



The Tides...

Breaking News from

Lifelong Learning



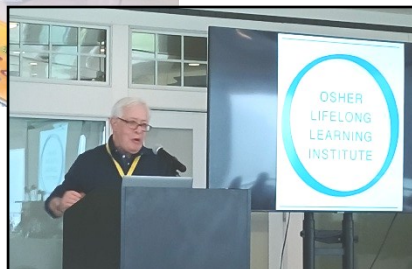
Vol. 15, No. 4, 2025

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Delaware in Kent/Sussex County

Instructors & Hybrid Operators Honored at Brunch



On May 14th a celebratory Instructors Brunch at Kings Creek Country Club in Rehoboth honored our instructors and hybrid operators, who make our program such a success. A breakfast buffet was provided by Kings Creek Country Club. Entertainment was provided by Mark Teesdale singing a selection of show tunes. Other special guests included Dr. Mark Clodfelter, UD Associate Dean, Professional & Continuing Studies, Dr. Karen Asenavage Loptes, UD Director of OLLI, PCS and Andy Walpole, UD Associate Director of Development. As this was also I Heart UD Day, Tracy, Trish and Josh were on hand to accept donations to our yearly fund raiser and Nick supplied continuous updates on the totals. As the progress thermometer edged higher our hope for making our goal of \$12,000 was assured.





From the Chair

Annual Report -- June 2025

This has been a wonderful, but challenging year – increased participation by members, new faces, fantastic classes, and then the resignations of Sally Cole as Program Manager and Emily Mathews as Program Coordinator – the two people who set the bar so high for our program.

We are a Learning Cooperative that focuses on instructors and members working together to enhance a learning environment that meets the academic and social needs of all involved with OLLI.

My thanks go out to the Council members; our staff -- Tracey Marino, Trish Dennison, Lisa Seifert, and Josh Strassle; the instructors and hybrid operators; and all of our members who went the extra mile to keep our program functioning. I also have a special thank you for Karen Asenavage Loptes, our Program Director, who spent one day a week in our offices to address our needs and to direct our search to fill the vacancies.

Our members could choose from 93 courses taught by K/S instructors in both the fall and spring semesters, and 31 in the January Explorations. We also had the opportunity to enroll in classes taught by Wilmington instructors both online and hybrid.

Speaking of instructors – did you know that they are all volunteers? Their payment is in the form of the appreciation expressed by the members in their classes, the enthusiastic faces of the members who enrolled in their classes, the thanks that is expressed at the end of classes and the thoughtful evaluations provided by the members at the end of the term. Council members also showed their appreciation at the annual Instructor and Hybrid Operator Appreciation Brunch held in May.

To show our appreciation to the instructors, the focus of I ❤️ UD Day this year was on them with the “League of Exceptional Instructors” and fund-raising to offer instructors a \$75 discount off their OLLI membership in the semester they are teaching. As members they are eligible for all the advantages of membership including taking as many classes as they wish. With your help, we exceeded our fund-raising goal and raised over \$20,000.

In the spirit of transparency, I would like to make you aware of the fact that we operate on a balanced budget with our income coming from the memberships that cover all our expenses, including leases of the buildings, salaries and benefits, printing and mailing of catalogs, utilities and maintenance (including snow removal this year), scholarships and other expenses.

A committee was formed of three council members, Tracie, and Karen Asenavage Loptes to search for professionals to fill the manager and coordinator positions. After reading countless resumes and recommendations and interviewing candidates online and in-person, I am pleased to announce that the search has been narrowed to two extremely capable professionals. Both positions will be filled this summer, and OLLI K/S will begin the fall semester fully staffed.

We are also saddened that Josh Strassle and Dan Edwards, our Technical Support personnel, will be

Continued on page 3

leaving our program, and new tech people will be joining us in the fall. We appreciate all the assistance they have given to us.

For the past year, ten members and I have served on the committee to write a Statewide Five-Year Strategic Plan. After many meetings and countless revisions, we are nearing the completion of the plan.

The culmination of the year saw another successful UD by the Sea in May with 133 members and guests involved in eight exciting tracts. Tracie, Trish, and Lisa worked tirelessly for the past year to make this unique program a success. The gardening, environment, and Lewes history tracks took place at sites outside regardless of the Nor'easter that roared across the Delaware coast on Wednesday and Thursday. The leaders and members fastened their hoods and kept smiling, listening, and asking questions, regardless of the wind and rain. This is the enthusiastic spirit of OLLI members!

