



# News & Views

Volume 29—Number 10

October 2025

## Wednesday, October 1 -- 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.

Tell Steve Cohen if you have a joke to share for "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum"

### Animal Control in an Urban Environment



This month we welcome **Jennifer Toussaint** of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington to talk about her work in animal control, both domestic and wild. Jennifer has been the Chief of Animal Control in Arlington County since 2016 and actively works to improve animal welfare. She implemented a local ordinance with regard to exotic animal care and ownership and has expanded the animal control department's outreach efforts in providing support to pet owners to enable higher owner-pet retention. Jennifer is known nationally for her work on humane urban wildlife management practices and has been published multiple times. She is a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)-trained officer and has trained both animal control and welfare professionals on a variety of topics including active listening, emergency preparedness, emotional support and service animals, animal neglect/cruelty investigations, and wildlife intake and triage. Jennifer is also the incident commander for the Community Animal Response Team (CART) in Arlington.

Jennifer is the 2017 recipient of the Virginia Animal Control Association's *Dr. Kent Roberts Animal Control Officer of the Year* award, and has received a commendation from the Virginia General Assembly for her service. In 2020, her department won the *Outstanding Agency of the Year* award from the Virginia Animal Control Association. In 2021, Jennifer was awarded a *COVID-19 Heroes Outstanding Individual Service* award by Arlington County. In 2023, she was selected as an honoree for the *Northern Virginia Leadership Center for Excellence 40 under 40* leadership award. She is a graduate of Moravian College with a bachelor's degree in political science and Spanish. Jennifer shares her home with her rescue dogs, Rheagan and Ducky.

\*\*\*\*\*

**After-Forum Lunch** — Join fellow LLI members for lunch and conversation at *Kilroy's* in Ravensworth Shopping Center, 5250A Port Royal Rd., Springfield. Patricia Brennan will host.

In our newsletters, you will see underlined names of people who are points of contact (POCs). Click on a name to sign into our website and find the POC's email in our member directory.

## President's Corner



I want to give YOU, the LLI/NOVA members, a big shoutout for your impressive spirit of giving. At last month's Forum, we filled a van with gently-used business clothing to be donated to NOVA students so that they can

dress appropriately for interviews and jobs. Also, we brought donations for the FACETS Emergency Response and Basic Needs service; Bonnie and Paul Hopley loaded them into their car and delivered them after the Forum. Thank you for giving with open hearts!

Thanks to Betsy Pugin for her many years of managing our monthly Forum donations and to Patricia Brennan for finding out about the NOVA clothing drive. The clothing drive for NOVA was so successful that it will probably be done quarterly or semiannually.

This month we are kicking off our LLI/NOVA scholarship drive, and I know you will again give generously. Our contributions are deposited directly into the scholarship awardees' accounts to go toward their tuition. This year, our new Scholarship Committee chair, Steve Cohen, reported at the Forum (see next article) that we have matching pledges to meet various goals. Our donations greatly help students stay in school -- often while supporting family and holding down jobs.

Many of us are fortunate to be able to have the means to relieve some of the pressure of daily life on our neighbors and on NOVA students and to help them succeed. To be associated with a group like LLI is truly humbling, and I thank you.

Remember: **Our strength is our members!**

Patti Volz ([president@llinova.org](mailto:president@llinova.org))

President, LLI/NOVA

## LLI/NOVA Scholarships



One of LLI/NOVA's proudest and most important accomplishments is our commitment to supporting second-year students at the Northern Virginia Community College through our annual

scholarship campaign. As of September 18, we have raised \$7,100 of our \$20,000 goal. There is a challenge grant in place that will kick in as we reach certain milestones: at \$7,500, an additional \$2,500 will be added; at \$15,000 an additional \$2,500 will be added; and if we reach our goal, an additional \$2,500 kicks in.

Our past recipients are extremely grateful for our support, sending thank you letters including the following comments:

- "Thank you so much...The scholarship will provide me many opportunities to further my education...with the necessary financial stability."
- "I express my deepest gratitude for the generous scholarship...this will not only help me financially, but will also give me the motivation to continue my studies with renewed vigor and enthusiasm."

Many of our past winners have not only been going to school, but work as well. Some are the first in their family to go college. All need the financial support that we have provided.

