

President's Message

By Vickie Hite, President, OLLI-CSUF



I hope February finds everyone still feeling positive about the year ahead — and perhaps still on track with a few New Year's resolutions!

While the Advisory Task Force continues its discussions with the University, there are many other projects underway to keep OLLI moving forward and thriving.

Our Election Committee completed the important work of developing a slate of new officers and trustees for the 2025–2026 year. I would like to thank the committee for their dedication, as well as the members who expressed interest in serving and supporting the work of the OLLI Board of Trustees.

Another key focus is our ongoing effort around member recruitment and retention. One of my goals is to reinvigorate our standing committees for publicity and marketing, ensuring we are doing all we can to attract new members while also retaining our current ones. We have many tools available to help strengthen our marketing efforts, and it is important that we stay responsive to current marketing and advertising practices. In particular, our new Salesforce program will allow us to conduct more meaningful surveys of both current and prospective members, helping guide our efforts moving forward.

We also remain focused on our collaboration programs and student scholarship opportunities. These initiatives generate valuable "in-kind" credit for OLLI that offsets financial charges from the University. Our volunteers provide meaningful services to CSUF students, and OLLI is able to receive financial credit for those contributions — benefiting both our members and the broader university community.

Toni Hoffman and the Snappy Tappers

By Mary Sampson, Staff Writer

Most likely, you have seen the Snappy Trappers perform, either around the Ruby Gerontology Center or maybe at your church or at an assisted living place. You may wonder how OLLI came to have such an accomplished performance group.



From 2012 to 2013, Lee Ann Donaldson had been teaching a tap class at OLLI for a couple of years. A friend of Toni Hoffman's told Toni about the class. Toni was interested and attended the class a few times and realized that they were not doing routines; they were learning steps. Toni went home with some of those steps and created a routine. She had not taken any tap classes before, but she and her husband Stan had been taking ballroom dancing classes. That helped, and then Toni went back to the OLLI class and showed Lee Ann and the class the routine she had created. At that point, Lee Ann decided that Toni should take over teaching the class. Toni finally accepted the idea that she could do this. Her husband Stan was still working, and the Friday morning class wouldn't interfere with their time together.

To polish her skills, Toni audited a tap class at CSUF. She also went to the Elite Dance Studio in Orange for some additional training. Her ballroom dance classes were also helpful, because the history of ballroom dance enhanced her creativity. She continued to go to the OLLI classes, practicing what she had been learning. She believes it is a gift from God to be able to choreograph routines and be a part of this wonderful group of OLLI tap dancers.

When her husband Stan retired, he bought her an advanced sound system. He became her AV coordinator. It really enhanced their performance.

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Toni teaches two tap classes on Friday mornings — “Tap Dancing: Advanced” followed by “Tap Dancing: Beginning” at the Kinesiology Center. The advanced class averages 40 members and about 20 members attend the beginning class per year.

Where did their name come from? They had decided that they would like to perform in the community, and they knew that a performance group needed an interesting name. According to Toni, the class members were kicking around names one day during practice. They tried “Happy Tappers” and a couple of others, but the one that seemed likely to stick was “Snappy Tappers.” That’s what the group has been known as ever since the spring of 2014.

Toni loves the happiness that performing brings to their audiences. Although the Snappy Tappers do not charge for their performances, groups sometimes give them donations. The donations help to finance the costumes that the members make for different dance routines. Different groups that want them to perform sometimes give Toni a theme that she and the others can build a performance around, such as fifties, patriotic, holidays or Broadway show tunes.

Toni gets a lot of pleasure seeing a student “get it” when they learn to do the steps and routines. The oldest member of the advanced class is Connie Kohn, who is 90. She doesn’t perform, but she faithfully attends the class.

The Snappy Tappers’ first performance came about because of Edward Dunvan, a member of the class. The group performed in Edward’s church, and the church members really enjoyed them. They must have been good because other groups wanted them to perform. They have continued to perform at churches, synagogues, assisted living places and other venues, including OLLI events. They are ambassadors of OLLI wherever they go to perform.