We will be celebrating our "Together We're Golden" anniversaries (Sussex OLLI 35+ years and Kent 15+ years) in November. A Wonderful Milestone of service! You are invited to be a part of this celebration.

Calendar of Events

June 17 -- Happy Hour, 4-6 p.m. Bethany Blues BBQ, Lewes

June 19 -- Happy Hour, 4:30- 6:30 p.m., The Green Turtle, Dover

June 19 -- Juneteenth Holiday, **OLLI Closed**

July 4 — Independence Day, **OLLI Closed**

July 7-31 — Summer session

July 15 -- Happy Hour, 4-6 p.m. Bethany Blues BBQ, Lewes

July 17 -- Happy Hour, 4:30- 6:30 p.m., The Green Turtle, Dover

Aug. 4 --Open House. Lewes, 10 a.m.-noon,

Aug. 6 -- Open House, Ocean View, 10 a.m. - noon

Aug. 7 -- Open House, Dover, 10 a.m.- noon

Sept 1 -- Labor Day Holiday, **OLLI Closed**

Sept 2 -- First day for Fall classes

It has been my pleasure to serve as your Council Chair for the past five years. I look forward to seeing you at our summer programs and at the Open Houses – Lewes – Aug. 4, Ocean View – Aug. 6, and Dover – Aug. 7. Enjoy your summer!

Connie Benko, OLLI K/S Council Chair

See pages 12 - 16 For committee reports

Thank you and Good Luck, Josh

With great appreciation for all his work these past months, Dr. Karen Asenavage Loptes, UD Director of OLLI, PCS, presented Josh Strassle with a wooden flag wall hanging made by Dr. Loptes's husband Arun Loptes. The flag was made of reclaimed wood from WW1 artillery shell casings. Our best wishes go to Josh.



We Recognize Our Instructors and All Our Volunteers

Thank you to all our volunteers, for your amazing generosity. All our volunteers are special. To our Instructors, we appreciate your on going resiliency, flexibility and dedication to sharing your knowledge, experiences and expertise with fellow lifelong learners.

Instructors

Alice Cataldi
Amber Woodland
Antoine Laguerre
April Wiaczek
Barbee Kiker
Barry Levy
Barry Moshinski
Ben Calamia
Bette Kaupa
Bobbi Neaton
Brendan Buschi
Bruce Crawford
Carol DiSabatino
Carol Neild
Carol Pollio
Carol West
Catherine Kennedy
Cezarina Cornejo Alzona
Charlene Jehle
Christine Eggert
Christopher Mark
Claire Brown
Connie Benko
Curt Smith
Dan Bilharz
Daniel Pritchett
Deb Roberts
Deborah Brown
Denise Bridgens
Denise Kaercher
Diana Beebe
Donald Egan
Dorian De Maio
Dorothy Greet
Douglass Miller
Elizabeth Jelich
Erica Holmes
F. Gregory Gause
Frank Powers
George Christensen
George Massey
Glenenise Parks
Glenn Rill
Harriett Smith
Harry Banks
Helen Hines
Iris Vinokur
Jack Bartley
Jack Vinokur
James DeMartino
James Patterson
Jane McGann
Janet Enslen
Jay Wheeler
Jean Pfluger
Jerome Bayer
Jim O'Leary
Jo-Ann Vega
Joe Chaikel

Joe DeFeo
John Gilly
John Huegel
John Roberts
Joseph Anastasio
Joseph Bailey
Joseph Cisco
Joseph Vesco
Joshua Strassle
Joy Russo
Judy Filipkowski
Karen McKinnon
Karen Schaub
Katherine Henn
Kathleen Ackerman
Kathy Huegel
Kevin Spence
Larry Watkins
Laura McGrew
Laurie deLaski
Lee Stanford
Leonard Haydychok
Lilisa Trala
Linda Dylla
Linda McSweeney
Linda Towers
Lisa Yacomelli
Lynn Kroesen
Madeleine Nichols
Marjorie Felty
Marlene Evans
Marty Rosensweig
Mary Boyd
Mary Ellen Winkler-Gunn
Mary Kate McKinley
Maureen Sherlock
Maurice McGrath
Melanie Moser
Michael Loftus
Michelle Butler
Mike Zito
Nancy Horan
Nancy Martin
Nick Simmonds
Nikki Roberson
Norm Golden
Oliver Hansen
Pam McMillan
Pat Newcomb
Patricia Thompson
Patricia White
Patrick Weaver
Patty Bennett
Paul Puch
Paul Smith
Peg Fisk
Peter Feeney
Peter Harrigan
Rae Tyson

