



President's Message

By Ellie Monroe, President, OLLI-CSUF



Welcome to a mask-less OLLI! April 1 marked the date that OLLI members were given the option to wear or not-to-wear a mask as we return to in-person classes on campus. We urge you all to pay attention to the updated COVID-19 reports in our community for any signs

that may suggest taking caution when making your decisions to mask or not mask.

It will be interesting to see what our "new normal" will look like for OLLI in the coming months. We are witnessing the signs of the CSUF campus slowly coming to life with concerts, sporting events and other social activities opening up.

Those who attended the "Volunteer Recognition Reception" got a glimpse of what our future will look like as we slowly return to campus. It was fantastic seeing our familiar OLLI friends and some of our newest members in person once again.

The scheduling of our summer programs has been completed and the Blue Book will be available soon, both electronically and hard copies.

We encourage you to invite your friends and family members to try out a single class (free) during intersession or join OLLI during the summer session. Send a note to your instructors that you wish to bring in a friend to try out a class they may be interested in.

Our spring semester is winding down, but there will be lots of fun activities coming up in May. Come join us in person. Take care and stay safe. Cheers!!

Membership Retention and Recruitment in the Time of Pandemic

By Susan McNamara, Staff Writer

While the majority of us were occupied with the challenges brought on by COVID-19, like finding scarce household items, making decisions about how to protect ourselves from illness and coming to grips with new concepts such as sheltering-in-place, those in leadership positions at OLLI had to grapple with devising ways to maintain membership along with developing new formats to engage their members. OLLI leadership met that pandemic challenge with a series of initiatives that were developed and launched over the last two years.

In March 2020 in-person classes were canceled due to the pandemic. Efforts to respond to the on-campus shutdown and to the retention of membership began immediately in anticipation of losing members. Outreach initiatives took on a multipronged approach which included digital, print, human contact, social media postings and the maintenance of robust programs. Initiatives were implemented and results were analyzed. Adjustments were made and new strategies were executed. It was a multi-team problem-solving effort.

The Technology Team organized training in Zoom for all volunteers and created tutorials for its use. The Instructional Continuity Team developed a plan to bring new classes and existing classes to OLLI members through virtual programming. The ChroniCLE and OLLI's weekly newsletters kept members informed about changes to OLLI classes, events and activities affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Links to articles, websites and videos useful for stimulating the mind, body and spirit during the isolation of sheltering-in-place were

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Susan and Elwood Berry Dynamic Instructors for OLLI

By Elaine Mitchell, Staff Writer

Susan and Elwood Berry have volunteered as course instructors and coordinators almost since they first joined OLLI. They have also made themselves available when asked to help with special events and other



activities. Like so many OLLI members, they first were invited to join OLLI by long-time friends from other organizations, especially the Sierra Club, where they were also loyal, hardworking members. Elwood is currently a co-instructor/coordinator for “World War II: What Happened and Why” and has recently joined Susan with the special interest group, “GROW Gardening Club,” where she has been a long time co-coordinator.

Susan is almost a California native; her parents relocated from New Jersey when she was five. She and her siblings were raised in the La Habra

family home where her mother stills lives today. Susan probably enjoys the GROW group because her mom and other family members were always “growing something and talking about it;” also her brother’s whole career was with Kellogg’s ... not the cereal folks, but the gardening products company.

Susan’s attention to detail and organizational skills were, no doubt, qualities that led to her success in working with title and escrow companies. In her later work career she left behind the vagaries of the real estate world, and with a little retraining, worked in another detail-oriented field, medical billing.

As a child growing up in Marion, Ohio, Elwood enjoyed assembling model airplane kits. Not only was he fascinated by aircraft, he always learned so much about the history of the planes he was building from the information included in the kits. It is not surprising that he went on to study aeronautical engineering at Ohio University, graduating in 1973. He worked for the Navy and McDonnell Douglas and Rockwell for a few years, necessitating his move to California. He spent the majority of his career with Hughes Aircraft working on the Air Force’s Ground Systems Group. During his career he contributed to the manufacture of many significant aircraft, including the B-1.

Susan joined the Sierra Club to hike and participate in other activities with friends. She pledged and earned the 100 Peaks Section, a mountaineering group with the goal of climbing 100 of the designated 5,000-foot mountains in the greater Southern California area.

Elwood joined the Sierra Club because he also wanted to hike, participate with friends and practice nature photography. The couple met in a Sierra Club cross-country skiing class and were married a few years later. They still participate in many Club classes, trips and events with longtime friends. They have even taken survival classes. They both enjoy OLLI’s “Trips Group.”

