



## OLLI @ UTEP

On Campus  
Miners Hall  
Room 209

(915) 747-6280



## Your 2022 OLLI Advisory Board

Leanne von Mittenwald

Chair  
Events

Karen Fraser

Vice Chair  
Volunteers

Elizabeth Fourzan

Secretary

Don Buescher

Finance

Mary Harris

Membership

Tom Harding

Committee Liaison

Helen Schmid

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Sonya Villa-Saenz

EU Advisor

Lynn Provenzano

Executive Director  
Interim Curriculum



### RESILIENCE...

#### *A message from the Executive Director*

*Lynn Provenzano*

Can we simply admit that our journey through these changing times continues? We have weathered an academic year of getting know how we've changed our lifestyles, our routines, and our values toward our time, family, friends and colleagues. We are still facing new ways to embrace and engage new outlooks. We started this past academic year dipping into the realm of hybrid courses and mastered the process (glitches aside). Looking at Fall 2022, most of our courses will be hybrid, giving our OLLI members more options than ever before. We look forward to seeing more faces in person, in classrooms and online as we grow our community. Here we are....resilient, stable, and a strong community of learners, volunteers, and caring supporters. Thanks for being a part of this wonderful program. Curiosity and learning never get old; these keep us thriving.



### CONSTANCY...

#### *A message from the Advisory Board Chair*

*Leanne von Mittenwald*

The summer of 2022 is almost at an end, but the New Normal created by events of 2020 is here to stay. As we ease ourselves back into face-to-face meetings and classes, we realize what a gift technology has been to all of us. We are able to continue to meet online for classes, clubs, and events. We kept our minds sharp, our bodies in shape, and our friendships intact – thanks to our ability to adjust and stay open to change.

This fall we will use what we have learned from our members, instructors, and administrators to offer something for everyone. We will continue to offer online, in person and hybrid options to accommodate our diverse community. We will offer several classes taught in Spanish and add more social events to our calendar. It will be another exciting year for everyone!

Through all of the changes in our personal lives and in the lives of those around us, OLLI has remained a constant. I want to thank all of the board members for your dedication and flexibility as we continue to expand our program, thank the instructors for adjusting their lessons to fit the new parameters, thank the hosts for learning and mastering the art of hybrid classes, and thank all the volunteers for your help and expertise whenever we needed you.

There are opportunities for all of you who wish to become more involved – as a volunteer, an instructor, a committee member, or as a board member. We are always open to new ideas to improve the quality of our program and hope you will join us as we continue to shape the

## EXTENDED UNIVERSITY | OLLI's Umbrella



### THE BUZZ...

#### *A message from the Dean*

Welcome to the Fall semester, OLLI members!

Summer zipped on by, as it often does, and turns into Fall. Soon the campus will be buzzing with students, including our OLLI members! At this point in time, UTEP is expecting one of the largest first-year student classes in recent history. We've also received approvals to offer two new PhD programs: one in Sociology and one in Physical Therapy. Extended University has exciting things happening too, as always. We were happy to host a full schedule for P3's Kidz on Campus since that hiatus we call the pandemic. UTEP Connect continues to add new online programs to serve adult learners wanting to finish a degree. The Center for Instructional Design is expanding their professional development offerings to UTEP faculty—and they have moved offices to the Education Building....no wonder summer feels like it zipped by. I encourage you to take a moment and review UTEP's Strategic Plan Annual Report, so you can learn more about what's happening at the University.

I continue to brag about OLLI's innovation, perseverance, and ability to make the best of challenging situations. As I look through the fall catalog, I'm amazed by the rich offerings available to our members and the engaging community of learners who support one another.

Enjoy the last weeks of summer, and let's get ready for an exciting fall!  
Go Miners!

*Dr. Beth Brunk-Chavez*

## NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER for Osher Institutes

*OLLI is **125** strong!*

The NRC is a light of guidance and support to the OLLI network. The NRC's Basecamp communication has been buzzing with discussions, information, networking, and shared resources and the NRC's monthly webinars have addressed the common challenges facing OLLIs across the nation. The insights that have arisen through these webinars have helped to strengthen each OLLI as we have eased into new pathways of delivering programs and engaging new and existing members. The Osher National Conference resurfaced in person last April in Denver, Colorado. OLLI at UTEP participated in a breakout session titled "Take Care of Yourself and Your OLLI." Lynn Provenzano, OLLI @ UTEP's executive director, Magda Vergara, Director, OLLI @ University of Miami, and Leslie K. Hasche, Ph.D., M.S.W., Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Associate Professor - Graduate School of Social Work, University of Denver, presented on the ways several OLLIs managed and encouraged personal wellness at their Institutes during pandemic conditions. Each OLLI has its own culture and uniqueness. Yet, we continue to discover that we are as much the same as we are different, especially as we rise and grow together.

