



News & Views

Volume 30—Number 7

July 2026

There will be no Forums in July or August. Next Forum is September 2.

President's Message



As I enter my third year as president, I want to tell you how much I appreciate your support. However, neither the Board nor I can do everything that needs to get done without your willingness to help us out and to step up when asked.

(Kudos to [Loren Brandman](#) and [Mary Gauthier](#) for offering to help on the fall picnic.) LET'S TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT: I encourage all our members to submit ideas for classes, Forums, ways to increase participation, and perhaps, most importantly, ways to grow membership. Send to president@llinova.org.



While awaiting your input, the Board this summer will be working on possible fundraising ideas and new ways to publicize and revive the LLI travel program (see articles on page 3). To help, please contact [Mary Alexander](#) for fundraising and [Derick Malis](#) for travel.

A robust summer semester of over 40 courses is underway! See the handy listing included on page 5 in this newsletter. I am always amazed at the number of classes I end up taking! I especially love trying a course on a subject I know little about. I encourage you to sign up for classes and support both our hard-working Curriculum Committee and, most importantly, our instructors (several of whom are LLI members) who freely give of their time to prepare for and deliver classes. If you have

forgotten to sign up beforehand, remember that the "What's Happening" email lists each week's classes and activities to encourage late interest. As a courtesy, please contact the class coordinator if you are not signed up.

Web site work continues—the new site is up and running, but has limited functions, to which we keep adding. The calendar and directory are up, and you can register for classes and pay your dues. If you run into problems with registering, please contact me or [Ellen Wallace](#) and we will help you out. [Janice](#) can help with payments.

Have a great summer! And always remember: Our strength is our members!

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

Let's Fundraise!

As Budget Committee chair Fritz Ernst described at LLI's annual meeting in June, with our expected expenses for FY 2027 exceeding our income by \$5,000, we must think about how to reverse a continuing trend of decreasing membership (and thus less income from dues).

Please continue to encourage friends to come to Forums and to try out a class. Meanwhile, our Membership Committee is very active, speaking at expos and to senior groups.

The Board plans to establish a working group to consider additional fundraising activities, such as raffles, sales, silent auctions, special events, crowdfunding, sponsorships/grants, and more.

We need you! If you can brainstorm with us on this group, please contact [Mary Alexander](#).

Annual Membership Meeting

Prior to our Forum speaker's presentation on June 3, LLI conducted a brief annual membership meeting. The Budget committee presented the budget as detailed in last month's (June) newsletter to the LLI membership. Then members voted to approve the slate of Board members and officers that had been proposed.

Effective July 1, our Board consists of the following members and officers, as shown in the updated credits box below:

LLI/NOVA Board of Directors	
President: Patti Volz	Members:
Vice Pres: Steve Cohen	Richard Ackerman,
Secretary: Bill Tuceling	Mary Alexander,
Treasurer: Richard Sigman	Cathy Becker, Andy Butler,
Past President: Derick Malis	Debbie Cohen, Fritz Ernst,
	Carol Fagnani, Ed McKnight,
Administrator: Janice Viola–	John Sullivan, Ellen Wallace
Contact at admin@llinova.org	
LLI Newsletter Committee	
Chair: Cathy Becker, newsletter@llinova.org	
Loren Brandman, Patricia Brennan	

Welcome New Members

- Roger and Kathleen Larson



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](#).

POC Information

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 contact information in our member directory, which has been restored – in our updated website.

Don't Be Scammed

An LLI member received a phone call from a female who identified herself as his daughter. She was crying, said she'd had a car accident, was injured, had injured another driver, and was under arrest. A man then came on claiming to be her attorney and explained that a large sum of cash was needed immediately for bail to get her out of jail to get medical attention.



Fortunately, the member took time to consult with some friends, who detected flaws in the identity and telephone information of the perpetrators. He called his daughter to discover the alarming call had been bogus. He also spoke to the police, who informed him that this type of scam is increasingly common, with scammers often organized into companies, sometimes located overseas. Be alert to these scams. Warning signs include: (1) a sense of great urgency, (2) reference to a family member, (3) possibility of physical danger, (4) possibility of legal repercussions, and (5) requirement for cash payment.

