



News & Views

Volume 28—Number 9

September 2024

Wednesday, September 4 -- 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.

First LLI Scholarship Winner – How Things Worked Out!



We are so pleased to have as our speaker Makan Shirafkin, the first recipient of an LLI/NOVA scholarship. Makan is Persian, one of many in our region who fled Iran after the fall of the Shah. As a child of an immigrant family, he has a unique appreciation for what immigration status means. But his story is so much more.

At the age of 19, Makan was wrongly charged, convicted, and imprisoned for 14 months for a crime he did not commit. After serving his sentence, he enrolled at Northern Virginia Community College to earn his Associate's Degree. He applied for and was awarded our first LLI Student Leadership Award in 2000. He went on to James Madison University to earn a business degree, all while working part-time and then full-time, sometimes sleeping in his car to manage the commute from D.C. to Harrisonburg. He worked in business for a short time, but felt unsatisfied and unhappy, so began talking to law schools. Despite his criminal conviction, Howard University took a chance on him and gave him a scholarship, conditioned on his remaining in the top 10 percent of his class, which he proceeded to do!

He passed the bar in D.C., but because of the (wrongful) conviction, had to get the D.C. Appeals Court to allow him to practice law. Referencing *The Innocence Project*, the Court voted in his favor, creating a new precedent. He began practicing in D.C. in 2009 but wanted to practice in Virginia, where he had been convicted. He continued what would ultimately be a 27-year long fight to have his conviction in Virginia overturned, and was rewarded when the Honorable Judge Steve Shannon of Fairfax Circuit Court exonerated him and admitted him to the federal bar. Amazingly, this was the same judge who presided over his criminal trial!

In Makan's law office in Tysons Corner, there is a replica of the Cyrus Cylinder, which symbolizes the first charter of human rights, lying at the feet of Lady Justice. Makan loves the ability to give voice to the accused and to protect their rights. He believes in giving back to the community and helping the next generation overcome its obstacles. He also advocates for criminal justice reform and is the founder of Justice For All, a Political Action Committee.



(This piece uses material from City Lifestyle website article [here](#))

After-Forum Lunch

Join fellow LLI members for lunch and conversation at Silverado, 7052 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Patricia Brennan will host.

President's Message



As your new president, I'd like to talk about my two current areas of focus for LLI -- participation and volunteering.

Participation

September is almost upon us and our new fall catalog is full of exciting, different, and

intriguing classes! Try to enroll early for classes so that we can be sure we have the minimum number of registrants to hold the class, and so that your calendars get marked. Our success depends upon your participating in our classes. Consider subjects that may be out of your normal areas of interest. You just might find them stimulating and eye-opening.

We are incredibly fortunate to have so many instructors willing to volunteer their time to prepare for and to give classes. We have tapped into professors from NOVA, George Mason, George Washington, Georgetown, and American universities. We find people who just want to share their passions with others. For example, almost all of the rangers from the National Park Service have advanced degrees and are glad to talk to us about niche areas of history that they are passionate about. Retired Federal employees from State, DOJ, and other departments and agencies also love to pass on their expertise and observations. And we can't ignore the many art lovers, naturalists, and storytellers who have mesmerized us with their videos and presentations.

The best way to thank our instructors is for us to robustly participate in taking classes, so that they know their time and expertise are appreciated. Most of our classes are in person this semester although a few will be on Zoom. In addition, most classes are held in NOVA's CN building, which is directly adjacent to the parking garage (and has a ramp accessible from the second level of the parking garage).

Volunteering

The Membership Outreach Committee is in need of a new chairman and a couple of members to help with its work. Mary Alexander has been chair for over three years, energetically publicizing and ensuring our participation in events where we can highlight the organization. She wants to continue working with the committee, but also wants to branch out and work on other committees.

The Membership Outreach Committee has two main functions; recruiting new members and helping to retain members.

- The **Recruitment Subcommittee** publicizes LLI through various media outlets, such as Fairfax County's *The Golden Gazette*, District Supervisor Walkinshaw's *The Braddock Beacon*, and local HOA newsletters. It also promotes LLI and its programs, through flyers and in-person, at local Fairfax County libraries, senior centers and organizations, local expositions, other public spaces, and independent living facilities.
- The **Retention Subcommittee** serves as a welcoming committee for new members by connecting with them by phone and email. The subcommittee also reaches out to non-renewing members to encourage them to renew as well as to learn if we have shortcomings that need to be addressed.

