A Warm Hello to OLLI Members!

It’s hard to believe that after meditating with so many OLLI members over the past years that I am sitting with OLLI as your executive director. Thank you for your warm welcome to this position, to the hellos, hugs, and, most of all, the opportunity to serve you in a greater way. We need OLLI. It has value in our lives and in our community. We need YOU as an integral part of the program. We need each other as we continue to dive into the curiosities of learning. Our membership is growing; 395 students will be attending Spring Session 1 classes (seriously... let's bump that up to over 400 or more). A very big THANK YOU to Ian Wilson for laying the groundwork for a stable and growing program and for mentoring this newbie. Thanks to the Advisory Board and volunteers for your guidance and commitment. I have much to learn with all of you in these early days of my position. Yet, isn’t that what OLLI is all about ... the journey of being engaged and learning?

Lynn Provenzano, Executive Director

Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.

Albert Einstein

OLLI@UTEP Membership Meeting and Reception for Dr. Larry Johnson a Great Success

Olli members turned out on December 8 for our annual Membership Meeting and a farewell reception for retiring longtime faculty and board member Dr. Larry Johnson. Board president Marie Livingston opened the meeting with a report about a national OLLI conference that she attended and some thoughts on OLLI@UTEP in 2019. More information on the conference and plans to implement some ideas at OLLI@UTEP will be presented at noon meetings in the OLLI lounge throughout the spring session. The OLLI Ideas-The Link meetings are on the fourth Thursday of the month in the OLLI lounge. She then presented Ian Wilson, outgoing Executive Director, a Hal Marcus print depicting UTEP in a uniquely El Paso setting with bold, lively colors and images.
A special part of the meeting was honoring Dr. Larry Johnson for his many years of service and inspiration. Ruth Bassett presented Dr. Johnson with a stained glass Miner’s pick in UTEP colors of orange and blue.

The UTEP catering department served a wonderful buffet after the presentations and meeting. A delightful piano concert, ‘Poets of the Piano’ concluded this wonderful evening.

PHOTO ALBUM: OLLI@UTEP MEMBERSHIP
MEETING AND RECEPTION HONORING DR. LARRY JOHNSON

- Ruth Bassett presenting our gift Dr. Larry Johnson
- Dr. Johnson (seated, right) is surrounded by OLLI well-wishers
- Thank you, Dr. Larry Johnson
- Our appreciation gift to Dr. Johnson, a stained glass Miner’s pick in UTEP colors
- Dr. Larry Johnson and his gift from OLLI
Board President, Marie Livingston, and outgoing Executive Director, Ian Wilson welcome members

Marie Livingston presents Ian with a Hal Marcus print. Thank you, Ian!

Board Secretary, Guillermo Avila, and Olga “Cookie” Mapula enjoying the meeting

Ian giving his farewell to the troops

Jamie Ackerman approves of the food!

Crystal Brown, our Administrative Secretary, looking very fine

Dave Larsen enjoying the meeting
OLLI Interrogates Alfredo Arroyo

Who dunnit, and why? Everyone loves a good mystery and OLLI members are no exception. His classes on criminal investigations are a hit, and instructor Alfredo Arroyo sat down with us for a most informative interview. A graduate of The Citadel and of the DEA/FBI Academy and other police, military, and intelligence schools, Alfredo enjoyed a career that included numerous domestic and foreign assignments with INTERPOL in Europe, Africa and Latin America. This spring he is teaching two classes: Anatomy of Criminal Investigation in the first session, and Secrets and Betrayal in the second session.

When did you start attending OLLI, and what have been some of your favorite classes?
I started attending OLLI courses in summer of 2012. I enjoyed the courses offered by professor Larry Johnson. Professor Grace Haddox's courses are all so rewarding, particularly those dealing with poetry and short stories. Another memorable event was Bill Key's lecture on mules, and his class on the history of oil and gas production. I love that OLLI courses cover a broad spectrum of subjects with varied degrees of substance, such as Professor Ruby Montana's philosophy courses and the law subjects presented by Professor Cesar Rivera.

You graduated from the Citadel. Share with us how attending this university has shaped your life, and some experiences you had while attending.
It was quite an experience. I was new to the language, the culture, the country and all that was combined with the fourth class system where freshmen are treated no better than recruits in Parris Island. I had to adapt, adjust, and learn a lot in a very compressed amount of time. The end result was a first class education and a commission in the US Army. The process instilled in me the values of pride in service, discipline, and the ability to perform under pressure. The camaraderie of the military lifestyle resulted in solid friendships that I still nurture today.