NOVA Students at our Forum

Our June 3 Forum speaker, Provost Diane Mucci, gave us a terrific talk about developments at the NOVA Community College Annandale, including their adding more certification programs for workforce preparation. She brought three students from the Office of Student Life, who talked about their experiences balancing work and study.



Community Outreach

LLI will not have an in-person food collection in July or August, but we hope you will continue to support your favorite food pantry during the summer. Stocks of food go down in the summer, with donors away or due to personal economic problems. However, children at home from school are still in need of support.

Please consider donating to [Food for Others](#), which is celebrating 30 years of serving the community. You can send a check to them at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, or donate by credit card on their [website](#). Thank you for whichever charity you decide to help.

Betsy Pugin and Debbie Omori

Reviving LLI's Travel Program

LLI had an active Travel Program from 1996 until the start of the pandemic. In May 2023, the program restarted with the *Jewels of Ireland* trip. Programming continued through January of 2025 with the *Australia/New Zealand* tour. Since then, the chair stepped down, and the program has been on hold.

The Board wants to reestablish this once-popular program by forming a working group comprised of members who have an interest in



travel. If **YOU** are interested, please email (or call) [Derick Malis](#). He will schedule a Zoom meeting to share the Board's ideas and to entertain new thoughts about how to create LLI travel opportunities (both overseas and domestic). Note that this new committee will not affect our LLI Cultural Excursions program.

Travel Personalities: Recognizing Ourselves on the Road

Whether we still travel widely or occasionally, or mostly enjoy travel through memories, books, films, and conversation, most of us know this truth: travel brings out personality.

At a recent session, **Itineraries to Interactions: Making Meaningful Connections on the Road**, presenters Brandon Bastian and Carolyn Lamm of the Piedmont Peace Center helped LLINOVA participants think about travel groups as temporary communities. People may be thrown together in unfamiliar places, on tight schedules, with different energy levels, habits, expectations, and ideas of what makes a trip worthwhile.

The liveliest moment came when they introduced several "travel personality types." There was the **Optimizer**, who has a plan and a backup plan. The **Wanderer**, who wants to see what is around the next corner. The **Documenter**, who believes, quite reasonably, that if it was not photographed, did it really happen? The **Social Butterfly**, who comes home with names, stories, and possibly new lifelong friends. And the **Homebody-Away-from-Home**, who wisely understands that comfort is not weakness, it is fuel.

Everyone seemed to freeze for a moment, silently recognizing themselves, a spouse, a friend, a child, or a past travel companion. It was a hoot. We might also add the **Know-It-All**, who confidently leads the group in the wrong direction more often than not.

The lesson was simple: travel works better when people name what they need, what they can flex on, and how they move through the world. Even for those staying closer to home, the same wisdom applies. Curiosity, patience, humor, and a little self-knowledge make every journey easier.

Anna Dixon

Special Interest Group (SIG) Meetings at a Glance

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

POC = Point of Contact

Bridge – Wednesday, July 8, and Thursday, July 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@llinova.org

Favorite Books – No meetings in July and August. See you in September!
POC Lynne Smaldone, favoritebooks@llinova.org

Foodies & Friends – Wednesday, July 22, 12:30 p.m. See article below for details.

Mystery Books – No meetings in July or August. See you in September!
POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, mysterybooks@llinova.org

Photography – Friday, July 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@llinova.org

Tabletop Games – Tuesday, July 28, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at **KPL**
We will play Swoop. POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, tabletopgames@llinova.org.

