



Newsletter

AT BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WINTER 2015

PARTNERS WITH WILLIAMS COLLEGE, BARD COLLEGE AT SIMON'S ROCK & MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

A Wonderful Winter 2015 Semester!

Beginning January 13 and continuing through February 25, OLLI will be offering 11 new and exciting courses for the winter semester. For your convenience, classes will be held at locations with easy-access parking. Register for classes now! Please see Winter 2015 Catalog for complete details or visit our website at www.BerkshireOLLI.org.

NO MONDAY CLASSES

TUESDAY

Triplex Cinema and Mason Library, Great Barrington

Tuesdays at the Movies: Food and the Movies II – Howard Arkans
Exploring the Two Faces of Photography – Thaddeus Kubis

WEDNESDAY

Kimball Farms, Lenox

Introduction to the Modern Middle East – Adam Hinds
Showcasing the Berkshires – Michael Ballon, Ellen Grenadier, Lisa Landry, Casey O'Donnell, Anastasia Stanmeyer, Dale and Phyllis Webb
Dante's Inferno: A Journey to Hell and Back – Laura Smith

THURSDAY

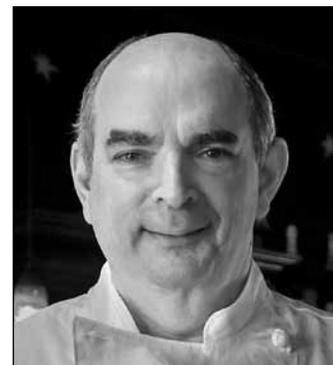
Lenox Library, Lenox

The Birth of our American Republic, 1776-1787 – Stacy Wallach
The Poetic Edda: Literature of the Viking Age – Alexandra Tinari
Reading Ghost Stories Out Loud – Elizabeth Young

FRIDAY

Lenox Library, Lenox

Today's Headlines – David Orenstein, Moderator
Advances in Medicine – Edwin Kolodny, Jonah Marshall, Rangan Murali
Science Conversations: Behind the Headlines – Anthony Segal, Moderator



Lecturer Michael Ballon



Lecturer Elizabeth Young

Spring/Summer 2015 Photo Contest

PRIZE: The winning photos will be on the cover of the Spring or Summer 2015 catalog, and the winners will receive a 1-year free membership to OLLI.

THEME: Berkshire area spring or summer scene

SPECS: Digital format (jpeg, tiff, bmp), 3.2 mega-pixels or greater. Please send high-resolution photos. No vertical format.

DEADLINE: January 9, 2015

SUBMIT: E-mail attach photos to Bob.Desrosiers@Gmail.com

Visit www.BerkshireOLLI.org for further details.

Winter Photo Contest Winner

The winning photo on the cover of the Winter 2015 Catalog was shot by Bob Desrosiers with an iPhone 5.

The photo was taken at Notchview, a 3,100-acre property located in Windsor, Massachusetts, currently managed by the Trustees of Reservations.

President's Message

Dear OLLI Members,

We have just completed a terrific fall semester! Our members were enrolled in more classes than in previous years. Their comments on the courses ranged from "fascinating" to "fabulous" to "simply wonderful." We have had many excellent special events and many outstanding distinguished speakers.

All of these activities were created, organized and implemented by our volunteers. One of the great things about OLLI is that it is member run. OLLI members volunteer in a variety of ways such as developing courses, editing the newsletter, helping out in our office and even cooking omelets when the need arises.

Becoming a member of one of OLLI's vibrant committees is a great way to meet new people and get involved. Opportunities abound. OLLI

committees such as Membership, Development, Newsletter, Catalog and Marketing will welcome you as a volunteer. The Science, Literature, Arts and Social Science Committees, which make up our curricula, are looking for people with ideas for courses. The New Venues Task Force, a committee that started this fall, can use your help. The annual art show and silent auction event which will be held in May can also use your help.

If you have an interest in any of these, please call our Executive Director Megan Whilden at 413.236.2192. She will be happy to discuss the various options with you. I assure you that your OLLI experience will be more satisfying if you get involved.

On a sad note, I am sorry to tell you that Rudy Hoeltzel passed away in October. A graduate of Princeton and the Harvard School of Business,

Rudy had a passion for literature and chaired the Literature Committee for many years. He was responsible for creating excellent courses and finding memorable lecturers to teach them. He participated in classes almost until the day he died. It was always interesting to hear what he had to say. Rudy will be missed. We extend our sincere condolences to his wife Mary.

