DANSE MACABRE
Sally Adkins

When evening's dusk grays them,
they dance a ghostly two-step
to the North Wind's flute,
arms akimbo, legs stretched out
or flipped up and over
like supple limbs of Oriental acrobats.

I embrace them, inhaling cold perfume,
pressing close thin, unyielding forms,
then release them from their wooden shackles
and crush them to fill the circular slatted cage
to be carried through a doorway
to their flame-hot destiny.

And thus I relive the fragrance and feel
of frozen-stiff garments from backyard clotheslines
on so many winter Mondays
of my growing up years.
Almost from the inception of the FULIR/OLLI program, on an annual basis I had the privilege of teaching courses in art history. As curator at the Greenville County Museum of Art, my mission was to bring audiences to the museum and enlighten them about art. As curator, I felt my role was to mediate between the artist and the public. So over the many years we explored various topics through slide presentations in the theater and gallery visits. In looking back, I think I started out as very formal, interested in delivering content, but as time went on I found it much more stimulating, and fun, to explore themes in a more interactive way. OLLI students taught me a great deal about engaging people and making them feel comfortable about art. Sometimes, though, I think they thought I was way off base, or even crazy, with my gallery exercises, but I could always retort: “I made you look!”

In reminiscing, I have two favorite courses: the most recent and the one on South Carolina artists, which began with a lot of portraiture and ended up with Jasper Johns. Many people find colonial portraiture to be dull (I concur at times!), but for both Henrietta de Beaulieu Dering Johnston and Jeremiah Theus, I was able to share some of my own research and, I think, make them intriguing. Flashing forward in time, I have always felt it an honor to work with artists of the caliber of Johns, and it was a treat to impart my perceptions about him to the class. I hope some of the ideas we shared will come back to haunt OLLI members as they see Johns and other contemporary artists in the future.

The last course I taught was winter 2010, and the topic was Realism. This was perhaps the most far-flung course of all and the most challenging for the many participants and me. Halfway through—before we got to Andrew Wyeth, one of my favorite artists—I announced to the class that I was retiring. Many questions ensued. I turned 65 on March 31, and I took a lot of satisfaction that my first day of retirement was April Fool’s Day.

Now I am an OLLI student. It has been wonderful: I am part of the Martin/Gibbins Thursday hiking group, and once again I feel honored to be able to participate. We are exploring the SC/NC mountains—something that my previous routine did not accommodate easily. I am loving the exercise and the scenery, but more significantly I am interacting with people in a whole new way; a few members of the group knew me in my former guise, but for most I am allowed to be a new person. Another bonus: after years of abstinence we now have peanut butter on the shelf, as one must have sustenance on a hike! I am grateful to FULIR/OLLI for what it has meant to me as both teacher and student. We are so very lucky to have it in our midst!
Alright, you know the drill. As I write this column, the fall term has ended, registration for the winter term is continuing, and your Curriculum Committee members are finishing up their lineup for the spring term. Yes, we do feel it's difficult to keep our heads in the same timeframe as other OLLI members.

We have an exciting schedule for the winter term. Including courses, special events, and industrial tours, there are over a 110 activities scheduled. Courses include Shakespeare, Jane Austin, Are We Going to be OK for Finance, Winter Hiking, Civil War Potpourri, Chinese for Beginners, Hurricanes, The Great Jewish Philosophers, Digital Photography, Bargello Quilted Vest Sewing, and even an Introduction to Beekeeping. Who said retirement can't be fun!

With the change in the academic schedule for Furman’s students, it has become more difficult to have them do our basic language classes. If you are fluent in French, German, or Spanish, would you consider sharing your talent with your OLLI members? And we are continually looking for ideas for new courses. Some of our best classes come from our own members. For example, OLLI member Doug Allen’s Autumn Birds and Butterflies course, conducted on Furman’s campus in the fall, was a “two thumbs up” class loved by his students. Standby; he'll be doing another class in the spring. In addition, for OLLI members who would like to compete in South Carolina’s Senior Olympics next spring, Doug will be offering a class to help get you in shape to bring a gold medal home to OLLI.

