The Last Gasp of William Schwartzfeller: Soviet Espionage and the Cruelties of Stalin's Gulags*

Friday, October 16

1:30-2:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

Peter Buck Feller is a retired international trade lawyer and independent historian with a particular interest in Soviet espionage and the Stalinist gulag system. He is the author of *US Customs and International Trade Law Guide* and

has published articles in *Foreign Policy* and *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. He holds degrees from the University of Pennsylvania, American University Washington College of Law, and George Washington University Law School.

Peter's book, *The Last Gasp of William Schwartzfeller: Soviet Espionage and the Cruelties of Stalin's Gulags*, will be available for purchase and signing immediately following the lecture.



Jim Johnston, *Maryland's Gift to the Nation: A Capital City*

Friday, October 23

1:30-2:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

Jim Johnston is a retired lawyer and active writer and lecturer in Bethesda. His legal practice focused on telecommunications, intellectual property, and appellate litigation. He has written more than 120 newspaper and magazine articles on topics including law, history, art, terrorism, and books.



Carla Dirlikov Canales, *Cultural Diplomacy: Using the Arts to Create Positive Social Impact*

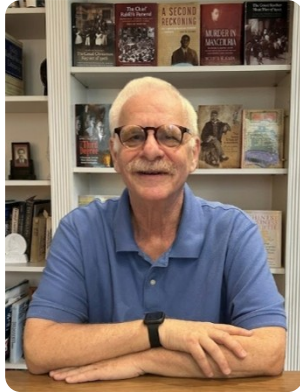
Friday, October 30

1:30-2:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

Carla Canales is an acclaimed opera singer, arts advocate, and entrepreneur who has performed on leading stages around the world. She served in the Biden administration at

the National Endowment for the Arts and later as Senior Advisor and Envoy for Cultural Exchange at the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, where she created and led the Artists for Understanding initiative.



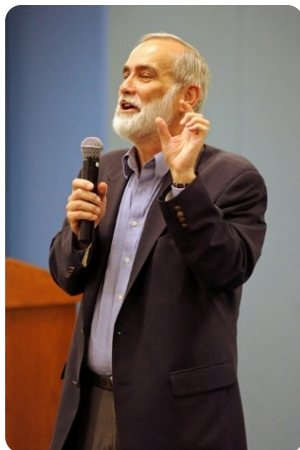
Scott Seligman, *The Great Christmas Boycott of 1906: Antisemitism and the Battle Over Christianity in the Public Schools*
Friday, November 6

1:30-2:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

Scott D. Seligman is an award-winning author of narrative nonfiction specializing in the history and biography of hyphenated Americans. A graduate of Princeton and Harvard Universities, he is fluent in Mandarin and lived in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China for eight years. His varied career has included work in Congress, business, public relations, corporate communications, and teaching.

Scott's book, *The Great Christmas Boycott of 1906: Antisemitism and the Battle Over Christianity in the Public Schools*, will be available for purchase and signing immediately following the lecture.



Nicholas Reynolds, *Reflecting on the Shadow War in Occupied France through the Eyes of a Magnificent Soldier of Fortune*

Friday, November 13

1:30-2:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

Nicholas Reynolds is a historian and former Marine Corps officer who earned his PhD from Oxford University. He served as an official Marine Corps historian and, as a colonel in the Reserves, led efforts to document history in the field. He later worked for many years at the CIA, most recently as historian for the CIA Museum.

Nicholas' book, *Ortiz's War: The Allies' Secret Weapon Against the Nazis in France*, will be available for purchase and signing immediately following the lecture.



Barry Lynn, *Monopolies and Oligarchs*

Friday, November 20

1:30-2:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

Barry C. Lynn is Executive Director of the Open Markets Institute and an author and advocate focused on monopoly power, competition policy, and international supply chains. His work has contributed to policy discussions in the United States and internationally. He is the author of *End of the Line*, *Cornered*, and *Liberty from All Masters*, as well as

numerous articles and congressional testimony.



Rebecca Hamilton, *White Collar Criminals*

Friday, December 4

1:30-2:30 PM

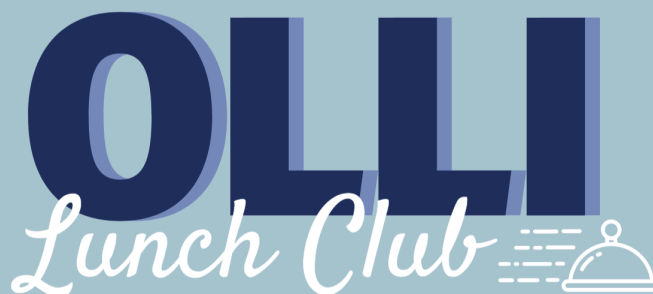
In-Person at OLLI

Rebecca Hamilton is a Professor of Law at American University Washington College of Law and Executive Editor at *Just Security*. A former International Criminal Court prosecutor and journalist for *The Washington Post* and Reuters, her scholarship focuses on international crimes and accountability. She is the author of *Fighting for Darfur* and is currently writing *White Collar War Criminals*.