Foodies & Friends

Wednesday, July 22, 12:30 p.m.
[SimSim](#), 9998 Main St., Fairfax

Join us as we discover the vibrant flavors of the Middle East at SimSim in Fairfax, where you will find authentic dishes like



shawarma, falafel, kebabs, stews, and fresh salads. The owners proudly say their menu is crafted to bring you culinary joy. Lunch here is not rushed. You will have plenty of time to talk amongst yourselves while awaiting your cooked-to-order dish. This means that all orders will not be served at the same time, but the food is worth the wait. [Loren Brandman](#) is our host for this event. There is plenty of parking and separate checks will be provided. The restaurant is accessible. RSVP to Loren by July 19.

Great News for Arts Aficionados

We are pleased to announce that LLI/NOVA members will be able to access deeply discounted tickets for the upcoming 2026-27 performance season at George Mason University's Center for the Arts.

This opportunity builds on a very successful 2025-26 season in which LLINOVA members actively participated by purchasing and attending more than 100 performances collectively. That strong level of engagement demonstrated both member interest and the value of continuing cultural partnerships that expand access to outstanding performances at deeply reduced cost.

We look forward to another exciting season of music, theater, dance, and special events, while continuing to grow LLINOVA participation and community involvement through these expanded member benefits. View the 2026/27 season [here](#). Additional details regarding performances and ticket access opportunities will be shared as the new season approaches.

Take a Look at these Upcoming Summer Classes!

We're well into our summer semester, but we still have many interesting classes ahead of us! Here is a handy list— and then register on our website: [Classes & Events - linova.org](https://www.linova.org/classes-events)

Summer 2026 Class List (from 6/23/26 to end of semester)

CLASS TITLE	INSTRUCTOR	Day	DATE	TIME	NOTES	NOVA ROOM
Murderous Blast! An Explosion on the Potomac	Jimmie McClellan	Tu	6/23/2026	10-11:30 am		CN 103
Longevity with Vitality	Harrietta Cush	Tu	6/23/2026	7:00-8:30 pm	ZOOM	--
Keeping History Alive: The Preservation of Cedar Hill (Frederick Douglas National Historic Site)	Ranger Sabrina Graham	Th	6/25/2026	1:30-3:00 pm		CN 103
Servitude in Colonial America	Jimmie McClellan	Tu	6/30/2026	10-11:30 am		CN 103
The World's Religions (Part 1) (4 sessions) (Part 2 will be held in fall)	Laura Shulman	Th	7/9, 16, 23, 30	1:30-3:00 pm	4 Thursdays in summer	CN 103
English Red Carpet for French Bayeux Tapestry	Bonnie Becker	M	7/13/2026	1:30-3:00 pm	ZOOM	--
Dark Skies: Essential for Wildlife and Humans (Fairfax County)	Tammy Schwab	W	7/15/2026	1:30-3:00 pm		CN 103
"Unsex Me Here": Macbeth & Specters of Feminine Empowerment	Anne Valentino	Fri	7/17/2026	10-11:30 am		CN 103
Retirement Planning for Women 50+	Vincent Grosso	Tu	7/21/2026	10-11:30 am	ZOOM	--
Oregon Trail-Fact, Fallacies & Funny Stories	Mary Alexander	M	8/10/2026	10-11:30 am		CN 103
Simple Changes to End Chronic Pain	Nancy Shaw	Tu	8/11/2026	1:30-3:00 pm		CN 103
Ernest Hemingway's Secret Adventures	Nicholas (Nick) Reynolds	W	8/12/2026	10-11:30 am		CN 103
Phenomenology and WW II	Daniel Blier	Tu	8/18/2026	1:30-3:00 pm		CN 103
Market Volatility and New Tax Legislation	Kelly Campbell	Th	8/20/2026	1:30-3:00 pm		CN 103
War and Peace in an Age of Empire: What About China?	Richard Rubenstein	W	8/26/2026	10-11:30 am	ZOOM	--
America's Policy Consensus Countering China's Challenges - Is It Softening?	Robert Sutter	Fri	8/28/2026	10-11:30 am		CN 104
Invasive Plants and How to Control Them (Fairfax County)	Rekha Dolas	Fri	8/28/2026	1:30-3:00 pm		CN 104