November 2026 Vol. 1, Issue 3

The Owl

AN ONLINE MAGAZINE. PUBLISHED QUARTERLY.
A Lifelong Learning Collaborative Publication

MEET THE SEARCH TEAM:



The Search and The Searchers

LLC is searching for a new home. Meet the search team. Read about how they are conducting the search: Their process and their progress.

Read the details here.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LLC's Marketing Committee

New and creative approaches to promoting LLC to RI communities and beyond: The Marketing Committee. ***Read "In the Spotlight" article here.***

YOU ASKED, ELSIE ANSWERS



Elsie Answers Three Questions

about LLC's search for a new home.

Read this edition's Q and A here.

THE LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES

Two Thursdays in December for LLC'ers



Two fascinating book talks with book signings.

Take a break from holiday madness.

Bring your lunch. We provide beverages.

Bring a friend or two. It's free.

Read about the authors and the books here.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Members' Calendars

Listings of important events, semester schedules, and webinars. ***Details here.***

Classified Ads: Help Wanted

Find out how to help LLC: Calls for help from LLC committees. ***Check them out here.***

OWL MASTHEAD: The OWL credits here.

The Search and the Searchers

On September 22, 2026, LLC'ers received this notice in their email boxes:

> "The Shriners have informed us that they do not intend to renew the lease after it expires on May 31, 2027."

This announcement came as a disturbing surprise to all LLC'ers. Indeed, in that same email, LLC President Linda Shamoon wrote,

> "I know that this news is surprising and disappointing. Nevertheless, I urge you to have confidence in our search plans and our experienced search team. We are already engaged in the search process. Please share your suggestions and ideas."

From that day onward, LLC members have suggested more than thirty-six locations for our search team to investigate. In response, Dave Hansen, Co-Chair of LLC's Governance Committee, and Gene Mihaly, LLC's Treasurer, sprang into action. They developed a consistent way of evaluating each site, they quickly eliminated the unsuitable sites, and then they narrowed down the remaining possibilities to a few likely options. That is where we are today in the search process.

Meet the Search Team



Dave Hansen
Co-Chair, Governance
LLC President, 2018-2020



Gene Mihaly
LLC Treasurer

One reason Dave and Gene were able to move so quickly is that they are not new to the search. Dave and Gene led the search for a new home a mere 18 months ago, when we left Temple Beth El. Furthermore, Dave led a search in 2013, when LLC leaders realized they needed a unified home site for its steadily increasing number of class offerings. Prior to that (after the split from Brown University's experiment in lifelong learning), LLC held classes in numerous church basements and spare classrooms around Providence's East Side. Finally, during the 2013 search, Dave met Judy Mosley, former Executive Director of Temple Beth El, who viewed LLC as having a mission that was compatible with Beth El's, making us appropriate daytime tenants in an otherwise empty building. That special relationship lasted for twelve years. (cont'd, next page)

With all this search experience, Dave and Gene are ready in 2026-2027 to find LLC's next home. Plus, they have other qualities that help them to be such good leaders for LLC at this moment. They are dedicated to LLC, they helped us in our relationships with both Beth El's and Shriners' personnel, and they know our needs going forward. Gene, who has years of experience as chair of numerous non-profits, has co-coordinated many LLC classes in politics and in history. Dave has co-coordinated many semesters of Great Decisions and of Current Decisions, plus he served as LLC's President from 2018 – 2020. They have spent time in our classrooms, in our coffee rooms, and in conversation with managers and maintenance staff. They are the right LLC'ers, at this moment, for this LLC search.

Understand the Search Guidelines

What are Dave's and Gene's criteria for an acceptable site? They start with location. "The greater Providence area," says Dave. "With our move to the Shriner's Center, we learned that, if necessary, LLC could flourish in locations beyond Providence's East Side."

The next criteria might be called the essentials:



- Rental space within our budget
- Four accessible classrooms, plus a coffee room
- Sufficient parking
- Reasonable security
- WIFI
- At least one building staff member on hand when the building is open.

Dave emphasizes, "Lots of places will rent a room for a semester, but we need a place of our own for semester after semester."