Both Susan and Elwood have more items on their bucket lists, although some things are on hold. Their current priority is the care of Susan’s

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included. The Hospitality Committee devised ways to conduct virtual social events with Zoom, giving OLLI members an opportunity to connect with each other.

In June 2020 a new committee focusing on retention of current members and the recruitment of new members to replace non-renewing members was formed. A new OLLI webpage was introduced to market OLLI to the public as were plans for advertising for new members in local papers. This was the first time in five years that OLLI publicly solicited new members. 50 courses were offered during the summer session via Zoom and were well attended and well received. The Fall Open House was held on August 22 via Zoom. Sunshine Social Callers were formed and reached out to over 1,000 OLLI members to provide a social greeting and information about OLLI. Zoom training for members was ongoing.

In 2019 the annual OLLI membership was around 1,600. As of September 10, 2020, membership registration, both new and renewing members, for the new academic year fell to 775, about 50% of normal, in spite of the outreach that had taken place since March. This loss was in line with what OLLI organizations nationwide experienced. In November 2020 an Ad Hoc Member Retention Subcommittee was tasked with completing an analysis of initiatives implemented and generating new strategies for retaining highly engaged members. New strategies included the addition of ads on the CSUF electronic billboard, campus and community outreach, Bring a Friend promotion of classes, social media postings, a Zoom buddy program, membership with 30-day money back guarantee, virtual socials and the promotion of OLLI's free CSUF course auditing. The spring 2021 Blue Book was electronically distributed and printed copies were mailed to all members. Transitions in Retirement brochures were sent digitally and delivered in print to libraries, community centers and senior resident centers. Email letters and digital materials were sent to all CSUF Emeriti. Presentations were made to outside organizations. January 2021 saw the initiation of "Just a Taste," an e-blast of the month to capture the fellowship involved with sharing

food.

Some of OLLI's most popular programs, including trips, socials, band, tennis and poker, could not be converted to Zoom, because they required in-person interaction, and had to be discontinued. This prompted more members to quit OLLI. In an effort to create more socially interactive programs, in February 2021 three new Zoom social meetings, "Cooking Potpourri," "The Crafty Social" and "Happy Hour" and virtual socials were introduced.

March 2021 saw the introduction of the Continuity and Re-entry Teams to focus efforts needed to plan for the return to face-to-face classes. By April 2021 membership rose to 964.

By May 2021, 96 programs had transitioned to virtual mode via Zoom. The Distance Learning Team increased the library of class videos to around 300. Many members shared that they found participating in Zoom classes to be advantageous to them. They didn't have to deal with parking, they could hear better, and in the end they were able to take more classes.

In June 2021 efforts focused on preparing members for returning to campus with the hope that the return of in-person programs would encourage former members to return to OLLI.

By January 2022, OLLI membership increased to 1,050, still well below pre-pandemic membership levels, and retention and recruitment efforts continue under a new Membership Recovery Plan.

OLLI leadership's response to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic is an exemplary model of the proverb "It takes a village." It takes a village of individuals committed to a shared vision and mission to form strategies to solve a challenge. The result of this village's efforts is an organization that not only has survived but has evolved to become even stronger in its ability to offer a platform for lifelong learning.



Thanks to Outgoing Board Members for Serving OLLI

About half of the members of OLLI's Board of Trustees will complete their terms of office on May 12 and will be succeeded by new officers and trustees that were elected at the General Meeting and Election on April 21.

Those leaving their positions are: Mike Stover, Vice President Administration; Ginger Barnhart, Vice President Communications; Susan Mullaly, Vice President External Relations; Bob Newcomb, Vice President Technology; and Trustees at Large Fran Colwell, Debbie Maxwell, Cynthia Owens, and Chris Shaw.

Susan Mullaly will continue on the Board, elected as Trustee at Large.

Thanks to all of these exceptional volunteer Board members for steering OLLI through a particularly difficult time for OLLI. No one could have anticipated the pandemic, and these people worked hard and effectively to keep OLLI's programs afloat and serve its membership.



Michael Stover
VP Administration



Ginger Barnhart
VP Communications



Susan Mullaly
VP External Relations



Bob Newcomb
VP Technology



Fran Colwell
Trustee at Large



Debbie Maxwell
Trustee at Large



Cynthia Owens
Trustee at Large



Chris Shaw
Trustee at Large

Blast from the Past: CLE Celebrates 25 Years

Editor's Note: This is a reprint of an article by then ChroniCLE Editor Lorraine Gerni in the August, 2004 ChroniCLE commemorating CLE's 25th anniversary and its history (OLLI was originally Continuing Learning Experience, or CLE). Thanks to Donna Spradlin for unearthing this.

CLE will continue observing its 25th anniversary during the continental breakfast and general meeting which will be held on Saturday, August 14. The breakfast at 9 a.m. in the Shapiro Wing will be followed by the general meeting at 10:30 a.m. in the Mackey Auditorium.