If you can help us out, we'd really appreciate it. Always remember: Our strength is our members.

Patti Volz
President, LLI/NOVA

HOORAY!

*Fall 2024 Catalog is online [here](#).
Registration for classes is OPEN!*

Support LLI Scholarships at NOVA



LLI has been helping deserving Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) students with LLI member-supported scholarships for many years.

Last year we provided \$32,572 for student scholarships.

Most recipients are from low- and moderate-income Northern Virginia families, and many are from other countries or minority populations. All are upwardly mobile and aspire to productive and fulfilling professions. Many earn two-year associate degrees and go on to full university degrees at other institutions. Others complete vocational programs and begin their careers. The Northern Virginia economy benefits from the large number of skilled professionals NOVA produces.

LLI scholarships are awarded by the NOVA Foundation to NOVA students selected by the College's Office of Student Financial Aid. LLI specifies the number and sizes of scholarships we can give each year, and the scholarships are awarded to students with exceptional academic and leadership accomplishments and who have financial need.

LLI members are encouraged to donate to this valuable initiative. As an added incentive, once an initial \$7,500 has been raised, gifts totaling up to an additional \$5,000 will be matched by a generous LLI member. To contribute online or by check, follow the instructions [here](#).

LLI/NOVA Board of Directors

President: Patti Volz	Members:
Vice Pres: Patricia Brennan	Richard Ackerman,
Secretary: Gina Trapp	Mary Alexander,
Treasurer: Richard Sigman	Cathy Becker, Andy J Butler,
Past President: Derick Malis	Debbie Cohen, Steven Cohen
Administrator: Janice Viola–	Fritz Ernst, Carol Fagnani,
Contact at admin@llinova.org	Richard Martin, Ed McKnight

LLI Newsletter Committee

Chair: Cathy Becker, cz.becker@verizon.net
Loren Brandman, Patricia Brennan



Our newest members:

- Leigh Anne Kao
- Robert McCarthy

Member Passing



Eda Pickholtz, a member of LLI for 25 years (1998-2023), passed away on August 8. For Eda's obituary, click [here](#).

Eda loved to participate in LLI's poetry classes. She had a life-long interest in reading,

discussing, and writing poetry. Here is one of her haikus (with the perfect 3 lines in 5, 7, 5 syllables):

Tiny fishermen
On an outing with Daddy
Throw little fish back.

Fort Hunt History – Virtual Seminar

Saturday, September 7, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Speaker: Daniel Blier, National Park Service

Forces of Necessity: Fort Hunt & International Collaboration During World War II & The Cold War

Reservation required. Sign up [here](#) to register and to receive the link for this **virtual** seminar. Limited spots available.



Legal Expert Chuck Rosenberg on Current Activities Affecting Us

Monday, September 16, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
on Zoom. Details are available [here](#).

Community Outreach



September begins with Labor Day. There are so many residents who labor all year and still have trouble getting nutritious food for their family. Donations to food pantries slow down during the summer, too. Let's help with re-stocking those shelves.

At our September Forum, we'll be collecting for **ECHO** (Ecumenical Community Helping Others) in Springfield. Their food room continues to break records in terms of the number of people they serve. Their list of needs includes dried beans, rice, cereal, canned fruit and tomatoes, canned milk, masa corn flour, and pasta. They also welcome donations of hygiene and laundry products. Click [here](#) for more info on ECHO.

Capital Area Food Bank has an interesting, short video giving a sense of the need for food in our area. Take a look at the "Hunger Is Here" video [here](#).

Please try to bring items for the food collection when you come to the Forum on September 4.

Thanks for remembering our residents in need.

– *Betsy Pugin and Susan Jagen*

Let's Tackle Tech!

Want to know more about artificial intelligence and robotics? Confused about what batteries you need for your electronic devices?



Wondering how to set up your new iPhone?

The Tackling Tech class at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, September 6 will feature a panel discussion by our five tech-savvy volunteers. Each of them plans to make a 10-to-12-minute presentation, after which they'll field your questions in the time remaining. Please register for this Zoom event [here](#).

Remember that they stand ready to help you personally negotiate technology. Call or email them to arrange mutually convenient meetings.

- Susan Bigman, Apple devices: stbigman@gmail.com, 703-862-9323
- Luis Granados, Android devices: granadoskerry@yahoo.com, 202-460-1270
- Andy Butler, available evenings and weekends: abutler@pbs.org, 703-451-5834
- Fritz Ernst, a Mac specialist: fritz_ernst@msn.com, 703-569-3898
- Steve Malone: steven69m@icloud.com, 202-494-3773

Study/Travel Program

Australia & New Zealand – January, 2025.

