Lifetime Learning Institute | NOVA

December 2026 Newsletter

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llinova.org



Winter Luncheon



Wednesday, December 2, 11:00 a.m.
Country Club of Fairfax, 5110 Ox Rd., Fairfax
November 25 is the NEW deadline to purchase tickets (here)
No refunds for cancellations nor for no-shows.

11 a.m. Reception/cash bar
Noon Enjoy camaraderie with fellow LLI members over a sit-down lunch

We'll collect new, unwrapped toys for children under the care of Artemis House, as well as gently used COATS and warm outerwear for NOVA students (see article below).

Questions? Contact JoAnn Ackerman

President's Corner



This is my last President's Corner for the year. I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a delightful and rewarding winter and holiday season. I hope to see many of you at our Winter Luncheon, which is a highlight of the season! Come enjoy good food, good friends, and great conversation. Register by Nov. 25. Remember: Our strength is our members!

Let's not forget to reach out to others who may need some support at this time, with a few words or an invitation for coffee. I truly appreciate your confidence in me as your president. I assure you that I don't take your support for granted. As always, I encourage you to contact me with anything on your mind.

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

Donate Coats at Winter Luncheon



Many students at NOVA's Annandale Campus face the cold weather without adequate winter clothing. The Provost welcomes donations of new or gently-used coats, hats, scarves, and gloves. Items should be clean and in good condition. As there is no Forum in December, the items will be collected at the Winter Luncheon on Dec. 2. If you are not going to the luncheon, please pass the items to someone who is going.

Welcome, New Members



- Hugh Calkin
- Deborah Gomez
- Kurt Krueger
- Otis Langford

POC Information – Underlined names are points of contact (POCs). Click on them, sign into our website, and find the POC's contact information in our member directory.

December and Spring Classes

We have just a few more classes left in the fall semester. Click on Classes & Events - llinova.org to find out about them and to register.

Hooray! A catalog of **45** classes for spring 2027 will be online about Dec. 10, and registration opens around Dec. 14.

Upcoming Forums

There will be no Forum in December, but here is a sneak peek at the next six Forums. Three will be on Zoom (to avoid winter driving) and the rest in person at the usual location (Little River United Church of Christ) on the first Wednesday of each month:

- Jan. 6 Zoom: Mary Bauer, Executive director, Virginia American Civil Liberties Union, Post Election Update and What's New
- Feb. 3 Zoom: Adam Ratner, The Marine Mammal Center advances ocean health through marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation, research, and education.
- March 3 Zoom: KaLynn Clark, Development Director, 4 Paws for Ability, a non-profit that breeds, raises, trains, and places service dogs with children and veterans who have disabilities.
- April 7 in person: Dr. William K. Kaufmann, "Rachel Carson and Environmental Carcinogenesis: does environmental degradation cause cancer?"
- May 5 in person: Tom Shoop, Author, A Place Called Ilda, a story about a mixed-race community established on Little River Turnpike after the Civil War.
- June 2 in person: Diane Mucci, Provost NVCC

Community Outreach

Although there will not be an in-person opportunity to collect for a food pantry in Dec. (no LLI Forum), there are so many opportunities to give at this holiday time!

As you know, there will be a toy collection at the Winter Luncheon to benefit Artemis House, the only 24/7 domestic violence shelter in Fairfax County.

On Dec. 1, many charities participate in Giving Tuesday, where one can give financially or through volunteer time to assist their favorite charity. Whether you give financially, do a good deed for another, or share time and a smile, there are lots of ways to be part of Giving Tuesday. See https://www.givingtuesday.org/ for more info.

Our friends at John Lewis High School send a big "Thank You" for your donations from our Nov. Forum. The donations are already being put to good use with the students.

– Betsy Pugin and Debbie Omori



John Lewis High School Principal Serena Girón (left), Betsy Pugin, and teacher Amy Pascucci (right)

Postponed to January

Date to be determined

Tea at The Things I Love – $45

9327 Main St., Manassas

Let's enjoy a delicious afternoon tea at a favorite location—The Things I Love in Manassas.



The cost is $45 per person, which includes tax and gratuity. There is space for 16 guests.

Note the new address above. There is free parking on the street and in a nearby public parking garage. Carpooling is recommended. The location is accessible with four stairs to the entrance with a railing; there is no ramp.

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.