Ralph Begleiter
Randi Cohen
Ray Glick
Rick Grier-Reynolds
Rita Myers
Robert Heifetz
Robert Jeter
Robin Roth
Rodney Lau
Roo Brown
Rosemary Engle
Russell Endo
Scott Allen
Sergei Boboshko
Sheila Exum
Stephanie Williams
Steuart Martens
Steven Bunoski
Susan Donahue
Susan McFarlane
Susan Salkin
Susan Watkins
Susan Yost
Tamara Steele
Teresa Ripley
Thomas Kelly
Tracey Marino
Travis Olszewski
Trudie Thompson
Veronica Grady
Wendy Leicht
William Zak

Hybrid Operators

Brendan Buschi
Bruce Crawford
Claire Brown
Janet Enslen
Jean Pfluger
John Roberts
Josh Strassle
Karen Schaub
Larry Watkins
Lynn Kroesen
Madelein Nichols
Marty Rosensweig
Pat Newcomb
Patrick Weaver
Susan Watkins
Tom Kelly
Tracey Marino
Trudie Thompson

Thank You Volunteers

UD By the Sea -- Learning for Fun at Rehoboth Beach

Beginning with a welcoming reception on Tuesday, May 20, over 130 OLLI members and guests from the entire state of Delaware experienced Osher instructors and subject matter experts to learn about Delaware's seashore communities, their history and their contributions to the state's economy. Other tracks focused on foreign affairs, gardening, healthy eating, space, ecology, the arts and crafts. Participants were able to choose from eight learning tracks. Tracks included two days of intensive learning and fun through presentations, field trips and demonstrations. Participants also enjoyed evening social events at the Atlantic Sands Hotel and Conference Center and an exhilarating trivia night.

Center: Conie leads her tract to visit the towers at Cape Henlopen

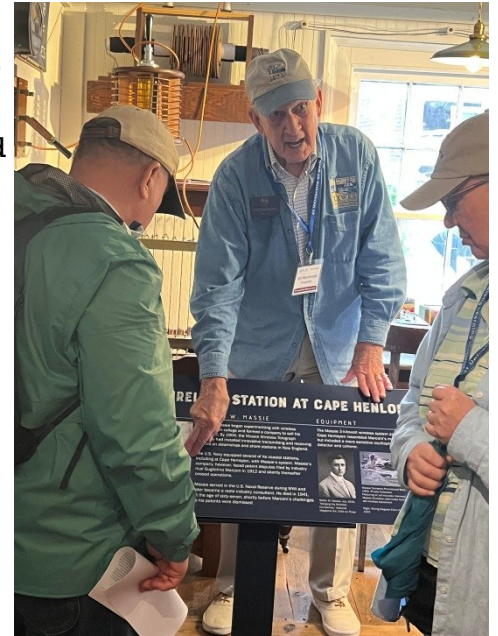
Top R: Guest speaker Bill Manthorpe guides a group at the Ryves Hold House in Lewes.

Center: Floyd Smith checks the size of the space suit.

Center R: The Gardening Track participants

Bottom R: Making a basket was just one of the crafts learned.

Below L: Jay Wheeler examines a space glove during the presentation



OLLI Dover Members Honor Retiring Dan Edwards



OLLI Dover members filled the Narthex at the Wyoming Methodist Church at the May 1st luncheon to honor Dover's retiring audio visual technician, Dan Edwards.

Karen Asenavage Loptes, many instructors and ex Kent/Sussex Program Manager, Sally Cole, praised Dan's pivotal role in training OLLI instructors to teach in hybrid and online formats. They noted his ability to handle tech glitches during classes quickly, quietly and capably, for instructors and students alike, over his four years with OLLI.