Escape the cold of January for an epic adventure with Grand Circle Travel to explore the breathtaking landscapes and vibrant cultures of Australia and New Zealand. See the [LLI/NOVA Study/Travel Program webpage](#) for full details.



In conjunction with this trip, a class highlighting the places on the itinerary will be held on Thursday, September 19, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. The class is open to all LLI members, whether planning to participate in the trip or not. For more information and to register for the class, click [here](#).

Special Interest Group (SIG) Meetings at a Glance

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

POC = Point of Contact

Bridge – Wednesday, September 11, and Thursday, September 26, 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. at Mason District Governmental Center. All levels of player are welcome.

For more info, click [here](#). POC Bob Huley, roberthuley@cox.net

Favorite Books – Thursday, September 19, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at KPL

"West with Giraffes" by Lynda Rutledge (fiction).

POC Lynne Smaldone, lynne.smaldone@gmail.com

Foodies & Friends – Thursday, September 19, 12:30 p.m. See article on page 6 for details.

Mystery Books – Monday, September 9, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at KPL

Our September book is "Skinny Dip" by Carl Hiaasen. On October 7, we'll review "Dead Mountain" by Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child. POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, mlbednarsky@gmail.com

Photography – Friday, September 20, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at KPL. New members are always welcome. Cell phone cameras are fine. Meetings are normally the third Friday of every month.

POC Buck Myers, hbm@hbmphoto.com

Tabletop Games – Tuesday, September 24, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at KPL.

POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, mlbednarsky@gmail.com

Tech SIG/Service – POC is Patricia Brennan, patriciabbrennan@cox.net. See POCs on page 4.

Visual and Performing Arts – Sunday, September 8, 10:00 a.m. at the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden. Join VPA members for another sketching outing. Click [here](#) for more information. RSVP at vpa@llinova.org if you would like to participate.

Did you miss a Zoom class?

Note that recent Zoom classes have been recorded for members to view on our website [here!](#)

Photography SIG photos taken in response to the theme "The Letter L." The subject for this theme was anything that STARTS with the letter L. More Photography SIG photos are posted [here](#).

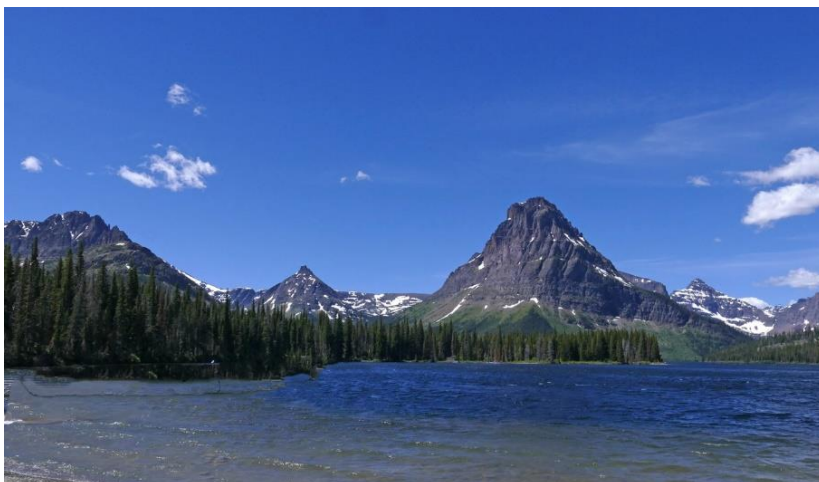


Photo by David Drachsler – 2 Medicine Lake



Photo by Mary Lu Bednarsky – Locks and Bagels

Foodies & Friends

Thursday, September 19, 12:30 p.m.

[Pho Hot Restaurant](#)

7442 Little River Turnpike, Annandale



Join Foodies & Friends as we are transported to Vietnam. **Pho Hot Restaurant** celebrated its 20th anniversary this May. A hidden gem located just inside the beltway in Little River Shopping Center, Pho Hot invites you to experience the taste of authentic Vietnamese food. Although pho soup is the house specialty, many other delicious dishes are also available. Check out the restaurant's website [here](#).

Separate checks will be provided, parking is easy, and the restaurant is totally accessible.

Tempie Tavenner is your host for this luncheon. RSVP to TemTav@verizon.net by September 17. Hope to see you there!