*Thanks to NRC's Steve Thaxton, Kevin Connaughton, Stacy Hart Rivera, Isabel Jane Bethke, and Amanda Rhodes.*

*Special Thanks to Kelly Jane Rosenblatt of the Osher Foundation*

*AND to Bernard Osher for his precious gift to all of us.*

The Osher NRC's mission is to help Osher Institutes thrive.  
<https://sps.northwestern.edu/oshernrc/>

**125**

Osher Institutes

**340**

cities/towns

**113,399**

members

CARMEN MENDOZA

Supernatural

In the cool desert summer nights, when the sun dissipates and twilight covers the earth, they come out of their dark entombment. Darkness has brought them to life and they dance in the night sky darting to and fro in a wild frenzy looking for warm blood. Their grotesque faces with large piercing eyes and deformed furry bodies make my soul quiver. All day they hide from the light waiting for nightfall in order to come out and feed on me. As they dart about in the darkness, they look for me in order to sink their fangs into my jugular vein and drain my blood so that they might live. Ridiculous? Yes. The literary world and the movie industry have given the poor bat a bad rap. I know that it is nonsense but my imagination takes flight when I see bats. The supernatural is a frightening thing and bats conjure up images of Dracula, when in fact bats are very useful creatures. Not only do they eat the real vampires, mosquitoes, but they are our number one pollinators, even before bees. Yet their faces and undeserved imagery frighten me even though it is unrealistic.

CYNTHIA PORTER

Bugs

Bugs is his name. He was the runt of the litter, born in 2008 in the dirt yard of a next-door neighbor of a dear friend and fellow cat lover's home.

I brought him and his sister home. They were only my second attempt at owning cats, having only come to appreciate the curious, fickle felines about a year before.

He was skittish at first, but late into his first night in my bedroom, as I lay partially awake, I felt him creep onto my bed and shyly settle himself on my pillow, right above my head. Not one for having a pet sleep in my bed, I surprisingly found myself smiling quietly at his courage.

I have come to rely on his unconditional love. His unflinching acceptance of my morning breath, my bed head, groans from arthritic aches, snoring at the end of particularly harsh days, swearing at relationship hiccups and ugly face, wet tears from senior tantrums have earned him the title of dear friend, confidante, sweet, loving companion.

Each morning when he hears the bedding being flung off of my feet, I sense him raise his head from wherever he is and slink over to me. He looks up at me with those pools of wet, green loving eyes, sweetly, patiently, lovingly, silently asking if it's ok. Then I pick him up and slide him onto my lap in a standing position as he slowly lowers his body to face me and buries his warm, cashmere fluffy being into my chest, gently kneading his paws and purring softly. As I kiss and caress the top of his head, I murmur our morning prayer, one full of gratitude and awe. Gratitude for waking up to enjoy another day and awe that God allowed me the gift of finding such great joy in one of his many creatures.

PATRICIA GALLARDO

Origin of Martians

For some reason, our poetry readings today remind me of the Cuban Missile Crisis of the 60's. I remember the blaring of ominous sirens that would pierce through our ears and make our hearts pound as we hurried to the basement of our school for shelter should we be attacked.

Around this time, people all over the United States started reporting sightings of UFOs, unidentified flying objects. One afternoon, students at my school reported a sighting in our own Memorial Park! We ran out of the building screaming bloody murder toward the park. Supposedly, green creatures termed "martians" were in a saucer shaped UFO watching us.

I was disappointed to not see the UFO, but wondered, "Wouldn't it be cool to meet those green martians?" I imagined chilling and chatting with them. I wish I had more of that 4th grade imagination and fearlessness left in my being.



MARY ANN SNIDER

I know who I am and who I am not. I am proud of my resilience. If I let someone destroy my core values, I will no longer exist. Whenever I am discouraged and weary, I surround myself with special friends and therapy to get over the hump. Giving up is not an option for me.

In difficult times I am in the forest with a nearby lake. I focus on the smells, sounds, things of beauty and joy. I grow calmer as I picture all the gifts from Mother Nature. I am the swan gliding slowly on the surface of the nearby lake. The moon puts me in her spotlight.

There is a pungent smell of campfires in the air. Little specks of light flicker up from the burning embers and smoldering ashes. The sweet smells of toasted marshmallows, chocolate and graham crackers try to cover up the smell of burning wood. There are bursts of laughter coming from the source of heat and comfort. They become fainter as the children make their way to their warm sleeping bags inside the tents.

The sky is filled with millions of stars. Far too many to count. Occasionally one shoots out as if it needs to quickly reach a destination. There are swarms of insects moving in unison in all different directions. When some dip down close to the water's surface a few fish jump out of the water for their evening snack. An owl hoots in the background.

Near me a small log floats by. A little turtle sits on the log. He sees where the log is being carried by the ripples headed toward the shore. The turtle decides to slip back into the cool water and see what comes by next for him to anchor onto.

On the shore animals bring their offspring to get a drink. Their heads move up and down, sideways, ears alert for unknown dangers. A few crabs scattered here and there over the grains of sand looking for any garbage the current has brought to them. Soon small bundles of seaweed are seen being transported along the beach. A chorus of frogs provides the beautiful background music.

My sorrows, fears and anger slowly dissipate in this place. I am at peace.