Doug is a perfect example of some of the talent we have among our members. Thanks, Doug. And thanks to so many other OLLI members who volunteer their time to create and teach so many of our classes. I must also thank all of our instructors from the Greenville community. Without these generous people, we would not be a first-class OLLI. Whenever possible, please tell all of our instructors how much you appreciate them.

Many of the Curriculum Committee’s subcommittees could use another member in order to lighten their workload. If you would like to be a part of the Curriculum Committee, and maybe even create that class you always wanted, please let the OLLI office know. We would love to have you on our team. It can be very satisfying to see a class that you helped develop turn out to be a winner for other OLLI members.

**HIPPIE DREAMS**

Sally Hicks

I could have been a hippie.
I really think I could.
But I was a girl from Mississippi
And didn't think I should.
The Long-Range Planning Committee has been very active during the fall term and into December. We are still targeting a completion date for OLLI’s first-long range plan for the May, 2011 OLLI @ Furman Council meeting for approval by the Council. Surveying has started, and the second round of survey later during the winter term will provide us some important member input.

We have sent each of the OLLI standing committees a copy of the long-range goals and noted where committee input is needed. We have requested that each committee provide us with their 5-year long-range strategies and 12-month action plans to progress toward these strategies and goals. Given the difficulty of trying to think 5 years out, we have offered each standing committee a member of the LRP committee to facilitate the discussion to develop its long-range input. We have also asked each committee to hold a special meeting with the facilitator in early January.

OLLI committees are extremely efficient and effective in meeting their operational objectives, and we recognize that thinking 5 years in the future when you are also addressing this year’s curriculum or budget or events is a challenge, which is why we decided to offer some focused help. When these inputs are available and the next survey of members is completed and analyzed, the LRP committee should be able to create the first LRP for OLLI. Keep in mind that this plan is just the start of the process, as it will be updated, tweaked, and revised at the standing committee and OLLI Council level annually.

GODDESS
Beth Dragon

You swam in the reservoir
naked in the night
laughed when the cops came
and while we ran
scattering in all directions
you rose from the waters
like a young goddess

In the moonlight
droplets were sparks
quivering on your pale
changing shape
sending police in a panic
back to their cars
to find blankets
and call for backup
against your newly acquired power
MEET SUSAN RAE
Barbara Mallon

A warm, belated welcome to the new OLLI cat on the block, Susan Rae. Susan started one week before fall registration. As many OLLI members know, this was baptism by fire!

They say the third time is a charm – Susan has lived in Greenville three different times. She was born and raised in Wilmington, NC. Her husband, Joe, works as a manager at General Electric. Susan has been blessed with three children – Kyle, Tyler, and Kelly. Kyle graduated this past May from Furman (degree in accounting) and is currently in graduate school at NC State. The middle child, Tyler, is a sophomore at Clemson studying biological sciences. The baby/daughter, Kelly, is a junior at J. L. Mann Academy and dances with Carolina Ballet Theatre. When Susan is not at OLLI, she likes to walk, read and attend sporting events with her husband.

Her husband is taking her on a whirl-wind tour of all baseball parks across the U.S. – from low A to the majors. You can find Susan in the OLLI trailer next to Carol’s office from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

BEGINNING AND ENDING WITH X
Kathy Sychra

Xanthippe’s hallux, pollex, and coccyx
Turned xanthic . . . as
She said Adieu to faux Xanadu:
“How xeric you really are!
 I can’t even grow phlox here!”
Sadly she went from vertex to vortex to Big Box.
She never found onyx,
Only xyloid plastics,
And became xenophobic in Lowe’s.
WHERE I'M FROM
Sally Hicks