Then there are the intangibles. Is the organization truly ready to share their space? Are they ready to welcome another organization and ready to help make a portion of the building a new home for the renters? Dave says, "There are churches and synagogues with space and available classrooms, but when we ask if they are ready to let us make those rooms our own and are they ready to support us with basic services, then things get serious. In some instances, we do not hear from them again. For us and for them, it is not just about the money." (cont'd, next page)

Be Patient for the Latest Results

Finally, with these demanding criteria, are Dave and Gene making progress? Will we have a site identified by March or April of 2027? Gene says, “Dave has worn out shoe leather visiting places.” But luckily, during that last six weeks or so, three sites have emerged as possibilities. All three are within the greater Providence area; all three have available classrooms and meet most of the other essential criteria. Dave and Gene have held conversations with the administrators of each site.

The result? One site has emerged with all the essential elements plus those intangible elements that could lead to a long-term new home for LLC, based on shared values and overlapping missions. Gene and Dave are optimistic but not ready to name the place. Nevertheless, we hope to hear more soon, perhaps very soon.

- This article was written by Linda Shamoon with help from Dave Hansen and Gene Mihaly.

What article would you like to read next?

Click here

THE LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES:

Two Thursdays in December: Two Special Lunch & Learn Events
Meet the Authors: Book Talks - Book Signings

December 10th, @12 – 2 pm: Liberty is Sweet by Jane Lancaster

December 17 th @12 – 2 pm: Rahsaan Roland Kirk's Volunteered Slavery by Richard Watrous



Jane Lancaster, PhD, is a historian and prize-winning author of four books and many articles on women's, local, and Black history (and now, all three at once).

Liberty is Sweet, her fourth book, is a sweeping historical novel that begins in Rhode Island during the American Revolution and ends decades later in Freetown, Sierra Leone. It follows the odyssey of two Black Loyalists who face years of danger as they crisscross continents in search of freedom and independence. Theirs is a story of upheaval, courage and resilience.



Rick Watrous, author and music reviewer, filmmaker, communications professor, state representative, and more.

Rahsaan Roland Kirk's Volunteered Slavery, his second book, tells of a phenomenal jazz musician and composer who persevered through blindness, poverty, racism, and commercial indifference, to promote Black Classical Music, aka jazz. Kirk's performances were electrifying. He would play three saxophones or two flutes at once. He would play the flute for minutes on end without pausing for breath. At the Newport Jazz Festival and The Ed Sullivan Show, his performances were unforgettable. **Rick's talk will include sound clips of Kirk's music.**

Event Schedule:

- 12:00 pm: Bring your lunch. We provide water, coffee, tea.
- 12:30 pm: Author's book talk with Q & A
- 1:30 pm: Book signing and purchase, cash, check, Venmo:
  - *Liberty is Sweet*: $20. *Rahsaan Roland Kirk's Volunteered Slavery*: $15.

Location: Shriner Center,
1 Rhodes Place, RI 02905
The event is free for LLC members and two guests. Registration required.
Register here for Dec. 10th Lunch and Learn with Jane Lancaster
Register here Dec. 17th Lunch and Learn with Rick Watrous

What article would you like to read next?
Click here to select the next article.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Meet the Marketing Committee and Its New Chair

> "I am impressed with the credentials and talents of our committee members. I hope to have the group work together to expand our brand across Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. I want to continue what works and try new, innovative approaches."

These are the words of Olin Thompson, the new chair of LLC's Marketing Committee. Olin brings to the committee decades of leadership and marketing experience at both the global and local levels, plus a preference for new and creative approaches to marketing.

Olin follows the pattern established by Art Norwalk, former Chair of Marketing. Under Art's leadership, LLC's marketing initiatives expanded into new media outlets, such as with announcements on RI's public radio station. Art redesigned our fliers, business cards, and other print media, and he redesigned the LLC website, bringing it into the 21st century.

Under Olin's leadership, Art will continue to serve on the committee along with these talented LLC members.



Olin Thompson, Chair



Diana Grady, Vice Chair



John Brezack



Sheila Brush



Stuart Einhorn



Dennis Flavin



Margaret Lawrence



Art Norwalk

(cont'd, next pg.)

Olin, did your career prepare you for chairing the Marketing Committee?

"I was involved in three start-up businesses. The most successful was Marcam, a company that developed, sold, and supported business software for the food and chemical industries. Our customers included global companies like Kraft and Nestle as well as smaller companies. My role was the "industry expert" plus I ran sales and marketing.

"In the late 1990's Marcam was purchased by a larger company. I semi-retired and consulted to food and chemical companies plus business software companies. I also wrote for industry magazines and spoke at numerous industrial conferences."

