

OUR OFFICE WILL CLOSE AT 1:00 PM TODAY AND WILL BE CLOSED THE ENTIRE DAY ON MONDAY, SEPT. 2, IN OBSERVANCE OF THE LABOR DAY HOLIDAY. HAVE A GREAT WEEKEND!

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Where Curiosity Never Retires

August 30, 2019 OLLI News

Letter From Our Chair



The September 12 talk by Steve Sherman is the first in a Social Committee-sponsored series we are calling *Serendipities!* Throughout the year, OLLI members who wish, for example, to share a thought-provoking or unusual experience, talk about a book they have written, or be part of a small panel on a timely topic can express their interest by e-mailing Social Committee Chair Jeff Porter at jeffporter@gmail.com (filling out a brief form found [here](#) or available in hard copy in the OLLI office.) Our OLLI community is filled with members who have great talents, expertise, and fascinating interests and experiences. *Serendipities!* will give us all a chance to learn more about one another. Light refreshments will be available before the one-hour presentations.

Members ask on occasion how the lottery works, and this week's newsletter gives an explanation that I encourage you to read. If you wonder how you are fortunate to get your top choices or wondering why you never seem to get a given class, the inner workings of the lottery can help clarify the algorithm that determines your fate.

Registration for the fall semester is open. Fall catalogs have been mailed. Online registration is also available. **The lottery for class assignments is on Tuesday, September 3. The fall semester starts the week of September 23.** To register online, please click [here](#).

How The OLLI Lottery Works

The objective of the lottery logic is to assign courses in a fair way. This is done through random assignment and assigning one course to all registrants before assigning any second course, and providing a second course to each registrant who requests one before assigning any third course.

Members can prioritize their study groups however it works best for them. Some members select the study groups in which they are most interested regardless of day and time. Others select study groups that are all on the same day of the week. Still others are limited by their schedule and list one course on one day and time and an alternate at the same day and time, etc.

The only restriction for selecting study groups is that a member cannot list the same course more than once (unless there are two sessions of the same course).

At the beginning of the lottery, the software assigns each member a random number. Then, the membership is divided into three groups: A, B, and C. For example, if there are 900 registrants, members assigned 1 to 299 are in group A, those assigned 300 to 599 are in group B, and those assigned 600 to 900 are in group C.

The lottery goes through multiple rounds in assigning courses. In the first round, the lottery assigns members in sequence of A, B, C, their first choice. If their first choice is not available (because the course is full), the lottery adds the member to the course waitlist and assigns their second choice instead. If the second choice is not available, the lottery also waitlists the member for their second choice and assigns their third choice instead, etc. (We call this “drilling down.”) The lottery only proceeds to the next member in the sequence after the current member has been assigned a study group. The process is repeated for the second member, third member, etc., until all members are “registered” for one course. (Let’s call this the “routine.”) It is possible (and it does happen) that a member is assigned no classes because she/he listed only one course which was full before the member’s turn in the first round.

To make the system as fair as possible, in the second round, the member sequence is reversed (C, B, A, so that the last members in the first round are first in this round). The lottery follows the routine. Members are assigned their second course (drilling down as necessary) until everyone who requested two or more courses receives a second course.

The lottery follows the same routine for the third round, except the sequence is B, then C & A together (so that those who have not been first yet are first in this round). Members are assigned their third course (drilling down as necessary) until everyone who has requested three courses has received a third course.

If a member lists two courses at the same time and gets into the first one, the second one is marked “not selected.” This leaves open seats, so the lottery runs through as many more rounds as needed to move any members from “waitlisted” to “registered.”

One additional condition is weighed in the lottery. If a course has two parts, those members who took the Part I AND who list Part II as their first choice when it is offered, are given preference over members who did not take Part I.

Whether a member has been an OLLI member for the first time or for many years does not

matter. To increase your odds of getting the number of courses you desire, list up to six courses that you would consider taking. You might not get your first choice(s), but OLLI members frequently mention how much they enjoyed a course that was lower on their list.