President’s message ... Continued from Page 1

Over the past couple of years, there has been ongoing discussion regarding reimbursement to the University for services provided to OLLI, including IT support and administrative assistance from Philanthropic, ASC, and University communications departments. We are working to reduce some of these costs as our OLLI Office staff takes on additional responsibilities. One example is Corina’s work on the Blue Book. Previously, this required university support, but in the near future Corina will be completing this work independently, eliminating the need for university assistance and reducing CSUF Extension Programs payroll-related charges.

*“As you can see, there is always
 meaningful work underway to ensure
 OLLI remains the vibrant and
 valued organization we have all
 come to appreciate.
 Thank you for your continued
 engagement and support.”*



Vice President Administration

Robert Kovacev

By Chris Shaw, Editor

Bob Kovacev was elected as Vice President Administration in 2024 for a two-year term ending in May 2026. Bob previously served on the OLLI Board of Trustees as Vice President External Relations. He is a member of the OLLI-CSUF Collaboration Committee.



Bob was born in New York City and grew up in Los Angeles. He graduated from CSULA with degrees in engineering and physics. He earned a doctorate in business administration and an MBA with an emphasis in entrepreneurship from the

University of Phoenix School of Advanced Studies.

***“He graduated from CSULA with
degrees in engineering and physics.
He earned an MBA.”***

Bob was a CSUF faculty member of the School of Business and Economics for 38 years. He is a member of the Service Corps of Retired Executives.

OLLI’s Vice President Administration oversees the implementation of the organization’s Policies and Procedures, acts on behalf of the President in their absence, supports OLLI Office operations and supervises the OLLI Archivist/Historian, Joanne Hardy. The Vice President Administration also works with various campus departments such as Athletics to negotiate reduced costs for OLLI members to attend campus events.

OLLI is governed by written statements of policy and procedures defining steps for carrying out the policies. All policies and procedures must conform to OLLI’s Constitution and Bylaws and none shall conflict with those of the University. The Vice President Administration appoints the chair of OLLI Policies and Procedures Committee and serves as an ex officio member of the Committee. Current committee members are Joanne Hardy (Chair), Phil Barnhard, Jim Monroe, Chris Shaw, Ann Sparks and Mike Stover.

CSUF Honors Donna and Kirt Spradlin

By Elaine Mitchell, Staff Writer

On November 21, 2025, I was honored to attend the Spradlin Naming Ceremony where OLLI members, Donna and Kirt Spradlin, became part of institutional history on campus. The auditorium in the Humanities and Social Sciences Building at Cal State Fullerton was named the Kirt and Donna Spradlin Family Auditorium.

Donna and Kirt have been the gold standard of OLLI members for over twenty-five years; they believed in the mission of OLLI, lifelong learning, and that meant they supported and were engaged in furthering those ideals just as they believed in education in their own lives, their children’s lives and all lives.

I hope you know these names, better yet, I hope you have known these people. Unfortunately, Kirt passed away in 2020, and Donna has had some physical problems, complications from a fall, that have kept her from being on campus recently. If you had the luck to work with either of them on an OLLI project or a committee, you would know how hard they worked, the creative ideas they brought to the job and the leadership they showed — always with great humility. Their “still waters always ran deep.” Kirt was an OLLI Board member and president. He was also unofficial photographer, with Donna often the photo subjects’ arranger. Donna’s contributions include the Hospitality Committee, supervising the remodel of the OLLI kitchen, organizing the Baseball Bash and trips, both local and overnight, including memorable destinations such as the Hollywood Bowl and San Francisco. And after Kirt’s death, Donna continued photographing OLLI events, winning her own accolades with her photos appearing on Blue Book covers.