The scholarship committee realizes that our members receive many requests for donations to all sorts of worthwhile causes. But this is our opportunity to make a tangible difference by supporting the students at our own local community college. Please donate generously by check or online, by clicking [here](#). **Our closing deadline for this scholarship year is October 14.**

[Steve Cohen](#), Scholarship Committee Chair

## Community Outreach

At our October 1 Forum, we will have an opportunity to assist a food pantry serving our local youth. As we did in the spring, we will collect for the John Lewis High School in Springfield.

The high school's [Leadership Program](#) students will be taking some field trips and would really appreciate our help with snack foods that can be eaten on the go. Please bring non-perishable snack foods like cheese crackers, granola bars, bagged cookies, boxed juice drinks, and other similar foods. Motts Fruit Snacks are appreciated for those who keep halal. Their staff leaders were overwhelmed by your generosity previously – let's keep it up and help the next generation of student leaders!

– [Betsy Pugin](#)

## Who Do You Know? (Instructors needed)

We're looking for engaging presenters, and sometimes the best instructors are right in our own neighborhoods! Do you have a friend, neighbor, or colleague with an interesting career, life story, or unique experience? Someone who could inspire or inform others in a 90-minute session? Take a moment to think about the people in your circle. If someone comes to mind, please encourage them to submit a class proposal [here](#).

Or, if you prefer, share their contact information with me and I'll be happy to reach out to them about teaching for LLI. We're eager to offer a wide variety of engaging classes for the winter/spring 2026 semester. The deadline to submit class proposals is October 17.

[Ellen Wallace](#), Curriculum Committee Chair

## Winter Luncheon



Friday, December 5,  
11:00 a.m.

Please mark your calendar to attend LLI/NOVA's Winter Luncheon at the Country

Club of Fairfax. Details will be included in next month's newsletter. Point of contact is [JoAnn Ackerman](#).

## LLI Potluck Picnic

Monday, October 6  
12:30 – 3:30 p.m.



### [Roundtree Park](#)

3320 Annandale Rd., Falls Church

Come join the fun! All members/guests need to register (by October 3) to attend, even if you had already registered for the original June date. LLI will provide the hamburgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers, buns, and condiments. There is a \$10 per-person fee that will be collected on site. Click [here](#) for details/registration and to sign up to bring a potluck side dish and to help with tasks like grilling, cleanup, and more.

## NOVA Annandale

**National Writing Day, Friday, October 3,  
11:00 a.m.** CE Building

Long Nguyen and Kimmy Duong Forum space



Bestselling author **David Baldacci** will give the keynote address for the National Writing Day, which inspires students with the power of the written word. LLI is invited to attend.

After the talk, there will be book signing along with a meet-and-greet opportunity with the author. Seating is limited to 200, so be sure to register [here](#).

**NOVA Annandale Lyceum**  
**2025 Fall Speaker Series**

**Tuesday, September 30, 1:00–2:30 p.m.**  
Room CA 302

**Topic: From Poetry Translation to Poetry Writing with a Beat**



*Dr. Yuemin He*  
*English Professor*



*Judith Gomez*  
*Musician*

The presentation will feature recitation of translated poems and songs to the accompaniment of music.

**Wednesday, October 29, 12:00–1:00 p.m.**  
Room CA 302

**Topic: Space Quest with Dr. Jim**



*Dr. James Thorne*  
*Space Scientist*

Dr. James Thorne will discuss his involvement with the Space Quest Program for educational outreach to elementary students about space science, supported by original story songs.

**In Memoriam**

**Christine Suskiewicz**

passed away on August 26.

She was an active LLI member since joining in 2015. Chris attended many classes and was a valued member of the Curriculum Committee’s “Brain Trust” – the editors who bring each semester’s class catalog to all of us. She enjoyed the editing job and was masterful at rewriting awkward or wordy prose. Chris was an avid reader, an excellent baker, and a talented seamstress. She loved exploring ethnic food and traveling. Her friends remember her as warm, always upbeat, and never “down.” She was an attentive and caring friend, always putting people first. Chris will be sorely missed by many.



Chris was a registered pediatric nurse at Children’s National Hospital and the Children’s Rehab hospital in D.C. She then worked in many roles over many years at Kings Park Elementary School.

Chris is survived by Lew, her husband of 55 years, three adult children, and two grandchildren.