Our annual fundraising appeal letter has recently arrived in your mailbox. I hope you will be as generous as you can. Our membership and course fees, as well as the income from our endowment, cover some but not all of our expenses. We need the help of our members if we are to continue the high quality of our programming.

I hope to meet you in class during our winter semester.

Sandra Rubin

From the Executive Director

Hello OLLI!

I am thrilled to be working for such a dynamic organization with members as fascinating as the courses, talks and events we offer. One of my key responsibilities is to ensure that as many people (and potential members) as possible find out how terrific OLLI is, and I hope you will help me get the word out.

Towards that end, we are continuing a very special offer to encourage you to recommend to your friends and neighbors that they join OLLI. In gratitude, if someone joins on your recommendation, we will give you a free course credit worth \$45. Just be sure to let us know that you sent them our way.

This winter, in time for the holidays, we are also offering a special gift membership. If you purchase an OLLI membership as a gift for someone, we will include a free FLEX PASS at no extra charge—a \$45 value—so

the recipient will have a chance to sample OLLI's terrific courses. For more information about ordering gift memberships, please call our Administrative Assistant Norah Bresnahan in the office at 413.236.2190.

In order to keep our members updated about OLLI, we've established a Facebook page where we post news about OLLI events and those of our cultural and educational partners. "Liking" our Facebook page is a great way to keep up with all the wonderful educational opportunities in the Berkshires. You can find us at [facebook.com/olliatberkshirecommunitycollege](https://www.facebook.com/olliatberkshirecommunitycollege).

Not on Facebook but interested in learning more about it? No worries! We're planning to offer classes to acquaint you with Facebook, smart phones and tablets. And I'm happy to tell you we have other updates including a spiffy new website which will enable you to sign up for courses, special events and even renew your membership online. Look for these upgrades in early 2015, and please let me know if you have suggestions for helping us get the word out about OLLI. Your ideas are always welcomed. My contact information is mwhilden@berkshirecc.edu or 413.236.2192. —Megan Whilden

OLLI NEWSLETTER

Editor: Wilma Michaels

Assistant Editors: Peter Bluhm, Peri Caverly, Judy Katz, Marge Lewis, Don Miller, Sandi Rubin

Editorial Staff: Arline Breskin, Mary Anne Cicchillo, Ruth Degenhardt, Magda Gabor-Hotchkiss, Marilyn Margolis, Marie Milazzo, Elizabeth Rosenberg, Myrna Schneiderman, Rose Scotch, Helen-Mary Shaffer, Harriet Shair, Arthur Sherman, Ruth Weinstein, Selma Williams

Feature Writer: Joanna Fribush

Getting to Know Norah Bresnahan

OLLI's Can-Do Administrative Assistant

When the phone rings at the OLLI office at BCC, the welcoming voice that answers it belongs to Norah Bresnahan who joined the OLLI staff in June as administrative assistant to Megan Whilden, OLLI's executive director. Norah spends a lot of time on the phone, answering questions about the many facets of OLLI programming—from registration and class locations to dates of special lectures and outings. She also checks details of setting up the various venues for the wide spectrum of OLLI activities. When she can manage to get away from the oft-ringing telephone, she is on the run at the BCC campus to make sure all is in order before OLLI members show up for their classes, lectures or trips.

"I love working here," she says with a smile. "I can't imagine a better place to work." She has been working at BCC for the past three years. Since OLLI has an institutional connection with the college, she appreciates the

fact that she is still associated with BCC. She finds the OLLI work very fast paced, "which is a good thing," she adds. Norah finds that in her new job she is interacting with more people. She says, "It is very hands-on work, and it's also demanding in a varied way."

One of her recent challenges came when the college maintenance staff was short-handed at the time OLLI needed to set up for the annual OLLI brunch. Norah pitched in, helping to set up 25 tables and 150 chairs for the record crowd of OLLI members and guests who attended the event. "It keeps me on my toes," she said.