He seemed to be everywhere, arranging furniture before and after classes, and graciously handling issues at the front desk. Dan left with a box filled with notes from many OLLI members, expressing their gratitude for his many significant contributions to OLLI Dover and wishing him well.



Dover Happy Hour Packed with Fun



Karen Asenavage Loptes attends packed OLLI Dover Social at the Green Turtle Restaurant (Left) and Marge Felty hands out the prize for fun 'game' winner Trish White (right)

Submitted by Wendy Leicht

ISO Social Committee Co-Chair in Sussex County

If you enjoy organizing and hosting fun social events, we need your energy! Please reach out to Council Chair Connie Benko at cbenko@comcast.net if you are interested in co-chairing this committee. We work as a team, and will provide support of your events!

OLLI Members Learn New Ways of Artistic Expression



Students from our **Beginner Acrylics Part 2 class**, instructors Barry Moshinski and Joe Vescio, display their work.

Submitted by Barry Moshinski & Joe Vescio

OLLI English Country Dancers at Williamsburg Heritage Dancers' at George Washington Ball in Williamsburg, VA. on MARCH 1, 2025

Submitted by Carol West



OLLI students tackle the intricacies of **CALLIGRAPHY** with the expert guidance of instructor Sheila Exum.

Submitted by Wendy Leicht

OLLI Dover In-Person Classes Are Very Popular



CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES (left) has been a staple OLLI Dover class for over 10 years. Denise Kaercher and Joe Bailey facilitate these never dull, student based discussions. Respectful discourse is mandatory, while examining different points of view, to promote a better understanding of these complex often emotionally charged issues.

BOB HEIFETZ COURSES-(right) No dazzling technology here. Marker in hand, flip chart to the side, Bob analyzes familiar topics like the Bible in “THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE” or “THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN REDUX” and other literary works, providing fresh, keen insights while promoting very active class participation. The classes are always full and his students will affirm, you can’t take just one of Bob’s courses.



“Excellent” is the word students use to describe Instructor Kevin Spence’s “DELAWARE GOVERNMENT STATE AND LOCAL POLITICAL OVERVIEW”. OLLI students (left) from throughout Delaware, several who’d worked in or with state, local or national government, traveled to Dover for this course, a true master class, with guest speakers, off site opportunities to see government at work, extensive handouts describing the workings of our state and local government.

Submitted by Wendy Leicht



Got a Bright Idea?

OLLI classes are taught or led by volunteers. If you would like to share a special interest with other members and you have an idea for a course or are willing to serve as an instructor or instructor’s helper, write and submit a proposal. If you have questions, contact the Kent/Sussex OLLI office.



OLLI Members At Preview Of Derrick Wang Opera “FEARLESS”

OLLI Dover members were part of a truly unique experience, May 4th, a preview of the new Derrick Wang Opera, “**Fearless**” at the Air Command Mobility Museum in Dover. Surrounded by restored aircraft, opera cast members performed arias from this English language opera about WW II Chinese American pilot, Hazel Ying Lee. Cast members then joined Opera Delaware orchestra conductor, Managing Director, Opera librettist Derrick Wang, and 2 women Air Force members for a lively, interactive panel discussion.



Audience applaud “Fearless” cast members

Opera Delaware presented the World Premiere of “**Fearless**” on May 16 and 18 at the Grand Opera House in Wilmington, Delaware. Many thanks to OLLI instructor and Opera Delaware board member John Roberts and instructor Deb Roberts for notifying members of this event and instructor George Christensen for his Opera/music courses that continue to expand OLLI members’ knowledge of this art form.



Opera Delaware General Director Brendan Cook with OLLI Instructors Deb Roberts, Bob Heifetz and wife Sandy

Submitted by Wendy Leicht

OLLI Promoted at Dover Days

Claudia Young, Bobbi Neaton and Denise Kaercher manned a booth at the Dover Days Festival and Parade May 3rd to promote OLLI.



Tell your friends about OLLI

Help us continue to grow and

Welcome new members

Tours of Historic Dover Draw Statewide OLLI Members



In the **WALK AND TALK ABOUT DOVER**, course organized by Beth Jelich and Rosemary Engle, walking tours of the historic district of Dover, drew OLLI members from throughout Delaware. Led by expert speakers/guides, students learned the important role Dover played in the early days of the history of our nation, in visits to **Delaware Archives (left)**, **The Old State House (Center)** **The Green (below right)**, **Women of the Green (below left)** Additional sessions included; Revolutionary Dover and a visit to Old Christ Church.