I'm from kudzu,
From blackberries and sweet iced tea.
I'm from old tire swings hanging on
A strong Oak tree,
Feeling like Jo March,
Wild and free.
I'm from hot summers and rainy winters
With dark days brightened by
Dr. Doolittle and the Bobbsey Twins.
I'm from grits and cornbread,
From Roy and Dale.
From rebel yells,
And "Bless her heart."
From "Yes, ma'am" and hearing the Lord's word.
"Jesus loves me, this I know."
But only if your skin is white,
And no questions allowed.
I'm from stickers in my bare feet,
Strawberry shortcake and sweet iced tea,
Mimosa trees and shelling butter beans,
Bee stings and fat first grade pencils,
"Step on a crack, break your Mother's back"
I'm from a dusty attic
Smelling of old moth balls,
And holding memories.
I'm from those long years past,
A protected southern white child
With divided thoughts of Dixie.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Older Adults with Driving Experience: Greenville Hospital System (GHS) University Medical Center is recruiting 500 volunteers for a research study on a computer-based DrivingHealth Inventory® designed to help drivers determine their driving strengths and weaknesses. Volunteers must be over age 50 and have driving experience. The study will be conducted at Roger C. Peace Hospital and take a maximum of 2 hours to complete. For more information, contact Ashley Reis at 455-6262 or areis@ghs.org.
FINANCE COMMITTEE
Karl Sedlarz

After the completion of the fall term and the now almost complete registration for the winter term, it appears that the deficit that OLLI experienced in 2009/2010 will be substantially reduced for 2010/2011. The fee adjustments adopted last spring have so far resulted in higher revenues. At the same time, because of the increase in membership, we are also expecting higher expenses, particularly in the staffing area. While it is too early to know for sure, we anticipate a substantially lower deficit for the full fiscal year.

TOO EARLY FOR THE MORNING
Beth Dragon

Awake too early for the morning light
the world still a symphony of blues
do I choose the still warm bed of night
or await the goddess to infuse
the sky with pink and golden dawn?
In bygone days the question would be moot
I would be back to sleep without a yawn
too tired from night’s exertions to salute
the day; that beckoning hour of rest
no competition for a world not yet begun.
Although the sunset fire still suits me best,
now that I am not so very young
sometimes I am distinctly blessed
to share the new day with the rising sun.

TIME
Keith McMahan.

Time is fleeting oh so fast.
At this swift rate, how can I last?
The Bobbsey twins are old and gray.
Spot and Puff no longer play.
Dick and Jane get Medicare.
I weep and wail in my despair.

Why am I so sad and dour?
Tried everything within my power.
I should brace up and stronger be.
Time, please release your hold on me.
WHERE IN FURMAN ARE WE?

This picture was taken on the Furman Campus. Do you know where? How many hints to you need to figure it out? Hints:

1. Science students frequent this building.
2. On the tree-lined mall.
3. Near FULIR’s first Office.
4. Part of Plyler Hall.

Answer below.

Room on the east side of Plyler Hall.
The Frances H. Townes Reading Room.

LIMERICKS AND HAIKU

This morning the moon was a round cloud in the West, skimming on old oaks.

Kathy Sychra

A poacher in Okefenokee thought gater traps quite okey-dokey. A game warden found him, arrested and bound him, and hauled off HIS hide to the pokey!

Sally Adkins

In London I purchased a bunny for a pound and a half of Brit money. I thought, "What shall I do--rabbit broth, rabbit stew?" till "a hare in my soup" struck me funny!

Sally Adkins

Kudzu dinosaurs lounging on telephone poles chat with each other.

Kathy Sychra
The OLLI Communications Committee has been busy this fall getting ready to launch several communications programs that will get the OLLI story out to as many folks as possible. We are working hard to develop a closer and more productive partnership with the good folks in Furman's Marketing and Public Relations Department. Their help and support are much needed, and so far the response has been very positive.

One of our first steps was to have a meeting with Vince Moore. Vince is Furman's PR Director and has excellent relationships and contacts with all of the media outlets in Greenville. Working closely with Vince, we are implementing a process that starts first with our committee, with the help of everyone else at OLLI, to identify interesting and newsworthy stories about OLLI students, instructors, activities, and important events or accomplishments. We then discuss each with Vince to determine whether the stories will be of interest to the local media outlets. If we agree that the stories have value, we write press releases, articles, and news items that Vince will send to local media. We expect to see several stories appearing soon. We need your help so we know what is going on and who is doing something interesting so we can follow up to get stories written. If you know about something of interest that our fellow OLLI members are involved in please tell us.