DEB RODRIGUEZ

### Standing on the shoulders of those before

Ma and Papa were infants when their families got to Ellis Island. Papa and his brothers started a plumbing company in Capone's Chicago. Ma worked in an upscale dress shop on Michigan Avenue. Daddy took opera lessons as a boy and wrote songs and a musical comedy with a partner when I was young. They all loved – loved with no thought of themselves, loved with their whole beings. Love still, although they are gone from this earth. Their legacy is now mine to continue. I pray I can do half as well.

MANUEL DIEGUEZ

How do I cope with stress? When I am stressed out, I don't listen, I am more skeptical. I barely speak. Lately I have noticed that what helps me unwind my stressful thoughts is to watch those wonderful videos about the cosmos, meditation, collective thinking, life and mainly, about mortality. It's not that I find comfort in other peoples' suffering, it is that I see myself as a spec in the universe creating chaos as the universe follows its course, jumping even though the ground is level.

In my opinion, there is no hell, or heaven either after death. But perhaps heaven and hell occur on the earth during our lifetime. When I die, I will be where I was before I was born, where nobody knows, but there won't be any stress, or damaging stress. So, I choose flowers, love, hate or stress? I choose, and I think I still alternate during my life between mixed feelings from Namaste to Bah Humbug! This is life to me and my awareness of it calms me down and resets my ego and my humanity and also my reptilian nature and state of mind, and I wish the almost impossible – to be more of a complete human being than just a simple stubborn human being. Namaste and Bah Humbug!

*Feature:* **LETTERS TO OLLI** ...on learning about the present for the future at UTEP

...I simply wanted to thank you and the OLLI Program for the opportunity to participate in the IDRB: Interdisciplinary Research Building Tour that took place on June 23, 2022.

The Tour, the speakers, and the various ongoing projects we were exposed to were extremely informative. We learned about UTEP's successful efforts to bring together diverse engineering and liberal art faculty and student resources and how these talents were focused to work on and solve National, State, and local community challenges and problems. This was indeed refreshing and gratifying.

Additionally, we learned that UTEP ranks among the top ten universities that have competed for and been awarded grants from National, State, and local community governments and organizations.

Again, thank you and the OLLI Program for working with the myriad of campus organizations to make this all possible. I look forward to future events of this type and caliber.

Sincerely Yours,

A.M. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*

When I arrived in El Paso from Atlanta, Georgia in 1993 to take up work as the director of the Brain Injury Unit at Rio Vista Rehabilitation Hospital I suddenly found myself not only in a environmental desert but in a desert of medical availability and knowledge. On the eastern seaboard of the United States I had ready access to colleagues in institutions who were doing cutting edge work in my field. In El Paso at that time the closest colleagues in my field of medical expertise were in Dallas, San Antonio, Houston, and Austin to the east and Tucson and Los Angeles to the west. A lot has changed since my arrival in 1993. Today I was one of only 6 participants who attended a presentation by Dr. Renato Aguilera on the cutting edge work his university department is doing at the Border Biomedical Research Center (BBRC). As a medical professional of some 40 years I was immediately impressed to hear that not only is the BBRC doing research into cancer and other diseases through genetic engineering but that the UTEP facility I toured has at its disposal multimillion dollar equipment to accomplish its research goals. UTEP is turning out doctoral level students who are fanning out across the United States having been exceedingly well trained ready to immediately begin contributing to scientific discoveries that will enhance human well-being. Today El Paso is not the outpost in the desert I found in 1993. Now the El Paso medical community and UTEP are leading the country in scientific advancements. I encourage all of the OLLI membership to learn about the outstanding contributions being accomplished at our local UTEP.

Michael Faulkner





# SPREADING THE WORD ... OLLI: Where Learning and Curiosity Never Get Old!

The community will see more about OLLI as we reach out to bring more awareness to our programs and opportunities to make new friends and acquaintances, connect further with each other and stay engaged for healthy living. Here is what's happening at OLLI@UTEP.



## Catalogs

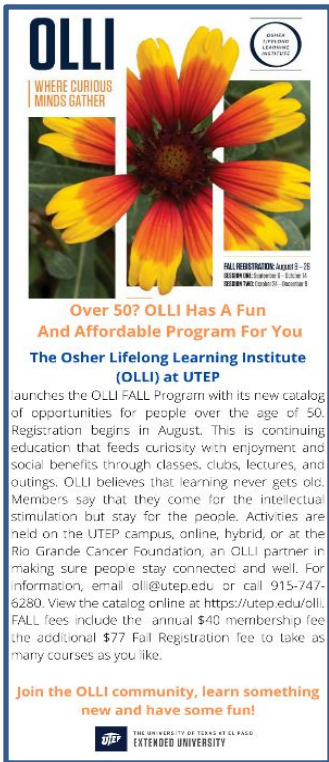
Mailed to 4800 households with another 800 spread throughout El Paso.

## Weekly Bulletins

Announcements and notifications to active OLLI members via email.

## New! OLLI Postcard

An overview of OLLI in English and Spanish with contact information for distribution at any time.



## Digital Card

Get the message out via text or Neighborhood apps.

