



News & Views

Volume 27—Number 9

September 2023

Wednesday, September 6 -- LLI/NOVA FORUM

LOCATION: Little River United Church of Christ, 8410 Little River Turnpike, Annandale
Socializing starts at 9:30 a.m. Announcements: 9:50 a.m. Forum Presentation: 10:00 a.m.

One Church's Fight for Inclusion and Diversity



David Roach, historian for Little River United Church of Christ (LRUCC), will share his extensive research into LRUCC's unique history, starting with its founding in the 1950s as a racially integrated church during an era of segregation in Virginia. With an affirmation "to celebrate diversity, independent thought, and faithful action," the church was founded by a group of people who had been members of various Congregational Christian Churches (CCC's) around the country. With the help of the Washington Association of CCC's, they formed a new church that was theologically liberal and open to people of all races and

backgrounds. The minister states that the founders felt this was their heritage – it was members of CCC's who "backed the Amistad slaves in court, started many of the schools for freed slaves in the South after the Civil War, and founded many of the historically black colleges, including Howard University in 1867." David will describe the challenges from both government and society that the church confronted in its early years and how it still practices its originating principles.

These core beliefs naturally led the church in 2001 to declare itself open to, and affirming of, all persons, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ+). This declaration included extending full access to the rites of ordination and marriage. Members are active and visible in support of the dignity and worth of the LGBTQ+ community in the metropolitan area.

LRUCC members regularly participate in courses and book groups on racial justice, white privilege, and other topics related to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Members are also active in the Center for Common Ground's Reclaim Our Vote effort, which encourages minority populations to vote. In collaboration with several other local churches, LRUCC also supports a neighbor-to-neighbor program that provides tutoring and other services to immigrant families in our community.

David moved to Annandale in 2015 and began attending LRUCC after having taught school in South Carolina from 1994 to 2015. He had heard many stories of why and how the church began, and when he became historian, he began to study its real past. Please join us for a true story of diversity, equality, and inclusion that is timely, fascinating, and from our own backyard.

After-Forum Lunch

After the Forum, join fellow LLI members for lunch and conversation at Kilroy's Restaurant, 5250A Port Royal Rd., Springfield, in the Ravensworth shopping center. Paul and Bonnie Hopler will host.

President's Message



I hope that your summer is going well and that you are perusing the new fall catalog that our Curriculum Committee has prepared. It is full of interesting and engaging classes that will be held in September through December. Registration began on August 7.

As I mentioned I would report to you, Inta and I returned from our three-week tour of the Baltic States on August 3. We spent three days in Riga, Latvia, "the Paris of the East," and then drove in a rental car along the beautiful coast of the Gulf of Riga towards Lithuania. We spent two nights in Klaipeda, Lithuania, while visiting the lovely beaches of Palanga and the Curonian Spit. We found the latter area to be similar to the Outer Banks of North Carolina except that after about 35 miles we encountered a barrier that warned and prevented further passage, as we would have entered Kaliningrad, Russia!

We then proceeded to Kaunas and to Vilnius, Lithuania's capitol.



Kaunas (Lithuania)
Castle in native garb

We found its medieval architecture, lively night life, and rich history of resistance to various invasions to be charming and inspiring. We visited the picturesque Trakai Island Castle and then returned to Latvia, where

Inta's Latvian language skills enabled us to locate her grandfather's former veterinary clinic in Madona – still in operation! He and his family had fled the Russian occupation at the end of World War II. Next, we entered and circumnavigated Estonia, visiting each of its four largest cities. On our return to Riga, we had another adventure in trying to locate Inta's mother's ancestral farm.

In summary, we found the cities very modern and sophisticated, the people friendly and accommodating, the beaches of the Gulfs of Riga and Finland and the Baltic Sea to be stunning, and the history and culture rich and interesting.

Returning to LLI issues, I want to thank members who have already contributed to this year's LLI/NOVA Scholarship Program. See the next article below. Also, be sure to attend our October 4 Forum, where one of our initial scholarship recipients (now an attorney) will speak briefly about what our support meant to him 20 years ago. The impact of your donations to this fund cannot be overstated!

Derick Malis
LLI/NOVA President

Scholarship Fundraiser

Please donate to our LLI/NOVA Scholarship Program before the **October 14** deadline. It is a wonderful cause – that of helping second-year students at the Annandale campus of NOVA complete their associate degrees. This enables them to either transfer to four-year colleges or graduate with the skills to become productive workers in our community.