OLLI does not endorse any of the viewpoints expressed by the speakers in its series.

We thank the Lecture Committee and all those who suggested and contacted speakers: Ellen Babby, Joe Belden, Tamara Belden, Helen Blank, Jim Blasiak, Edward Cohen, David Flaxman (Co-Chair), Lisa Harper (Co-Chair), Jeanne Kent, Lynn Lewis, Annabel McClure (staff liaison), Irvin Nathan, Marc Pearl, and Paul Vamvas.

OLLI EVENTS



OLLI LUNCH CLUB

12:00 PM

Millie's Restaurant | Registration Required

[Tuesday, October 6](#)

[Wednesday, October 21](#)

[Thursday, November 5](#)

[Monday, November 16](#)

The OLLI Lunch Club will hold its next luncheon of the fall semester on **Tuesday, October 6 at 12:00 PM at Pizzeria Paradiso** across the street from OLLI. This is a great way for new and existing OLLI members to meet each other as the semester continues. There is space for up to 12 people. Each person pays their own way. **Please register using the links above.**



SHARE YOUR FAVORITE BOOK TITLES

Wednesday, September 23

2:30 PM-3:30 PM | Room 3

Registration Required

If you are missing the *Washington Post Book Review* or just can't commit to a monthly book club, think about attending one of OLLI at AU's "Share Your Favorite Book Titles" meetings where we share our favorite titles with one another. The next meeting will take place on **Wednesday, September 23 at 2:30 PM in Room 3**. Please bring (at least) four titles to share!

Those who register will receive an email with further information closer to the meeting date.

REGISTER



FALL WINE & CHEESE WELCOMER

Thursday, September 24

3:00-4:30 PM

\$15/Person

Registration Required | No Refunds

Join us for our wine and cheese welcome event for fall registrants and their guests on Thursday, September 24, from 3:00-4:30 PM at the Spring Valley Cafe on the 6th floor of the OLLI building. Various wines and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Attendance is limited to the first 125 members who register. We look forward to seeing you!

If you are new to OLLI and would like a tour of OLLI facilities, we will have tours starting at 2:45 PM followed by the Wine and Cheese Welcomer. Please meet on the 5th floor by the elevators for the tours at 2:45 PM.

*The cutoff for registrations is **Monday, September 21**, at 4:00 PM or 125 registrants, whichever comes first.*

MORE INFO/REGISTER



**HILLWOOD MANSION IN
HOLIDAY SPLENDOR TOUR**

**4155 Linnean Avenue NW,
Washington, DC 20008**

**Thursday, December 10
10:15-11:30 AM**

**Registration Required | Tickets
\$35/person | No Refunds**

Experience Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens at one of the most beautiful times of the year. During the holiday season, Marjorie Merriweather Post's magnificent mansion takes on an added brightness and warmth, with festive seasonal decorations enhancing its elegant rooms and extraordinary collections.

MORE INFO/REGISTER

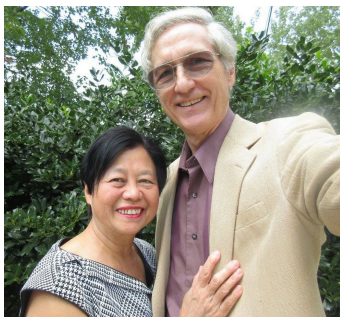
OLLI PODCAST

Listen to episodes from OLLI at AU's podcast, [*Curiosity Never Retires*](#). This series provides information about some of the wonderful courses and people at the heart of our OLLI at AU, while sparking curiosity and maybe a conversation or two. Each 13–15 minute episode features interviews with instructors about upcoming courses, offering prospective registrants insight into what the course will offer and an introduction to the instructor. At *CNR*, we believe there's never a good time to stop learning or laughing. Look for a new episode to be posted next week.



Ellen Stanton, [*O Canada!*](#)

Ellen Stanton served as an educator at the US Capitol Visitor Center and as lead historical interpreter at George Washington's Mount Vernon. For several years, she was chair of the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission. For more than ten years, she has facilitated classes at the OLLI programs at the University of Denver and American University. Ellen is a graduate of Manhattanville College and received an MSW from the University at Albany, SUNY.



Rita and Bill Hadden, [*What is Truth?*](#)

Rita and Bill Hadden love leading film discussions with OLLI members. Bill is a sociologist with a career at the CDC and NIH. Rita has done management and culture change consulting for 35 years, and has led OLLI study groups for a dozen years. Both have lived and traveled widely around the world. They thrive in different cultures and speak multiple languages.

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at American University

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at American University is an association of, by, and for the people in the Washington, DC area who wish to continue to study and learn. OLLI at AU is dedicated to the proposition that learning is a lifelong process and that *curiosity never retires*.

Web: www.oli-dc.org | **Phone:** 202-895-4860 | **E-mail:** oli@american.edu

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Mail: 4400 Massachusetts Ave NW | Washington, DC 20016

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