By Wendy Leicht



Try It – You’ll Like It!!

UD OLLI Summer Session will be held July 7-31.

Featuring four weeks of fun topics, short courses and field trips

Catalogs are available **online** and for pickup in OLLI locations. View our interactive digital catalog for updates and the summer schedule by day! \$125 registration fee includes **unlimited** access to the full four-week session. (Special events may include additional fees.) Classes and activities are offered in person and online Mondays through Thursdays. Give OLLI a try. Experience all that OLLI offers!



Registration will reopen June 16.

In Remembrance of



Paul D. Collins of Lewes, DE, who lived life to the fullest and freely shared his many talents with others, died March 27, 2025 after a valiant battle against cancer. He was 75.

An accomplished technologist, executive, and business owner, Paul's love of adventure led him to travel

the world. His passions included sailing, community service, dogs, and lifelong learning.

Born in Richmond, VA, to Marion (Wright) Collins and Myron Collins, Paul graduated from John Marshall High School and attended Virginia Commonwealth University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in philosophy. He studied civil engineering at Virginia Tech and later received master's degrees in biopsychology and biomedical engineering from Rutgers University.

Paul retired in 2010 following a 25-year career with TotalTec Systems, where he served as chief technology officer and chief information officer. Earlier, he worked for New York State Institute for Basic Research.

An avid sailor, and sailboat owner for decades, Paul was a competitive sailboat racer in New Jersey and Delaware, participating in weekly races at the Lewes Yacht Club. Piloting his J/80, *Born To Run*, he won the Cape to Cape Challenge in 2013. Water adventures were a recurring feature of Paul's travels with his wife of 23 years, Denise Bridgens.

Frequent visitors to Paris, Paul and Denise also sailed the waterways of France from Normandy to Provence, as well as east and west. In Egypt, they rented a boat to sail the Nile at their own pace. They cruised the South Pacific on a small ship, allowing them to visit remote islands and gain a glimpse into remote village living. Other adventures included a Crystal Cruise to the Caribbean as well as travel to Romania, Hungary, and Venice, where Paul and Denise immersed themselves in the city's architecture, history, and food.

In 2023, the couple took their bucket list trip to the Arctic Circle in Norway to experience the Northern Lights. Nature seemed to know this was a special event and put on an amazing display.

When not traveling abroad, Paul and Denise loved Frostbite Falls Farm, their eight-acre horse farm in New Vernon, NJ, where they spent 10 years prior to moving to Lewes.

Paul embodied the spirit of community service, learning, and adventure in every aspect of his life. Paul and Denise were among the founders of the Lewes Unleashed dog park, and he served as its president for six years. Paul and Denise are a foster family for Cavalier Rescue USA. Paul also was a passionate supporter of the Lewes Historical Society, and for the past 13 years often could be found entertaining visitors to the Lewes Historical Complex.

Paul was a dedicated member, talented instructor, and extraordinary volunteer at the University of Delaware's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). He served on OLLI's governing council; chaired committees; organized social and fundraising activities; and generously applied his technical expertise for the benefit of OLLI's more than 2,000 members.

During the pandemic lockdown, Paul led the training of members to use Zoom, an incredible feat that kept the age 50-plus community connected when many other organizations fell silent. Thanks to his efforts, the University of Delaware's was among the first of 125 OLLI chapters nationwide to offer online classes during the pandemic. Paul also was instrumental in developing OLLI's hybrid learning model so that online participation could continue after in-person classes resumed.

Paul's first wife, Patricia Collins, passed away in 1999.

In addition to his wife, Denise, Paul is survived by his cousin Cathy (Collins) Listander, her son, Alexander; cousin Barclay Collins and his wife, Judy, as well as their daughters, Brittany and Bayleigh Collins; cousins Marie Listander, and Craig and Linda Bogley; and goddaughters Erika Nedderman and Emily Hamilton. Paul also is survived by his two Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, McKinley and Denali.

Plans for a celebration of life ceremony will be announced at a later date.