Kirt and Donna were able to give financial support to university students and programs. Their giving began in 1997 with the key areas including the Aging Studies Program, OLLI and the Art Alliance in the College of the Arts. In 2018 they were able to make their Orange County home an estate gift. The proceeds will provide more than \$40,000 annually to graduate students majoring in English and Aging Studies. Their generosity has been recognized with the University’s 2025 Cornerstone Award, which is reserved for donors whose gifts uphold the mission of the University for generations.

CSUF Honors Donna... Continued on Page 4

The naming ceremony, while attended by several campus VIP's, was in keeping with the Spradlin's easy attitude. I and many OLLI friends were genuinely touched by the Spradlins' continuing support of their ideals and their pride in the quality of OLLI members' accomplishments. We may not all be as successful, but we have these mentors to mark the path.

Kathy Maxwell, Donna's daughter, her husband, Gary, and Donna's granddaughter, Erin Ponchak, attended the event, and both ladies spoke about the family legacy of the importance of education.

“We may not all be as successful, but we have these mentors to mark the path.”

Kathy, who was a teacher and later returned to school for her master's degree to become a Career Specialist for deaf students, shared her memories of waking up to see her mother studying late at night while working to become a teacher. Kathy also recalled how her parents supported and encouraged her when she was a working mom trying to earn her master's. She said, “Education has definitely given us rewards as well as a better life.”

Erin, a CSUF alumna, shared several beautiful childhood memories of her grandparents, including her Grandad patiently helping with her math homework and her Grandma proofreading her essays. She said, “Love of learning can guide us through every stage of life.”

The naming ceremony was emceed by HSS Dean Jessica Stern who welcomed us and gave brief biographies of Kirt and Donna and their generous support of learning in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences especially in Aging Studies and English.

Dr. Laura Zettel-Watson, Associate Dean, College of HSS, explained how broadly the Spradlins' donations have been felt so far, with almost fifty Aging Studies students selected for an award. Each year, one scholarship category is aimed at older students who have returned to complete a degree.

Storytelling is a basic for English students. English Chair, Dr. Irena Praitis, talked about how incoming students would be inspired by the Spradlin example of generosity as noted by their name on the side of the building.

Both Deans expressed their gratitude and the idea that the auditorium was the perfect place for the Spradlin name, because it would be seen by groups and classes constantly. In fact, for some students, the auditorium is the first place on campus they will visit; each year's new students will be welcomed to the program in the Spradlin Auditorium.

The next speaker was an Aging Studies scholarship winner in 2023. Deborah Morse explained how she had been helped in her journey by adding more professionalism to her work with the aging population. She uses her degree to offer guidance to older people. Deborah's return to school as an older student and a cancer survivor gave her the knowledge and courage to be more effective in problem solving and, thus, a better service provider.

CSUF President Rochon was the final speaker. He expressed his gratitude to Donna and Kirt; he said their generosity and support of education was what made the University so successful. He also said that attending the naming ceremony was the delight of his day.

Dr. Rochon and Donna cut the ribbon under the lettering on the side of the building, “Kirt and Donna Spradlin Family Auditorium.” It is beautiful and so deserved.

If you haven't seen it; it will definitely raise your spirits. The Spradlin Auditorium is on the north side of the Humanities “H” Building, where the Tuffy icon is located. Check it out. You will be proud that your fellow OLLI members have shown how much we value lifelong learning. We come to OLLI for the great programs and classes, but we find the that the people we meet here are the true gems.



Donna Spradlin at CSUF

Magic of the Holiday Spirit Luncheon — December 10, 2025

Photos by John Blaydes, Jim Di Tota and Diana Guerin



Holiday Luncheon Raffle Basket Winners

Congratulations

to the following winners of the 10 lavish raffle baskets at the Magic of the Holiday

Spirit Luncheon: #1 Donna Di Tota, #2 Loretta Campobasso, #3 Meredith Castillo, #4 Ken Luke, #5 Dianne Wallace, #6 Diana Guerin, #7 Deborah Vagts, #8 Jim Di Tota, #9 Laura DiBlosi and #10 Laura DiBlos.