Norah is a Pittsfield native with a large, close family—38 first cousins! She is, herself, a BCC student, taking one credit course a semester in addition to her full-time OLLI job. For her, one of the great benefits of working at BCC is that her two-year-old daughter



can go to the day care center located at BCC just downstairs from her office. When not working, Norah enjoys reading, playing with her daughter and refinishing furniture.

She very much likes interacting with OLLI members. She feels they are "a different kind of person" from the traditional BCC student population. Those who take OLLI classes are not concerned with earning credits and come to classes without feeling the stress of taking exams or having to do homework. Norah said, "Their lives are so interesting, and they always give good advice."

— Selma Williams, Editorial Staff

Meet Board Member Bill Latimer

Bill, the new editor of OLLI's catalog, is an experienced newspaperman and editor with a passion for learning. He grew up on Cape Cod and then entered Eisenhower College in Seneca Falls, New York, as a political science student. After graduation, "looking for something real," he entered the workforce and took a variety of jobs including fishing, picking cranberries, restaurant cooking, managing a small computer service company and eventually writing and editing. Between jobs, Bill hitchhiked over much of the Western Hemisphere.

Years later, Bill enrolled in journalism courses at Harvard University's Extension School where he became "hooked" on education. A professor there offered him a job in central Massachusetts working for a new weekly newspaper near Worcester. Bill accepted and soon found himself edi-

tor of the paper, where he remained for many years. He greatly enjoyed this work which involved him deeply in his community and brought a new challenge each week. After many years working as a journalist and editor, Bill completed a formal degree in journalism at UMass Amherst University Without Walls.

Five years ago, Bill moved to western Massachusetts and bought a home in Pittsfield to be nearer to Kathryn, who is now his wife. They generally spend weekdays in Pittsfield and weekends in Cummington. Presently, Bill works as a freelance editor and has edited scores of books, including textbooks, in a range of fields. Looking toward retirement, Bill plans to write



books, and he and Kathryn plan to build a "Net Zero Energy" passive solar home.

Bill says that he greatly enjoyed a recent OLLI course on the industrial archaeology of the Berkshires. He is pleased to volunteer for OLLI even though he is still work-

ing. He believes OLLI demonstrates that people retain a thirst for knowledge as they age, and as he moves into retirement he hopes to take more OLLI courses.

Bill is proud to contribute to OLLI as the catalog editor and as a member of the Board of Directors.

— Peter Bluhm, Editorial Staff

Meet Board Member Lois Lenehan

Lois, an OLLI board member for the past year, is a veteran teacher and former art gallery owner. A Renaissance woman, she was born in Lynn, and raised in Saugus, Massachusetts, and spent her teen years in Rhode Island. She has earned a bachelor's degree in social science and a second one in general science. She



also holds a Master of Arts degree in sociology from the University of Massachusetts.

Lois moved to the Berkshires in 1969 with her first husband, Jim Lenehan, who was a GE engineer. They spent most of the next twenty years in Lenox while Lois taught

science and history at the Richmond Consolidated School. During those years, she also taught sociology as an adjunct professor at Berkshire Community College and served on the Lenox Library Board. Lois also taught classes at Middlesex Community College and North Adams State College.

After Jim died in 1989, Lois married Burt Hanback in 2005 and a year later they moved to Pine Plains, New York, a rural community near Millerton, New York. Lois owned the Hanback Gallery in Lenox from 2007 to 2009 and then in Millerton from 2009 to 2011. Today, Lois and Burt

divide their time between Pine Plains and Lenox, enjoying the unique amenities of each place.

Lois enrolls frequently in OLLI courses. She enjoys traveling throughout New England to visit her three children and five grandchildren. In Pine Plains, Lois volunteers at the library, is the treasurer of the local historical society and has worked for the Cornell Cooperative Extension Service as a family budget educator. Her son Matthew is the president of the Lenox Library Board, where Lois served years earlier.

Co-chair of the Distinguished Speakers Series, Lois is also in charge of the silent auction for the OLLI art show which will take place in May 2015.

— Marilyn Margolis, Editorial Staff

Call for OLLI Authors

The OLLI Newsletter highlights members who are published authors. We spotlight some of their works in this issue and will continue to do so in future issues as space permits. If you have published in any genre, please send us the title, publisher, date of publication, a brief synopsis of the work and ordering information. Send your information to Editor Peter Bluhm at peterbluhm@roadrunner.com.