Memorial contributions may be made to Humane Animal Partners, online at www.humaneanimalpartners.org or by mail at Humane Animal Partners, 701 A St., Wilmington, DE 19801. When making a donation, please specify that it is in memory of Paul.

OLLI K/S Committee Annual Reports for 2024-2025

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE 2024-25 REPORT

Jim O'Leary & Deb Roberts Co-Chairs

The Academic Affairs Committee is indebted to the hard work and dedication of our Kent/Sussex instructors and the OLLI support staff for helping to make this past academic year so successful. We continue to grow our membership and have increased the number of courses offered by Kent/Sussex instructors. In response to requests from K/S instructors, Derek Cole and Ralph Begleiter offered a repeat of the series of three workshops initially offered in July 2023 to help develop/improve Power Point and Key Note presentations. Instructors participated in both Fall and Spring Semester Open Houses at all K/S locations- Dover, Lewes and Ocean View. They shared information regarding their upcoming classes with both new and returning members. Instructor Orientation sessions were conducted in both the Fall and Spring semesters to provide information regarding OLLI/UD policies and procedures and answer questions from potential and returning instructors. The Instructor's Handbook was made available to all participants. The Committee continued the initiative to identify and recruit new instructors, as well as working with current instructors to develop new courses. A presentation on the use of AI in the classroom was well received. The introduction of single-day programs proved to be a popular option for members enrolled in the summer semester. Members from all three counties took advantage of the opportunity to visit a variety sites in both Kent and Sussex. A new pricing structure for Summer Semester tuition was introduced with instructors offering classes over five-week and four-week periods, as well as one-week, and single-day events. While the venture proved to be an exciting experiment, courses offered for the summer 2025 semester will fall within the month of July, with single-day, 1,2,3 or 4 week classes available for the \$125. tuition.



Communications Committee (*The Tides*)

Lynn Kroesen & Wendy Leicht Co-Chair



This year *The Tides* has highlighted the activities and the connections that make OLLI the dynamic organization it is. Monthly Happy Hours, Open houses, the Fall potluck, the Instructor Appreciation brunch and UD By the Sea all point to the connections OLLI members enjoy.

With the excellent reporting of Co-Chair Wendy Leicht in Dover, we also cover classes and events in Kent County. Wendy's contributions have highlighted the instructors that are the strength behind Kent County OLLI vitality.

Showcasing our volunteer instructors and the interesting classes they teach continues to be the focus of *The Tides* and keeping the membership aware of the opportunities and benefits of their continued support of this cooperative organization.

We appreciate the submissions of pictures and articles from OLLI members and staff, and we welcome suggestions for future articles. Current and past issues of *The Tides* are located on the OLLI website. Anyone interested in knowing more about OLLI Kent/Sussex can see what "Learning for the fun of it" is about.

OLLI Kent-Sussex Library Committee Annual Report 2024-2025

Madeleine Nichols, Library Committee Chair



The 2024-2025 period for the OLLI Kent-Sussex Library in Lewes was notable for demonstrating “mastermind group” effects. A ‘mastermind group’ is the coordination of knowledge and effort in a spirit of harmony among people for a definite purpose. For OLLI members in Kent and Sussex, individuals have created a library for sharing their interests and shaping expectations. They continue to do so. In 2024-2025, OLLI member donations included 95 items; the library has grown to 1322 items. By contributing these non-fiction books, CDs, etc., OLLI members add to a shared resource that reflects the scope of OLLI’s instructional program.

Volunteers give their time and energy to make the donated materials available for members to borrow. Thanks largely to two library volunteers, April Wiaczek and DeAnna Poling, who coordinated tasks and schedules, work is shared flexibly among the volunteers. Throughout the Committee, several hours each week are dedicated to teamwork and enjoyment, with a schedule that adjusts by semester, season, and circumstance. The mastermind effects visible this year were supporting one another’s retirements and travels, appreciating each other’s skill sets, and learning how to improve overall.

During OLLI Summer Session, July 7 - July 31, the Library will be staffed on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. (longer if needed that day) so that onsite in-person help will be available. From now until the Summer Session begins, and for the weeks after Summer Session until Fall Session starts, volunteers will be ‘on-call.’ For questions about the Library, send an e-mail to Madeleine Nichols at nicholsm@udel.edu.

