



News & Views

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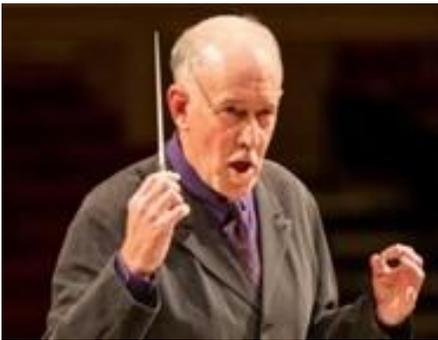
Wednesday, March 4 -- LLI/NOVA FORUM

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.

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

Interview with Maestro James Ross, Alexandria Symphony



For our special Forum speaker, Maestro James Ross, music director of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra (ASO), we will hold this Forum in person, rather than on Zoom.

The ASO proudly identifies him on its web site as “an improviser, a horn-blower, a dogged questioner of concert rituals, a man who likes to move, a phrase-shaper, and a firm believer in the humanizing impact of classical music on the lives of those it touches.” For this program, LLI’s new Forum chair, Mary Alexander, will interview the conductor, a Boston native, about his life and passion for music.

This year will be James Ross’ eighth and final season as music director of the ASO. He is credited with reshaping the organization’s artistic profile and in navigating the symphony through the pandemic. He states, “My upcoming eighth season as music director will be my last in that capacity before morphing elegantly into the role of music director laureate. I am beyond grateful to all those who have supported me and our orchestra along this musical journey.”

James Ross is the former orchestra director of the National Youth Orchestra – USA at Carnegie Hall and is on the conducting faculty at the Juilliard School. He served as Professor and Director of Orchestral Activities at the University of Maryland at College Park for a distinguished 16-year tenure. He is internationally recognized for his work advancing the future of orchestras through cross-genre collaborations. He studied conducting with Kurt Masur, Seiji Ozawa, and Leonard Bernstein.

After-Forum Lunch - Join fellow LLI members for lunch and conversation at [Jukebox Diner](#), 7039 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Patricia Brennan will host.

Coat Drive for NOVA Students – NOVA Provost Diane Mucci has informed us that they have been conducting a campus coat drive, as many of the students don't have warm coats for the winter. It has been so successful that there is demand for more gently used, clean coats and winter accessories. We are invited to help. If you have extra winter outerwear, and welcome the opportunity to free up closet space, please **bring items to the March 4 Forum**. We will get them delivered to Provost Mucci’s office.



President's Corner



LLI's immediate past president Derick Malis stepped up to chair the Nominating Committee, and Board members Andy Butler and Ed McKnight volunteered to serve on the committee. Our by-laws require that two LLI members at

large also be included, so Pete Brandman and Bonnie Nelson have volunteered. To all members of LLI, if you are interested in running for a Board position, please contact [Derick](#) by **March 6**. Remember, we are all in this together!

As I've said many times, your generosity to our community is incredible. It is also gratifying to receive acknowledgement for our efforts. The NOVA Foundation sends us monthly notes of appreciation for our contributions made on behalf of our Forum speakers to its Student Success Fund. This is an emergency fund that enables individual students in critical need of support to continue their studies. Our efforts do make a difference!

VP Patty B and I participated in a regional LLI conference several weeks ago. Discussions included ways to increase membership and to engage members, as well as approaches to course makeup. Two interesting suggestions were to (1) issue "guest passes" to classes for prospective members and (2) hold an informal "coffee klatch" where members could socialize more easily. Twenty minutes before our Forums is not enough time for new members, in particular, to meet folks. If you have ideas on how to welcome and mix with new members, please let me know at my email below. We also gleaned a few ideas for new classes and forums.

Should you have anything at all (good or bad) to pass on, please send me an email. Always remember: **Our strength is our members!**

Patti Volz (president@llinova.org)
President, LLI/NOVA

Community Outreach



It's time to break out of hibernation and meet in person for our March Forum, which also means we will be collecting for a local food pantry in person.

We will collect for a well-loved group, [ECHO](#) (Ecumenical Community Helping Others). ECHO's mission is to provide services with "compassionate support, treating all with respect and dignity, and continuously [improve] how we serve."

In 2025, ECHO distributed over 314,000 pounds of food, the equivalent of over 261,000 meals for local families. And LLI donations were a small part of that.