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The Commons by Susan Dworkin, published by Divided Light Projects, 2014

It is the year 2165. Climate change has impoverished the world. One giant corporation governs North America and controls the food supply. When a fierce wheat plague threatens everyone with starvation, an alliance of plant scientists, robot spies and fed-up farmers organize to fight it. And at their center is a young pop singer named Lizzie who becomes the voice of the revolution. *The Commons* is

available from Amazon in paperback and Kindle editions. Susan Dworkin has written half a dozen plays and published 14 books, among them the international bestseller *The Nazi Officer's Wife*, a true story of love and terror in the Third Reich.

—————
To The Village Square: From Montague to Fukushima: 1975-2014 by Lionel Delevingne, published by Nouveau Monde Press/Prospecta Press, October 2014

Photojournalist Delevingne has been covering the antinuclear/Safe Energy movement for almost 40 years. This book documents citizens' actions opposing nuclear power energy throughout the U.S. and the aftermath of nuclear catastrophes in Chernobyl and Fukushima. It celebrates the power of a vocal, engaged citizenry to exercise their democratic rights and enact change through peaceful protest. For more information, visit www.tothevillagesquare.net.

No Time to Play (1998) and *Recess is Over: A Handbook for Managing Youthful Offenders in Adult Systems* (2001) by William "Bill" Sturgeon and Barry Glick, published by American Correctional Association

The incarceration of adolescents in adult correctional institutions—in significant numbers—was a new phenomenon in the 1990s. These two books were written to guide correctional institutions manage youthful offenders also known as adjudicated juveniles. Bill is an international criminal justice and security consultant, expert witness, U.S. government consultant and former college professor. He is the host of "Discussions from the Berkshires" on WRRS 104.3 FM and Pittsfield Community Television on Channel 16.

*Best Wishes for a
Happy and Healthy
New Year*

A Very Special Event!

**OLLI Brunch and Lecture at BCC
October 12, 2014**

***Enemy of the People* at Barrington
Stage Company**

*Below: Speaker Phyllis Jaffe on
Enemy of the People*



OLLI Chefs

*Above Left to Right: Paul Smilow, Adele Cukor, Tom Koelle,
Judy Cromwell, Carol Sabot, Bobbie Liebert, Ro Koelle, Joan
Brotman, Arline Breskin*



*Left: New OLLI Members Attending Brunch
Deborah Payne, Alex Nardacchi, Adrea Seligsohn,
Arthur Wichman*



PHOTO CREDITS BOB DESROSIERIS AND WILMA MICHAELS

*Right: Special Events Volunteers
Seated Left to Right: Audrey Schlanger,
Judy Keshner, Barbara Greenbaum,
Chair Arline Breskin
Standing Left to Right: Paul Smilow,
Carol Sabot, Turbi Smilow,
Lesley Oransky, Helene Calman,
Ellen Tabs, Bonnie Desrosiers*



Cyrus West Field – Stockbridge Born

Joined Two Worlds

Cyrus West Field, famous for funding and planning the transatlantic telegraph cable in the 1850s and 1860s, was born in Stockbridge in 1819. His father was the prominent minister, David Dudley Field. His brothers David Dudley Jr., Jonathan Edwards, Stephen Johnson and Henry Martyn attended Williams College and gained fame and prominence in their careers, but Cyrus did not go to college. He left school in 1834 at age 15 and went to work as a clerk in New York City. Several years later, he went into the paper business where he became rich and retired at age 34. Cyrus now needed to do something with his money.

