

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Newsletter

May 2013



OLLII

at American University Washington DC



Fall 2013

**Fall semester 2013
will begin on
Wednesday 25
September.**

May

3: Board Meeting,
12:30pm, TBC

**16: AU SIS presents
Third Thursday
Films: "David Wants
to Fly," refreshments**
6pm, screening
6:30pm, Wechsler
Theater, Mary
Graydon Center

**21: Curriculum
Committee Meeting,**
2pm, TBC

**22: Spring Fling, 4-
6pm, Marriott, 5151
Pooks Hill Road,
Bethesda. You must
RSVP to the OLLI
office by May 15.**

We're Moving!

The OLLI office is moving twice this summer. Our first move happens on May 31 to the Brandywine Bldg,

Letter from the Board Chair, Linda Miller

Precis of Annual Meeting

On April 22, we held what I hope will be the first of many formal Annual Meetings -- a report to the membership on the state of OLLI at AU. An Annual Meeting conforms to the law regarding 501(c)(3) charitable organizations, as well as provides an opportunity for good old-fashioned "straight talk" to and with members.

We had a good Q and A following the report, with lots of suggestions, comments and questions ... and NO discussion of parking! I think we all left the meeting sparked by new ideas and feeling more informed about OLLI. For those who missed it, I offer this summary.



Current State: A Year of Accomplishment and Progress

We noted the explosion in numbers -- of members (over 900 this year alone), classes and SGLs, participating AU departments and schools, and teaching venues (now 6 including 4-H) -- all within the past few years.

We recognized the "stabilization" of the relationship with TBC (along with the loss of use on Fridays at TBC), the staff additions of Mary Fran Miklitsch and Tony Long ("the god-sends"), and the new management structure (a fully-dedicated Curriculum Coordinator, a Program Coordinator to manage all non-curriculum related activities and committees, and an Executive Director with an expanded focus on the external community of AU and foundations, as well as potential sponsors and benefactors).

We applauded the new and now public commitment from AU and the promise of AU's expanded commitment and its promise of a permanent, AU-based home for OLLI -- with special thanks to Ray Rasenberger's perseverance.

And finally, we reported on the excellent financial shape OLLI is in due to careful stewardship by the board over the past years. We currently have a budget close to \$400,000, with approximately 75% going to salary, benefits and rent, and an annual surplus we are banking for

and the second happens on August 16 to the 6th floor of Brandywine where we will remain for at least the next couple of years.

Thank You!

We're grateful to Study Group Leader **John Poole** for contributing his class gift to OLLI.

Cool Poems for Hot Days

Back by popular demand! Yes, this summer OLLI poetry buffs are getting together again to read fabulous poetry and write poems of their own. Text: David Lehman's *The Best American Poetry, 2012* (including poems by Ann Carson, Billy Collins, Jane Hershfield, Marie Howe, Robert Pinsky, and 70 others). Beginning in early June, "Cool Poems" will meet at Ginny Finch's place near Van Ness metro every other Tues. afternoon, 2-3:30. RSVP to Ginny at ginnyvne@yahoo.com and she'll send you more details.

Condolences

Enrique Lerdaу passed away on April 22. He remained an active Study Group Leader through the beginning of

future space needs. We have a \$1 million endowment held at AU, paying out approximately \$50,000/year (a rolling average of 5% of principle), and eligibility to apply to the Osher Foundation for a second, similar grant as we approach 1000 members. We also noted the Friends of OLLI Fund has more than \$700,000 invested in diversified mutual funds comprised of fixed income and equity securities and hopefully growing to fund a new OLLI home.

Challenges in the Coming Year(s)

We noted our biggest challenge is defining the cost and structure of future space at AU and having a team in place with an experienced pro bono lawyer set to begin the rigorous negotiations ahead of us. We also talked about the unique quality of the relationship OLLI -- as an independent organization -- shares with AU, noting that nearly all other OLLIs are owned and run by their university sponsor.

The second, and more immediate, challenge OLLI faces is finding space for the 90 classes(!) we currently have scheduled. We also recognized the need to replenish and to grow our SGL pool through continuing recruitment and outreach -- a responsibility of all members.

Finally, we noted the looming need for a capital campaign and expanded fund raising to meet future needs. (We are sitting pretty for the present, but, oh my, what is ahead of us!)

We ended with a salute and thanks to the board, the committee chairs, the SGLs, Anne, and so many others who have given endless time and energy to OLLI.

Post Script

At the Annual Meeting, I also had the opportunity to talk of some of the things that I felt were left undone this year (creating a membership category for mid-semester joiners and finishing a planned giving brochure well underway). I also wanted to remind the membership of what OLLI is beyond classes, an issue near and dear to my heart. As we move forward in growth and pace, I hope we will always keep in mind that OLLI is not just about classes. It is a place where many find support, new friends, and shared interests. It is a home of belonging and camaraderie for the newly bereaved, retired, or re-located. It is a happy place with a strong social component -- values that I hope we are willing to actualize as we plan for the exciting and promising future ahead of us.

Being chair has been an honor. Thank you.

Linda

Curriculum Committee Brown Bag Lunches

The OLLI Curriculum Committee's first ever "brown bag" lunch meetings with OLLI members, held at TBC a couple of weeks ago, produced an encouraging turn out of potential Study Group Leaders and a few course proposals for consideration for the upcoming Fall and Spring semesters.

this semester and will be greatly missed.

Phyllis Homes's husband, Joe, died in early April.

Ellie O'Toole's husband John passed away this spring as well.

The Committee scheduled the meetings as a new device to reach out to OLLI members who are thinking about suggesting a new course or leading a course for OLLI but are unsure how to do so.

We found the brown bag experience so useful for OLLI learners and committee members alike that it was decided to offer these sessions in each future semester so that potential SGLs will have time to utilize what they learn from the sessions as they develop their proposals. The lunches will be scheduled earlier in future semesters.

Finally, the Curriculum Committee is eager to hear about your proposal for a course at any time. We can be reached through the OLLI office.

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Linda B. Miller, *Board Chair* / Anne Wallace, *Executive Director*

Tony Long, *Curriculum Coordinator* / Mary Fran Miklitsch, *Program Coordinator*