



Active Adults  
Inspired Learning  
Travel & Friendship

NOVA Annandale Campus.  
View of the CF Building overlooking the lake.

Volume 26—Number 5

# News & Views

May 2022

Wednesday, May 4

## LLI/NOVA FORUM VIA ZOOM

Social Zoom: 9:30 a.m. Announcements: 9:50 a.m. **Forum Presentation: 10:00 a.m.**  
(Click on the link in the upcoming email announcement)

### Native Plants and Native Pollinators



**Sandy Tarpinian**, an Extension Master Gardener since 2002, is excited to talk to us on Zoom about the important relationship among native plants and native pollinators. She will tell us how we can choose plants for our yards that will help preserve habitat for our native plants and wildlife. Continued development of cities and homes has led to the destruction and fragmentation of natural areas, and hence decreased native plants and native wildlife. Sandy will share suggestions on how to incorporate native plants in our gardens (of any size), balconies, and community open spaces. She will highlight the many types of native, easy-care plants that are adaptable to this metropolitan area's climate. Sandy will show how we can have beautiful gardens AND preserve the environment at the same time.

Sandy received her Master Gardener training at nearby Green Spring Gardens. She focuses her work on wildlife gardening using native plants, especially gardening for pollinators. She was instrumental in getting the City of Falls Church certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat with the National Wildlife Federation and remains the volunteer liaison for the City with them. A more recent interest is educating homeowners about replacing lawn with landscaping that will help control stormwater and provide cleaner water to soak into the ground. Sandy participates regularly in local projects to remove invasive plants and restore native flora in area parks. Her home garden has been a 20-year transformation from English ivy, Japanese hollies, and lawn into a wildlife garden alive with pollinators and birds, and much less lawn. When she doesn't have her hands in the dirt, Sandy spends a lot of time in Arizona where she loves to hike in Flagstaff and Tucson and is learning about the plants of the Sonoran Desert.



## President's Message



Like many organizations, LLI/NOVA has experienced a loss of membership since the start of the pandemic. I recently participated in a Zoom meeting of LLIs and similar organizations across the state of Virginia.

Some have seen their memberships shrink by half. As I've mentioned in previous President's Messages, your LLI board, and especially our Membership Outreach Committee, have taken numerous steps to attract new members. My shout-out this month goes to three LLI/NOVA members whose efforts are helping lay the groundwork for LLI's current and future membership growth:

★ New LLI member Julianne Wojay has assumed the role of liaison between us and our sister organization in Arlington County, Encore Learning. Julianne, who is also an Encore Learning member, is coordinating the sharing of classes, trips, and activities between our organizations, which have similar missions. This will enhance membership value and growth in both organizations. Thanks for stepping up, Julianne!

★ Long-time LLI member Rick Daniels is working with our Membership Outreach Committee Chair to promote LLI membership to Fairfax County's senior communities. Rick is currently researching which county committees would be worthwhile to join and which committee meetings to attend in order to disseminate information on the value and scope of LLI membership. Rick has participated in several meetings with contacts of agencies serving Fairfax's senior population. Good work, Rick!

★ Debbie Cohen is a new Board member who currently serves as Assistant Treasurer and will become our Treasurer in July. Debbie has initiated discussions with AARP in the hope of offering LLI classes to local AARP

members, providing an opportunity to attract new LLI members. AARP is excited about this potential collaboration and so are we. Way to go, Debbie!

Take in some fresh air and enjoy documenting plants and wildlife at our City Nature Challenge event on Sunday, May 1, noon to 3:00 p.m. at nearby Mason District Park. See page 4 for details.

Finally, the revitalization of LLI/NOVA's Study/Travel Committee is progressing wonderfully. Rod Dyke is the new chairman and will concentrate on the travel component, while Bonnie Hopler will coordinate the study/class component. See the Study/Travel article on page 3.

Derick Malis  
LLI/NOVA President

### Covid-19 Policy

as of 4/8/22

In order to ensure the safety of our members to the maximum extent possible, the Board of Directors has decided that, effective immediately, all attendees at **in-person** LLI/NOVA functions, including classes, forums, and excursions, must show proof of a full vaccination series and also recommended boosters. For details, click on: [Covid-19 Policy](#)



### Welcome, New Members!

We hope you will participate in our classes and volunteer your time and talent.