## More...

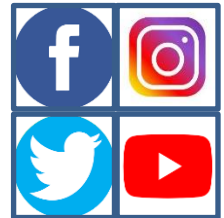
- \* Listen to 88.5 KTEP FM for interviews.
- \* Catch your City District Newsletters.
- \* Occasional articles in El Paso, Inc.
- \* Public service radio Announcements.
- \* Postings on <https://www.amightygoodtime.com/>



## Social Media



FACEBOOK  
INSTAGRAM  
TWITTER  
YOUTUBE  
OLLI - UTEP



## QR Code

OLLI @ UTEP has a QR code for easy access on your smartphone



OLLI Community Advocates | We love to talk about OLLI at group meetings and organizations.

## YOU SHOULD KNOW

- ❖ OLLI@UTEP is supported by an endowment from the **Osher Foundation** with a requirement of 500 or more members and annual membership fees.
- ❖ OLLI@UTEP sits in UTEP's **Extended University** with the Center for Instructional Design (CID), UTEP Connect, UTEP P3 (Professional and Public Programs) and the English Language Institute (ELI). All divisions report to Dean Beth Brunk-Chavez.
- ❖ Member support of the **EACH ONE REACH ONE** ongoing campaign is a valuable part of sustaining and growing the membership required under our endowment. The benefit to OLLI members is in engaging friends and colleagues, staying connected, enhancing enjoyment and helping to grow and sustain our OLLI.
- ❖ The **August Caring and Sharing Initiative** (Pick-a-Project) reached 27% of its \$8,000 goal. Thanks to UTEP's Institutional Advancement for their support and to ALL who donated to keep our OLLI thriving. Several donations have been made in memory of OLLI members and/or loved ones. Thank you.
- ❖ Spring 2022 and Summer 2022 each had 30% of the **course offerings as hybrid**. Fall 2022 has 70% of courses as hybrid, giving OLLI students more options in taking courses.
- ❖ Welcome Carol Bohle to the **Rio Grande Cancer Foundation (RGCF)**. She is the new RGCF executive director following Patty Tiscareno's retirement. RGCF has partnered with OLLI again and is sponsoring three courses in each of the Fall Sessions and continue to share their space with OLLI. The *Wellness From Within Workshops, Crochet/Knitting Therapy*, and the *Folk Guitar/Folk Music Club* will continue to meet at RGCF.
- ❖ OLLI@UTEP is one of the biggest supporters of the **UTEP Food Pantry** (<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/foodpantry/>) and **UTEP's FHAR** - Foster, Homeless and Adopted Resources – (<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students-office/wellbeing/financial/fhar.html>). Both of these UTEP organizations work to mitigate insecurities for UTEP students. Donations are accepted at the OLLI office.
- ❖ The **OLLI Advisory Board** is comprised of volunteer positions filled by elected OLLI members for two-year terms. Each Board member holds a Committee Chair position.
- ❖ **UTEP** released its **Strategic Annual Plan** as America's Leading Hispanic University laying out a roadmap to leverage advantages to achieve four goals during the next decade. You can read more on UTEP's strategic advantages, strategic goals and the annual 2022 report at <https://www.utep.edu/strategic-plan/>

### OUR VISION

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Texas at El Paso aspires to be a premier membership organization for adults over the age of fifty (50) in an aging demographic through continuing education and social integration - with an expanded reach - to positively enhance mature adult lives in the El Paso Border Region.

### OUR MISSION

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) provides opportunities under the umbrella of the University of Texas at El Paso to enhance the enjoyment, meaning, and direction of all adults over the age of fifty (50); to stay connected; and to support their good health and wellness in an aging community through diverse course offerings in continuing education, social activities, volunteerism, intergenerational experiences, and any other special services.

# What's New?

Every term at OLLI is refreshed with new courses and topics that engage and feed curiosity. New pilot programs have revitalized the way we learn and have provided new awareness and appreciation of our community and the world.

## SPRING 2022

El Paso History Walking Tours

New Lecture Series:

- Expressions: Art and Culture Series
- Ponder the Science
- Capturing History

## SUMMER 2022

Back to the Future Tours: The Science at UTEP

New Lecture Series:

- This and That
- Inspired Creations: Great Works of Art

## NEW IN FALL 2022!

### El Paso History District and Mission Trail Tours

*...worth the drive to explore the rich historic districts of the border region and learn about six centuries of history along the Mission Trail.*

### Solo en Español

*...courses for Spanish speakers that capture culture and language.*

### Lecture Series

#### ❖ Exploring the World of Art

*The world of art shapes our perspective and imaginations and spans centuries. Discover some of its highlights.*

#### ❖ This and That

*More of something new that catches our attention.*

### More CLUBS!

- ❖ New! Bridge Club
- ❖ New! Yoga Discovery Club
- ❖ New! Foodie Club
- ❖ New! Folk Guitar/Folk Music Club
- ❖ OLLI Favorites
- ❖ Photography Club
- ❖ Italian Club
- ❖ Book Club
- ❖ French Club
- ❖ Film and Wine Club

### Intergenerational Projects

*Opportunities to make a difference in a student's world and to share experiences.*

- ❖ Generation to Generation
- ❖ OLLI Meets Technology and the Intergenerational UX Project

### Special Thanks to Club Facilitators

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Philip Anderson      | Bob Jacobs            |
| Phyllis Price        | Lily Dueñas           |
| Fred Eiland          | Marie Livingston      |
| Sylvia Portillo Koch | Leanne von Mittenwald |
| Janet Dand           | Catherine Dickason    |
|                      | Stan Deming           |



# Volunteers... our lifeline Thank you!

## Special Recognition

### Hybrid Classes

... online and in-person

It has taken many hands, minds, and effort to accommodate members in our OLLI classrooms.