Can you share some experiences from the intelligence/police/military positions that you have held?
My first Army assignment was with a military intelligence group in Fort Hood Texas and that started a relationship that opened a path that eventually defined my role in the Army, and in the civilian world. It was the Cold War era. The assignments were varied -Infantry, Communications-Air Defense Artillery-and the logistics that go in support of such missions. Always with a link to intelligence operations, always focused on foreign lands. Thanks to my security clearance I was able to transition to the world of federal law enforcement which is intelligence and surveillance driven. I had to go through the levels for career development but enjoyed an early opportunity for overseas assignments: Central and South America, Europe, and Asia. My most remarkable assignments were in Bolivia where I was agent in charge of financial investigations focused on Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, and Brazil. Bolivia is a source country for cocaine to the world so that gave me opportunities to literally travel the world and work with some of the finest intelligence and enforcement agencies in the world. Drugs are always a source of fast and anonymous cash so we were always crossing paths not only with traffickers and related criminal entities, but also foreign intelligence services and groups with nefarious intentions against western cultures. My last assignment was at the Federal Intelligence Center, popularly known as the El Paso Intelligence Center in Fort Bliss. It was a good and intense life and career.
Tell us about the classes you have taught at OLLI.
The first was *A Journey Through the Criminal Mind*. It is an overview of the motivations and circumstances that drive a person to cross the line into the murky waters of criminal intent. I just presented the popular *Anatomy of Criminal Investigation* where we learned how investigations are conducted, and the painfully intricate details of how police work is carried out, including the challenges and pressures that make police work a true calling and not just a job. The fun part is when we contrast shows such as *CSI Miami* with the true crime scene investigators and procedures.

We learn that police work is not about what anyone knows, or thinks they know, but about what can be proven, with evidence, in a court of law. Both classes were a lot of work to prepare but the response of the OLLI community made it all fun and fulfilling.

Your career has taken you to Africa, Europe, Latin America. What aspects of those cultures have you especially enjoyed?
Every culture is unique in wonderful ways. Such diversity and richness comes down to one inescapable observation: All people in the world want to feel safe, they want to live in happiness and comfort. We all share fundamentally the same dreams, desires, and fears. The difference is in how we go about it.

What are some of your favorite interests or hobbies?
I love the study of mathematics, reading history, and going to the cinema. I travel to attend opera and symphony events. But above all, hockey and motorcycles. I often just get up one day and without plan or destination I simply pick a route and just ride, ready to discover whatever the road brings to me. The United States is a beautiful country.

**OLLI Members Give! (OMG! has a whole new meaning)**

The OLLI program and its members have been a part of the UTEP community for several years and as such we have enjoyed many of the benefits of that membership. And this is an opportunity for us to give back to that community.

You may or may not be aware that on the UTEP campus, there are students who are struggling just to survive. For instance, there are students who have “graduated” out of foster care or for any other reason find themselves homeless. Or if not homeless are in need of an emergency boost.

The UTEP Academic Advising Center is providing support to these students with the Foster, Homeless, Adopted Resource (FHAR). This resource provides help to these students in a variety of ways. One of these ways is to provide gift cards for those students to use in case of emergency or need. For instance, a student recently came to them and he needed a new white shirt for a job that he had recently obtained and they provided him with a gift card for Walmart.
To support FHAR, we are initiating a campaign to provide them with a variety of gift cards. Please consider donating a gift card from one of the following: Walmart, Target, Dollar Store, CVS, Walgreens (gift cards can be used for prescriptions), the UTEP Book Store, any of the several “fast food” places close to campus or any other outlet where you shop and a variety of goods are available.

Cards should be in small denominations of $10 or $20. Note: if the dollar value is not readily apparent on the card, please attach a “sticky” note with that information. Cards can be given to Crystal in the office. We will then tally and deliver them to the FHAR advisor, who will distribute them to UTEP students on an as needed basis.

This will be an on-going campaign occurring in the Fall, Spring and Summer.

Karen Evans, OLLI@UTEP Board member

Valentine’s Party on February 13

Be sweet and join us in the OLLI lounge from 12:30-3:30 for some Valentine’s treats. Feel free to bring a potluck dish to share. Everyone welcome! This will also be a great way to meet our new Executive Director, Lynn Provenzano.

Nose for News???