We are working with Furman's marketing team to get a story in FU Magazine about the new building fundraising campaign. We recently had an orientation meeting with Mark Kelly. Mark is the new Furman marketing director. Mark joined Furman in November and is in the process of getting around campus to meet as many people as possible. During our meeting we were able to give Mark a detailed update about OLLI. Mark was very impressed with what has been accomplished thus far and is very excited about lending his support in all our efforts, including programs to help us reach our funding goals for the new building. We are so close, and Mark has some excellent ideas on how we can get to the finish line. Stay tuned for more information on some fundraising programs being developed.

Another exciting new initiative we have been able to launch is to have OLLI instructors participate in the High Noon at FYI spring series. Working with Vince Moore, we have recommended several OLLI instructors who will speak during the spring lecture series. The weekly series is sponsored by Furman and meets on Wednesdays in downtown Greenville at the FYI center on South Main Street. The lectures are free to the public and always attract large audiences, many of whom are potential OLLI members. This is an excellent vehicle for OLLI to generate awareness and increase membership.

We are also exploring how best we can harness the power of social media to create even more OLLI @ Furman awareness and exposure. We are planning to create an OLLI Facebook page, a Twitter account, and even create an OLLI @ Furman You Tube address. You Tube will allow us to use the power of video to tell our story by showing how exciting and interesting OLLI is. Stay tuned for more information on this as we go forward. Again we ask for your suggestions and ideas on interesting topics we can use.

OLLI @ Furman is a wonderful organization. All of us benefit from a healthy and active membership. Telling the OLLI story is an important part of helping OLLI grow.
ANTHROPOMORPHISM
Beth Dragon

Tiny feet pad silently through the empty rooms
Tracing over and over
The paths where they played
Little ears twitch at every sound
Expecting him to pounce.

At last she curls herself where he always lay
Real or imagined, his scent, perhaps,
A lingering comfort

And as she sleeps
I tiptoe out
To spread his ashes
Among the trees.

A VIEW FROM THE CLASSROOM
Dan Kappel   -   With Apologies to Arthur Miller

It has bothered me as a student-member, an instructor, and a member of the Curriculum Committee when I see people who enroll in classes and fail to show up. Now I know in many cases we all have medical appointments and family responsibilities, but there have been classes where OLLI members have signed up and never appeared at all. Not from day one.

This is inconsiderate to your fellow members who may have been shut out of the class because you took a seat in a class that was limited by the size of the room or by the desire of the instructor. In some classes where discussion could be an important part of the experience, having just a few people in the class means the class does not have the depth it might have had if you were there. It is also inconsiderate to the instructor, who might have gone to a great deal of trouble to research the material to provide you with a broad experience of some esoteric subject and you blew it off. And the members of the Curriculum Committee might have twisted someone’s arm to arrive on the campus at some weird hour in his or her life to find you…..absent!

If 10 or so people are missing in a class of 140 they probably will never be missed; but if the class is a small one, each student makes an impact on the learning experience.

This problem was addressed in the survey taken three years ago when we discovered that the lion’s share of missed classes was due to travel and medical reasons. As I remember, there were questions regarding the same subject in the latest survey. We have not seen the results of that one yet. The problem was brought to my attention recently by a long-time OLLI/FULIR member, although I had been aware of it for a long time.

Our new term is starting soon. Let’s show up!
TRIBUTES

DOUG STEVENS  Submitted by Tim Baiden

Doug Stevens belonged to that illustrious group of OLLI instructors who have a devoted following because they offer outstanding courses year after year. Count this writer among those who signed up for anything Doug had to offer. His subjects were diverse, from astronomy to jazz to classical music. But, to him, J. S. Bach was the holy grail. I recall that, in my first ‘Listening to Bach’ class, Doug told us, with that wry smile of his, that he would introduce the Master’s work by playing an extensive recording of one of the Partitas for solo violin. As we listened to this complex, difficult yet compelling sound, he leaned back in his chair, observing us with palpable enjoyment. At the conclusion, he remarked “Well, if you survived this and do return to the next class, you will be a convert! Urbane, elegant (he also had the most immaculate golf swing; shooting his age was not a problem) Doug liked to explore new subjects. Those of us who were fortunate to be members of his classes will miss his gentle yet passionate presentations. The stars, Mozart, Bernstein, Bingen, Beethoven, jazz, Bach were given a new dimension. We are all enriched because of the excellence Doug brought to FULIR/OLLI over the years.

