

# Osher Lifelong Learning Institute



## 2018 OLLI Membership Voter Information Guide



**Georgianne Mastera**  
*Chair, Advisory Council*

Preparation of the OLLI Voter Guide begins every year as spring rains roll across the Nebraska landscape and the first flowers begin to bloom. This year I have been rather sluggish about writing this entry because of the prolonged winter snows. It just doesn't seem like election time is right around the corner. However, as you read this, May has arrived.

OLLI members elect two directors for the OLLI Advisory Council in late May. Six elected directors, with overlapping three-year terms, represent the OLLI membership. They join the appointed chairs/co-chairs of nine OLLI standing committees to form the Advisory Council.

The Council works collaboratively with OLLI Coordinator Dee Aguilar and recommends actions regarding programs, budget, fee structure, recruiting and program sustainability. The Advisory Council acts on behalf of the membership and has responsibilities for:

- establishing, safeguarding and advancing OLLI's mission, vision and values
- reviewing and monitoring OLLI's financial position
- advancing OLLI's goals
- advancing and supporting the OLLI coordinator

In response to OLLI's growing membership, expanding expectations and changing staff responsibilities, the Council's focus this year has been on clarifying the Council's roles and responsibilities. An ad hoc

committee was charged with writing a policies and procedures document that will guide OLLI staff and Council members in years to come.

The standing committee chairs and co-chairs, who are members of the Council, continue their good work. They have:

- overseen the delivery of stimulating courses
- advanced inclusivity and diversity
- planned social events
- provided community outreach and visibility
- focused on financial stability
- increased the number of interest groups
- and have "Sung in the Rain"

Four OLLI members are running for the two director positions on the Advisory Council. Don't be sluggish. May is here. Please review the candidates' statements and cast your votes.

### **Voting Open through May 25**

**Two individuals will be elected to the OLLI Advisory Council. Profiles and photos of the four candidates presented by the Nominating Committee are included here.**

**If you have an email address, you will receive your ballot electronically. Members without an email address will receive a ballot in the mail.**

**Whether you vote electronically or by mail, your ballot must be received or postmarked by Friday, May 25.**

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## Advisory Council Duties

- The Council will see that the policies established by mutual agreement between the Council, the Coordinator, and the University are disseminated to and carried out by the membership.
  - The Council will work collaboratively with the Coordinator and will recommend actions regarding curriculum, budget, class fee structure, recruiting and program sustainability.
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## Meet the Candidates

I joined OLLI in August of 2017 following an early retirement in June. My professional career spanned a period of 40 years in health care, serving in roles from administrative support to human resources. In addition, I have enjoyed being a resident of Lincoln, Neb., since



**Becky Akert**

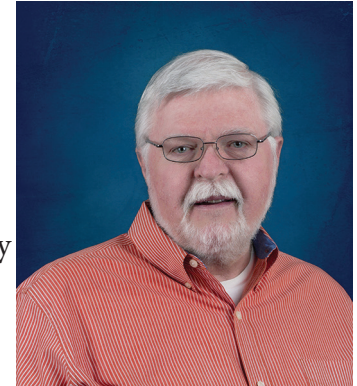
1975. I consider myself a lifelong learner, especially after returning to college as a non-traditional student in my late 40s. While juggling work and family responsibilities, including raising two active sons, I eventually earned my undergraduate degree in organizational communications in 2003, followed by a master's degree in management from Doane University in 2010. As a lifelong learner, I always looked forward to continuing that passion thru OLLI once I was no longer working.

The OLLI courses I have enjoyed thus far have focused on history, wellness and travel. That said, I look forward to participating with the Confucius Institute on the tour to China in May.

### Priority

Being new to OLLI, I want to learn more about OLLI's structure and apply my perspective to identifying challenges for new members in relation to course enrollment, wayfinding and understanding curriculum content.

I have spent half a century working, first in advertising and, for many years, providing creative services in radio, TV and media production. Increasingly over the past 25 years, people have turned to me as a marketing and communications consultant. Still do. Helping organizations and individuals be more successful is rewarding for them and personally satisfying for me. That is why I have served on the OLLI Marketing Committee for several years. As a certified Medicare counselor, I am able to help people getting ready for Medicare make sense out of what looks like a maze of complication and confusion.



**Jerry Smithers**

Volunteering for good causes is something I enjoy and miss when I am not doing it. OLLI at UNL does a remarkable job of adding knowledge, substance and enjoyment to, at last count, about 1,700 seniors' lives. I want to continue to invest my time and energy to help OLLI expand and increase its good work.

**Priority:** OLLI at UNL is about to begin welcoming baby boomers and, behind them, Gen Xers. The differences in these groups lies in more than their name identifiers. Those coming into our ranks will be increasingly computer literate and mobile device dependent. I hope to be elected to the Advisory Council to help OLLI understand and address their expectations.

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## Advisory Council Responsibilities

- To ensure quality programs
  - To ensure a positive learning environment
  - To represent and advocate for members
  - To encourage membership participation
  - To approve committee action
  - To collaborate with the coordinator on assessment and evaluation for program viabilities and strategic planning
  - To establish and oversee selected committees, permanent and ad hoc
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## Meet the Candidates

I grew up where the deer and the antelope truly do play, in the Panhandle. Scottsbluff to be exact. I found UNL and my husband Mike, in that order. We married after college and spent time in Washington, D. C., and Champaign, Ill., before returning to Lincoln to raise our family.



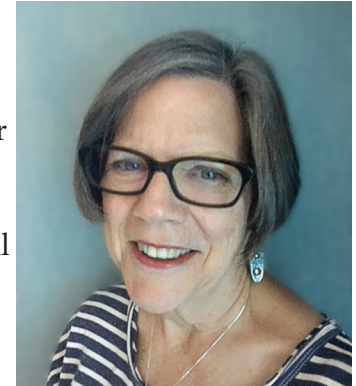
**Carol Jess**

My career in marketing and public relations focused largely in health care, with one notable exception. In the early 1980s, as executive director of the Downtown Lincoln Association, the downtown booster group Updowntowners was started, and with a dedicated corps of volunteers, the Star City Holiday Parade got its start along with other great events. Since 2007 when I left the corporate world, I've been engaged with a variety of clients through my own firm, CJJ Communications.

While most of my OLLI involvement has been as a student, I have recently contributed to the OLLI travel experience, "A President, a Terrorist, Architects and Lots of Cowboys." I wrote, designed and produced the brochure and assisted my husband Mike to determine the itinerary and restaurant locations.

**Priorities:** Help OLLI reach out to different target markets and bring them into the OLLI experience; Develop more OLLI experiences thorough travel and expanded special interests groups.

Five years ago, I retired from gerontological nursing and have been an active OLLI member since. After receiving my bachelor's degree in nursing from Cornell University, New York Hospital School of Nursing in New York City in 1967, and working in the hospital



**Suzanne Harder**

for three years, I moved to Baltimore to teach leadership in nursing at Johns Hopkins Hospital School of Nursing. I moved to Crawford, Neb., in 1971 to help care for my dying mother and young brother.

Since that time, I have received another bachelor's degree in biology from Chadron State College and obtained teaching endorsements in biology, chemistry and elementary education from Kearney State College. I also earned a master's degree in adult education/distance learning from the University of Phoenix. I have been married for 46 years, raised three children and have become a grandparent.

My background in education, gerontological nursing and quality improvement have helped hone my skills in implementing change and maintaining quality.

**Priority:** As an Advisory Council member I would like to see the OLLI program continue to provide diverse classes and modes of presentation, such as distance learning, as well as strive to increase the cultural diversity of our membership.