The year-long celebration began with CLE sponsoring a Baseball Bash at Goodwin Field on Sunday, February 8, when the nationally ranked CSUF Titans beat the team from University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The highlight of the game, however, was when Leo Shapiro, who is in his 100th year, threw out the first ball, which was ably caught by our president, Kirt Spradlin.

On April 30 the observance continued when CLE 25-year charter members, Phil and Irene Castle, Russell Ball and Margaret Coston were honored at the annual Installation Luncheon. Although Leo Shapiro, our charter president, and Barbara Paige were unable to be present, they were fondly remembered.

Betty Robertson and Barbara Talento also were recognized. Betty was with Extended Education 25 years ago and Barbara, a CSUF professor at the time, served on all committees as a nursing faculty member.

Because they felt the presence of many active and retired adults who were interested in CSUF and a return to a new kind of educational program which was self-defined, self-supporting and self-run by and for retired persons, Betty Robertson, Barbara Talento, and other committee members researched what was available at senior centers and through adult education.

Betty, who was coordinator of Community Outreach at the time, said they found no programs "like we planned" in the area.

While attending a workshop on "Developing

Community Programs for Older Adults," Betty visited programs at San Diego State University and UC San Diego at La Jolla; the latter provided the Institute for Continued Learning after which CLE was modeled. After returning home, Betty wrote a grant proposal for \$2,000 and succeeded in getting the seed money and university commitment to start the CLE program. The charter for the program was granted on March 23, 1979.

An open meeting was held in August at Mahr House on the campus, and the first study group met on September 18, 1979. Members were required to enroll in one course of extended education and in one of four study groups. The membership of CLE has grown from 47 men and women in 1979 to 721 on April 15, 2004.

Many of our current members may be curious about the name of the program, Continuing Learning Experience, better known as CLE. Were it not for Florence Arnold, a 79-year-old well-known artist who was CLE's first vice president, the program would be SLE, Senior Learning Experience. "We chose the name out of a whole group of possibilities ... and everybody loved it," said Leo. That is, everyone except Florence who responded, "I'm not going to be put in that category and that's what everyone does." Her argument was so convincing that all board members agreed.

Florence's feistiness is an example of the attitude of CLE members which has continued during the past 25 years. CLE has remained true to its original aim of "providing refreshing, intellectually stimulating programs and events for older people whose bodies may be retired from 'active duty' but whose minds have not."

Leo and Bill Coston were co-chairmen of a fund drive which kicked off in October 1982. CLE members alone contributed approximately \$750,000. The Charles L. and Rachel E. Ruby Gerontology Center, the first building on campus financed by these donations rather than state funds, is located on land contributed by the trustees of the California State University system. James Roosevelt, oldest son of FDR, was the keynote speaker at dedication ceremonies on October 8, 1988.

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Dr. David Walkington, VP in the Office of Extended Education, commented at the first open meeting, “Let’s face it, we’re a prestigious group here, and this is a prestigious atmosphere.”

One need only to attend one or more of CLE classes and talk with CLE members to realize that these comments made 25 years ago remain true today.

(Information on the 25-year history was found in the volumes of scrapbooks organized by Charlotte Oliva; a history and statistics on CLE, “Getting Older,” written by Barbara Talento; and a paper, “History of CLE,” presented by Betty Robertson during an open meeting on September 15, 1981.)
Lorraine Gerni, Editor

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mother and enabling her to stay in her own home. When you talk to the Berrys, you understand how important their goals are and how their plans will most definitely include their old friends, travel and maybe more music.

If you haven’t tried one of Susan’s and/or Elwood’s courses, give yourself a treat. “GROW Gardening Club” is not offered in the summer, but watch for it this fall. Generally, it meets alternate Thursdays at 1-2:30 p.m. Check the OLLI Class Information and Updates Newsletter for simple directions to register for this very informative class, which is supported by the Extension Service at CSUF with master gardeners as speakers.

Also watch for “World War II” this fall, which usually meets in Room 9 on alternate Tuesdays at 2:15-3:45 p.m. This is a very important history class that provides an understanding of the effects of the most influential event of the 20th Century; these effects continue to be very important in current events.

Come Play Bingo at May’s Social
May 5 • Shapiro ABCD
Open to OLLI Members Only



Come join the fun as we socialize and play bingo Thursday, May 5. Check-in from 2:30–3:00 p.m. and bingo starts at 3:00 p.m.

Light snacks of a Mexican theme and an assortment of beverages, desserts and other snacks will be available at no charge.

We will be playing 10 bingo games, with each game winner receiving an awesome prize.