OLLI members are welcome to use the library. It is open whenever the OLLI KS program office is open at the Trinity Faith Christian Center, 15516 New Road, Lewes. To borrow an item from the library, write your contact information on a card (each book has a card inside for you to use) and put the card into the card box beside the door.

The take-as-you-want cart is a favorite. The cart is a tradition at OLLI for fiction books and other donations beyond the general scope of the OLLI curriculum. The cart is in the hallway of the OLLI Education Building, just at the library doorway. Word of mouth has made the fiction cart a vibrant, popular, and informal hot spot. No card is needed. Take what you enjoy. Bring what you think others will enjoy.

What is the OLLI Library Committee all about? It exists to maintain a library to support the members of OLLI Kent-Sussex for the needs, curriculum, and interests of instructors and members, with books and related media formats. What would a new volunteer be doing if you are interested in volunteering a few hours, as your schedule may allow? A job description might be:

- * Keep the shelves neat, “edged,” and not tight;
- * Add new books relating to OLLI courses, instructors, and members;
- * Follow the system to identify, list, and prepare “cards” for loaning the materials;
- * Maintain the take-as-you-want fiction cart;
- * Occasionally add muscle, if moving books and/or shelves is needed;
- * Show up; and
- * Enjoy conversation with team members

We encourage you to volunteer. Your interest and questions are welcome. Teamwork evolves to stay low-impact, flexible, and fun. Most volunteers prefer on-site tasks; others serve as mentors with expertise and knowledge, but not a schedule.

We look forward to making the OLLI Kent-Sussex Library even better. It is a group “mastermind” adapting to our retirement context. If you are interested, contact the OLLI Kent-Sussex program office, speak with April and DeAnna on a Tuesday morning during the Summer Session, or e-mail Madeleine Nichols at nicholsm@udel.edu.

Special thanks to the Library Committee members and advisors: Bernard Gilmore, Lynn Kroesen, Linda Levin, Laurie Nelson, Cynthia Opderbeck, Jean Pfluger, DeAnna Poling, Nancy Sakaduski, Floyd Smith, and April Wiaczek

2025 Annual Report – Strategic Planning Committee**Nick Simmonds, Chair**

The Committee met in December to review and update the 2021-2024 Kent/Sussex Strategic Plan. The review took place during a hiatus from the statewide strategic planning process, which was due to resume in spring 2025. Having the statewide process as a reference enabled us to sharpen the focus on protecting Kent/Sussex strategic priorities as part of the eventual statewide plan.

Summary of recommendations**Short-term priorities (12-15 mos.)**

- Fill open staff positions in Dover and Lewes
- Advocate for a review of the current pricing model within statewide planning process
- Conduct concerted lobbying for a permanent facility in Lewes.
- Advocate for greater transparency from UD in budgeting and resource allocation decisions
- Improve communication w/members regarding K/S budget

Longer-term (3-5 years)

- Secure UD commitment to lease a permanent facility in Lewes
- Begin community campaign to raise capital funds to refurbish and/or expand a permanent facility in Lewes
- Negotiate long-term arrangements to secure suitable OLLI facilities in Dover and Oceanview.

The Kent-Sussex Council adopted the above-referenced priorities by unanimous vote at the February 14th meeting.

Committee Members: Connie Benko, Paul Collins (in memoriam), Rosemary Engle, Ronnie Grady, Karen Schaub, Deb Roberts, Susan Salkin.

Attention OLLI Members

The Kent/Sussex OLLI Council anticipates several openings. Please consider becoming part of OLLI leadership and helping to perpetuate its mission in providing "lifelong learning" now and into the future.

For more information, contact [Connie Benko](#) or the OLLI Kent/Sussex office.



2025 Annual Report for Finance

Karen Schaub, Chair



As the end of FY'25 nears (June 20, 2025), it appears we will once again close the books in good financial standing.

Many OLLIs across the country generate revenue through endowments, fundraisers, partnerships as well as membership fees. Our expenses, however, are supported almost entirely by our membership fees. These expenses include salaries/benefits, building leases, utilities, internet services, phone services, building maintenance, postage/shipping, office/course supplies, credit card fees and other miscellaneous expenses.