Instructions on donating with credit card or check are on our LLI website; click [here](#). This year, as an added incentive, an LLI/NOVA family has offered to match gifts for the scholarship program up to a total of \$5,000.

NOVA Community
College students are very deserving of scholarship support. The student body is extremely diverse, with large numbers of international and minority students. Many have full-time jobs and are supporting families. Many are the first in their families to study at the college level. Our support makes a big difference in their lives.





Encore Learning is offering the following free online events to LLI members. No advance registration is required. Click [here](#) to join these events.

- Monday, August 21, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.
A Conversation with Author and DC Historian Briana Thomas
Details are available [here](#).
- Monday, September 18, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.
Legal Expert Chuck Rosenberg on Current Activities Affecting Us
Details are available [here](#).

Community Outreach



September is coming. School is starting. More wonderful programs at LLI. **And** more people in need. Our September Forum will feature a food collection for Facets.

[Facets](#) is in its 35th year of helping parents, their children, and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty – so often unnoticed – in Fairfax County since 1988. Facets has grown to be one of the major service providers in our area, assisting with food, clothing, shelter, jobs, and more.



Please put a reminder on your calendar – bring something for this non-perishable-food collection, such as cereal, peanut

butter, tuna, canned fruit, etc. We'll be at the door when you come to the September Forum. You make a difference!

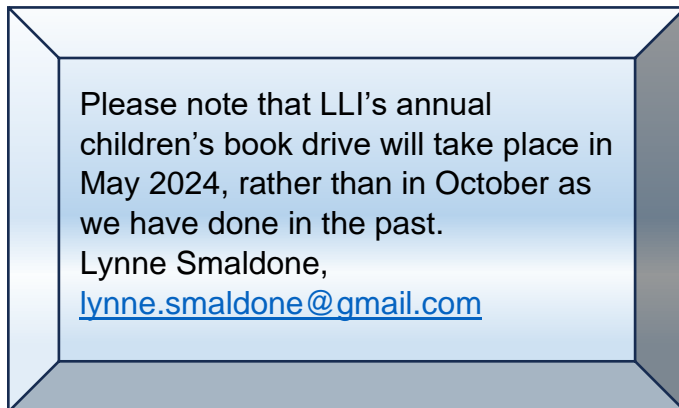
Bonnie and Paul Hopley will deliver our collection to Facets after the Forum.

Thank you! Betsy Pugin & Joyce Pomeroy



Welcome to our newest members:

- Ellen Kallas
- Wendy Sneff



Study/Travel Program

Because of the overwhelmingly positive word-of-mouth feedback received from Viking tour participants, for 2024 the Study/Travel Committee is delighted to offer an exciting trip through the heart of Europe on Viking's Grand European Tour. This tour embarks in Amsterdam on June 20, 2024, and disembarks in Budapest on July 2, taking us through four countries – The Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and Hungary – along the Rhine, the Main, and the Danube rivers. See the [Study/Travel Program website](#) for full information.

These trips are very popular and fill up early, beginning with the highest cabin categories.



Contact Committee Chair Rod Dyck (rd2222@aol.com or 703-328-1660) with any questions or comments.

Special Interest Group (SIG) Meetings at a Glance

KPL = Kings Park Library, 9002 Burke Lake Rd., Burke

POC = Point of Contact



Bridge – Wednesday, September 13 at Mason District Governmental Center, 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

All levels of player are welcome. For more information, click [here](#).

POC Bob Huley, roberthuley@cox.net

Favorite Books – Thursday, September 21, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at KPL, “The Lincoln Highway” by Amor Towles (Fiction). POC Lynne Smaldone, lynne.smaldone@gmail.com

Financial Discussion Group – Discontinued until new leader is found.

Please consider volunteering. Contact Derick Malis, derickmalis@gmail.com

Foodies & Friends – Thursday, September 21, 11:30 a.m. – See article below for details.

Mystery Books – Monday, September 11, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at KPL, “Basket Case” by Carl Hiaasen. POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, mlbednarsky@gmail.com

Photography – Friday, September 15, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at KPL

New members are always welcome. Cell phone cameras are fine. Normally meets the third Friday of every month. Contact Buck Myers, hbm@hbmphoto.com

Tabletop Games – Tuesday, August 22 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at KPL.