- Peter Brandman (husband of LLI Board Secretary Loren Brandman)
- Judy Harder (saw LLI listed with Prince William Lecture Series)
- Vince Romano (Steve Cohen referred)

## Study/Travel Program

After a pandemic-imposed break in our LLI travel program, the newly reconstituted Study/Travel Committee is gearing up to



explore and to offer travel opportunities. We will be mailing a survey to all LLI members to get a feel for their travel

interests. When you receive the survey, we would appreciate your taking the time to respond.

The Committee has updated the Study/Travel Program webpages with listings and descriptions of past trips. We encourage you to peruse them [here](#).

If you have questions or comments about this program or have an interest in joining the Committee, contact Rod Dyck at [rd2222@aol.com](mailto:rd2222@aol.com) or 703-328-1660 (except during May when Rod and wife Joyce will be traveling to Portugal and Madeira).

## Community Outreach



There is an incredible amount of need for help in Europe, especially with the devastation and displacement of people in Ukraine. Here in the U.S., many continue to have difficulties

buying groceries, with the cost of gasoline exacerbating the problem.

This month, we highlight two organizations that are helping with these problems:

- Jose Andres' group, World Central Kitchen (WCK), has teams in more than 30 cities and towns across Ukraine, as well as serving refugees in neighboring countries. Check out their website: [World Central Kitchen \(wck.org\)](http://WorldCentralKitchen(wck.org))
- Food for Others has put out a plea for food donations to the Power Pack Program for children. It provides food for kids on weekends,

when school is out. Please consider making a contribution on the website for Food for Others ([FoodForOthers.org](http://FoodForOthers.org)) or dropping off food items at their warehouse (use loading dock #2): 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax. They are open Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and can be reached at 703-207-9173.

Thanks for all you do to share and help others.



## Special Interest Groups

### Photography



Friday, May 20  
10:00 a.m.– noon

Braddock District  
Governmental Center  
meeting room,  
9002 Burke Lake Rd.  
(Kings Park Library).

New members are always welcome. Cell phone cameras are fine.

Contact Buck Myers, [hbm@hbmphoto.com](mailto:hbm@hbmphoto.com)

### Financial Discussion

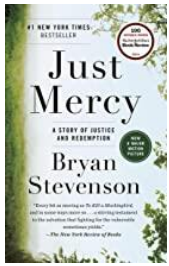


Thursday, May 12  
1:00 p.m. on Zoom.

Those interested should contact Doug Johnson at [linoavadoug@gmail.com](mailto:linoavadoug@gmail.com) to get the link.

Join us for a discussion of the fascinating and frustrating world of finance and investments. Meetings are on the second Thursday of each month (on Zoom until further notice).

## Favorite Books Club



Thursday, May 19  
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

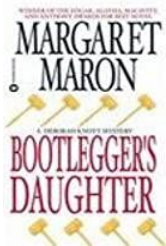
"Just Mercy"  
by Bryan Stevenson

Location: Braddock District  
Governmental Center

This memoir, written by an attorney, focuses on injustices in the United States judicial system. The chapters alternate back and forth between (1) the author's extensive efforts to overturn the wrongful conviction of Walter McMillian and (2) his work involving others who are poor or marginalized.

Questions? Contact Lynne Smaldone  
[smaldonega@hotmail.com](mailto:smaldonega@hotmail.com).

## Mystery Book Club



Monday, May 2  
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

"Bootlegger's Daughter"  
by Margaret Maron

Location: Kings Park Library

POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, [mlbednarsky@gmail.com](mailto:mlbednarsky@gmail.com)

## Tabletop Games



Wednesday, May 25  
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
(a new meeting day!)

Location: Kings Park  
Library

Join us for Las Vegas Royale.

POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, [mlbednarsky@gmail.com](mailto:mlbednarsky@gmail.com)

## Cultural Excursions

### Nature Talk on Zoom

Wednesday, April 27, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

LLI member Mary Alexander will be giving a Zoom talk on "Nature in your Backyard: Its

Secrets and Wonders." Mary is a naturalist who will share interesting information about plants and animals, which will be good preparation for the City Nature Challenge (next article). This is a Zoom event sponsored by the Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL). To get a Zoom link, register directly with the library at <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/9008512>

## City Nature Challenge



Sunday, May 1  
12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Want to enjoy the outdoors on May Day? Meet at Mason District Park's amphitheater at noon to start a walk where we'll identify plants and animals using the iNaturalist app. Our LLI coordinator for this event is Mary Alexander, a knowledgeable naturalist. For details and to register for the outing: [City Nature Challenge \(linova.org\)](http://linova.org)

## Fort Washington and Fort Foote

National Parks in Prince George's County, MD  
Thursday, June 9, 9:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Join us in an outing that explores the richness of the history of our country. A National Park



Service ranger will give us a free tour of historic Fort Washington. This fort has

stood as a silent sentry defending our nation's capital for over 180 years. It is one of the few remaining seacoast forts in its original design.

Then, a few minutes down the road we will take a self-guided tour of



Fort Foote National Park. Come see the two cannons that are still there, along with the remains of the fort's earthworks.

Both of these forts were part of the wartime defenses of Washington, D.C. during the American Civil War, which helped defend the Potomac River approach to the city. These forts were also used briefly during World Wars I and II. Our trip Leader is Deb Hunsberger. Register on the LLI website [here](#).

### Foodies & Friends



Tuesday, May 17, 1:00 p.m.

**Bollywood Bistro,  
3955 Chain Bridge Rd**

703-273-0031

*BHOJAN KAA AANAND LIJIYE* (enjoy your meal)! Join us for contemporary Indian cuisine. Bollywood Bistro serves both quality

interpretations of classic dishes and creative new takes on Indian cuisine. View the menu at [BollywoodBistro.com](http://BollywoodBistro.com). Vegetarian options are available. Individual checks will be provided.

The restaurant is located in the Fairfax Old Town Plaza, a block from the Fairfax City Regional Library. Plenty of parking is available. Heading north on Chain Bridge Road (Route 123) take the first right after crossing North Street into the parking garage, which has an elevator leading to the restaurant level. The parking garage is also accessible from University Drive. Heading north, take the first left after crossing North Street.

Our host for this event is Loren Brandman. RSVP by May 12 to Loren at [LorenBrandman@gmail.com](mailto:LorenBrandman@gmail.com). Come join us!

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## ELECTION SUPPLEMENT

**SEE NEXT 4 PAGES** for slate to be voted on for the

LLI/NOVA Board of Directors for fiscal year 2023 (July 2022- June 2023)

Plan to **attend the June 1 forum** (Zoom) to vote.





# ELECTION SUPPLEMENT

LLI/NOVA Board of Directors 2022-2023

The LLI/NOVA 2022 nominating committee is pleased to announce an outstanding slate of officers and board members for our 2022-2023 year. The Nominating Committee this year was comprised of Pat Neri (chair), Patti Volz, Gina Trapp, Dina Cotlier, and Phil Centini.

Please review the proposed slate of nominees and plan to **attend the June 1 forum** (Zoom) to vote on these candidates. Your vote is important.

Our Board of Directors is made up of 15 members elected by the membership. Board members serve a three-year term, with five members' terms expiring annually. If a position becomes vacant, a new member is elected to complete the unexpired term.

The slate of candidates for the Board is as follows:

Board candidates for three-year terms ending June 30, 2025:

- Gina Trapp
- David Drachsler
- Richard Ackerman
- Cathy Becker
- Debbie Cohen

Candidates to fill terms ending June 30, 2023:

- Patti Volz (term ending June 2023)
- Richard Martin (term ending June 2023)

LLI/NOVA has four officer positions elected by the membership from among the Board members. Officers serve a one-year term.

- President: Derick Malis
- Vice President: Patti Volz
- Treasurer: Debbie Cohen
- Secretary: Gina Trapp

Short biographies for each candidate are provided below.

## Derick Malis – President



Derick Malis joined LLI/ NOVA in 2018. He was born and raised in Northwest Indiana and graduated from Indiana University with an AB Degree in Anthropology and Political Science. He taught three years of high school, then moved to the Washington metropolitan area in 1974 and began a 27-year career with the YMCA. Derick served in many capacities at the YMCA including: Outreach Director, Program/Aquatic Director, International Director, Drug Free Zones Director, Associate Executive and Executive Director of three branch operations. Derick initiated a youth sports program in Arlington that exceeded 300 participants. He administered programs that served a variety of community needs, most prominent of which were childcare and day camp services in the Green Valley Community of South Arlington.