Foodies & Friends

Friday, Dec. 11, 1 p.m.
Kelly's Oyster House & Bar,
4069 Chain Bridge Rd.,
Fairfax



Join us for a foray to the eastern shore and beyond. Though Kelly's is an oyster bar, it's also a sports bar and restaurant with a varied menu. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves there last year. Co-owner Bill Hamrock has been in the restaurant business since he was 13 years old, starting at Three Pigs Barbecue in McLean. He has also been the chef-owner of Hamrock's Restaurant since 2015 (another popular spot for Foodies & Friends). Both restaurants are located in old historic homes in Old Town Fairfax City. Our host this month is one of our newer members, Karen Mellon. Many of you met her in November at the Present Restaurant. RSVP to her by Dec. 9. Individual checks will be provided. Parking is alongside and behind the building. The restaurant is accessible. Hope to see everyone there!





LLI Scholarships

This year's LLI/NOVA scholarship drive set an all-time record of over $35,000 dollars. We were able to increase the number of scholarships from five to six, and also increase the amounts of each award. We funded the Knox Singleton Leadership scholarship and the Lorin Goodrich Academic scholarship at $6,630 each. The remaining scholarships were $5,630 each.



Scholarship Committee chairman Steve Cohen (right) presented a check to Marc Westenburg, Acting Director of the NOVA Foundation, at the November Forum.

LLI/NOVA Board of Directors

President: Patti Volz
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Administrator: Janice Viola–Contact at admin@llinova.org

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

LLI Newsletter Committee
Chair: Cathy Becker, newsletter@llinova.org
Loren Brandman, Patricia Brennan

LLI Travel Opportunities

Are you interested in travel? Would you like to go on an adventure? Here are some trips you might be interested in joining me or another LLI member on:



- 12-day Panama Canal with Costa Rica & Caribbean Holiday
  Dec. 26, 2026 – Jan. 10, 2027 on Princess's Caribbean Princess.
- 7-day Greek Isles from Athens to Venice: Santorini, Olympia & Croatia
  May 9 – May 16 on Norwegian Cruise Line's Norwegian Gem
- 10-day Mediterranean From Venice to Rome: Italy & Spain
  May 17 – May 27 on Norwegian Cruise Line's Norwegian Prima
- 10-day trip to Calabria, Italy
  May 24 – June 2
  LLI member Gary Stultz invites LLI members to join him on a trip to the family farm of Deliba Olive Oil. Details are available here.
- 7-night Greek Isles Cruise
  May 30 – June 6 on Royal Caribbean's Odyssey of the Seas

Click the hyperlinks above for more information on each trip. If you are interested in any of these trips, contact me, at travel@llinova.org. (Phone number available in the LLI directory.)

– Dara Aldridge

Special Interest Group (SIG) Meetings at a Glance

***KPL** = Kings Park Library, 9002 Burke Lake Rd., Burke* ***POC** = Point of Contact*

Bridge – Thursday, Dec. 3, and Wednesday, Dec. 16, 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 –There is no meeting in December. See you in 2027!
POC Lynne Smaldone, favoritebooks@llinova.org

Foodies & Friends – Friday, Dec. 11, 1 p.m. See article on page 3 for details.

Mystery Books – Monday, Dec. 7, 1:30–3 p.m. at KPL
We will discuss "Eleventh Hour" by Catherine Coulter.
POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, mysterybooks@llinova.org

Tabletop Games – Tuesday, Dec. 29, 1:30–3 p.m. at KPL. Game is to be determined.
POC Mary Lu Bednarsky, tabletopgames@llinova.org.

Photography – Friday, Dec. 18, 10 a.m.–noon at KPL
Check out the Photo SIG website here. New members are always welcome. Cell phone cameras are fine. POC Buck Myers, photo@llinova.org.

Visual and Performing Arts – *Performances at* George Mason Center for the Arts
$20 tickets are available for several upcoming performances. Email admin@llinova.org to receive the discount code which may be used to purchase tickets online, over the phone, or in person at the ticket office. For online purchases, enter the code (not case-sensitive) in the "Set Your Search Options" menu prior to selecting seats. Coupon code cannot be added in the cart.

- Spanish Harlem Orchestra, Saturday, Dec. 5 at 7:30 p.m.
- Aquila Theatre: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Saturday, Jan. 23 at 2 p.m.
- National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, Sunday, Jan. 31 at 3 p.m.
- Third Coast Percussion, Saturday, Feb. 6 at 7:30 p.m.
- Orpheus Chamber Orchestra with Isata Kanneh-Mason, Sunday, Feb. 21 at 2 p.m.
- Martha Graham Dance Company, Saturday, April 3 at 7:30 p.m.
- Silkroad Ensemble featuring Cécile McLorin Salvant, Saturday, April 10 at 7:30 p.m.
- Angélique Kidjo, Sunday, April 25 at 7 p.m.