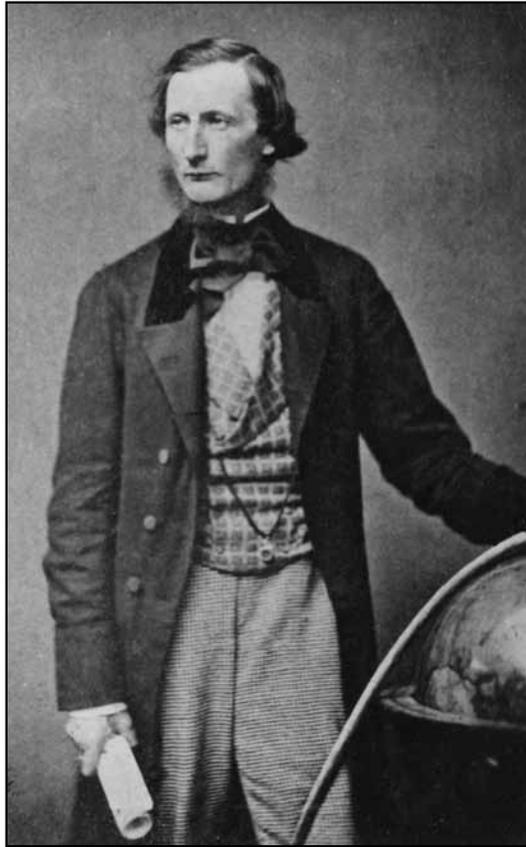
Another brother Matthew Dickinson, a self-taught engineer, introduced Cyrus to Frederick Gisbowne who originated the idea of a transatlantic cable in 1839 but had no funds to build it. At first Cyrus dismissed the idea, but after studying his globe and consulting with Samuel F.B. Morse and Matthew Maury, a well-known oceanographer, he agreed to support and manage this formidable and risky venture. The plan was to lay the cable under the ocean from Newfoundland to Ireland—the shortest distance between North America and Europe. Cyrus Field's library globe is on display at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.

In 1854, under Cyrus's leadership, the New York, Newfoundland, and London Telegraph Company was formed and construction of the cable began. Finding suitable chemicals to build an underwater cable was the first big challenge, and installing it seemed an insurmountable task. The first attempt in 1857 failed as did several other trials which caused many to give up, but dauntless Cyrus persisted in reorganizing and refinancing and the work continued. In August 1858, two ships—American and British—met mid-ocean to join the two parts of the cable which stretched 2,000 miles at a depth of 2 miles. It worked! Queen Victoria and President James Buchanan exchanged messages and each expressed the importance of this amazing unifying link between the nations. It took sixteen hours for the messages to be transmitted using Morse code. Unfortunately, the cable broke a month later, and Cyrus again began the search for success. It took years of fundraising and technical work to establish the next trial.

In 1866, the seemingly impossible goal was accomplished. The fifth cable was successful! Cyrus was triumphant and was praised worldwide. Congress awarded him a medal, celebrations were held, fireworks sparkled and the link across the ocean was secure.

Cyrus died in 1892 and is buried in the family plot in Stockbridge. A small section of the 1858 cable is on display in the Melville Room of the Berkshire Athenaeum.

— Joanna Fribush, Feature Writer



OLLI at BCC Annual Fund Donors

OLLI at BCC depends on the generosity of our members and supporters. Thank you to all those listed below who supported the annual Fund for OLLI in our last fiscal year July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.

FELLOWS

Lile Deinard
Sandra & Alan Rubin
Martha & Ron Stewart
Ellen & Leonard Tabs

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Distinguished Speakers Series

A Morning with Keith Lockhart
Boston Pops Orchestra Conductor

Saturday, August 23, 2014
Barbara Greenbaum, Interviewer

Special Event!

Sarasota, Florida, March 5, 2014
Visit to the Ringling College of Art and Design



George Menken, Alvin and Myrna Schneiderman, Harvey and Bonita Ganot, Lora Tobias



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Upcoming Events and Lectures

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS SERIES' co-chairs, Warren Hagler and Lois Lenehan, have been busy working to bring you outstanding lecturers and lectures. Hold these dates:

MAY 2 • Dori Katz, author of *Looking for Strangers: The True Story of My Hidden Wartime Childhood* will speak about her journey to recover a wartime childhood.

JUNE 13 • Lawrence Snyder, Associate Professor and Director of the Undergraduate, Graduate and Online Cyber security programs at Bay Path University, Longmeadow, MA. His topic is "Cyberspace and Privacy Issues."

JUNE 27 • Jeremy Yudkin, author and music professor, topic to be determined

The **SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE**, under the leadership of Arline Breskin, has planned fabulous winter events for you—on both coasts of Florida. Mark your calendars for these special events:

JANUARY 27 • The Museum of Fine Arts and The Salvador Dali Museum, St. Petersburg, Florida

MARCH 5 • The Equestrian Center in Wellington, Florida

MAY 23–24 • OLLI Art Show and Silent Auction, Lenox

Look for emails about these events and check our website at www.BerkshireOLLI.org for these listings.