Please bring something non-perishable, no matter how small, for the collection at the Forum on March 4. The ECHO website has a list of [food and personal care items most needed](#). Examples include dried beans, canned goods, masa corn flour, snacks, cereal, toothbrushes and toothpaste, lotions, laundry detergent, sanitary napkins, and Band-Aids.

Please also bring any paper grocery bags you can. We'll use them for the collection or to give to the food pantries.

Thank you for being generous as always!

– *Betsy Pugin and Debbie Omori*

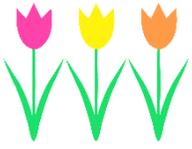
Recorded Zoom Classes

Did you know you can view a recording of past Zoom classes and Zoom Forums? Log in, click on Classes & Events / Online Class Materials / Zoom Links to Spring 2026 Classes/Forums. Recordings remain online for 18 months.

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](#).

Spring Classes



Make sure that you keep visiting our spring-class listings and registering for classes, both in person and on Zoom! Topics for the remaining classes include Neuroanatomy; Communicating with Confidence (by a TEDx presenter; see article below); WWII Internment of German, Italian and Japanese Americans; Everything You Wanted to Know About Cults; Daylight Savings Time; Women and Incarceration-The Hidden Impact and Pathways to Justice; Estate Planning; Understanding Your Ears and Auditory Health; Hyperlocal Peacebuilding; Agriculture Meets Art; How Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven were Influenced by Turkish Military Music; several nature classes; and many more.

Special Opportunity

Who doesn't want to communicate better? Here's your chance! [Register](#) for **"Communicate With Confidence: Presenting, Connecting, and Thinking on Your Feet,"** an LLI class/workshop to be given by Meducate Global principal Lawrence Sherman. This session will be held on Wednesday, **April 15, at 1:30 p.m. in CA 302** (stadium seating).



Sherman specializes in strengthening how professionals -- particularly those in medicine, EMS, emergency management, rescue, and disaster response -- learn, teach,

and translate knowledge into practice, especially when the stakes are high. However, for LLI members, he will focus on communications skills we can use daily, even in retirement.

"Most of us have spent a lifetime communicating — leading meetings, teaching,

managing teams, raising families, or navigating tough conversations," he said. "We've learned a lot along the way, but sometimes it helps to step back and look at how adults actually learn, listen, and change."

This interactive workshop will explore the art and science of communication and presentation for experienced professionals who still enjoy learning something new (and having a few laughs along the way). We'll blend practical techniques, real-world examples, and light improvisational activities to explore how to structure a message, engage an audience, and respond confidently when things don't go as planned.

You'll leave this LLI class with new insights into how adults process information, why people tune in or tune out, and how to connect more effectively in every setting — whether it's a presentation, a conversation, or a moment that catches you off guard.

In addition to lecturing in healthcare communication at the [Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science](#) of New York, Stony Brook, Sherman has also performed stand-up comedy — and once even took the stage at Carnegie Hall. He also did a TEDx talk at an international conference in Maastricht, the Netherlands, called "Turning medical education inside out and upside down."

He is a Visiting Professor of Medical Education at the First Affiliated Hospital of Sun Yat Sen University in Guangzhou, China, and holds an International Development position with The International Association for Health Professions Education.

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

Foodies & Friends

Monday, March 16, 11:30 a.m.,
The Old Brogue, 760 Walker Rd., Great Falls



Be ye Irish or a descendant of another nation, don your green and join us at [The Old Brogue](#) for a pre–St. Patrick’s Day lunch. This well-known and beloved establishment first opened on St. Patrick’s Day in 1981. Bring yourself in green attire. The restaurant will provide a cozy, charming atmosphere and delicious food. After all these years, The Brogue still stands out for its Irish banger rolls and is known for the very best fish n’ chips. Your host will provide necklaces and several prizes. Separate checks will be provided. There is plenty of parking just outside the door. RSVP to your host [Jan Pry](#) by March 9. May the road rise to meet you!

Special Interest Group (SIG) Meetings at a Glance

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

POC = Point of Contact

Bridge – Wednesday, March 11, and Thursday, March 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 Martin Stutsman, bridge@lilnova.org

Cinema – Wednesday, March 25, approximately 12:00 p.m. at Cinema Arts Theatre in Fair City Mall, Fairfax. Let Patricia Brennan (cinema@lilnova.org) know to add you to the email list.