**A memorial service will be held on Sunday, October 12, 2:00 to 3:00 p.m., followed by a Celebration of Life from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at Demaine Funeral Home in Springfield. See the [obituary](#) for more details. All are welcome. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider donating to World Central Kitchen or Planned Parenthood in Chris’s memory.**

**LLI/NOVA Board of Directors**

**President:** Patti Volz  
**Vice Pres:** Patricia Brennan  
**Secretary:** Bill Tuceling  
**Treasurer:** Richard Sigman  
**Past President:** Derick Malis

**Members:**  
Richard Ackerman,  
Mary Alexander,  
Cathy Becker, Andy Butler,  
Debbie Cohen,  
Steven Cohen, Fritz Ernst,  
Carol Fagnani, Ed McKnight,  
Ellen Wallace

**LLI Newsletter Committee**

**Chair:** Cathy Becker, [newsletter@llinova.org](mailto:newsletter@llinova.org)  
Loren Brandman, Patricia Brennan

## Special Interest Group (SIG) Meetings at a Glance

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

**POC** = Point of Contact

**Bridge – Wednesday, October 8, and Thursday, October 23, 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 Martin Stutsman, [bridge@lilnova.org](mailto:bridge@lilnova.org)

**Cinema – Wednesday, October 22, approximately 12:00 p.m. at Cinema Arts Theatre in Fair City Mall, Fairfax.** Let Patricia Brennan ([cinema@lilnova.org](mailto:cinema@lilnova.org)) know to add you to the email list.

**Favorite Books – Thursday, October 16, 11:30 – 1:00 p.m. at KPL**

Our choice for October is “The Hazelbourne Ladies Motorcycle and Flying Club” by Helen Simonson (fiction). POC Lynne Smaldone, [favoritebooks@lilnova.org](mailto:favoritebooks@lilnova.org)

**Foodies & Friends – Wednesday, October 15, 1:00 p.m.** See article on page 7 for details.

**Mystery Books – Tuesday, October 7, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at KPL**

Note the day change from the usual Monday meeting; the day was changed to avoid a conflict with the LLI picnic. We will review “Man in the Water” by David Housewright. For our November 3 meeting, we will discuss “Gray Mountain” by John Grisham. For December, we will discuss “The Spy Coast” by Tess Gerritsen. POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, [mysterybooks@lilnova.org](mailto:mysterybooks@lilnova.org)

**Photography – Friday, October 17, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at KPL.** New members are always welcome. Cell phone cameras are fine. POC Buck Myers, [photo@lilnova.org](mailto:photo@lilnova.org)

**Tabletop Games – Tuesday, October 28, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at KPL.**

Game is to be determined. POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, [tabletopgames@lilnova.org](mailto:tabletopgames@lilnova.org)

---

### Cultural Excursions

#### Tour The Falls Church – Free

Friday, November 7, 10:30 a.m. to noon  
166 East Broad Street, Falls Church

Join us on a tour of The Falls Church, an historic church that was established in 1732.

This event is open to members and guests. Find details about this excursion and register [here](#). The church is wheelchair accessible.

Trip Leader: [Regina Rogers](#).

#### Tour of Historic Blenheim – Free

Thursday, November 13, 10:00 a.m.,  
Fairfax City.

Join us for a guided tour of Historic Blenheim. The tour will be 1.5 hours and will involve walking uphill to the historic house from the Civil War Interpretive Center.

Click [here](#) for detailed information and registration. Trip leader: [Bill Tuceling](#)

#### Afternoon Tea at The Things I Love – \$45

Thursday, November 20, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.  
9084 Center St., Manassas

Carpooling is recommended. The location is accessible with two steps at the entrance.

Your registration is confirmed once your payment by cash or check is received by Susan O’Boyle. First come, first served. November 10 is the deadline for your payment to be received. There will be no refunds. However, if you are unable to attend, you may transfer your registration on your own. Notify Susan of your replacement’s name and contact info.

Meet in front of the venue a few minutes before 1:00 p.m. Contact [Carol Fagnani](#) for Susan’s contact info (she is not in our member directory).