A Random Act of Kindness

By Gordon Owens, OLLI Member

Last night as I was helping to close up the Shapiro classrooms after the OLLI Concert and Jazz Band rehearsals, an opportunity to do a good deed came my way.

Our class coordinator, who was out-of-town, asked a fellow OLLI musician, a coordinator of a different class, and me to see that everything was put away and the building locked. As we and one more OLLI member prepared to lock the doors, we noticed a backpack left behind in the Shapiro lobby.

At first we thought it belonged to an OLLI member. Looking inside, I found a laptop computer, notebooks with calculus notes, and some personal items. It obviously belonged to a student who had taken a break from class earlier that day or evening.

I found the student's name and a form from the CSUF Electrical Engineering Department. We discussed the options of what to do, one of which was to leave it there, hoping the student would return in the morning. As I held the backpack, I knew that since I had possession, it was my responsibility. I decided to call the Electrical Engineering Department early the next morning and see that it was returned to the rightful owner. The other OLLI member nodded her head in agreement.

And so we locked up and said "Goodnight." They drove away but I tarried. In my car I looked up the phone number of the engineering department, deciding to leave a message right away. I looked for the student's name again.

Then I saw a student hurriedly walking up to the Shapiro entrance and try the door, only to find it locked. He looked through the glass and saw only empty chairs. As he dejectedly took a few steps back, I drove up to the entrance. When he looked at me, I asked if he had lost something. He said, "My backpack. I hope it's not stolen."

As I held it up for him to see through the open window, his face brightened, he released the tension from his shoulders and he began to thank me profusely. I told him of my plans to call the Electrical Engineering Department, but he may not have heard — he was so relieved to get it back.

After thanking me several more times, we parted. He began to walk back to the dorm and I slowly drove out of the OLLI Lot. While driving away, I hoped that sometime in the future he would remember a stranger's selfless act during his college days and that he might pay it forward to a new recipient.

Call it what you may, a good deed, a mitzvah or a random act of kindness. I hope that this simple act might have made our troubled world a slightly better place.

Planned Giving: High Charitable Gift Annuity Rates Remain for 2026 While the IRA QCD is Primed for Charitable Giving

*By Hart Rousell, Senior Director of Planned Giving,
CSUF University Advancement*

Charitable Gift Annuities (CGA) have always been a great idea. The gift annuity provides a fixed return on your gift during your lifetime and the remainder benefits the charity of your choice, like OLLI-CSUF. When you fund a gift annuity today, your payments will be at higher rates than in recent years. The American Council on Gift Annuities (ACGA) recommended increased rates for CGAs in 2024 and they remain in place for 2026. The increased rates reflect the interest rate environment of the last two years. Here is an example, based on rates for a one-life CGA of how current rates have increased:

AGE	RATE BEFORE INCREASE	RATE AFTER INCREASE
70	5.9%	6.3%
75	6.6%	7.0%
80	7.6%	8.1%
85	8.7%	9.1%
90+	9.7%	10.1%

Once you fund a gift annuity, your rate and your payments never change, no matter what the economy does, and you will have the unparalleled satisfaction of knowing that after a lifetime of payments to you, any funds remaining in the gift annuity support OLLI-CSUF.

IRA TO CGA PROVISION: The Secure Act 2.0 of 2022 created a provision to allow you to fund a CGA with a one-time transfer from an IRA's required minimum distribution (RMD). In 2026, a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) of up to \$55,000 can be used to fund a CGA. While the QCD qualifies toward your RMD and avoids income tax, the annuity payments are taxed as ordinary income since the IRA funds have not been previously taxed. Contact us for details.

IRA QCD RULES FOR 2026: If you are 70 ½ or older, you can make a Charitable Qualified Distribution (QCD) from your IRA to support your favorite charity. The 2026 annual limit is \$111,000 per individual.