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

Our selection for Women’s History Month is “The Woman They Could Not Silence: One Woman, Her Incredible Fight for Freedom, and the Men Who Tried to Make Her Disappear” by Kate Moore (nonfiction). POC Lynne Smaldone, favoritebooks@lilnova.org

Foodies & Friends – Monday, March 16, 11:30 a.m. See article above for details.

Mystery Books – Monday, March 2, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at KPL

We will discuss “The September Society” by Charles Finch. Our April 6 book is “The Shot Caller” by Jen Danna and Sara Driscoll. POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, mysterybooks@lilnova.org

Photography – There will be no meeting in March. Our next meeting will be Friday, April 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

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

Our game will be Qwirkle. POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, tabletopgames@lilnova.org.

Visual and Performing Arts – Discounted Tickets for two more performances this season!

LLI members can purchase orchestra, balcony, or box seats **for \$15** (plus \$4 fee). Pre-show chats begin an hour before curtain. *For more information contact [Anna Dixon](#).*

- [Mnozil Brass](#) – Sunday, March 1, 4:00 p.m.
- [Circa: Humans 2.0](#) – Sunday, April 12, 7:00 p.m.

Cultural Excursions

Detailed information about each excursion is in the posting of the excursion on the class-registration webpage. Reserve your space on an excursion by registering on the LLI website. Carpooling is strongly encouraged; contact the LLI leader if you are interested in participating in a carpool as a driver or passenger. Contact [Carol](#), committee chair, with any questions.

Afternoon Tea – \$48

Tuesday, March 17, 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.,
[Lily's Chocolate & Coffee](#), Vienna

See detailed information [here](#). There is one opening available to join this event. Carpooling is highly encouraged due to limited parking. Limited accessibility (two steps and small bathroom).

Virginia Garden Week Tour – \$50 (purchase tickets online in advance)

Sunday, April 19, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., Leesburg

Leesburg is a charming, historical town that was briefly our nation's capital during the War of 1812. This year's self-guided tour meanders through the side streets, taking a peek into a few of Leesburg's special homes and gardens, including George C. Marshall's home, Dodona Manor, along with five private houses built in the early 1800s and 1900s, showcasing a range of gardening styles. More information is available [here](#) and on the LLI registration [page](#). Carpooling is recommended.

Trip leader is [Carol Fagnani](#).

City Nature Challenge – Free

Friday, April 24, 10:00 a.m. to noon
Hidden Oaks Nature Center, Annandale

Each spring, cities around the world participate and compete in the Challenge, simply by observing and recording the wild plants and animals seen in nature. Those involved are taking part in one of the largest community science events in the world, as well as learning more about nature in our own urban

environment. [Mary Alexander](#), an LLI Board member who has taught a number of LLI classes on nature, is organizing this event in collaboration with Ginny McNair from Arlington Regional Master Naturalists. Register [here](#).

Trillium Hike – \$26, divided among participants. Wednesday, April 29, 8:30 a.m.
Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area, Linden

Join LLI's annual field trip to see the spring flowers, especially the trillium flowers. Join [Mary Alexander](#), LLI instructor, member, and Virginia Master Naturalist, on an organized walk to look for trillium, spring beauties, trout lilies, showy orchids, and other spring flowers. More information about the trillium trail is available [here](#) and on the LLI registration [page](#). Meet at Hidden Oaks Nature Center.

Pohick Episcopal Church Tour – Free

Wednesday, May 13, 1:00 p.m., Lorton

Join us for a tour of Pohick Episcopal Church, "the Mother Church of Northern Virginia." Free, but contributions to the church are welcome. Details [here](#). Trip leader is [Regina Rogers](#).

Ball-Sellers House Tour – Free

Wednesday, June 17, 11:00 a.m., Arlington

The Ball-Sellers House, built in 1750, is the oldest structure in Arlington County. It is on the National Register of Historic Sites and it is designated a Virginia State Historical Landmark. The house has been restored to its condition from the colonial era. Free, but contributions are welcome. Details [here](#). Trip leader is [Regina Rogers](#).

LLI/NOVA Board of Directors

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