GMU Center for the Arts Tickets

Opera: "Carmen"

Discounted tickets are still available for the Virginia Opera's production of "Carmen" on Sunday, November 17, 2:00 p.m. at GMU: **\$34 per seat** for Orchestra seating (regularly \$110). More information about seating, pre- and post-performance discussions, and the opera itself is available [here](#). The opera will be sung in French with English surtitles. Contact Anna Dixon (vpa@llinova.org) with questions.

Other GMU performances



LLI/NOVA members can go to the Visual and Performing Arts website and use our specially-designated code to purchase \$15 tickets to the following performances:

- **Mark Morris Dance Group** – Saturday, October 19, 2:00 p.m.
- Two School of Theater matinee performances for a fall musical (title not yet confirmed) – Saturday, November 2, and Sunday, November 3, 2:00 p.m.
- **Take 6** (a holiday acapella group) – Sunday, December 1, 2:00 p.m.
- **The Peking Acrobats** - Sunday, March 9, 1:00 p.m.
- **Shakespeare's "The Tempest"** – March 29 and 30, and April 4 and 5, 2:00 p.m.
- **Cirque Mechanics: Pedal Punk** – Saturday, April 5, 2:00 p.m.
- **Virginia Opera: "Loving v. Virginia"** – Sunday, May 4, 2:00 p.m.

Cultural Excursions

Detailed information is available on the [LLI website here](#). Register for excursions as you would for an LLI class. Send trip ideas to Carol Fagnani (contact info online).

Friday, September 20: O Street Museum in the Mansion, D.C. – 10:30 a.m. – \$30

O Street Mansion is a hands-on, immersive museum/hotel/showpiece with a focus on history and music legends. Discover the reason the Smithsonian rated it in the “Top 5 places to explore – in the world!” and Bookings.com listed it as “The coolest place in DC!” Embark on an exciting self-guided adventure through secret doors and hidden passages. No maps or hints — just your sleuthing skills!

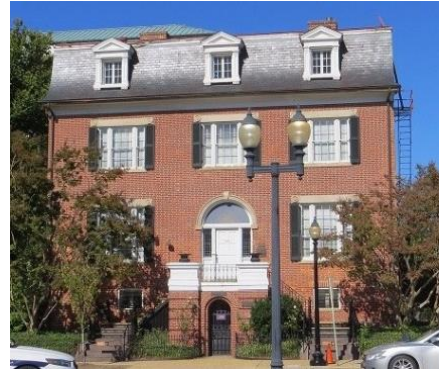
Each visit promises access to at least 60 legendary rooms and 32 concealed passages. The set of rooms and secret doors that will be accessible to visitors changes daily. It’s your challenge to find and conquer! Learn more about this unique site at omuseum.org.

Most everything from the fashions to marvelous hats (one of Audrey Hepburn’s hats from *My Fair Lady*), books, records, and much more are for sale. After visiting the museum, LLI members may want to enjoy finding lunch together in Dupont Circle.

Registration: This event is open to members and guests. Please register [here](#) so that we know how many will be attending. Leader is Suzanne Holland.

Transportation: The O Street Museum is conveniently located less than a block from Embassy Row and the Dupont Circle Metro stop on the Red Line (south exit). We recommend you go green and use public transportation when you visit. On-street parking near the Mansion is limited. If you choose to drive, convenient and affordable parking may be booked in advance through the parking reservation app SpotHero.

Thursday, October 17: Belmont-Paul House, D.C. – 11:00 a.m. – Free



The [Belmont-Paul Women’s Equality National Monument](#) has played a significant role in the U.S. women’s suffrage and equal rights movements. From this house, suffragist Alice Paul and the National Woman’s Party developed strategies and tactics to advocate for the Equal Rights Amendment and equality for women. President Obama designated it as a national monument in 2016.



The building is not fully handicapped accessible at this time since the exterior lift is out of service. The museum is hopeful the lift will be repaired by October. There are 15 steps from the street to the entrance level. Once inside the museum, all the exhibits are on one floor.

There is no cost. We will meet at the Belmont-Paul Monument at 11:00 a.m. The museum doesn’t have a cafeteria, but there are many restaurants in the area. Lunch arrangements will be up to individual participants.

Registration: This event is open to members and guests. Please register [here](#) so that we know how many will be attending. Leader is Regina Rogers.

Transportation: The Belmont-Paul House is a short walk from the Union Station Metro stop on the Red line and from the Capitol South stop on the Orange, Silver, and Blue lines.