In late May, OLLI paused its forward motion to cast an assessing eye on the preceding fiscal year. In her written report, Director Katie Compton called it “the year of our name change to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.” Attendees at the annual general meeting had only to look around them to enjoy one improvement. Instead of having to trek across the West Campus to a large meeting room, they could take seats in one of the two spacious, fully equipped, new classrooms on the lower level. Their renovation was made possible by a $100,000 grant from the Osher Foundation.

With Katie on medical leave, Joan McDonald, chair of the Executive Committee, conducted the meeting. She introduced Mark Rollins, dean of University College, who praised OLLI for its “great success.” He spoke about the changes coming to UC and announced his own retirement in June, upon completion of his three-year tenure as dean.

In presenting Katie’s annual report, Joan said that OLLI’s numbers had started to come back up, after last year’s 13 percent drop. A total of 876 students participated in at least one of the past four terms, with 140 of them being new to the program. Once again, she said, members had donated generously to the general fund, as well as to the scholarship and endowment funds. OLLI gave out $6,675 in scholarships to 35 students, with $1,000 of it coming from the Hootenanny fundraiser.

For building enrollment, Marketing Chair Steve Radinsky stressed that nothing beats member recommendations. That fact cannot be overstated as we work toward the goal for our first year of affiliation with the Osher Foundation: a 1000-student enrollment. Our twice-annual “Show-Me OLLI” presentations are our second-best marketing tool, he said. The immediate results of our sponsorship spots on St. Louis Public Radio, however, were less than hoped for.

David Brown, chair of the Curriculum Committee, told of a cooperative venture with a Washington University group researching age-diversity (or intergenerational) classrooms. This fall, as part of the project, a small group of undergraduates will participate in Marlene Katz’s “Salon of Ideas: What’s Wrong with Education in America?” class. He also commended this year’s 85 facilitators, some of whom continue to lead one or more courses for every session.

With business over, attendees were treated to a readers’ theatre presentation of scenes written chiefly during the spring playwriting class. The lively dialogue and humor brought warm applause as time’s curtain fell on OLLI’s 24rd year.
Message from the Chair

So many classes, so many choices. OLLI’s hard-working Curriculum Committee, led by David Brown, has done it again. There is certainly something for everyone in the exciting classes offered for the fall semester. We welcome our new members and welcome back all returning students to Osher Lifelong Learning Institute’s 2019-2020 academic year. And we especially welcome back from her medical leave our Executive Director Katie Compton.

We have a lot to look forward to during the upcoming months. There will be a special fall address on September 5 by Mary M. McKay, Brown School Dean of Social Work, to be held at the Forest Park Golf Club. Then Hootenanny III is scheduled for October 27. At the end of this fiscal year, our 25th anniversary celebration is slated for May 27 in conjunction with the annual meeting. Steve Radinsky, marketing chair, is heading up the event, and he and his committee are already hard at work planning for the big day. So mark your calendars and start thinking Silver! Meanwhile, most of the online registration glitches and parking problems have been ironed out (hopefully); and more people are able to take advantage of the larger classes with the addition of the two new spacious classrooms on the lower level.

Show-Me OLLI in May was a great success, with over 50 attendees enjoying the three sample classes. This semi-annual event continues to be an excellent introduction for those interested in joining OLLI. Our 2018-19 annual meeting was held in May in Room 25, one of the newly refurbished classrooms on the lower level, eliminating the need for the trek over to room A/B and making it much more convenient. University College Dean Mark Rollins spoke briefly, and in addition to his praise for the success of OLLI, his remarks included the announcement of his forthcoming retirement. Silvia Madeo was elected to the Executive Committee to replace Rick Blaha whose term had lapsed, and Bos Irvine was elected to fill out the term of his late wife, Kathy. After a very entertaining Playwriting Class presentation, a lovely lunch was enjoyed by all just across the hall in room 24.

And now a word about peer learning. As you know, peer learning is, always has been, and continues to be the backbone of OLLI. Although our facilitators continue to do a fabulous job of putting together instructive and entertaining curricula, the enriching experience of OLLI is due in part to the knowledge and experience brought to the class by its members. We learn from each other—and that’s what it’s all about.

One final note. A big thank you to Denise Zona, administrative assistant extraordinare, and her band of volunteers who kept everything running smoothly during Katie’s absence. Brava.

--Joan McDonald
Notes from the Director’s Desk

As most of you know, I have been out on medical leave since mid-May when I had surgery for breast cancer. By the time you receive this newsletter I will have returned to work on a “reduced schedule” while I have chemotherapy. Your thoughts, prayers, cards, and best wishes have been most deeply appreciated. Someone even wrote me a poem!