**Thanks to the OLLI volunteers and staff** who stepped up to learning and honing new ways of delivering courses to our OLLI students. We've been able to work hybrid classes and enjoy each other in-person.

#### Classroom Hosts:

##### Volunteers

Jessica Arriola	Tom Harding
Jill Boyea	Mary Harris
Rich Dand	Marie Livingston
Stan Deming	Marianela Milner
Lily Dueñas	Mark Pumphrey
Fred Eiland	Don Smelser
Karen Fraser	Susan Sobin
Leanne von Mittenwald	John Walker

##### Staff

Diana Dieguez-Enriquez  
Kristian Mancillas (work study - graduated)  
Betzy Lira (work study)

## Special Recognition

**OLLI Volunteer Instructors**  
**OLLI Club Facilitators**  
**OLLI Bulletin and Newsletter Contributors**

The diverse skills that volunteers bring to OLLI contribute to the caring and rich culture of our OLLI community. Our volunteer base has grown to over sixty (60) people who are generous with their time, talent, and skills. We value everyone who is part of OLLI and give special thanks to our volunteers.

Volunteers are the lifeline for your OLLI and the greatest examples of OLLI's vision and mission.

**OLLI's success is due to the services and support of our volunteers!**

- Office Support
- Stay Connected Phone Calls
- Class Attendance Takers
- Committee Chairs and Members:
  - Volunteer
  - Membership
  - Events
  - Marketing
  - Curriculum
  - Community Advocates
- Catalog Distribution
- Tech Assistance
- Photography
- Instructors
- Advisory Board Members

## Special Recognition

#### Office Support:

Jamie Ackerman	Mary Harris
Jill Boyea	Pat Jablonsky
Luis Castillo	Maggie Jackson
Fred Eiland	Marie Livingston
Elizabeth Farrelly	Mark Pumphrey
Karen Fraser	Tom Harding
Leanne von Mittenwald	Susan Sobin

# Highlights

## from the Advisory Board

### Leanne von Mittenwald

Advisory Board Chair  
Events Committee Chair

“We hope to see you at our next OLLI event! Family and friends are always welcome to join us and get to know the wonderful world of OLLI!”



“Covid prevented OLLI members from attending events and get-togethers for a long time. As soon as we could, we replaced the online Zoom events of the past two years with face-to-face events. In December, we held our Annual Membership Meeting and Fundraiser at the Cinemark Theater and enjoyed the new *Westside Story*. In March, the Film Club and other OLLI members met at the Alamo Theater for lunch and a movie and later at Cinemark to view the Oscar nominations for Short Films.

Another lockdown prevented us from gathering for a while, but as the weather warmed, we decided to host a meet-up at the Charcoaler Drive-In to relax and enjoy the company of other OLLI members.

We held another OLLI at the Movies fundraiser in June and watched the new *Downton Abbey*. Donated auction items raffled for a “sleeve of tickets” added to the entertainment.

This month, OLLI members met at the Plaza Classic Film Festival for a screening of *The Sting*. Upcoming events include a Back to School Pizza Day at Peter Piper Pizza, the 915 UTEP football game on August 27<sup>th</sup>, a Potluck in the OLLI Lounge scheduled for September 14<sup>th</sup>, and an online and live auction in the fall.

We hope to see you at our next OLLI event! Family and friends are always welcome to join us and get to know the wonderful world of OLLI!”

*Current Events Committee members:*

*Bonnie John, Karen Fraser, Leanne von Mittenwald (chair)*

### Karen Fraser

Advisory Board Vice Chair  
Volunteer Associate Committee Chair

“We hope you will let us know how volunteers are doing as supporters of OLLI, what more we might do and how you may help us.”



“Volunteers have continued their usual activities of calling, emailing, and recruiting new members; and participating in committees for curriculum, marketing, membership, and volunteering. To support a transition in OLLI office staff, a team of volunteers has helped with office activities and will continue to help during the afternoons for Fall, 2022 annual membership renewal and registration for classes. Another team has served as hosts for hybrid and online classes.

The Volunteer Committee has met three times since October, 2021 and hosted two all-volunteer Zoom meetings.

#### Ongoing Foci for volunteers:

- Encourage membership renewals and class registrations
- Identify members for Advisory Board positions
- Engage more volunteers in hybrid class hosting
- Identify members for existing committees
- Actively support special events for socializing and fundraising
- Find potential off campus locations for live lectures and/or classes in 2023

# Highlights

## Staying Connected Member Calls

Prior to the Fall membership renewals and class registrations, texting and emails will be sent as alternatives to voice calls and voice messages.