All are welcome to come and have some fun learning and playing “Penny Drop”!

POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, mlbednarsky@gmail.com

Foodies & Friends

Wednesday, September 20, 11:30 a.m.

[The Secret Garden Cafe](#)

404 Mill St., Occoquan

Please join Foodies & Friends in September when we visit historic Occoquan to lunch at The Secret

Garden Café in the heart of Old Town. The restaurant is toward the east end of Mill Street, the main street in town. Built in 1840, the building used to be owned by the town pharmacist and was home to many families over the years until it was finally sold and converted into a restaurant. The restaurant includes a beautiful garden that is delightful for relaxing with friends. All dishes are created from scratch using fresh, quality ingredients by restaurant chefs who bring their own influences and backgrounds. Please note that there are stairs leading to the restaurant’s entrance and therefore this restaurant is not wheelchair accessible. The stairs do have railings on both sides. There is on-street parking as well as free parking lots at each end of town. Separate checks will be provided. After lunch, a stroll through the town to visit the many small, unique shops would be a nice way to end your afternoon. There is limited seating for this outing. Please respond to our host, Mindy Rojahn (mindyroj@cox.net or 703-966-9889) by Monday, September 18. We haven’t been to Occoquan in several years so it will be nice to see the town again!



Cultural Excursions

Detailed information on excursions is available on LLI's website [here](#). All attendees must register as they would for a class so we may get a headcount of attendees. Questions? Contact Carol Fagnani (see member directory).

[National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, VA](#)

Thursday, August 24, 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Register for this event [here](#) before noon, August 22.

The National Museum of the Marine Corps contains world-class interpretive exhibits and unique artifacts, immersing visitors in the sights and sounds of Marines in action.

The museum is located just off I-95, 36 miles south of Washington, D.C. This is a meetup; members are encouraged to carpool. Admission to the museum is free. We will be given a guided tour by docents who will provide an overview and point out highlights of the museum. Lunch is on your own and available [onsite](#). While we're in the lunchroom, there will be a display of Vietnam War weapons and items, and a volunteer will present a program about these at 12:30 p.m.

Hiking, wine tasting, and lunch, Fauquier County

Wednesday,
September 27

Hike at [Sky Meadows State Park](#)



led by naturalist and LLI member Mary Alexander, followed by a visit to a nearby winery, [Delaplane Cellars](#), for wine tasting and a bring-your-own lunch. There is a \$10 entrance fee payable at the park. We will meet in the parking lot in front of Mount Bleak House, then hike from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Wine tasting at Delaplane Cellars will be 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. Register for the Sky Meadows State Park hike [here](#), and for the Delaplane Cellars Winery [here](#). Join us for both or for just the hike or the winery.

Afternoon Tea at [Café Renaissance](#), 163 Glyndon St. SE, Vienna

Thursday, September 28, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.



Enjoy a classic afternoon tea at Café Renaissance. The tea will include sandwiches, scones, sweets, and delicious tea selections. The cost is \$52 per person (\$40 for the tea, plus tax and gratuity). Pay at the tea

either by cash or check made payable to Bonnie Hopley. Please put your payment in an envelope with your name on it. Free parking is available at the restaurant. Register for this event [here](#).

Save these excursion dates. Details are available [online](#) and will be published in future newsletters:

- Thursday, October 12: [Ben Lomond Historic Site - Prince William County](#)
Our visit will include a house tour and a docent-led tour of the grounds and outbuildings, including the slave quarters. In addition, site historian Dave Born will present a talk about the enslaved workers' lives – their clothing, food, work, and more. (Please note: This historic site is normally closed to the public Tuesday through Thursday; this is a special event for LLI members and friends.) Register [here](#).
- Saturday, October 14: **Hike along the Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Canal - D.C.**
Participate in Locktoberfest 2023 with a six-mile guided group walk organized by LLI member [Steve Brown](#). We'll begin our scenic and historic stroll at the boathouse at Fletcher's Cove at 11:30 a.m. and walk along the C&O Canal towpath toward Georgetown. We'll eat lunch in Georgetown, then return to Fletcher's Cove. This outing is limited to 24 participants. Register [here](#).