TAX BENEFITS: If you are interested in an income tax deduction, funding a CGA qualifies for a charitable tax deduction in the year you make the gift. Funding a CGA with appreciated stock is a great way to achieve an income tax deduction and avoid capital gains. Plus, a significant portion of the income from your CGA is free of income tax. For the IRA QCD, your gift is excluded from taxable income and, if it is from your required minimum distribution (RMD) your QCD can fulfill all or part of your RMD.

BIG IMPACT: When you fund your gift annuity, you receive the fixed payments and tax benefits, but you also do something more. After a lifetime of payments to you (or you and your spouse), all funds remaining in your gift annuity support OLLI-CSUF.

Call or email us to learn how a gift annuity or a QCD can benefit you and OLLI-CSUF. As always, this information is not intended as legal or tax advice. Please consult your professional advisors for legal and tax guidance.

Planned Gifts to support OLLI-CSUF are coordinated through University Advancement. Please visit www.csufplannedgift.org or contact us to learn about all of the benefits of making a charitable bequest and how it can help OLLI-CSUF continue our important work. If you're interested in establishing your legacy and making a lasting impact at OLLI-CSUF through membership in the [Ontiveros Legacy Society](#), please contact our Office of Planned Giving at (657) 278-3947 or CSUFPlannedGift@fullerton.edu.



Lengthen the Life of Your Computer with Linux

Keep hardware out of landfills by using an operating system that stretches the usable life of your computer.

By Tom La Casa

OLLI Tech Help Instructor/Coordinator

Many proprietary computer operating systems, such as Windows and MacOS, essentially force a hardware upgrade upon us long before our old hardware is used up. If you own a computer with Windows 10, the recent announcement by Microsoft ending software support for Windows 10 may have you contemplating the need to purchase a new PC because your old one doesn't meet the hardware requirements of Windows 11. Apple doesn't do any better, either. Apple's Mac computers can be essentially rendered obsolete by an upgrade in MacOS with Apple no longer supporting a previous MacOS version.

Sustainability is an increasingly important problem when it comes to computing. Reduce, reuse, recycle is a popular motto for environmentally responsible consumption, but applying that to your computer hardware can be challenging. Unlike many proprietary operating systems (Windows, macOS) that require frequent hardware upgrades due to increasing system requirements, Linux is compatible with older and less powerful machines, allowing consumers to continue using their equipment for longer periods.

Linux is a replacement for your Windows or macOS operating system. Linux comes with a graphical user interface (GUI), similar to your Windows or macOS displays and standard support which typically spans five years or more, up to ten years. Software updates to your Linux system are included just as with Windows or macOS, and updates are easily applied.

The advantage of Linux is that it is free and open source. Linux is known for its security, stability, flexibility and strong community support. Its open-source nature allows application (app) and peripheral hardware developers to customize their products to work with Linux. Linux comes with many of the software drivers for your printers, graphics, camera and sound that allow your computer to operate efficiently. Many of the common applications we use daily, like the Chrome internet browser, will operate just fine on Linux, and if not, there are many alternative apps available. There is suite software (word processing, spreadsheets and

presentations) that provides the full functionality of Microsoft Office, and the Zoom application we rely on at OLLI works seamlessly. There may be a favorite app of yours that may not function, but there are usually alternatives available online.

I recently re-purposed my 2017 iMac with a Linux operating system, and it still runs like new. I did so because Apple no longer supported updates to my computer's operating system. The Linux version (called a "distribution") I chose will be supported with software updates, security patches and driver updates until at least June 2029.

If you want proof, come to OLLI Tech Help in Room 20 on a Friday between noon and 3:00 p.m. (check available dates in the Blue Book or OLLI website) and test drive Linux. We have repurposed a number of 2014 devices (even a PC from 2009) with various Linux distributions. You can try them to experience their features along with their very modern graphical user interfaces.