## Future Meetings

Volunteer Committee – Mondays, July 25 and September 26, 2022

All-volunteer Meeting – Monday, October 17, 2022 (hybrid from a restaurant?)

Please note in this newsletter the featured article regarding volunteer efforts and contributions. We hope you will let us know how volunteers are doing as supporters of OLLI, what more we might do and how you may help us.

**Come join us as a volunteer!**

*Current committee members:*

*Jill Boyea, Lily Dueñas, Tom Harding, Liz Highsmith, Julieta Paez, Jim Rolph, Don Smelser, Karen Fraser (Committee Chair)*

## Elizabeth Fourzan

Secretary



*“...Now that I have joined the OLLI Advisory Board, I will be viewing our OLLI organization from a new perspective... It is our time to enjoy these amazing days and each other.”*

“Most of us are drawn to things that improve, heighten, or enhance our lives in some way; at least that was the way I saw things retiring after nearly three decades in the field of education. When a friend asked me to join OLLI (OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute) whose name implies growth, I thought carefully about it. In reflecting upon my life, it had been a bumpy journey full of epiphanies, friendships, loves, losses, and time seemed to say to me, ‘You’re supposed to be here, enjoy these amazing days.’

It was no surprise to me that our OLLI chapter won recognition for their handling of activities these past couple of years and the medical mystery we were facing with Covid-19. These new friends at OLLI banded together and helped those of us stranded at home during the pandemic wondering what was going to happen next. OLLI reached out to us to help us navigate through the next steps. That was a big relief for me.

It has been lots of fun and satisfying when I congregate at my computer with these newfound friends and meet via Zoom, play a game of movie trivia, have a good laugh, have spontaneous moments of goofiness, and have my grandnephew wonder in the background what it is I am doing that is so much fun. Wait, who knew home learning could be this much fun?

During one of the online classes about film censorship, a class members shared their own experience. How cool was it to hear a story about a senior class skipping class to watch a film banned for religious purposes just because they were curious and were caught by the principal! (I only wish she would have remembered which movie it was).

Now that I have joined the OLLI Advisory Board, I will be viewing our OLLI organization from a new perspective (new for me), helping it prosper and maintaining its records of meetings, etc. And I sincerely believe:

It is our time to enjoy these amazing days and each other.”

**EACH ONE . REACH ONE ... Invite friends, colleagues, and relatives to join OLLI.**  
**Enjoy feeding your curiosity together!**



# Highlights

## Don Buescher

Finance Committee Chair

“From a financial perspective, OLLI is one of the best kept secrets in town.”



“HELLO... My name is Don Buescher, and I am honored to be included in this OLLI Newsletter. I was born in Belleville, Illinois and graduated from a Catholic Grade School and High School and obtained a B.S. in Marketing with a Minor in Business Admin from the Univ. of Illinois in Champaign, Ill. I became a Certified Public Accountant in 1970 and worked in accounting for the Monsanto Co. for 10 Years. I relocated to the General Dynamics Co. after six years was transferred to El Paso, Texas in 1983.

Moving to El Paso was challenging because I was divorced and had custody of my three teenage children, who have become accomplished and productive adults. I became the Executive Vice President of El Paso Sand Products and the EVP of Southwest Moulding Co. before remarrying in 1995. As companies I worked for continued to be sold or downsized, I worked for Clarostat Sensors & Controls, Inc., Plastic Engineered Components Co., and retired in 2010 after 9 years within Eagle Ottawa, Mexico.

Retirement finds me busy working on projects around our house, figuring out how to fix everything that breaks, enjoying our friends, and recently filling the OLLI Board **Finance Chair**.

OLLI is great. My wife and I have attended some classes in person and some classes online. We have enjoyed every one of them. The instructors are highly qualified and there is NO HOMEWORK AND NO TEST. OLLI membership is made up of individuals with varied backgrounds and levels of education, college degree not required. OLLI offers a wide variety of face-to-face classes, online classes, clubs, and outings. There is FUN for EVERYONE.

From a **financial perspective**, OLLI is one of the best kept secrets in town. Annual membership is only \$40 per person or \$70 per couple. Each semester a member may take as many classes as he/she wants for only ONE registration fee. I am working with the Advisory Board and OLLI’s Executive Director to help monitor the use of funds, recommend additional sources of income and appreciate the opportunity to function as Finance Chair.”

*Current committee members:*

*Lynn Provenzano, Sonya Villa Saenz, Don Buescher (Committee Chair)*

## Mary Harris

Membership Committee Chair

“We look forward to the Fall session and attracting more OLLI members.”



“Over the last quarter the Membership Committee added three new members. We now have 10 members with Mary Harris facilitating as chair. In addition, three other OLLI members, not part of the committee, also volunteer on distributing catalogs.

We are very active in distributing OLLI catalogs to libraries, the YMCA's and YWCA's, medical and physical therapy clinics, and all Senior Centers and Senior Living residences. We continue to reach out to outlying outlets in Las Cruces. One of our members is active in coordinating with local media outlets. Another member is in contact with City Council members. We look forward to the Fall session and attracting more OLLI members.”