In 2002, Derick became the field organizer for the effort to bring Major League Baseball to Northern Virginia. In 2003, he became the fundraising manager for Vanguard Services Unlimited, a substance abuse treatment agency serving the Washington Metropolitan Area. Derick retired in 2012. He hopes

to continue to serve as LLI/NOVA President because it will be an interesting challenge and will provide him opportunities to advance the interests of an organization he values, as well as work with and get to know many talented and interesting individuals.

Derick is married to Inta Malis and has one grown daughter. He is an avid basketball fan who still plays (pre-Covid), enjoyed attending his daughter's games, and officiated local games for many years. He is a history buff who loves to travel. He has heated his house with wood for the last 30 years, doing all the chopping, splitting, sawing and chimney sweeping this entails. He is a fairly avid reader and enjoys most games and sports.

## **Patti Volz - Vice President**



Patti joined LLI/NOVA in May 2013 after a 33-year career with the Central Intelligence Agency and elsewhere within the Intelligence community, focusing on management, collection and requirements, and public affairs. Patti is currently LLI/NOVA's Vice President. She serves as chair of the Foodies & Friends Special Interest Group, and is a member of the Scholarship Committee. She earned her Bachelor's degree at the University of Virginia and her Masters in International Relations at Georgetown University, with an emphasis on the Soviet Union and China. Patti is a recipient of the CIA's Career Intelligence Medal, awarded for a cumulative record of service reflecting exceptional achievements that substantially contributed to the mission of the Agency. Patti believes strongly in education and has helped teach adults to read through the Literacy Council. She is an avid SCUBA diver and enjoys travel, reading, and growing herbs.

## **Debbie Cohen - Board member and Treasurer**



Debbie Cohen has 40 years of broad experience in finance, management, marketing, and communications at for-profit and non-profit organizations. She retired as Chief Development Officer of the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust (a mutual fund for pension funds) in early 2019. Her other financial management roles have included Vice President positions at Fannie Mae (Portfolio Management and Transactions, and Capital Markets) and Chief Operating Officer at the non-profit Forest Stewardship Council - US.

Wanting to give back to the community, Debbie has volunteered at various non-profits. At Shelter House, Inc., which manages homeless family and domestic violence shelters, she served for nearly 10 years in roles including President, Treasurer, and Chair of the Personnel and Finance Committees. Since her retirement, she has become a public-facing volunteer at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History; helps to provide emergency financial assistance and counseling at St. Paul's Lazarus Ministry to residents of the City of Alexandria; serves as Secretary and Treasurer on the Board of Directors of Nature For Justice, a new non-profit that uses nature to address the social justice needs of vulnerable populations confronting the climate crisis around the world; and is on the Board of Directors of The Campagna Center in Alexandria, which provides educational and social development programs for children, teens, and adults.

Debbie holds an MBA from the University at Buffalo and a BS in Biological Sciences from Cornell University. Debbie and her husband Steve joined LLI/NOVA in late 2019. They live in Annandale with their wonderful cat Knuble.

## **Gina Trapp - Board member and Secretary**

Gina Trapp has been a member of LLI since 2004. A graduate of Misericordia University in Dallas, PA, she taught high school English for a year before moving to Northern Virginia. She then worked for 30 years for the Inspector General at the Department of Housing and Urban Development as a writer/editor. She was a speechwriter for the Inspector General and was in charge of reports to Congress that highlighted instances of fraud, waste, and mismanagement of government funds. Gina was introduced to LLI by a former member who gave her a year's membership dues as a retirement gift. She has been grateful for that gift ever since.

Gina became active in LLI shortly after joining. She became a member of the Curriculum Committee in early 2005 and served on that committee for 13 years, two as Committee Chair. In 2005 she joined the LLI Board of Directors and served as Secretary for three years. She later served two additional terms on the Board. She was one of the original members of the Automation Committee in its early years and has twice served on the Nominating Committee. Gina has also volunteered at the Animal Welfare League of Arlington helping to "socialize" cats and arranging for adoptions.