LINUX

OLLI Members Donate Gifts for CSUF Children's Center

By Chris Shaw, Editor

Pictured are Lydia Palacios (next page), CSUF Children's Center director, and OLLI member Debbie Kegel, delivering some of the trove of gifts donated by OLLI members at the Magic of the Holiday Spirit Luncheon on December 10, 2025. Also, nearly 200 items from their wish list, including \$200 in Target gift cards and items from the donation bin in the Shapiro wing, were donated.

Sue Mullaly, Chair of the OLLI-CSUF Collaboration Committee, thanked Debbie for facilitating, coordinating and delivering the gifts from OLLI members so quickly. She said, "Another great success for the Basic Needs and Children's Center Program! You are amazing!"

Lisa Sewell, OLLI Vice President Hospitality, said, "Fantastic! Our members really came through. I feel proud. ... It shows the kindness and generosity of our OLLI members."

OLLI Members Donate Gifts



Pictured are Lydia Palacios (right), CSUF Children's Center director, and OLLI member Debbie Kegel,



What's Happening at the Board

By Chris Shaw, Editor

The following are highlights from OLLI's Board of Trustees meeting on December 11, 2025:

- The Advisory Task Force extended the potential relocation of OLLI to Titan Hall from the RGC to no earlier than September 2027 to allow additional time to review, document and make appropriate recommendations.
- OLLI office staff are training on the new Sales Force Program. It will email new and returning member registrants their CWID, pin and vehicle parking information.
- Non-members will be able to use Touch Net to sign up and receive class listings for Open to the Public programs.
- Executive Director Daisy Thomas is researching the use of public service announcements with local TV networks to promote OLLI, and she is working with Trustees Debbie Kegel and Judi Marsh on community and government relations opportunities.
- An OLLI membership advertising campaign was approved, which may include ads in the LA Times (Orange County edition), Fullerton Observer, Facebook and Instagram. The OC Register may provide email blasts. Daisy Thomas is also working on a "Tell a Titan" campaign with CSUF's Parent's Association, Emeriti and Alumni Associations.
- CSUF reinstituted free parking on campus on weekends.
- The Spring 2026 Blue Books are being distributed.
- A new version of the OLLI website is coming.
- Registration for the "OLLI Experience," free OLLI programs for non-members throughout January, is being offered through Touch Net.

Relocation Update from OLLI Advisory Task Force

By Chris Shaw, Editor

On December 9, CSUF President Rochon announced the first phase agreement produced by the OLLI Advisory Task Force, made up of representatives of both CSUF and OLLI, regarding the possible relocation of OLLI from the Ruby Gerontology Center.

The four elements of the agreement are:

- CSUF will extend the current relocation timeline from June 2026 to no sooner than August 2027, with the flexibility to adjust if a mutually agreeable solution becomes feasible earlier.
- Beginning with the Fall 2026 semester, CSUF will increase the use of Mackey Auditorium for Tuesday-Thursday classes, while ensuring OLLI receives priority use for Fridays through Sundays. This balanced approach allows CSUF and OLLI to continue delivering high-quality learning experiences.
- CSUF and OLLI will maintain shared use of the Ruby Gerontology Center, outside of the Mackey Auditorium, through spring 2027. This ensures continuity for OLLI programming and university operations while longer-term space planning continues.
- We will also identify CSUF-funded, short-term, minor capital improvements to the RGC that will benefit all who use the facility, demonstrating our commitment to maintaining a high-quality learning environment for all students.

More details and continuing updates are available on the OLLI website homepage under "OLLI Proposed Relocation" at <https://olli.fullerton.edu/>.



OLLI

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Unless you elected not to receive emails from OLLI, you are currently receiving an email each month announcing the new ChroniCLE for the upcoming month with links to view or download the publications.

You can also access the most recent ChroniCLEs through links on the OLLI website.

If you are receiving the ChroniCLE in the mail, but no longer want it mailed to your home, send an email to olli-info@fullerton.edu with **your name and address** stating: "Do **not** send me a ChroniCLE in the mail." If you ever need the printed version, copies are always available in the OLLI office.

Other Sources of Information About OLLI

Website: <http://olli.fullerton.edu>

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