It is a testament to our wonderful Denise Zona that the summer term registration went off with nary a glitch and that classes started on time and as usual. Our team of facilitators has done a fabulous job preparing for the summer term as well as the upcoming fall term. Our executive team eagerly stepped up when needed, especially Joan McDonald, David Brown, Steve Radinsky, and Bettye Dew.

Please tell your friends and relatives about our wonderful OLLI and encourage them to register for a class or special program. As I write this, we are poised to have our biggest summer term with an enrollment of 379. We hope this fall term is our biggest and best ever! With your help it will be.

I hope to see you all soon,
Katie

Henrietta and Rudolph Freedman Fall Address, September 5, 2019

As usual, OLLI will kick off the academic year—our 25th—with the Fall Address. This time, though, a metamorphosis has occurred. The formerly plain Fall Address has become the Henrietta and Rudolph Freedman Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Fall Address.

The newly named lecture series is a memorial tribute to Henrietta Freedman, one of the founding members of OLLI, and her husband, Rudy, both graduates and supporters of Washington University. As announced last spring, this address has been endowed by Henrietta and Rudy’s daughter, Dr. Judith Freedman, and son-in-law, John Lawrence, who will come to St. Louis from England for the inaugural event, to be held on Sept. 5.

The speaker for the occasion is Mary M. McKay, Neidorff Family and Centene Corporation Dean of the Brown School at Washington University, whose topic is “Advancing Social, Economic and Health Equity through Leadership and Innovation.”

The Henrietta and Rudolph Freedman OLLI Fall Address, Sept. 5, 1 p.m.
Forest Park Golf Club, 6141 Lagoon Drive 63112
Free Parking!!

13th Annual Lawrence Jasper Lecture
‘Eating for Two: Therapeutic Interventions That Prevent Healthy Tissues from Feeding Cancer’

“Eating for two” is a phrase that every expectant mother is likely to hear. It means, of course, that her nutrition must not only sustain the needs of her own body but also those of her developing fetus. For most, the words suggest a life-enhancing relationship.

But, in March, when “Eating for Two” appeared as the title of the 13th annual Lawrence Jasper Lecture, it soon became clear that, when applied to cancer cells, the phrase had lost its innocence. A sizable OLLI audience listened as this year’s speaker described how nutrition and growth, so necessary in the mother-baby instance, can warp into something life-threatening.

The speaker, Gary J. Patti, the Michael and Tana Powell associate professor of chemistry at Washington University, told of his team’s investigation of the metabolic role in tumor development. Cancer cells, he explained, recruit vascularization to poach nourishment from surrounding healthy tissue as a means of promoting their own growth.

This type of research lies in the developing field of metabolomics, a system for analyzing the metabolism of tumor cells. It includes using a mass spectrometer to crush live tumor cells, thereby enabling the measurement of their metabolites, substances essential for their nutrition. The goal is to find therapeutic interventions that would block a tumor’s nutritional pathways.

Patti’s team has developed a “dictionary” of metabolites. A thousand are known, he said, with roughly the same number yet to be defined. But since cancer cells and normal cells have most of the same metabolites, the problem becomes how to kill cancer cells without killing normal cells. Between any two points of metabolism, however, there are many possible routes. Patti and his team have been working on ways to restrict traffic on pathways essential to cancer metabolism. In animals, he said, simple diet modifications can have a striking impact.

(Gifts to the Jasper Lecture Fund would be greatly appreciated.)

Dr. Patti and Kathleen Jasper Cameron and her son.
In Memoriam

Bob Groer
Shirley Listerman
Thelda Riess
Glenn Sheffield
Greg Vogelweid
Maurice Lonsway

In Memory of:

Shirley Listerman
Karen & Butch Sterbenz
Jay Lapin
Charles and Anne Korr
Shirley Bassett
Doug & Annette Twells
Neil Bernstein
Marcia Bernstein
Maurice Lonsway
Bettye Dew

In Honor of:

Sam Crews
Lydia Long
Denise Zona
Marjory Sacks
Ken Streett
Ruby Lapin’s birthday
Aleene Zawada
Ellen Moceri
Ken Streett
Katie Compton’s Speedy Recovery
Larry Perlmutter
Ruth McBrayer
Hazel Sohn
Rosalyn Borg

General Fund
Judith Ugalde
Susan Huddart
Harriet Switzer
Mick Redohl
Rob Gibson
Virginia McCann
Stanley Misler
Susan McCorkell
Ruby Lapin
Jane Smith
Barbara Thach
Constantine & Maria
Michaelides
Geraldine Schiller

Scholarship Fund
Harry & Sue Estill
Ellen Moceri
Rick Blaha
Rita Warren

Lawrence Jasper Fund
Elizabeth Jasper Stewart
Kathleen Jasper Cameron
David Jasper

Third Hootenanny Fundraiser on October 27

If Woody Guthrie were around, I bet he would enjoy coming to the OLLI Hootenanny. And if Woody would, why wouldn’t you? The third annual Hootenanny will be held October 27 at the Ethical Society. It’s a great way to enjoy the OLLI community and give back at the same time.

Every dollar raised goes to OLLI student scholarships. Hootenannies are gatherings, often informal, for singing folk music. Possibly begun in Appalachia, they were popularized by singers such as Guthrie and Pete Seeger in the ’50s and ’60s. Come and sing—or even just listen, for there’ll be guest musicians. Bring snacks to share.

—Rita Hulbert

OLLI

I’m tempted to call it a bit of a shame
But I’m not an over-reactor
They’ve added an O to the LLI name
To honor a big benefactor

I’m perfectly willing to go with the plan
As we gather each Monday with Polly
But I never signed up for Kukla or Fran
So who signed me up for OLLI

—Ed Moorman

You are invited to a gathering celebrating

Ann Rynearson

Her wit and wisdom and warmth
Friday, September 20, 2019
1:00-3:00 pm in room 25

There will be a showing of the documentary she produced in conjunction with the International Institute of Saint Louis

“Weaving Bitter with the Sweet”
A Lao Waver’s Tale

A selection of her writings will be read.
We hope that you will share your stories and memories of Ann.
We will close with a selection of beverages and sweets.

r.s.v.p. 314-935-4237
For a long time after Vietnam,” Bill von Glahn said, “schools were leery of war-history courses. But what people didn’t realize is that when you get to the bare bones of what war is really like, you cannot glorify it.”

Bill’s recent two-part OLLI class, “War and Morality,” served as an examination of war and the ethics of conflict. Using examples that spanned from ancient Greece to modern times, the course looked at various causes of war, investigating why some wars are fought justly and others are not.

Bill began teaching war history as an adjunct professor at the University of Tulsa while also working as a corporate lawyer. His interest in the philosophy and ethics of war, however, grew from his experience as a young man, when, to his parents’ dismay, he resigned a banking job and joined the U. S. Marine Corps. He ended up serving as a captain in Vietnam during and after the Tet Offensive of 1968. As a bombardier navigator, based in Da Nang, he flew both tactical and strategic missions.

“In actual combat,” he said, “instant decisions are made with little information. Terrible and compromising situations can occur. Troops can look at the other side as beasts and monsters. I came away from Vietnam with a strong feeling that war was not well understood by our society and needed more forthright consideration. That notion eventually impelled me toward teaching military history.”

When his military service ended, Bill, a native of Westchester County, New York, came to St. Louis to attend Washington University School of Law. After graduation and a return to the New York financial world, he was ultimately lured away to work in a corporate law office for a company in Tulsa. In 1986 he began his affiliation with the University of Tulsa by teaching law courses before transitioning to military history.

For Bill and his wife, Joyce, grandchildren were the great draw for a retirement in St. Louis, where both are enjoying OLLI. For the fall session, Bill is offering a class on Napoleon, a subject he has long wished to tackle. “Napoleon fought 60 battles, losing only eight, so we will examine his miraculous climb and tragic downfall.” For this three-part series, entitled “The French Revolution and Napoleon,” he will concentrate on the historical aspects, while his co-facilitator, Peter Griffin, formerly a history professor at Lindenwood University, will lead the philosophy discussions.

Bill now serves OLLI’s Curriculum Committee as history chair and hopes to expand course offerings. If you have ideas for new history courses or would like to learn about facilitating courses, please call him on his cell, 918-688-7319.

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The Age-Diversity Educational Project

Since our recent affiliation with the Osher Foundation, the required minimum age for OLLI members has dropped from 55 to 50. This fall, however, you might spot some 20-year-olds among the mature students. That’s because five or so Washington University students will be at OLLI to participate in Marlene Katz’s class “Salon of Ideas: What’s Wrong with Education in America?”

The undergraduates’ involvement stems from a project sponsored by the university’s Harvey A. Friedman Center for Aging through an initiative known as “Washington University for Life.” Its purpose is to conduct research on the pros and cons of age-diverse (or multigenerational) classrooms.

Conversely, the project’s director, Prof. Nancy Morrow-Howell, will integrate several older students into discussion sections of a course she teaches in the undergraduate program. “We have no intention of changing the nature of the OLLI education program,” she said recently. “We just want to begin to learn about age-diverse classrooms, to understand how age-diversity affects the processes and outcomes for teachers and students alike.”

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FIND US ON FACEBOOK
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Washington University in St. Louis
Who Can It Be?

Imagine knowing yourself—really knowing who you are, what you stand for (or are up against), and your basic philosophy of life—at the age of eight. Of course, it’s not that she hasn’t grown, learned, and evolved since then, but our OLLI classmate says she is basically the same person she was back then. She was “more liberal” than her parents and today retains her early outlook on life, which means striving for the common good and working towards life being a win-win proposition for as many as possible. “And it cannot be a zero-sum game,” she adds.

“If it’s that, you’re going to just take care of yourself.” She also likes to consider herself as approaching issues rationally.

Our classmate is a true St. Louisan: born here, educated at Wash. U., married here, spent her career here, and raised two children here. She has a younger brother whom she taught his multiplication table; he now “nannies” her, she claims.

Teaching that younger brother might have set the stage for our friend’s career. After a year spent studying political science at Smith, she transferred back home and completed a degree in elementary education. Why the change? “I guess I was thinking about earning a living,” she says. Along the way, she was fixed up on a blind date which “mutually did not take.” A couple of years later, it did; they married and had two children. She took time off from teaching, returning “accidentally” when her kids were in middle school (she was volunteering at the school when a job opened up). She taught for about 20 more years, retiring young so that she and her husband could enjoy traveling.

Growing up in Clayton may have cemented our friend’s liberal tendencies; she says that Clayton was liberal before liberal was cool, and she’s proud to be a Clayton High School alum. She had terrific, devoted parents who put up with her ceaseless talking and constant questioning. It must have been pretty relentless because her little brother’s nickname for her was “WhereWhy.” She didn’t mind challenging the status quo, and it didn’t bother her to challenge her teachers. Even though she claims she’s not a writer, she was editor of her high school yearbook and belonged to a writing group called The Scribblers. Fun fact: she played intramural volleyball in college.

Our classmate has brought her interests in current affairs and activism to OLLI, first in the New Yorker class, and then in the classes she facilitates. She also has a great interest in linguistics. She has taken various classes over the years, and once accidentally ventured outside her interest/comfort zone to take a class on the Aeneid. Although it was a clerical error, she decided it would be interesting and ended up enjoying it. Asked about something she has learned through her classes at OLLI, she says, “People on both sides of an issue can be reasonable.”

As an educator, she worked hard to use every minute for learning. She was a consistent disciplinarian who made a point of always following through. That she had high expectations for her students is hardly surprising, since she has high expectations for herself, such as to remain engaged, active, and, above all, rational. She believes we should all do what one of her heroes, George Washington, exemplified: look for compromises. She says that she’ll never write a memoir (I wish she would), but that if she did, she might entitle it “Born on a Soap Box.”

She feels she’s been very lucky in the life she has had, helped along, perhaps, by not having done too many stupid things, and she is very grateful for her many blessings.

— Rita Hulbert

(Answer on Page 8)
OLLI’s March Open House

“No man ever steps in the same river twice,” said Heraclitus, oh, so many years ago. This bit of ancient wisdom certainly holds true at our institute. Think of our four annual terms, each bringing a fresh mixture of course offerings. And think of other changes that occur each year, some too subtle to attract much notice. This past spring, however, change arrived in more dramatic fashion when we joined the national network of Osher Institutes and changed our name to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute of Washington University. That step grabbed everybody’s attention.

To celebrate the new status and amended name, OLLI held an Open House for members in late March. After introductory remarks by Mark Rollins, dean of University College, came reflections from OLLI Director Katie Compton. She assured the 100-plus attendees that, despite the new name and affiliation, “the format and philosophy that have made our program successful will not change. Our emphasis on peer learning and active class participation will remain paramount.” In addition to a lovely lunch, those present enjoyed inaugural tours of the two new lower-level classrooms, both renovated and furnished by means of a grant from the Osher Foundation.

Ninth Annual OLLI Writers Showcase

Fourteen writers from each of our writing classes read from their best work—poetry, memoir, fiction, essays. Dennis Smith MC’d the event and refreshments were served following the readings.
NEVER A DULL MOMENT AT OLLI

Greeter Gayle Gray (right) hands out nametags and smiles at the May Show Me OLLI.

The Reading The New Yorker Class Players enact a cartoon. (L to R) Esther Smoller, Tom Craddock, Jerry Schiller, Marge Jaffe, and Fran Gould.

Marlene Katz talks Climate Change at the May Show Me OLLI.

Our “Panel of Experts” lead a discussion on facilitating at the March OLLI Facilitator Workshop: Stanley Misler, Anna Amelung, Marlene Katz, Michael E. Nolan

Facilitators break out into discussion groups at the OLLI Facilitator Workshop.

Ben Sandler presents a mini poetry class to attendees at the May Show Me OLLI.

Answer to “Who Could It Be?”: Marilyn Lipman