DR. JOE THORPE  Submitted by Shirley Wagner

Our friend, Dr. Joe Thorpe, died September 28, 2010, after a courageous battle with Alzheimer’s. Joe was involved in FULIR (now OLLI) as an instructor/student after moving to this area in 2000. Professor Emeritus from the University of Missouri Psychology Department was the prelude to his creation of a class in the construction of model airplanes as well as classes in Medical Ethics. JoAnn, his wife of 50+ years, is also involved in OLLI as a student. To know Joe was to know an immediate friend. His love of golf was accelerated when they moved next to the Linkside golf course in Pebble Creek. He loved his route for Meals on Wheels and made immediate friends with each recipient. I had the pleasure of living next door to the Thorpes in Columbia, Missouri.

The Tributes section recognizes departed OLLI classmates, teachers, and staff who have enriched the OLLI program. We invite you to submit your name and contact information, along with a brief notice of up to 125 words (8 or 9 lines) to the Tributes editor (connieirby@charter.net). Please emphasize the significance of the deceased to OLLI. As OLLI continues to grow and flourish, the Tributes section of Gray Matters seeks to acknowledge and celebrate those who have enriched our OLLI experience.
BOOK BUDDIES
Connie Kane-Maguire

OLLI should again be very proud of its team of volunteer Book Buddies at Duncan Chapel Elementary School this year. Seventeen out of a total of 44 volunteers come from the OLLI program. Because so many of our volunteers read with more than one Duncan Chapel student, our team is reading with 33 out of a total of 82 students. We continue to be the largest single source of volunteers in the Book Buddy program.

The following is the list of OLLI members who volunteered for the Book Buddy program during the fall term: Bonnie Arrington (friend of CKM), Gary Aten (reads with two students), Jean Bridger (reads with two students), Dea Cox (reads with two students), Lynda Fredsell (reads with three students), Linda Gilkinson (reads with two students), Margaret Howland (reads with two students), Connie Kane-Maguire (DC BB coordinator), Nancy LeDonne (reads with two students), Judy Leonard (reads with two students), Sandy MacIvaine (reads with two students), Phoebe Michaels (friend of CKM, reads with two students), Susan Recknagel (reads with two students), Sue Renault (reads with two students), Bob Scherer (reads with two students), Pat Tyson (friend of Lynda Fredsell, reads with three students), and Paul Ziemer (reads with two students).

Book Buddy volunteers read with each student for one half-hour per week. Children are selected for the program because they have no one who is able to read to them at home (in English), and usually they do not read at grade level. The Book Buddy can read to the child, read with the child, or listen to the child read to them - depending on the student's age and ability. The objective is to show the child that reading is fun and worth the effort to learn. If you are interested in joining the OLLI Book Buddy team or would like more information, please contact Connie Kane-Maguire (ckanemaguire@gmail.com or 271-8544) about this opportunity to help a child.

CHOCOLATE
Sally Adkins

Chocolate is honeylava from a god volcano. Its warm brown satin sluices and slides down crevices in glorious slowness and studied passion. It circles and pauses to plot lazy paths, then gathers to plunge recklessly to oblivion. Ahh.....
Once again, the fall term of OLLI was a huge success. With a total of 868 members enrolled in 84 classes, we continue to grow and become a vital part of the lives of our members. At the same time, we are also expanding one of Furman’s goals in reaching out to the greater Greenville community. The course package offerings were also a success, with 321 members participating. Thanks to Jim Baker and Elaine Brummett, the Friday bonus trips continue to be popular by providing 654 spots for our members. Committee members made introductory calls to new OLLI members and are making follow-up calls to determine how they enjoyed their experience.

The winter term is off to a great start with 88 classes and 16 Friday bonus trips. At the current time, we have over 750 members registered with 170 of them being new members or members who were not enrolled during the fall term. This puts our membership for the year over 1000, which is very important to us as we move forward.