Why have you agreed to serve as chair of LLC's Marketing Committee?

"LLC is a cooperative. We all must do our part for its continued success. This is how I believe I can best serve our organization. My marketing success in industry has been aided by "thinking outside the box". That will help the Marketing Committee and LLC expand how we build and maintain our membership."

What are your goals for the committee?

"I hope to have the group work together to expand our brand across Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. We are actively working on efforts to bring word of LLC to an even broader audience.

"For example, the RI Monthly's February edition with a focus on healthy aging. We have purchased a page that will be an advertorial. It will be partly an informative about the importance of staying engaged and learning as we age and partly an advertisement for LLC. Art Norwalk is writing the article. That advertorial will be reprinted into a pamphlet which will be distributed to the places where senior citizens visit, for example, doctors, residential living facilities, lawyers focused on elder law, etc. That way we are reaching beyond the magazine's to many other groups of readers.

"Here is another example. Thanks to Diana Grady, our Vice Chair for Communications, we learned about the RI Wind Ensemble, a music organization made up of volunteer musicians representing a broad range of occupations—including engineers, teachers, healthcare workers, IT professionals, small-business owners, nonprofit employees, and retirees. Their ages span from college students to older adults and come from more than two dozen towns across Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts. They perform, educate, and engage in community service. Like most cultural events, their audience is mostly people in their 50's and up. One reasonably priced ad in their program booklet got us exposure in four of their events from November to March."

(cont'd, next pg.)

What about "new, innovative approaches"?
"Historically, 'word of mouth' has been proven to be the most successful marketing effort at LLC. We are working on how we can encourage and assist our members to build on that success.

"I have talked with committee members about an email campaign. We could encourage our LLC members to send an email to a neighbor or a friend, inviting them to try an LLC class or event. We would supply a draft of such an email. Also, we have talked about expanding our efforts into social media—beyond Facebook—as a way of reaching a younger group of retirees. We would need new committee members who are skilled with social media. We are just getting started. There is more to come."

Want to join the committee? Have questions and suggestions?
Send an email to OT@olinthompson.com

This article written by Linda Shamoon and Olin Thompson.

What article would you like to read next?
Click here to select the next article.

YOU ASKED, ELSIE ANSWERS



Elsie Answers Three Questions about LLC's search for a new home.

Elsie received many questions and suggestions about LLC's search for a new home. Here are the three most popular queries/suggestions.

- Have you considered the large churches?
- Have you looked at RI's many colleges??
- What about returning to Temple Beth El?

Greetings Elsie,

I advise the search team to investigate various big churches. For example, the Community Church, Wayland Ave., on Prov's East Side. They have a huge space underneath the sanctuary -- it even has a bowling alley!



Hopefully,

Angel

Ave Angel!

A bowling alley! Suddenly, I have visions of an LLC bowling team, adorned in our own tee shirts and bowling shoes, competing in a league for the over 75's (canes and walkers allowed). Wow!

Let's get back to reality. Yes, the big churches seem like an apt search target. But the reality is that in Providence and environs, the large churches do not have parking, including the Community Church on Wayland Ave. Angel, my friend, ample, readily available parking is #1 on LLC's list of essential features.

Interestingly, Angel, regarding the Community Church: In 2013, we held classes there. After a semester or two, they decided we were too noisy and asked us to leave! Huh? An LLC class too noisy?

Vale, Angel. Stay hopeful.

Elsie

(cont'd, next pg.)



Hi Elsie,
A friend invited me to attend a class at the Academy for Lifelong Learning (aka ALL) in Barnstable, MA. All of ALL's classes meet on the Cape Cod Community College campus. ALL has its own classrooms, access to the campus gym, library, cafeteria, etc., and lots of parking! Elsie, our next home should be on one of RI's many college campuses!

Elsie, I am so jealous!

Hi So Jealous,

Yes, ALL is in an enviable situation. Confidentially, SJ, I try to avoid the big seven 'deadlies,' but in this instance, I am as green-eyed as you are.