Are you curious? Inquisitive? Like to talk to people? Meet new folks? Take pictures of something interesting happening in a class? If the answer is yes, we’d love to hear from you. We want our newsletter to be about YOU, as well as what’s happening in OLLI and UTEP that would be of interest or concern to our members. Contact Nicole Grant, OLLI on Line newsletter editor, at grantn795@gmail.com. Com’on, newshounds, let us hear from you!

Balancing Act: a Conversation with Steve Barowsky

Grasping the Sparrow’s Tail, Longevity Breathing, and Improve Your Balance are some very popular and useful OLLI classes taught by Steve Barowsky. He believes that his classes are practical in nature, the skills learned apply to all aspects of daily life, and are based on philosophical concepts from Chinese Taoist culture. Steve also believes these classes require personal practice to reap the benefits which are possible.

Steve is the director of the Center for Internal Arts, an El Paso studio dedicated to Tai Chi, Chi Gung, and Meditation. He has studied the internal arts of China extensively with direct lineage masters for 35 years and has been teaching these arts professionally for over 25 years. Prior to the past 35 years, Steve studied external styles of Kung Fu for many years and was trained and worked as a teacher of Kundalini yoga. He also has a bachelors degree in anthropology and a masters' degree in education.

You taught the course Longevity Breathing during the fall session. How can seniors benefit from learning the breathing techniques you presented?

Although most of as babies and toddlers had good natural breathing a majority of adult Americans breathe poorly. Most of us develop bad breathing habits gradually and these habits worsen as we age. Our breathing tends to become more and more shallow and we rely on our chest rather than our diaphragm when we breath. This worsening of our breathing habits happens gradually and most
people don’t even notice it until it’s quite severe and we are having obvious trouble getting a good
breath. There are many negative consequences to this. Our blood does not get properly oxygenated
causing our energy levels to drop. Too much stagnant air remains in the lungs increasing the possibility
of infections. We lose the natural massaging action of the breath on the organs below and above the
diaphragm. We lose the pumping effect of the breath on the fluids of the body. We lose the structural
support the diaphragm gives to our posture, causing our posture to collapse. There is also a strong
correlation of breathing well with reducing stress. Relearning proper breathing habits is one of the
single most effective ways to positively affect our health and vitality.

**Improving Your Balance to Prevent Falls is a popular class you have taught. Tell us a bit
about this class.**
As with proper breathing, balance is something that most of us as children and adolescents naturally
had but that often slowly deteriorates as we age. This is partly because most of us have sedentary
lifestyles which really is a relatively new development in the history and prehistory of the human
species. It is also because as a function of aging we lose some of our sense of balance. Although
sometime this loss of our ability to maintain our balance is due to a particular medical problem, often it
is more the result of developing bad habits and gradually losing our body awareness. In this balance
class we use some very basic exercises from the art of Tai Chi to awaken our awareness and to
strengthen the natural feedback systems we have to maintain our balance. This is done mainly by
focusing clearly on all the elements involved in stepping and turning so that we develop a dynamic
sense of balance in motion, which is more effective than standing on one leg in a static position. These
exercises are done in relaxed, slow motion. The slower you can do them the more they demand
constant balance. As with good breathing, for all of us balance is crucial to the quality of our lives. For
those of us interested in practicing Tai Chi, posture, breathing and balance is where we should start.

**Have you taught other courses at OLLI?**
In the past I have taught Wu style Tai Chi, The Tai Chi- Chi Gung, Opening the Energy Gates Chi
Gung, Seated Meditation Classes, and the Eight Chi Gung Methods of Master KC Mao.

**What classes would you like to offer at OLLI in the future?**
I have taught many classes on various elements of Tai Chi, Chi Gung, and meditation for many years
at Olli and before, while it was still the Center for Life Long Learning. I have found given the
constraints of time it is most useful to teach the basics. The Breathing Class, The Balance Class and
Grasping the Sparrows Tail have been the most useful. In addition to those classes I would like to offer
a class on Standing and some Meditation classes. Because they require a longer commitment, classes
that involve learning complete traditional Tai Chi Forms, Ba Gua or more involved Chi Gung I teach at
my studio in El Paso’s upper valley and in Las Cruces, in both group and private classes as they require
a longer commitment.
All the classes I offer through OLLI are practical in nature; the skills learned apply to all aspects of
daily life. In addition they are based on philosophical concepts from Chinese Taoist culture that are
presented as part of the class. The also recommend those students who really want to master the
material, repeat the class a number of times. As it becomes more familiar students find the experience
enriched with each repetition.
If you would like to know more about my background and what other classes I offer you can go to my
website [www.centerforinternalarts.com](http://www.centerforinternalarts.com).
Is this book worthy of the Pulitzer Prize? That topic, among others, was discussed at the OLLI Book Club in January. Shellby McCue lead the lively discussion of *The Sympathizer*, a novel about a Vietnamese double agent that was set in post-war Viet Nam and the United States. This novel provoked spirited conversation about our experiences and feelings during the Viet Nam war era. The February selection is *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot. Described by the *New York Times* as one of the most acclaimed recent nonfiction books, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* begins as an investigation of a medical miracle but becomes a gripping, poignant story about racism, shoddy scientific ethics and a sprawling family’s painful experiences with both. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer, yet her cells—taken without her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in medicine. The first "immortal" human cells grown in culture, they are still alive today, though she has been dead for more than sixty years. The Book Club meets on Thursday, February 14 at noon in the OLLI lounge.