An Ad-Hoc Committee led by Dick Eaton, with staff support from Lucy Woodhouse, was formed to develop a member survey, which was conducted online during the latter part of the fall term. We anticipate much good information to come from the survey, and it will be shared with the membership later in the year. A follow-up survey will be done based upon what is learned in the current survey. Thanks to Dick and Lucy for all their work on this project.

As our membership has grown, it has been recognized that there is a special place in OLLI for what we term Special Interest Groups. Joy Eaton and Jim Baker have taken the lead to identify these groups and find a way to promote them and give proper recognition and support. You will be hearing more about this in the near future as efforts to promote and expand these groups become more visible.

Special recognition should be given to two members of this committee, Sharon Huecker and Judy Lema. Sharon has been responsible for obtaining the class liaisons, and Judy has been responsible for obtaining office volunteers. Both have done outstanding jobs to make sure that the classrooms and office run smoothly.
I hope you enjoyed this Poetry Edition. Most of the poems came from students in Sally Adkins “Write On!” class or from Sally herself. I think you will agree they really display feeling and a lot of talent. This edition also has our first article by Martha Severens, which I’m sure you also enjoyed. The word “first” was a hint, Martha. Our next issue will have the results of the OLLI Statistics survey about our use of technology. Thanks to Carole Eisen for proofing this edition, and to the Gray Matters hiking advisors: Lawson D. Woods and Luka D. Trees.

As usual, if you have pictures, articles, or poems you would like to submit please send them to me at garyaten@bellsouth.net. You can also call me at 294-6371.

**JOLLY OLLI HIKERS**
Bozeman’s Monday Hikers  (To the Tune of Jolly Old St. Nicholas)
Sharon Howell

Jolly OLLI Hikers, follow alpha male,
Trying to keep up the pace, am I looking pale?
Could it be I’m overdressed—mittens, hoods and muffs?
Should I be in summer clothes and rolling up my cuffs?

Jolly OLLI Hikers, marching in a line,
Precious goodies in our packs and a stash of wine.
Spending time with all our friends, those both old and new,
Can’t think of a better thing that I’d rather do.

Jolly OLLI Hikers, in the woods so deep,
Trekking over rocks and logs, over streams we leap.
Graduation’s coming soon, so our dearest Bill,
We passed your test and did our best, tell us if you will.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
Sherm Rounsville - OLLI Council President

These are exiting times for OLLI @ Furman. Since fall term ended, many great things have happened and, as I write, are still in their early stages as we enter 2011 – which will be a year to remember for OLLI.

The Lifelong Learning Building and new home for OLLI are closer to reality thanks to two anonymous donors.

We are very grateful that an anonymous donor provided in late November a $1.8 million challenge gift toward the naming opportunity for the building if Furman University and OLLI each provide $500,000 in new gifts by June 30, 2011. More information on the $1.8 million challenge will be made later in January.

An anonymous OLLI member hastened the process mid-December by making a $50,000 challenge gift to the OLLI portion if OLLI matched that amount by December 31, 2010. Because there was not time to go to all the members, an immediate request was made to the past presidents, the OLLI Council, and Building Committee members to meet this challenge. Results will be announced in January. I trust the participation of these leaders will set an example to be followed by our membership as we all respond to the $500,000 challenge.

We are also very thankful that OLLI @ Furman received and invested its initial $1 million grant from the Osher Foundation at the time the market was turning around in 2009. Within the Furman Endowment, the Osher Endowment has grown nicely, and we are working with Furman’s Financial Services to establish the initial distribution and process for handling it. The Finance/ Administration Committee will develop a pro-forma income plan for the Osher Endowment income and a process to get input from OLLI members on how this income can be put to good use. We will announce the first distribution and start the process to identify our options later in January.

On the membership side of things, as you will read in these pages, our committee chairs and their teams have been engaged in making OLLI and your experience with OLLI better than ever. As this is a membership ‘lead’ program, OLLI @ Furman will be as great as and go as far as the members ‘lead’ it. Keep up the good work and THANKS for all you do for OLLI.