Updates on Courses and Books

There is a listing of book availability at the Politics and Prose bookstore on our website. Some books are not available and some are pay-to-order only. For books not available in-store, suggestions of other online booksellers are listed. For detailed information on book availability, please click [here](#).

OLLI Book Exchange

There is now an OLLI book exchange located in the Social Space on the 5th floor. Members are welcome to donate books from past study groups, as well as take books they would like. **It would be especially helpful to donate any books that are on the [booklist](#) for this upcoming fall semester.**

There is a box with slips of paper to fill out, pens, and paper clips in the book exchange area. If you donate a book, please fill out one of the slips of paper with as much information that you know (title, number, and study group leader from the class in which the book was used) then clip it to the cover of the book. **The book exchange will be ongoing.** Jacqui Gallagher, the organizer, hopes this will be an activity that will enable members to share interests and make new connections – both intellectual and personal. If you have any questions, please contact Jacqui at gallagherjacqueline@gmail.com or 202-333-7957.

2019 National Book Festival

The 19th annual Library of Congress National Book Festival will be held **tomorrow, Saturday, Aug. 31, 2019**, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, and they still need volunteers. We encourage you to attend. This event is free, no tickets are needed, and it is accessible by metro from either the Mt. Vernon Square or Metro Center stop. More information can be found at: <https://www.loc.gov/events/2019-national-book-festival/>.

Technology Workshop for Study Group Leaders

Study Group Leaders are invited to a technology workshop given by Victor Rezmovic, OLLI SGL, specifically for fellow SGLs, titled *An Introduction to Enhancing Your Presentations with Software Tools*. The workshop will take place on **Monday, September 9, from 10:00-11:30 AM in Room A** of 4801 Massachusetts Ave. NW.

Victor will be covering topics that SGLs will likely find helpful when preparing to use technology in their presentations. For a list of topics he will cover and to register, please click [here](#). This workshop is free, given specially for Study Group Leaders, but please make sure to register if you plan to attend.

A Talk with Steve Sherman: Polish Tour

Steve Sherman will give a presentation of his recent 10-day study tour of Poland (Gdansk, Warsaw, Krakow). He was honored to be part of a delegation of American Jewish leaders invited by the Polish government to learn about Poland and to foster Polish and Jewish dialogue. The tour occurred at a time of controversy between Poland and the Jewish diaspora/Israel, as well as at a

time when Poland is seeking stronger ties with the U.S. Meetings were held with Jewish community members (temples/JCCs) and government representatives (Ministries of Justice/Foreign Affairs). The group had special tours of museums like Solidarity, WWII, History of Polish Jews, and Auschwitz, and attended the Jewish Cultural Festival.

Poland has had a long, rich and tragic history of uneasy co-existence with its Jews. In 1939, Poland was the cultural center of the Jewish world, but was also experiencing rising anti-Semitism. WWII brought the near annihilation of Poland's three million Jews by the Nazis, and many of its remaining survivors were expelled by Poland's anti-Zionist Communists in 1968. Non-Jewish Poles were also victims as Poland was attacked and divided up by Germany and the Soviet Union. Today, Poland has a fledgling Jewish community of about ten thousand and there are efforts to grow and revitalize it. Poland has preserved Auschwitz with its historical lessons and is seen by more than two million annual visitors. In contrast, the Parliament has enacted, almost unanimously, a law penalizing those who accuse Poland of complicity in Nazi atrocities. Poland is also seeking a NATO base in its country because of its concern about possible Russian aggression.

Steve spent most of his career as a trial attorney with the U.S. Justice Department. He also served in President Clinton's White House Counsel's Office, clerked for a U.S. District Court Judge, and was a past Chair of the Federal Bar Association Tax Section. He served on the Federal Inter-agency Holocaust Committee and is the son of Polish holocaust survivors.

This event will be held on Thursday, September 12 at 11:00 AM in our Spring Valley building (4801 Mass. Ave. NW) in Room A on the first floor. To register, click [here](#).