*Current committee members: Alda Briones, Luis Castillo, Michael Faulkner, Betty Kennedy, May Ann Snider, Sue Sobin, Waynene Spradlin, Karen Fraser, and Mary Harris (chair)*

## Highlights

### Helen Schmid

Community Advocate Chair



“I am a native El Pasoan, graduated from Austin High 1969, attended UTEP began working for insurance company and stayed in the insurance industry for 33 years. Worked in Northern California for 3 years returning home due to family situation. I have served on several industry boards: Health Underwriters, Life Underwriters, and General Agents and Managers. I am proud to say I was the first female president in the state of Texas for Life Underwriters in 1992. My insurance industry career included service representative, agency manager secretary, marketing and sales, and brokerage firm sales director/vice president.

As retirees, my husband John and I have been blessed to be able to travel. I enjoy yoga, workout classes and of course all the OLLI classes and opportunity to meet the nice people that attend OLLI. I look forward to doing my part to enhance membership and increase member participation during the coming semesters.

To all our current members: I am asking that you tell your friends/ acquaintances about OLLI. Encourage them to join for one semester - you know they will be hooked. I have reached out to my high school reunion group, church members, and neighbors and will be participating in the community health fair to promote our upcoming semester.”

“To all our current members: I am asking that you tell your friends/ acquaintances about OLLI. Encourage them to join for one semester - you know they will be hooked.”

### Welcome! Tom Harding

New Board Member: Fall 2022 | Committee Liaison



“My name is Tom Harding and I joined OLLI in January of 2021, after retiring from a 30-year career as an Intelligence Research Specialist with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). I grew up in Wisconsin, outside Milwaukee, until I joined the Air Force in 1983. Four years later I left the Air Force and returned to Wisconsin to finish my college degree. In 1991, I joined the DEA and moved to El Paso, TX. Having lived in Texas/El Paso for over 30 years now, I consider myself a Texan, but will always be a Green Bay Packer fan. Sorry Dallas. Prior to retiring, my daughter, who at the time, was a student at UTEP, introduced me to OLLI. OLLI looked like an interesting program, so I joined.

I have always been a firm believer in “continuing education” whether we are 30 or 90 years old. So, when I was introduced to OLLI, I knew I had found a new home. There would be new friends, new experiences, and new challenges. I looked forward to these challenges and jumped right in. There is an old saying, “bloom where you are planted,” well that is what I’m doing. Thanks to Volunteer Chairwoman Karen Fraser, along with attending classes, I began hosting classes and volunteering in the OLLI office.

I feel so at home at OLLI. The staff, students and instructors are so welcoming. The wide range of classes, clubs and lectures are refreshing.

Volunteer Chairwoman Fraser nominated me for a position on the Advisory Board. I am humbled and grateful for the opportunity. As the newest member of the Advisory Board, I will work as a dedicated member of the OLLI team to ensure we meet the needs of all OLLI members. It is important for all OLLI members to explore new interests and contribute our talents and most importantly, share our life experiences with those around us. Let us all take advantage of all that OLLI has to offer and “bloom where we are planted” I look forward to these new challenges ahead and fully immersing myself in all that OLLI has to offer.”

“I feel so at home at OLLI. The staff, students and instructors are so welcoming. The wide range of classes, clubs and lectures are refreshing.”

# Highlights

## Mark Pumphrey

Past Committee Liaison

*“In Memoriam...  
We hold Mark in our hearts.”*



In Memoriam.... OLLI unexpectedly lost an Advisory Board member and friend this past July. We will remember Mark as caring soul for his fellow OLLI members, an avid student, and a dedicated volunteer. Mark will also be remembered for his honesty in sharing his life story with his paired UTEP student in the Fall 2021 project, *My Life Story*. What followed in his student’s presentation was poignant and brought to life a remarkable person that we only knew as Mark. The Family Shakespeare Festival’s presentation of *As You Like It* in September/October at Madeline Park in Kern Place will be dedicated to Mark. The festival is presented by Shakespeare on the Rocks, the Kern Place Association and the UTEP Department of English.

## Lynn Provenzano

Executive Director

Interim Curriculum Committee Chair

Marketing Chair

*“We are discovering new  
opportunities and evolving.”*



“Spring and Summer have been interesting as mandates were lifted and life eased into new challenges. Keeping in step the transitions on campus and the community along with the needs of our OLLI members have kept us very busy.

### Curriculum Update

You can see by looking at the Spring, Summer, and Fall catalogs that the priority has been to offer a diverse menu of courses that gives OLLI members flexibility in fitting classes and lectures into their schedules. We have piloted some new programs, secured presenters from the OLLI network, and engaged UTEP instructors and students to teach and collaborate in intergenerational projects. We are discovering new opportunities and evolving.”