## **David Drachsler - Board Member**



David Drachsler grew up in New York City where he went to George Washington High School and Uptown NYU at University Heights in The Bronx. After Harvard Law School and a year as a VISTA Volunteer Lawyer in New York, David became a lawyer at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington in 1969. He retired in 2004. At Labor, he worked on race, sex, and handicap discrimination cases and regulations, as well as wage and hour cases. He is a mediator trained by the

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and has mediated numerous EEO and labor management cases at federal agencies in the DC metro area. He is the author of numerous law journal and newspaper pieces on civil liberties, civil rights, and administrative law. One of his hobbies is attending Supreme Court arguments (pre-COVID) on cases of interest.

David was appointed by Gov. Mark Warner and reappointed by Gov. Tim Kaine to the Virginia Council on Human Rights and served as Vice Chair of the Council. He also was Chair of the Alexandria Human Rights Commission. He was a member the Board of Directors of the ACLU of Virginia for almost 25 years and still serves on ACLU-VA's Litigation Screening Committee. He has also served on the Board of Directors of the ACLU of the Nation's Capital and as the Virginia representative to the National Board of the ACLU. He is a volunteer attorney for Blue Ridge Legal Services in the Shenandoah Valley and at the Employment Law Clinic of the Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs.

David is married to the former Susan Price of Alexandria. They have three children and three grandchildren.

## **Rich Ackerman - Board Member**



After many years of classes at Northern Virginia Community College following retirement, Rich discovered LLI Nova and has been an active participant since early 2017. Rich has been a resident of Northern Virginia since moving here from New York City in 1968. He graduated from the City College of New York with a degree in Electrical Engineering and completed several years of graduate work in



Engineering Administration at George Washington University. Rich worked for the Navy Department in the field of aviation electronics for 7 years, eventually becoming the Navy's sole engineer responsible for autopilot systems on all Naval aircraft at that time. Rich left the Navy job to pursue his long-held passion for the environment and spent 30 years at the Environmental Protection Agency enforcing all the motor vehicle and fuel emissions rules and requirements which, at the start of his EPA work, only applied to passenger cars and light trucks but, at the time of his retirement, applied to every single internal combustion engine and every type of fuel product sold in the U.S.

Besides attending numerous NVCC and LLI classes since retirement, Rich has worked as a volunteer coaching kids' basketball at different levels; tutored students at the Alexandria Seaport Foundation and local elementary schools; volunteered at Fairfax County rec centers; served as an information aid at National Airport for over 10 years; and has performed other miscellaneous volunteer food assistance and delivery services. Rich's hobbies include: basketball until recently, when the old bones said it was finally time to quit; fishing both locally and in Alaska occasionally; SCUBA diving; boating; and doing all kinds of fixit projects for friends and family. He is excited to become a member of the Board to help LLI serve its members.

### **Richard Martin - Board Member**



Richard Martin is a retired foreign service officer who served 30 years in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Born and raised in Rochester, Minnesota, he received an MA from the University of Washington in Seattle and a PhD from the University of Wisconsin. After college, he and his wife, Aimee Moore Martin, worked as primary school teachers for two years in a blue-collar neighborhood in Bogota, Colombia. After graduate school, he was on the faculty of the Michigan State University Department of Communication. He joined USAID in Washington in 1977. In USAID "missions" in developing countries, he provided analysis and funding in the areas of basic education, health, and population. With his family, he lived and worked in Honduras, Guatemala, Egypt, and Peru. After retiring in 2006, he did USAID consulting, taught English as a second language, was a volunteer researcher at the National Archives, and flew his ultralight airplane. He has enjoyed LLI meetings, classes, and activities. He coordinates the LLI scholarship program and participates in the LLI photography SIG.

### **Cathy Becker - Board Member**



Cathy Becker retired from the Navy after 21 years of active duty, after which she went to George Mason University, earning an MS in Environmental Science and Policy. Rejoining the workforce, she spent 20 years as an environmental database manager and analyst. She also holds a BS Mathematics degree from University of California, Davis, and an MBA (Info Technology) from George Washington University.

In addition to enjoying LLI/NOVA classes for the past 10 years, she became the LLI Newsletter Committee Chairman last September. She also is active at the Lincolnia Senior Center (President of the Advisory Council and regular exercise class participant); NoVA Lights Chorale (Treasurer of the Board and alto!); Friends of Fairfax County Senior Centers (Secretary); Pinecrest Community activities; and frequent traveler on the back of her husband Dick's Goldwing motorcycle.