We Want You: Become a Welcomer

We are still short of volunteers needed to welcome each new OLLI member individually before the start of classes. Welcomers contact new members by phone to go over basic information about OLLI and our facilities (including parking!), answer questions, and then touch base a couple of times during the semester. Each Welcomer is normally responsible for 3-4 new members. Although many of our veteran Welcomers will be on the job again this fall, we need additional volunteers. If you are interested in serving as a Welcomer, please send an e-mail to olli@american.edu.

We will review Welcomer responsibilities in detail at an **orientation meeting on Monday, September 9 at 11:00 AM. *The meeting will now take place in Room 3 on the 5th floor*** of our Spring Valley building. All first-time Welcomers are urged to attend. If you are willing to serve as a Welcomer but cannot attend the meeting, please let us know.

Fall 2019 Music-Theatre Group

Participants will enjoy the experience of attending performances as a group, expanding their appetites and critical appreciation for new forms, and supporting a variety of large and small music-theatre companies in our nation's capital. After each show, they will have the opportunity to deepen their experience by engaging with other group members in an informal gathering and sharing in discussions to understand the deeper intentions of the show's creators.

Performances include *LOVE SICK*, *The Tempest*, *Havel's Protest & Vaněk Unleashed*, and *Season of Advent and Light*. For more information and to register, click [here](#). The **registration deadline has been extended to Friday, Sept 6.**

Join OLLI at AU and the Alliance for New Music-Theatre for the 10th season of "Live & About." An energetic and eclectic program has been put together for this fall with outings to different productions across the spectrum of music-theatre in the DC area.

Steven Pearlstein to Speak at Book Club Meeting

The third annual OLLI Book Club will discuss the incisive and provocative book by acclaimed Pulitzer Prize author and *Washington Post* columnist Steven Pearlstein, *Can American Capitalism Survive?* This book is particularly relevant, given the current political climate. We hope many members will read the book and come to the discussion, which will be led by Pearlstein. **The Book Club will meet on Wednesday, September 18, at 10:00 AM in Room A.** There is no cost to attend. Please click [here](#) to register. If you have any questions, please contact our office at olli@american.edu.

Upcoming Events at American University

For any AU-specific event, please contact the sponsoring department directly.

FALL EVENTS AT THE AU MUSEUM-KATZEN ARTS CENTER

Open Tuesday-Sunday, 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Free and fully accessible

Early Fall Opening Reception

Saturday, September 7, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Free and open to all

Grace Hartigan and Helene Herzbrun: Reframing Abstract Expressionism

September 3-October 20, 2019

Curated by Norma Broude, American University Art History Professor Emerita

Free and open to all, no RSVP required

Grace Hartigan (1922-2008) and Helene Herzbrun (1922-1984) were both remarkable painters of the second Abstract-Expressionist generation who lived and worked as influential artists and teachers in the Baltimore/Washington region for many decades. Accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, with an essay by Norma Broude, this show brings together more than two dozen large-scale and rarely seen works by Hartigan and Herzbrun from private and public collections, many in the Baltimore/Washington area. For more details, click [here](#).

Topographies of Life: Pam Rogers, Lynn Sures, Mel Watkin

September 3-December 15, 2019

Curated by Jennifer Riddell, Presented by the AU Museum Project Space

Using the medium of drawing to varied and distinctive effect, Rogers, Sures, and Watkin trace human connections to the natural world—across time and varied landscapes. The three artists work from both a consciousness of drawing's ties to illustration and evidence; and, the medium's unique ability to transmit the artist's "hand" and personal response to their subject. From the deserts of Kenya, forests of the Midwest, to the Potomac watershed, these artists are deeply attuned to the mutually affecting relationship between the anthropological and natural worlds.

There will be a gallery talk on Saturday, September 7, from 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM, followed by the Fall Opening Reception. Please RSVP for the talk [here](#).

Our Mission

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.

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