

OLLI *Newsletter*

AT BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WINTER 2016

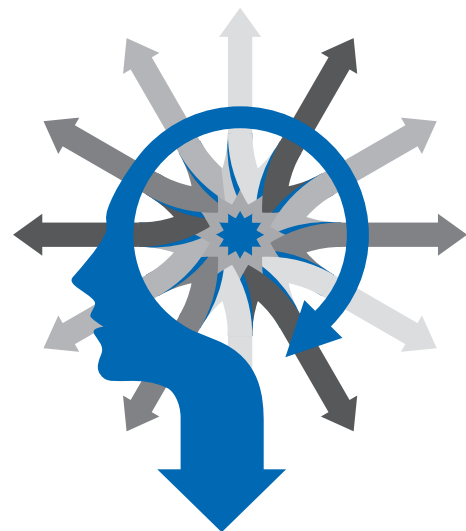
PARTNERS WITH WILLIAMS COLLEGE, BARD COLLEGE AT SIMON'S ROCK & MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Warm Up With OLLI Winter Courses

OLLI's curriculum committees have arranged more than a dozen courses for the winter semester. See the Winter 2016 Catalog or visit www.berkshireolli.org for more details. Courses begin on January 12 and end February 25.

CLASS LOCATIONS: **CONTE** = BCC Education Ctr., 78 Center St. Pittsfield; **SCC** = BCC South County Ctr. 343 Main St. Great Barrington; **HI** = Home Instead, 55 Wendell Ave. Pittsfield; **LL** = Lenox Library at 18 Main St. Lenox; **TRIPLEX CINEMA** = 70 Railroad St. Great Barrington; **WHITNEY** = Whitney Center for the Arts, 42 Wendell Ave. Pittsfield.

TUES.	<p><i>Tuesdays at the Movies: Sinatra</i> – Arkans TRIPLEX CINEMA</p> <p><i>Love and Marriage: Reading Short Stories Out Loud</i> – Young SCC</p> <p><i>Exploring the Two Faces of Photography</i> – Kubis CONTE</p> <p><i>Monkeys Don't Text: A Short Course in Linguistics</i> – Haynes SCC</p>
WED.	<p><i>Today's Headlines</i> – Orenstein HI</p> <p><i>Love and Transformation: Reading Ovid</i> – Keller HI</p> <p><i>What Was Plato Talking About? An Introduction</i> – Cameron HI</p> <p><i>Women and the Creative Self</i> – Schorr CONTE</p>
THURS.	<p><i>The Birth of Our American Republic, 1787-1800</i> – Wallach WHITNEY</p> <p><i>A Singer's Life</i> – Luxon WHITNEY</p> <p><i>Light Reading: Illuminated Manuscripts of the Dark Ages</i> – Gross Smith WHITNEY</p>
FRI.	<p><i>Science Conversations: Behind the Headlines</i> – Segal & Bluhm LL</p> <p><i>Advances in Medicine</i> – O'Malley, Yurfest, Eskurza LL</p> <p><i>Matters of the Mind</i> – Wollman, Pollack LL</p>



Spring/Summer Photo Contest Opens

Want to share your scenic photos of Berkshire area spring or summer scenes? The OLLI Spring/Summer 2016 Photo Contest has begun. The winning photo will be on the cover of the Spring or Summer 2016 catalog, and the winner will receive a 1-year free membership to OLLI.

Please submit photos, not later than January 9, 2016, in digital format (jpeg, tiff, png), 3.2 mega-pixels or greater, full-resolution and horizontal aspect. Limit of five photos per person, please. E-mail to Bob.Desrosiers@Gmail.com. Visit www.BerkshireOLLI.org for further details and to see previous winning photos.

Purdy Wins Winter Photo Contest

The most recent winning photo appears on the cover of the Winter Catalog. It was taken by Sue Purdy of Dalton, MA and shows the Massachusetts Veterans War Memorial Tower on the summit of Mount Greylock. It was taken with a Panasonic DMC-ZS8 in March, 2015.

President's Message

I am pleased to present my first message as President of OLLI at BCC. My goal is to serve as the bridge to a newer, larger and better OLLI. Our membership count presently stands at 1,025. Our goal is to increase that by 25 members by the end of this fiscal year. To that end, we held an open house for potential members in August at Bard at Simon's Rock. We plan similar future events for each of our four semesters.

In September OLLI held a cocktail reception for new members. Over 50 first-year members attended. We hope events like this will improve the retention rate and promote a spirit of friendship and socialization.