**Five Questions for Ian Wilson (recently retired Executive Director)**

**We understand you grew up in Brazil. Can you share a favorite or humorous memory about your childhood?**
Riding the trolley cars in Rio. Mom and Dad sent us off to Brazilian school and we had to take a trolley every day. I clearly remember the sound of the bell as the car began to move. Some years ago I found a Corelle bowl that when hit with a spoon gave that exact sound!

**You served in the Peace Corps. Where did you serve, what were your duties, and a favorite, funny memory from this time?**
Barbacena, Minas Gerais, Brazil. I was placed in a school for developmentally disabled children and my role was to develop a P.E and recreation program for the kids who were of all ages. Basically I got to play all day! My name in Portuguese sounds like the word for carrot and the kids thought that was the funniest thing!

**Please share a favorite or humorous OLLI moment.**
I will treasure all of the positive comments by many OLLI members. I don't think there was one day that I did not get a 'thanks', a sign of appreciation!

**We've heard rumors about some sort of unusual collection of yours...can you expound on this?**
I have several collections on my way to being a pack rat! I have inherited from my mom her collection of nutcracker figures. I have 93 so far, all sizes and shapes! They all come out at Christmas! To go along with that I have 350 versions of the Christmas song ‘Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire’ on my computer!

**What's something fun that you have planned now that you have retired?**
I've got lots of work to do in our garden and in my wood workshop. I'm going to take some OLLI classes and I'm thinking of standup comedy. I'm also going to get serious about my golf game!
What was El Paso like in WWII?

If that question piques your interest, head off to UTEP’s Centennial Museum, University Avenue and Wiggins Way, to see an exhibit entitled “Rations, Rights, and Rivets: Experiencing WWII in El Paso.” The exhibit runs through April 13; museum hours are 10am-4:30pm, Monday through Saturday.

Dean Denis O’Hearn presents at Mining Books

UTEP Mining Books presents a lecture by Denis O’Hearn, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and professor of Sociology, about the book *A Song for the River* by Phillip Connors. Cinco Puntos Press of El Paso, publisher, describes the book: “The river that runs through the wilderness opens his heart: the mountains burn, friends die, and green shoots sprout from the ashes. The Gila River and Wilderness are the heart and soul of *A Song for the River*. Every summer since 2002, Connors has been perched in a tower 50 feet above the Gila Wilderness, watching for fire. His first book, *Fire Season* (30,000 sold), recounted the deep lessons learned about mountains, wilderness, fire, and solitude. *A Song for the River*, its sequel, updates and deepens the story.” The lecture takes place on Tuesday, February 26 at 6pm in the Blumberg Auditorium of the UTEP library.

Chiapas, the Ultimate Frontier

*Where Did You Go and What Did You See* series continues with a photographic presentation of Chiapas, Mexico by OLLI student Bradley Roe. February 13th, noon, Miners Hall room 200.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**Feb. 13** Valentine Party
12:30-3:30, OLLI lounge
12:00-1:00 Chiapas, The Ultimate Frontier, Miners Hall Room 200

**Feb. 14** Olli Book Club
Noon, Olli Lounge

**Feb. 26** Mining Books with Dean Denis O’Hearn,
6:00 pm UTEP Library
Blumberg Auditorium

**February 28** OLLI Ideas-Link
Noon, OLLI Lounge

**Thru April 14** “World War II In El Paso” exhibit, UTEP Centennial Museum

EACH ONE...REACH ONE OLLI Membership Drive

*OLLI has all kinds of classes!*
*You have all kinds of friends!*
*You like OLLI classes!*
*Your friends will like OLLI classes!*
*Have them join us; the more the merrier!*