As you know, the cost of everything is going up in leaps and bounds. To cover these cost increases our revenue must also increase. It is hoped that going forward our membership will grow, thus increasing our revenue. We look forward to this increased membership not only to cover the increase in expenses, but to build a stronger, more vibrant Kent-Sussex OLLI.

It has been my honor and privilege to serve on the Kent-Sussex OLLI council (and the councils before the merger) as Finance Chair for eight years. The time has come to step down from this role, passing the financial baton/books (aka Excel workbooks) to the next finance chair.

Social Committee Annual Report 2025

Marge Felty, Co-chair Kent



The Social Committee in Kent hosted Happy Hours the third Thursday of each month at The Greene Turtle. We continued this activity even when classes were not in session. Activities are included to keep the conversation going during dinner. It's important for us to maintain the social connection we all enjoy.

The August 8th Open House was fun with the Moo Mobile onsite. We all worked together to give tours, share class information, answer questions about OLLI and enjoy refreshments. The Spring Open House on January 8th was anything but spring like. Members braved the inclement weather to offer a welcoming glance at OLLI. The Open Houses encourage new membership but also give current members help with registering, an opportunity to hear more from instructors about course offerings and a

chance to visit with colleagues.

Several Social Committee members met in August with Connie at the Jackson House in Dover to discuss anniversary celebration details. We shared ideas about venue, food, cost and entertainment for 15 years of OLLI Kent and 35 of OLLI Sussex. In consideration of unexpected staffing changes, this event was postponed until Fall 2025 and discussion was tabled.

Breakroom snacks are provided by member contributions of \$\$ and food items. Dan and Susan Baddorf along with members monitored the breakroom. With no food services in the building we provided snacks and water.

In May we quickly organized a potluck lunch, after receiving the news that Dan Edwards was leaving. He has meant so much to our program for the past 4 years and will be sorely missed. Members brought delicious sides and desserts to go with the Wawa subs Karen provided.

Community Relations Committee Annual Report (2024-2025)

Denise Kaercher & Trudie Thompson, Co-chairs



Denise and Trudie attended Kent/Sussex Marketing Committee Meetings (on zoom) and Statewide Marketing Committee meetings (also on zoom) as much as we were able, as long as those committees were active. Unfortunately, the committees have not been active the past few months, but we will likely participate when they become active again. Community Relations and Marketing are very closely aligned, so it is very useful to be involved with both committees. There was a strong marketing effort when Pete Harrigan was chairing these committees, including billboards, newspaper ads, and theater slides.

We continue our separate outreach, during which we staff an OLLI information table at various events and locations to talk to people about OLLI. We also give out verbal and written information, including flyers and catalogs. When an information table is scheduled, OLLI Staff call for volunteers in the weekly update and the instructors' update.

Events in Sussex County have included tables at the Lewes Library, at the Lewes Farmers' Market, and at Coast Day, as well as at Milford Riverwalk. Events in Kent County have included tables at Dover Days, at the Kent County Thrive event, and at the Kent County Chamber of Commerce's Home and Garden show. At each event, we suggest people sign up to receive information from OLLI, providing either an email address and/or a telephone number. Although we rarely know who actually become members, we do speak with many people who are interested in learning more about OLLI specifically and lifelong learning in general. We have recruited not only members, but also instructors!

Although this outreach effort has not been completed yet, Denise is communicating with local libraries to plan for one time Class Presentations at the libraries from Kent instructors. The libraries will receive a list of topics to choose from. She has had positive response from the Dover Library as well as the new Smyrna Library. This is something we plan to investigate in Sussex County, as well.

In addition to OLLI Info Table events, we also attend all Open Houses in Kent and Sussex Counties (Lewes, Ocean View, and Dover) to assist in whatever way we can, as well as to chat with new and prospective members and provide them with information about OLLI. This includes chatting with people we meet at other events, hiking, just about anywhere and providing an OLLI "business" card if we don't have handouts (fits in a wallet.)

Please let us know if you have any ideas for other outreach opportunities that we have not already identified!

Editor's Note

Thank you to Jim O'Leary, Karen Asenavage Loptes, Trish Dennison, Lisa Seifert, Dorothy Greet, Karen Schaub and others who sent pictures from UD By the Sea. See page 5. I wish I could have used them all.

Lynn Kroesen, Tides Editor