Rest assured, SJ, our search team has considered the RI colleges and reached out to a couple of them. Here's an inventory:

Brown U.: No parking, at all. Has its own alumni lifelong learning initiatives.
Bryant C.: Too far away
CCRI: The Lincoln and Newport campuses: Too far away.
The Warwick campus: Accessibility and parking are completely inappropriate for our demographic.
Johnson and Wales: Might rent a classroom for a day, a few weeks, maybe a semester, but not as a home for LLC.
Providence C.: Daytime campus parking: impossible.
RIC; Henry Barnard School: Our search team managed to snag one conversation with a RIC official. After that: Silence. Sometimes silence means "No." This seems to be one of those instances.
Roger Williams U.: Bristol campus, too far away. Prov. campus: no parking.
RISD: No parking. Little to no interest in community engagement.
Salve Regina: Too far away
URI: Kingston campus, too far away. Providence campus: no parking. URI is committed to the OLLI version of lifelong learning.

So, SJ, do you have any other colleges for the list? If so, let me know, asap.

Sincerely,
Elsie

(cont'd, next pg.)

Dear Elsie,

I have been a member of LLC for over ten years. IMHO, you should explore a return to Temple Beth El. The location is central for members driving from various directions. I heard that a cost increase was the reason we left. I would support an increase in LLC fees to meet this challenge. For those members unable to afford it, give them financial aid.



Yours,

Deeply Committed

Dear Deeply,

Ten years of membership! Thank you for your commitment!

You are not alone. Several LLC'ers have recommended a return to Temple Beth El. (I notice that all of those who have emailed in favor of returning to Beth El are east siders. Just saying . . .)

Deeply, the search team has been in conversation with Joie Magnone, the Executive Director of Temple Beth El. She said that we are welcome to return to Beth El—on their terms. These are:

- Three classrooms and a coffee room, available for three and a half days a week (closed all day Monday and Friday afternoon),
- An undefined security arrangement,
- Less parking than before (because other people are attending classes in Beth El's other classrooms),
- For a fee that is twice as much as we now pay the Shriners (where we get four classrooms and ample parking for five days a week).

Beth El's offer is hardly welcoming. Nevertheless, our search team asked for clarity regarding security, building access, use of a fourth classroom when needed, plus a desire to talk further about the rental fee. So far, the response has been inflexible on fees and vague on all other issues.

Now, Deeply, let's talk money. LLC's mission statement includes this phrase:

- "We offer a wide variety of accessible, *affordable,* academically oriented courses, . . ."

(cont'd, next pg.)

Every word in that mission statement was carefully chosen, including the word *affordable*. From the beginning, LLC has kept its membership fee (now $40) and its per-course tuition ($35 - $50) as low as possible. The current leadership is committed to that principle. A rental fee that is twice our current rate would not allow us to continue within the principles of our mission statement. That is not about to change.

So, Deeply, unless Beth El is willing to modify its offer, our search team is looking elsewhere.

Sincerely,
Elsie

PS: A couple of LLC'ers suggested that we hold a capital campaign to buy a building. The on-going expense and management burdens this strategy would entail are as unacceptable as paying twice our current rental fee.

Do you have a question for Elsie? Send it to
info@lifelonglearningcollaborative.org

What article would you like to read next?
To select your next article, Click here

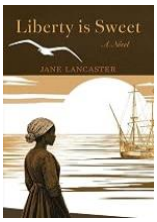
IMPORTANT NOTICES

For LLC Members: Three Calendars

1. Upcoming Fall and Winter Events
2. Fall Webinars
3. Dates for Fall, Winter, Spring Classes



1. Upcoming Fall - Winter Events

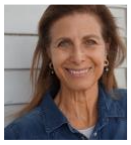
November 24	**NEEDLECRAFT 'N COFFEE**	Bring your needlecraft of any kind embroidery, needlepoint, knitting, etc. Share your stories. For location and time, email bigmamoo1@verizon.net
December 10 **12 – 2 pm**	**LUNCH AND LEARN: LLC Author - Book Talk And Book Signing** 	**Jane Lancaster's *Liberty Is Sweet*** follows a Black/Indigenous family as they escape slavery and search for freedom during the American Revolution. Free for LLC member and two guests. **Location:** Ballroom, Shriner Center. 1 Rhodes Place, Cranston, RI 02905. Register **here.**
December 11 **9 am – 11 am**	**BREAKFAST CLUB**	**All LLC'ers Welcome, Two Locations**: The Butcher Shop, 157 Elmgrove Ave, Prov. Crescent Moon Café, 520 Main St., Warren. Watch your LLC email for details