We have concluded a successful Fall 2015 semester. We had 710 course enrollments from 361 members. Both numbers were higher than in the fall of 2014. Our winter catalogue is out, announcing 14 courses. I'm certain you will find the course offerings interesting and stimulating, and I urge you to participate.

OLLI offers a variety of special events. We visited museums at Harvard and MIT, the Edward M. and John F. Kennedy museums, the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford and enjoyed the annual OLLI Brunch. Finally, we square danced in Pittsfield



*BCC President Ellen Kennedy with
OLLI President Leonard Tabs.*

this fall. For OLLI members who travel to Florida for the winter, events are planned for both the East and West coasts in January and March.

The OLLI Distinguished Speakers Series celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. Several dynamic speakers delivered lectures on a variety of subjects this past summer and fall, and an exciting lineup of speakers is in the works for the spring of 2016.

We are working on improving our technology and we are investigating an online registration system and an improved website. We hope these changes will make it easier to enroll in courses, renew membership, and keep abreast of news and upcoming events.

The courses, events, trips, and lectures are all created, organized, and implemented by our outstanding

volunteers and we are very grateful to them all. We have a committee structure to help manage these activities, and it goes without saying OLLI can use more help. If you are interested in joining any one of our committees, or in teaching a class on a favorite subject, kindly call our Executive Director, Megan Whilden, at 413-236-2192 for further information.

Megan and I attended the national OLLI conference in Charlotte, NC this past October. We were impressed by the new national OLLI organization based in Chicago and look forward to using it as a valued resource for new ideas, support and continued information exchange with the other 118 OLLI chapters.

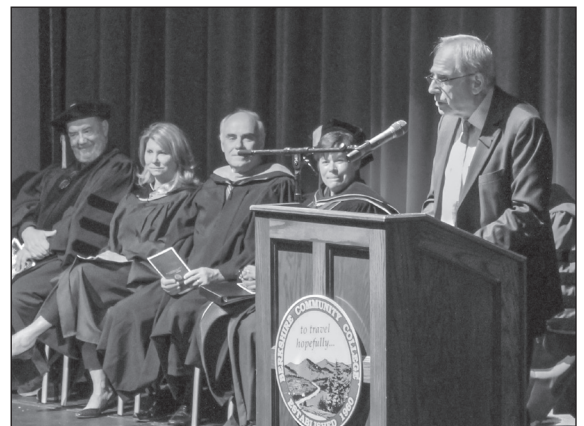
By now, our annual fundraising appeal has arrived in your home. Membership and course tuition cover only a portion of our total operating budget, so this appeal is necessary to continue delivering our package of courses, special events and lectures. Please be as generous as you can, and remember your contribution is tax deductible, much needed and greatly appreciated.

— Lenny Tabs

OLLI Gives Back to Berkshire Community College

On October 15, OLLI President Leonard Tabs was a featured speaker at this year's BCC convocation. He spoke about OLLI and our new Mentoring for Success program. He told the students "learning never stops. It doesn't end with a grade from the class you are taking or when you graduate. Life will not be as fulfilling if you do not continue to challenge yourselves with new ideas, new interests and new skills."

Few OLLI members may know that each year OLLI underwrites book purchases for the BCC library in honor of BCC honor students. This year OLLI underwrote 83 new books for the BCC Library. — Megan Whilden



OLLI NEWSLETTER: Editor: Peter Bluhm. Feature Writer: Joanna Fribush. Assistant Editors: Judy Katz, Linda Halpern, Judy Katz, Don Miller, Sandi Rubin, Myrna Schneiderman, Rose Scotch, Ruth Weinstein. Proofreaders: Ellen Antoville, Magda Gabor-Hotchkiss, Marie Milazzo, Harriet Shair, Selma Williams.

Upcoming Events

SPECIAL EVENTS IN FLORIDA

The Special Events Committee, headed by Arline Breskin, plans two Florida events this winter. On January 13, 2016, OLLI members will meet on the east coast at the Norton Gallery to view an international photo exhibition about Israel. The show, *This Place: Israel Through Photography's Lens*, explores the complexity of Israel and the West Bank, as place and metaphor, through the eyes of 12 internationally acclaimed non-Israeli and non-Arab photographers. The Norton Museum of Art is the first U.S. venue to host this show.

In March, OLLI members will gather on the Florida west coast to see the Helga Weill-Apeit Center for Asian Art at the Ringling Museum in Sarasota. More details will be announced soon.

FALL 2016 TUSCANY TRIP WITH KUBIS

OLLI and OLLI photography instructor Thad Kubis are planning to offer a Tuscany trip for OLLI members and friends next year. Scheduled for the first two weeks of September 2016, there will be two one week sessions at Villa Nobile, a rural 19th century villa near the Tuscany village of Cortona, the setting for the bestselling book and film *Under the Tuscan Sun*.