*Current Curriculum Committee members:*

*Ruth Bassett, Suzanne Hunter, Mark Huston, Marie Livingston, Leanne von Mittenwald, Linda Shubeck, Lynn Provenzano (chair), Mark Pumphrey (marketing liaison).*

### Administrative Update

“Campus activity has ramped up and we followed suit with our hybrid classes, compliance, and system updates. We said goodbye to our work-study student, Kristian Mancillas (she graduated!) and welcomed Betzy Lira. We said a soft goodbye to our Administrative Assistant, Lily Dueñas (she’ll be helping as a member and volunteer now) and welcomed Diana Dieguez-Enriquez into the Administrative Assistant position. All office activities are still streamlined to continue working with safety guidelines. Air purifiers are working non-stop. Hand sanitizer is readily available. The lounge is open. Announcements and administrative updates can be found in the weekly bulletin to keep you informed. Thanks for your patience as we continue to navigate the learning curves of change!”



*Current Office Staff:*

*Diana Dieguez-Enriquez (administrative assistant), Betzabe Lira (work-study student), Lynn Provenzano (executive director)*



# Highlights

## Marketing Committee

“There is plenty to say about our marketing endeavors. If you look at page 6 of this newsletter you will get a snapshot of the work that shouts out about our OLLI. The EACH ONE REACH ONE campaign is still one of the strongest messages and – thanks to our OLLI members–has brought many new members to the OLLI Community. The print and online catalogs continue to be our biggest marketing effort. Social media has expanded and projects have included the OLLI T-shirt Project, Catalog Distribution, City Representation, OLLI Summer Caring and Sharing Pick-a-Project videos, and a new promotional postcard. You can also find some of our OLLI postings on the website, <https://www.amightygoodtime.com/>.”

*Current Marketing Committee members:*

*Monica Gomez, Brad Roe, Mary Ann Snider, Leanne von Mittenwald, Lynn Provenzano (chair)*

*We welcome David Dodge to the committee in the Fall.*

## A note on OLLI Finance

“The annual memberships and fall registrations have always supported the academic year. Spring/Summer 2022 has been working with a very tight budget due to a low number of registrations. Membership has grown but has not recovered from the reset in numbers that we saw last Fall. Consequently, we have seen fundraisers- some for fun, some tied into marketing, and some with a simple ask (Summer Caring and Sharing Initiative). Thanks to committees/members, who have been a great support in generating the resources needed to support our OLLI.

On another note: Welcome to Don Buescher, who will be taking on the Finance Chair position moving forward.”

## Sonya Villa-Saenz

Extended University Advisor



“Extended University continues to pave the way through online course development and distance education learning delivery platforms with the challenges of limited financial resources and infrastructure to sustain the student demand of distance education.

The following are bullets to note strategies EU administration is facilitating to make improvements in this process. Starting with a clearly defined and communicated vision, supported throughout EU. This support includes human and financial resources, and possibly modifications to long standing models to adapt to the new environment we find ourselves living in. Below are initiatives and goals EU will spearhead to ensure our infrastructure aligns with the demand we are experiencing.

- ❖ Establish the vision of distance education’s importance to the university’s future.
- ❖ Support models that assist with changes through policies, processes, resources, and investment in staff, faculty and students.
- ❖ Proactively plan and budget for technology advancement and recurring support costs.
- ❖ Provide resources, time, and training for faculty to adopt new instructional technology.

One thing is clear, the future is online and we must take a hard look of where we are at and where we are going in order to establish a strategic plan to be successful in serving all of our students with a quality of education that keeps motivating and satisfying the need to learn and grow at any age.”

“...note strategies EU administration is facilitating to make improvements in this process. Starting with a clearly defined and communicated vision, supported throughout EU...”

## One More Note

*Thank you for your support!*

### OLLI Initiatives

**Thanks to ALL who have contributed to our campaigns to keep our OLLI healthy and thriving!**

*Each One Reach One . Summer Caring and Sharing Initiative  
Online Donations . Fundraising Events*

Staying the course in changing social and technological environments to meet the needs of an older population during these challenging times has been the focus of OLLI's efforts. Sustaining OLLI's programming has also meant sustaining a better quality of life for many people.

Learning and curiosity never get old! This is our motto at OLLI, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at UTEP. Our mission is to keep a community of people over the age of 50 engaged and active through continuing education, social activities, and volunteerism. Our goal is to enhance the enjoyment, meaning, and direction of mature lives.

We have learned that resiliency stays with us as we age. We will continue to move forward with new ideas, feed curiosity in meaningful ways and keep people connected to keep loneliness at bay. Testimonials tell us that **OLLI's value grows with each new and returning student**. Every contribution helps and is meaningful to a great many people.



**Suzie Currey, one of OLLI's newest members, describes OLLI as:**

*"[A] community of lifelong learners, of friends in a fun and engaging environment! We are inspired to be creative in our various interests like photography."*

**Jamie Ackerman, OLLI member and instructor, shares:**

*"I have made lots of friends while learning new things. You know, at our age, it is important to keep the mind active and OLLI certainly does that!"*

**Jim Richardson, OLLI member of 10 years, shares:**

*"OLLI is fantastic! I never would have thought I'd miss it so much as I did when we couldn't come during the early days of the pandemic. But, it's back [in-person/hybrid]! I have so very much looked forward to returning. The camaraderie is great... the classes are absolutely fascinating... the staff is courteous and extremely helpful. Overall, I can't imagine doing without. It's like trying to survive without water or food. It's essential!"*