Sign-ups are required. Sign-ups will be accepted in the OLLI office from April 20 to April 29 only. Space is limited to the first 100 sign-ups, so sign up early. [Click here](#) for the sign-up form.

Due to space constraints walk-ins will not be allowed.



OLLI #TitansGive Day of Giving
Results Are Astounding

OLLI not only participated in Cal State Fullerton’s #TitansGive Day of Giving on March 9, 2022, OLLI joined the leaderboard in several categories. A staggering total of \$22,080 was donated to OLLI from 150 donors, including matching gifts.

One of our goals this year was to increase the number of donors. Last year, OLLI received \$4,855 in donations from 34 donors, so, thanks to our members and donors, we succeeded dramatically, OLLI was second in total number of dollars raised

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and second in number of donors. You are amazing. To see how the University did as a whole and a breakdown of how OLLI did compared to other areas of the campus, [click HERE](#).

Gifts to OLLI help us to safely return to campus and maintain substantial virtual programming by participating in the Mackey auditorium audiovisual updates to better integrate the online components, continuing to improve the OLLI facilities to meet member needs, and continuing to offer virtual programming to members and the community. Contributions to OLLI's Today and Tomorrow Fund ensure that we have the necessary resources to meet these challenges and opportunities now and in the future.

From Masks to Sculpture How OLLI Members Coped with COVID

"From Masks to Sculpture" is a published anthology of dozens of stories, poetry and art by 56 OLLI contributors. It was envisioned by Jeanette Reese and self-published by Fritz von Coelln (Coordinator of "Publish Before You Perish") as a collaboration of OLLI members from OLLI's writing courses, such as "Poetry for Pleasure," "Life Story Workshop," "Publish Before You Perish," "Write Now!" and "Writing with Feedback."

This book was conceived by Jeanette Reese. She writes: "Once the Covid pandemic swept across the world, I began to look for stories written by people during the 1918 pandemic. As historic an event as it was, there were few personal stories to be found. During COVID-19 many of us lost family and friends. We also lost time and socialization. Those of us who lived alone spent months inside our homes without the company of another human. I realized this time in history needed to be documented. As writers, I wondered, what would we want future readers to understand about this pandemic experience? Our book is about the challenges we faced during this remarkable time in history: how we laughed, cried and became married to our masks."

Color artwork and photographs for the book

are provided by members of OLLI's art and photography courses: Sharon Brown, Jan Hudson, Donna Judd, Joan Lebsack, Veronica Michalowski Betty Redmon, Danita Ruth, Sandy Wessel and Rayleen Williams.

It is now available on Amazon: [click HERE](#). The cost is \$12.99, plus sales tax—if you have Amazon Prime, shipping is free. After expenses, royalties are donated to OLLI.

What's Happening at the Board

By Chris Shaw, Editor

OLLI's Board of Trustees met on March 10. Following are highlights from that meeting:

- Fiscal 2021's financial loss, OLLI's first since 2007, was covered by retained earnings. In the first seven months of fiscal 2022, OLLI has had positive cash flow, helped by lower expenses, and OLLI's reserves are very healthy.

- OLLI's budget for fiscal 2022-2023 was approved.

- Paid membership totals 1,025, not including 90+ members, who have free membership. A Board sub-committee is working on membership recovery plans.

- The purchase of new outdoor tables for the courtyard was approved. Estimates will be sought for repairs to the Shapiro movable walls.

- Purchase of HEPA air filtration units was approved for Shapiro, Rooms 9, 20, 21 and the OLLI office.

- VP Facilities Tony Package received approval to request an estimate from CSUF Facilities for replacing the old flooring in Shapiro ABCD.

- Amendment was approved of OLLI's policy on OLLI-CSUF Collaboration projects with CSUF academic programs involving student's service-learning with third party organizations.

- CSUF appointed a new head of EIP: Dr. Debra Leahy, Dean of Extension and Associate Vice President for International Programs. Outgoing Dr. Joe Shapiro was granted an honorary OLLI membership by the OLLI Board for his service to OLLI.



OLLI

at California State University, Fullerton

"A Continuing Learning Experience"

1979 - 2022: 42 Years of Excellence

Ruby Gerontology Center, Room 7

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If you still have trouble receiving emails from OLLI, send an email to ollinewsbytes@hotmail.com and include your name and email address.



How to Get the ChroniCLE by Email - Save Trees and Stamps!

Unless you elected not to receive emails from OLLI, you are currently receiving an email each month announcing the new ChroniCLE and calendar for the upcoming month with links to view or download the publications. You can also access the most recent ChroniCLEs and calendars through links in the weekly OLLI News Bytes and 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.

If you Need to Contact OLLI

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

Email: olli-info@fullerton.edu