(Calendar continues, next page)

December 17 **12 pm – 2 pm**	**LUNCH AND LEARN: LLC Author - Book Talk And Book Signing** 	**Rick Watrous's *Rahsaan Roland Kirk's Volunteered Slavery*** explores the music and life mission of an extraordinary, instrumentalist and composer. Free for LLC member and two guests. **Location:** Classroom #1, Shriner Center. 1 Rhodes Place, Cranston, RI 02905. Register here
January 8 **9 am – 11 am**	**BREAKFAST CLUB**	**All LLC'ers Welcome, Two Locations**: The Butcher Shop, 157 Elmgrove Ave, Prov. Crescent Moon Café, 520 Main St., Warren. Watch your LLC email for details.
March 4 **12 pm – 2 pm**	**LUNCH AND LEARN:**	**"Life Out Loud"** Short, true stories from long and interesting lives. LLC'ers share their memoirs, some happy, sad, or downright hilarious. LLC's version of "The Moth" podcast!
March 11	**SPRING CONVOCATION: A Celebration of Our Members**	Member's Art Exhibit and Photo Exhibit. Member's Collage Exhibit. New directions from committee chairs. Q & A session with LLC leaders.
March 12	**BREAKFAST CLUB**	**All LLC'ers Welcome, Two Locations**: The Butcher Shop, 157 Elmgrove Ave, Prov. Crescent Moon Café, 520 Main St., Warren. Watch your LLC email for details.

2. Calendar for Winter Webinars

January 20	**WEBINAR** 	**Photographer Tom Murphy** World renowned nature photographer will share stories and photos from his fascinating winter adventure in a wild and beautiful place.
		(Calendar continues, next page)

February 4	**WEBINAR** 	**Sandra Laub** An award-winning actress and playwright, Laub will present a one-woman live performance.
February 15	**WEBINAR** 	**C. Evan Stewart** Lawyer and historian will bring to life the 1960 political campaign that brought JFK and LBJ to the White House and the subsequent events the changed the course of US history.

3. Dates for Fall, Winter, Spring Classes

November 23	**WINTER COURSE CATALOG PUBLISHED** LLC's listing of winter courses. Check email.
November 30 **9 am,** **on the dot!**	**REGISTRATION FOR WINTER CLASSES** Sign up for winter classes. Registration starts promptly at 9 am. Check email for link at 8:50 am.
January 4	**WINTER CLASSES BEGIN** Many winter classes start this week
January 18	**SPRING COURSE CATALOG PUBLISHED** LLC's listing of spring courses. Check email.
January 25 **9 am,** **on the dot!**	**REGISTRATION FOR SPRING CLASSES** Sign up for spring classes. Registration starts promptly at 9 am. Check email for link at 8:50 am.
February 26	**WINTER CLASSES END** Many winter classes end this week.

(Calendar continues, next page)

March15	**SPRING CLASSES BEGIN** Many spring classes start this week
May 21	**SPRING CLASSES END** Many spring classes end this week.

Calendar content written by Diana Grady, with contributions by Jane Adler and Cathy Hurst.

What article would you like to read next?
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Classified Ads: Help Wanted

*****Help Wanted*****

We need your skills and energy!
Communications Subcommittee.

We're working hard to spread
LLC news to LLC members

Your ideas and efforts can make a difference!
Email: dgjournal45@gmail.com

Applications Welcomed

LLC'S COFFEE CZAR

Tasks:

- Help keep coffee room supplies stocked.
- Help keep coffee buffet table ready.
- Help keep the coffee room's tables, chairs & floor neat, clean and welcoming.
- Help with trash removal, as needed.

Coffee Czar benefits:

- **A free membership**
- **Up to three free classes a semester**

Send inquiries to lkshamoon@gmail.com

Join the Creative Team
Write or edit or proofread or design or contribute or . . .

Help us create LLC's publications: The Lark and The Owl
One edition. A few editions. Occasionally. All the time.
Contact: Diana dgjournal45@gmail.com
Linda: lkshamoon@gmail.com

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OWL MASTHEAD

The Owl

A LIFELONG LEARNING COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATION

- Created, written, designed, and produced by Linda Shamoon.
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- Content hyperlinks and similar elements by Linda Shamoon.

If you would like to contribute to the Owl or help with editing, production, artwork, etc. send an email to lkshamoon@gmail.com

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