## **Visual and Performing Arts – Discounted Tickets -- A Season of Human Imagination in Motion**

This year's lineup for greatly discounted tickets at George Mason's Center for the Arts reads like a kaleidoscope of human creativity—every performance has a different lens on what bodies, voices, and instruments can conjure. From the crystalline chamber music of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields to the deep cultural pulse of Les Ballets Africains, the season stretches across continents and centuries. Puppetry from Indonesia whispers grief and memory without a word, while Circa flips gravity itself to ask what it means to be human in the 21st century. Between those poles we get the fierce athleticism of Hubbard Street Dance, the timeless resonance of Limón, the wit of Mnozil Brass, and the passion of Virginia Opera. Taken together, it's not just a roster of events—it's a living syllabus of art in all its forms: classical, modern, global, experimental, and joyously unpredictable. Each performance is a reminder that art does not merely decorate life; it interrogates it, animates it, and leaves us changed. *For more information contact [Anna Dixon](#).*



LLI members can purchase seats for **\$15** (plus \$4 fee), a mere fraction of the regular price, with access to orchestra, balcony, or box seats. Also, pre-show **chats begin an hour before curtain**, offering a glimpse into compositional craft.

### **Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble (Friday, October 3, 8:00 p.m.)**

Drawn from the principal players of the legendary Academy of St. Martin in the Fields—a chamber ensemble will feature Schubert's Octet in F major, D. 803, considered one of the greatest chamber works of all time. Don't miss this; many LLIers plan to attend! Click [here](#) for more detail.

### **Papermoon Puppet Theatre: *Puno, Sewing Memories* (Saturday, October 4, 2:00 p.m.)**

This Indonesian puppetry marvel crafts narrative without a single spoken word—yet speaks volumes. *Puno, Sewing Memories* follows Tala, a young girl navigating the tender yet urgent terrain of grief after her father's passing, discovering how love and remembrance can be stitched into everyday life. Audio-described for inclusion. For more detail, click [here](#).



### **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago (Saturday, October 25, 8:00 p.m.)**

This Chicago-based company is celebrated for pushing the boundaries between contemporary and classical dance with athleticism, precision, and sheer emotional force; you'll be left breathless. For more detail, click [here](#).

### **Limón Dance Company (Saturday, November 1, 8:00 p.m.)**

Founded on the modern dance principles of José Limón, this troupe's performances are rooted in a poetic physicality that bridges narrative and abstraction, memory and sensation. For more detail, click [here](#).

### **360 ALLSTARS (Saturday, November 8, 4:00 p.m.)**

This crew brings the urban and hip-hop vernacular into the theater, turning the stage into a breakdance battlefield laden with flair, acrobatic feats, and collective fire. Click [here](#) for more detail.

**Winter/Spring 2026**—Mark your calendars for these; click on (hyperlinked) titles below for detail.

- [Mark Morris Dance Group & Music Ensemble](#) – Saturday, February 7, 8:00 p.m.
- [Virginia Opera: \*Intelligence\*](#) – Sunday, February 15, 2:00 p.m.
- [Les Ballets Africains](#) – Friday, February 20, 8:00 p.m.
- [Mnozil Brass](#) – Sunday, March 1, 4:00 p.m.
- [Circa: \*Humans 2.0\*](#) – Sunday, April 12, 7:00 p.m.



## Foodies & Friends

Wednesday, October 15 – 1:00 p.m., [Idylwood Grill & Wine Bar](#)  
2190 Pimmit Dr. Unit B, Falls Church

Nestled in Falls Church, this chef-owned, family-run restaurant has offered a blend of contemporary American dishes infused with Italian, French, and Mediterranean flavors. This year the restaurant is celebrating 20 years in an inviting and charming atmosphere. They also proudly offer what they call “our exquisite selection of wines.” Please join us at Idylwood Grill & Wine Bar and indulge yourself in an unforgettable dining experience.



RSVP by October 13 to our host, [Loren Brandman](#). There is free parking and the restaurant is accessible. View the lunch menu [here](#).

## Welcome, New Members

- Kathy Luetkemeier
- David & Nancy Roodberg
- May Roy



## Greeting Cards for our LLI Friends

Do you know an LLI member who might appreciate receiving a greeting card with get-well wishes, sympathy, “thoughts of you,” or other supportive words from LLI? If so, contact [Arlene Gribben](#).



*Colorful Chairs, by Mary Lu Bednarskey, Photo SIG member*