In Tuscany, you will enjoy intensive immersion in photographing the beautiful landscape and working together to critique and build each other's skills. Optional tours will be offered of Etruscan sites and the hill towns of Tuscany.



Italian cooking classes will also be available.

Cortona offers complete views of the Val di Chiana & Lake Trasimeno, and its architecture is medieval with steep narrow streets. Cortona also features an Etruscan museum and tombs. The OLLI trip will coincide with Cortona's annual international travel photography festival, Cortona On The Move.

Details are still being confirmed, including cost. To tentatively reserve a place on the trip, or to ask any questions, contact Megan Whilden at the OLLI Office at (413) 236-2192 or mwhilden@berkshirecc.edu or Thad Kubis at (917) 597-1891 or thad@tbkphotos.com.

OLLI's New Performing Arts Initiative

One of the best things about OLLI is that it is member driven. That's exactly how OLLI's new Performing Arts Initiative got its start. OLLI members Karel Fisher, Nancy Vale and Barbara Waldinger, all experienced theatre instructors, wanted to see more active performing arts programming through OLLI. With help from Chelly Serman, Lance Serman and Naomi Spatz, they decided to pilot three OLLI theatre outings in October, with the extra oomph of talkbacks, discounts and receptions.

OLLI members responded strongly to this new opportunity to actively engage with theatre in the Berkshires. The theatre companies, Shakespeare & Company, Berkshire Theatre Group and WAM Theatre, proved both very welcoming to OLLI members and eager to offer after-show talkbacks.

This new initiative supplements the wonderful OLLI Theater Brunch that the OLLI Special Events Committee continues to offer annually in concert with Barrington Stage Company's October production. This year over 100 OLLI members and guests attended.

What's next? The performing arts group is planning more interactive courses. A play reading course will be offered in the spring of 2016 as well as a course providing a behind-the-scenes peek at the 2016 offerings from six different Berkshire theatre companies. During the June 2016 summer semester, another course will dive into four plays selected from the 2016 Berkshire theatre season. If you have a great idea for OLLI, contact me and together we will work to make it happen.

— Megan Whilden



Barbara Waldinger, Nancy Vale, Karel Fisher.



The cast of Homecoming talks back to OLLI members after the show.

MEGAN WHILDEN

PETER BLUM

Local History – Ephraim Williams Jr.

Ephraim Williams Jr., the founder of Williams College, was born in Newton, Massachusetts in 1714. His wealthy, elite family had come to Massachusetts in the 1600s and held key military, church and judiciary positions in the Bay Colony. Ephraim was educated in a village school, but unlike his peers, did not attend college. Traveling and reading were his primary interests, and he voyaged to England, Spain and Holland. In these travels he acquired graceful manners and considerable knowledge.

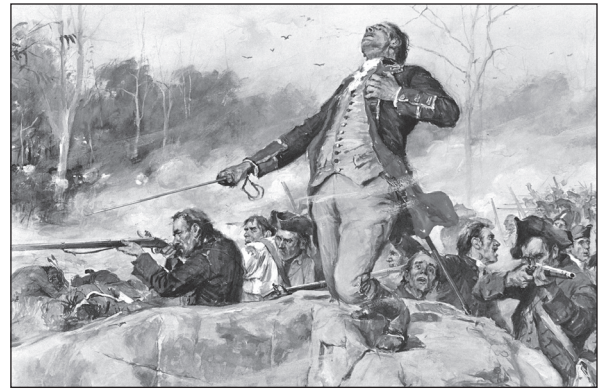
As a young man, Williams spent some time in Stockbridge with his father and John Sergeant at the Indian Mission, which helped the Housatonic Indians integrate with the colonists. His military career began with the outbreak of King George's War in 1744. Ephraim served as a captain at Fort Massachusetts in the province's northwestern area. The fort was captured and destroyed by the French in 1746, but he was absent at the time and escaped capture. Fort Massachusetts was rebuilt in 1748 and Williams continued as captain.

During the seven years of peace that followed, Williams remained at the fort, read books sent by his sister and earned the admiration and respect of his soldiers. He often traveled to Boston and Stockbridge for personal business. He bought land and encouraged settlement of towns in western Massachusetts along the

Hoosic River. He was also involved with the slave trade, which was legal at the time.

The French and Indian War ended the peace in 1754, and Williams was reinstated as provincial commander of Fort Massachusetts. Williams was apprehensive about this war and wrote that he hoped, "The Lord have mercy upon poor New England." In 1755 he was commissioned as a colonel to lead 1,000 British soldiers and 200 Mohawk Indians to protect Fort Edwards near Lake George. Tragically, his call for mercy was unheeded. On September 8, while on a mission to discover enemy forces, he was ambushed and killed by a shot in the head. His body was buried under a pine tree near where he fell.

Shortly before his death, Williams had written a will leaving part of his estate "to found and maintain a free school in the west township area," where he had commanded the militia. He stipulated that the town be named Williamstown and be part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. At that time the area was claimed by both Massachusetts and New York; and boundaries were not settled until 1773. In 1785, the Massachusetts legislature granted a charter for the school, and its Trustees began to raise additional funds for construction of a building to



The Death of Col. Ephraim Williams Jr., by F.C Yohn, courtesy of the Chapman Historical Museum, Glens Falls, NY.

be known as West College. The school opened in 1791 with 65 students. A year later the Trustees petitioned the court to convert the Free School into a college to make a liberal education affordable for middle and lower-class students living in the rural location. Williams College opened in 1793 with 20 students. Williams became the second institute of higher learning in Massachusetts.

In tribute to its founder, in 1854 Williams College erected a marble obelisk in his memory at the site of his death, just south of Lake George, where it still stands. In 1920 his body was exhumed and transferred to a vault in the Thompson Memorial Chapel at Williams College, where it remains today. The college has not forgotten its founder and annually remembers him. In March 2015 special celebrations were held in honor of the 300th anniversary of the birth of Ephraim Williams Jr.

— Joanna Fribush

Recent Events



Judy Levin and Carole Siegel at New Members Reception, Sept. 25.



OLLI members listen to descriptions of upcoming semester courses at the Fall Open House.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN GELLER

Getting to Know our OLLI Instructors

Thaddeus B. Kubis



Thad Kubis is a born and bred New Yorker. He went through the public school system and attended the NYC College of Technology, School of Visual Arts, NYU as well as UMass at Amherst. Thad graduated from UMass Amherst, cum laude, with a degree in Visual Communications/Marketing. He teaches visual communications at the NYC College of Technology and Integrated Marketing/Sales Promotion at Fashion Institute of Technology as an adjunct faculty member.

Thad ran an integrated marketing agency in NYC for 25 years. Upon moving to the Berkshires, he started The Institute for Media Convergence (TIFMC), a company where sales, marketing and technology converge. Thad has run training programs across the country for the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) and he contributes articles to an international magazine, Marketing Tech News.

Thad's interest in photography began in the late 1960's. He has worked both professionally and privately. He likes documentary photographs: images that tell a story and have strong emotional appeal. He also likes fine art photography, particularly if it is geometric, black and white and fully tonal.

Thad and his wife, Maria, have three sons. They live in Sheffield, having moved here from Port Washington twenty years ago. His hobby is sailing. He has sailed up and down the east

Marney Schorr



Marney Schorr is an art therapist and teaching artist who began teaching courses for OLLI in the spring of 2015. Her first course, *The Development of Art Therapy*, examined philosophy and origins, while also demonstrating some of the art-making directives used widely today. Her OLLI course this past fall, *Collage Cards*, considered topics such as the history of collage, creativity and the process of visual perception. Members intuitively created their own sets of collage cards and wrote personal affirmations guided by journal exercises. This winter Marney will be offering *Women and the Creative Self*, a course that is part lecture and part hands-on art-making. There will be reading and discussion of essays on relevant topics in the creative arts, as well as exploration of art media such as watercolor.

Marney earned a Master of Arts in Clinical Art Therapy at Long Island University and a B.A. in Visual Art at Empire State College. She worked in both New York and Massachusetts as a mental health clinician and art therapist. She has written about the relationship between art, neuroscience and trauma and has taught courses for mental health professionals on effecting change through art therapy. She has made presentations to the American Art Therapy Association and is a guest lecturer at Empire State College in Old Westbury, NY.

Laura Gross Smith



Laura Gross Smith is a veteran OLLI literature instructor with a love of her subject and a great zest for life. Born in Dalton, Laura graduated from Wahconah High School and attended Berkshire Community College in a business curriculum. As an adult, Laura later enrolled in a bachelor's program at Mount Holyoke College, in English this time. During these years she fell in love with medieval literature and graduated with a degree in English and Medieval Studies. Later she earned a Master's in Teaching, also at Mount Holyoke.

Laura finds much that fascinates her about medieval literature. In part it is the authors' strong connection to the natural world and their willingness to see symmetry and beauty. