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**The Executive Committee of the Board Presents Executive Director Jennifer Disano with a Plaque Recognizing Her Ten Years of Leadership at OLLI Mason, September 15** (Photo by Mike Emery)

## September 29, 2023

**Editor of the Week: Paul Van Hemel**

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## Alerts & Notices

- A list of fall-term course/event cancellations, additions, and changes is available at [this link](#).
- The next issue of *OLLI E-News* will be published Friday, October 6; the regular deadline for submission of items is Tuesday, October 3, at 6:00.

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## From the Desk of the Executive Director Ten Years and Counting



**By Jennifer Disano, Executive Director**

As I reflect on the past ten years, my heart is full of gratitude for the remarkable journey we've undertaken together at OLLI Mason.

When I first assumed the role of Executive Director, my vision for OLLI was to preserve the essential role it played in our members' lives. Little did I anticipate the transformative changes that awaited us. With your unwavering support, the dedication of our incredible volunteers, and the competence of our staff, we've achieved far more than I could ever have imagined.

Our decade long journey has been a testament to expansion, innovation, and adaptability. Not only have we sustained membership through time and trial, but we've also doubled our programs and tripled our staff. Thanks to technology like Zoom and the implementation of hybrid

classrooms, our reach now extends beyond geographical boundaries, allowing us to connect and engage our members with teachers near and around the globe.

Amidst the challenges and changes of the past 10 years, one of our most significant achievements has been the consistent quality and subsequent expansion of OLLI course offerings. This accomplishment is owed to the hard work of our dedicated curriculum committee volunteers, the unwavering support of our staff, and, of course, our incredible OLLI volunteer teachers.

While the impact of our collective efforts defies perfect quantification, one thing is undeniable: we've changed lives for the better. Our influence extends not only to our members but also to our teachers and the broader community. We've cultivated connections, ignited intellectual growth, and enriched countless lives.

Looking ahead, I am filled with optimism and excitement for the future. Our journey continues to evolve and unfold. Together, we will confront new challenges, embrace fresh opportunities, and uphold the spirit of lifelong learning.

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## Alzheimer's/Dementia—Treatment Hope for the Future?



*By Jane Harrison, Health and Safety Advisory Workgroup Member*

Much has been written about Alzheimer's Disease/Dementia, but overall treatment options are discouraging. In June, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Leqembi. In July, results of a clinical trial of Donanemab led to expectation that the drug will be approved by the end of the year. Both drugs have shown to provide for a slightly slower decline in cognitive function in those with mild cognitive impairment or early dementia. While some see these drugs as a milestone in the treatment of the disease that has been untreatable to date, the results are negligible.

It is helpful to look at some of the basic clinical trial results of these drugs and compare the possible efficacies. Both target the reduction of amyloid in the brain.

For an explanation of the studies, see [this link](#).

The Leqembi trial slowed cognitive decline by 27% over eighteen months—a five-month delay in progression. The Donanemab trial was conducted differently, and the numbers were slightly better, but almost 37% experienced brain swelling or bleeding.

Many experts agree that amyloid reduction is just part of the problem and that a cocktail of anti-inflammatory and anti-tau agents will be needed to effectively see real strides in treatment. Some feel that within five years there will be a combination of therapies, much like cancer treatment, which will improve the outlook. However, hope may be tempered by such factors as cost (\$26,500 per year; not including infusion), insurance coverage, availability of qualified treatment centers,

and, in the case of Leqembi, necessity of treatment for life. Treatment with Donanemab does have an end point. Efficacy is clearly the factor now, but is it the frontier of the future?

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## Wednesday Team Bloch Conversation—October 4



*By Brenda Bloch-Young and Doris Bloch, Co-Moderators*

Continuing our Wednesday Conversations series, Team Bloch (Brenda Bloch-Young and Doris Bloch) will moderate a Zoom discussion on October 4. The topic for Wednesday, October 4: **New Genres in Literature**, including autofiction (help us all to understand what it is).

Apparently, there are new novels being written that incorporate or supplant unreliable narrators. Is an author obligated to be honest with their characters? How do these new genres blur the distinction between fiction and non-fiction? Why that is happening and how to read around that is the question of the day.

Check your daily schedule for the Zoom link on Wednesdays and plan on some social time with Team Bloch on October 4.

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## Let's Party on Lucky Friday the 13th!



*By Marilyn Harriman, Diversions Chair*

Bring your rabbit's foot and join your OLLI friends on Friday, October 13, 3:00-5:00 at the Tallwood campus for our second annual Halloween party. Refreshments, including snacks, candy, and beverages, will be served.

Enjoy a range of entertainment:

- Visit a professional caricature artist for a five-minute personal portrait made just for you!
- Take a selfie with a celebrity, including George Washington, Audrey Hepburn, and Elvis.



- Decorate a pumpkin in the Annex.
- Whack a pinata for a chance at a candy stash.
- Wear a costume and compete for prizes.
- Sing along with rockin' karaoke music.

Bring a friend or spouse!

If you haven't yet signed up, register for **Event #1101** by October 11 in the [member portal](#). Admittance is free (no cost). The event will be held in TA-1, the Annex, and TA-3.

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## A Whole Year of Conversations



**By Brenda Bloch-Young and Doris Bloch,  
Co-Moderators**

A whole year of Wednesday Conversations with Team Bloch has gone by. We started our weekly sessions on September 13, 2022, and we have continued every week until now with only a very few interruptions. Our topics vary with each session, with some on the light side and some more serious and/or educational. We average about eight participants per session but have had as many as 16 join us. Popular topics have included:

- What Are You Reading?
- Travel
- Games to Play on Your Phone, and
- The Village Support Movement.

Team Bloch members (Brenda Bloch-Young and Doris Bloch) have had a lot of fun with these sessions, meeting new people and befriending the regulars, learning about what members think about the topics, and just generally enjoying the weekly social camaraderie. We invite you to join us any Wednesday afternoon from 4:00-5:00 and share our journey!

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## History Club to Hear Arlington House Presentation



**By Doug Snoyenbos, History Club President**

The History Club will meet on Wednesday, October 4. We will hear a presentation on Arlington House by Jerry MacLaughlin, National Park Service volunteer.

Arlington House (photo courtesy of Jerry MacLaughlin) has been a witness to momentous events in our nation's history, from the capture of the city of Washington in the War of 1812, to Colonel

Robert E. Lee's decision to resign his commission in the U.S. Army, and to the establishment of Arlington National Cemetery. This talk will provide an overview of these momentous events, and how the inhabitants of Arlington House, both enslaved and free, affected these events.



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## Photos Needed for Dirty Knee Club Book



**By Sally Berman, Dirty Knee Club Coordinator**

The Dirty Knee Club (DKC) is starting the process of making a new book about the landscaping at Tallwood. We are gathering photos and stories about OLLI and how the grounds are used. We will be using the first book, created by Valerie Braybrooke, to guide us.

We have a Google page where people can send their pictures. Here is a link to the site:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/333XCogfBzdhy8y88>

The DKC is looking for information about and pictures of the following:

- The Plum tree installation event and article
- Pictures or diagrams of the handicapped ramp construction
- Any pictures of groups or individuals enjoying the outdoor settings such as the breezeway, Solomon's loop, or the patio terrace
- The history of the cottage
- Information about the amazing Mason crew who have helped improve the grounds so much in the past few years. Drainage, rocks, stump gardens, . . .
- The effects of Covid on OLLI. The restrictions and the lack of in-person use. The number of people on campus before and after Covid.
- Any contributions that the Photography Club wants to share.
- Anything else that might be interesting in this book.

All members are encouraged to send information/pictures. If you have questions or suggestions, please send me an email at [skberman77@gmail.com](mailto:skberman77@gmail.com). Thank you!

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## Yes, You Can Teach at OLLI!



**By Camille Hodges, OLLI Board Member/Humanities and Social Sciences, Current Events Program Planning Group Co-Chair**

OLLI invites you to share your expertise on topics that reflect your knowledge in any area. Currently, OLLI members have expressed the desire to have classes on the following topics:

- "Agree to Disagree" Respectfully
- Cultural linguistics
- Comparing Education in America with Other Countries
- Historical Pros and Cons of Vaccinations

OR:

Your topic of expertise.

If you have an interest in teaching OLLI courses via (Zoom/hybrid or in-person), have questions or ideas of your own, please contact any of the following HSS/CE committee chairpersons or Program Associates:

- Camille Hodges [mimihodges4@gmail.com](mailto:mimihodges4@gmail.com)
- Peg O'Brien [mazob@live.com](mailto:mazob@live.com)
- Shannon Morrow [smorrow4@gmu.edu](mailto:smorrow4@gmu.edu)
- Nancy Klein [nklein4@gmu.edu](mailto:nklein4@gmu.edu)

Additionally, you may [click here](#) to fill out the OLLI course proposal form.

We are currently scheduling OLLI courses for spring 2024. The deadline for course submissions is October 6, 2023.

Spring Term: March 25-May 17, 2024

Take the challenge and teach!

*Editor's Note: This article appeared in recent issues of E-News. It is repeated here to encourage members to volunteer to teach at OLLI.*

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## Oktoberfest: Music, Food, and Fun



**By Linda H. Harber, Friends of Music at Mason President**

I hope my OLLI friends will be able to join us at the Friends of Music at Mason's upcoming

**Oktoberfest Musicale at the Woodlands.** Enjoy a delicious meal of German-style food (with vegetarian options available) and a special live concert from talented Mason Music students—playing music from German composers. Get into the mood with big pretzels with mustard and beer (or wine) with your delicious meal. Part of your ticket cost will go to Mason music scholarships. If you attended our first *Musicale Soiree* in the spring, you will enjoy another amazing evening with Friends of Music at Mason and the talented Mason music students.

Looking forward to seeing you on October 20. Tickets are going fast and there is limited seating available.

**Join us for the  
Fall Oktoberfest Musicale**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20  
6:30-9 PM**

**THE WOODLANDS RETIREMENT COMMUNITY**  
Enjoy a delectable dinner and a private concert featuring Dewberry School of Music students to raise funds for student scholarships. Hosted by Friends of Music at Mason board member Jim Bennett and his wife Sally.

**Join us as a sponsor to help FOMM scholarships the most!**  
Sponsor for \$250 to receive two tickets and special recognition at the event (\$60 in benefits)  
Individual Tickets are also available for \$70 each (\$30 in benefits)

**Proceeds from the event benefit  
Friends of Music Student Scholarships!**

**Space is extremely limited! Register online at [alumni.gmu.edu/musicale](http://alumni.gmu.edu/musicale)  
Questions? Rachel Ingle at 703-993-3927 or [ringle@gmu.edu](mailto:ringle@gmu.edu)**

Your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. The George Mason University Foundation Inc., is a registered 501(c)(3) organization (EIN: 54-1603842).

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## Poet's Corner

*Courtesy of the Poetry Workshop*

### My Friend Kay Menchel

Kay was an amazing English Lit teacher  
Who taught at GMU as well as OLLI.  
Always said she enjoyed teaching  
More than we loved learning.



But she'll never know how much we enjoyed her,  
And her fascinating classes—  
Murder Most British; British Detective Fiction;  
Explaining Britain One Book at a Time;  
Aspects of the Novel; The Literary Landscape.

She'd make us listen by adding humor and fun  
We had classes during the Pandemic right from her living room.  
Even her son Cameron joined by teaching us as well.  
I felt I knew her more as a friend than as a professor.

Her face was bigger than life on my screen at home  
I figured she'd always be there for us; she had many fans.  
But now she's gone and all that's left are memories of her,  
The handouts, and my notes from her classes.

-Joan Lunsford

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## Arts & Music at George Mason Performances September 29 through October 9



By Shelly Gersten, OLLI E-News Staff Writer

For tickets for either Center for the Arts Concert Hall (CFA) or Hylton Center, call 1-888-945-2468, buy tickets online through the event calendar (see links below), or visit the venue's box office. For more information, see the [CFA ticket page](#) or the [Hylton Center ticket purchase page](#).

Dr. Linda Apple Monson produces a periodic "Notes from the Director." This email is full of interesting online performances by the students and faculty of the School of Music. If you would like to receive these bulletins, just sign up at [this link to stay in touch](#). Also, the Center for the Arts has a website, [Mason Arts at Home](#), which has a calendar of online events and access to many past performances.

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### At the Fairfax Campus Venues

### Renée Elise Goldsberry in Concert (Part of Arts by George!)

Sat, Sep 30, 8:30  
Concert Hall  
Admission: \$100, \$75, \$50.

### Virginia Opera: Siegfried

Sat, Oct 7, 7:30  
Sun, Oct 8, 2:00  
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE: learn about the context, music, and production you are about to see and hear. A pre-performance discussion featuring Virginia Opera Resident Scholar, Joshua Borths, will take place in Monson Grand Tier, on the third level of the Center for the Arts Lobby, 45 minutes prior to curtain.  
AFTER THE SUNDAY PERFORMANCE: Joshua Borths will lead a post-performance discussion with the artists in the Center for the Arts main lobby.  
Concert Hall  
Admission: \$110, \$70, \$40.

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### Mason Student and Faculty Performances

(see [music.gmu.edu](https://music.gmu.edu) for additional student recitals)

### Mason Symphony Orchestra Concert

Wed, Oct 11, 8:00  
Concert Hall  
Admission: \$12 Adult, \$8 senior.

### Jazz4Justice: Celebrating The Legacy of Anthony Maiello

Sat, Oct 14, 8:00  
Concert Hall  
Admission: \$20 Adult, \$15 senior.

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### At the Hylton Center (Manassas Campus)

### David Amoroso: Belleza Brutal

Buchanan Partners Art Gallery  
Through Nov 4  
Admission: Free.

### Keyboard Conversations® with Jeffrey Siegel: Glorious Impromptus of Chopin and Schubert

Sun, Oct 1, 2:00

Merchant Hall  
Admission: \$50, \$43, \$29.

**Prince William Little Theatre: *The Westing Game***

Fri, Oct 6, 8:00  
Sat, Oct 7, 8:00  
Sun, Oct 8, 2:00  
Gregory Family Theater  
Admission: \$25 Adult; \$20 senior, student (ID Required), and military; \$18 group (eight or more); \$15 youth (12 and under).

**KC Dance Center: *Kollywood Night 2023***

Sat, Oct 7, 5:30  
Merchant Hall  
Admission: \$25.

**GFour Productions: *Menopause The Musical 2—Cruising Through 'The Change'*®**

Sun, Oct 8, 3:00  
Merchant Hall  
Admission: \$55, \$50, \$45.

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For further details on any of the above events, see the [CFA event calendar](#) and the [Hylton Center event calendar](#).

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## Meetings & Clubs

**Please note:** Although some physical meetings for clubs and activities are canceled, some may be meeting in person or, in a hybrid mode, both in person and online. OLLI events and activities meeting online bear the identification "Z" in their course or event number (except clubs; you may need to check the [OLLI calendar](#) and daily schedule email for location and other event information). Refer to the university's [coronavirus website](#) for official university updates.

The following list covering the next two weeks is extracted for your convenience from the master online calendar maintained by the office. The list is accurate as of mid-week but for the most up-to-date information, please view the latest forecast of coming events on our website (News/[OLLI Calendar](#)). *Note: All OLLI members are welcome at, and encouraged to attend, meetings of the Board of Directors, committees and resource groups, kick-off coffees, etc. The OLLI office has sent (or will send) emails with links and meeting passwords to club members; you may also log in at the [member portal](#) and click on ZOOM CLASS LINKS.*

Sat Sep 30	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club
Tue Oct 3	1:00 pm	Stay Active and Independent for Life
	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club
Wed Oct 4	1:45 pm	Bridge Club
	2:00 pm	Memoir and More Writing Group
	4:00 pm	Mah Jongg Club
	4:00 pm	History Club
	4:00 pm	Spanish Club
Thu Oct 5	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club
Fri Oct 6	9:30 am	Crafts and Conversation
	11:00 am	Classic Literature Club
	11:00 am	Homer, etc.
	1:00 pm	Stay Active and Independent for Life
Sat Oct 7	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club
Tue Oct 10	1:00 pm	Stay Active and Independent for Life
	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club
Wed Oct 11	11:00 am	Spanish Club
	1:30 pm	Tallwood Book Club
	1:45 pm	Bridge Club
	4:00 pm	Conversations with Doris & Brenda
Thu Oct 12	4:30 pm	Tai Chi Club
Fri Oct 13	9:30 am	Mah Jongg Club
	9:30 am	Photography Club
	9:30 am	Crafts and Conversation
	11:00 am	Classic Literature Club
	11:00 am	Homer, etc.
	11:30 am	Cooking Club
	1:00 pm	Stay Active and Independent for Life
	3:00 pm	Halloween Party
Sat Oct 14	10:30 am	Tai Chi Club

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## About OLLI E-News

OLLI E-News was created by Rod Zumbro, who served as its editor from 2005 to 2013.

### Editorial Staff

Chief Editor: Paul Van Hemel  
Associate Editor: David Gundry

Weekly Editor Team: David Gundry, John Nash, Sheri Siesseger, Paul Van Hemel  
Proofreaders: Rebecca Jann, Susan Van Hemel, Tom Appich

**Submissions:** Members are encouraged to submit letters to the editor, letters to Ms. Ollie Ettakit (on etiquette matters), OLLI-related news items, articles, and photos. Submit material to: [ollienewseditor@gmail.com](mailto:ollienewseditor@gmail.com).

**Deadline:** Tuesday, 6:00, for that week's issue (Monday, 6:00, for letters to the editor); early submissions are greatly appreciated. Please limit articles to about 250 words.

**Note:** You can view past issues of *OLLI E-News* on the DocStore. To search the content of issues, use Search Our Site or put your search term in Google followed by "site:olli.gmu.edu/" without the quotes.

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Notice: You received this newsletter because either you are a current OLLI member or you have been provided a courtesy copy. If you are an OLLI member who did not renew your membership, you can continue to receive our newsletter by emailing the office [olli@gmu.edu](mailto:olli@gmu.edu) with your request. If someone forwarded this newsletter to you and you'd like to receive it each week, please email the office and ask to be added to the courtesy-copy list.

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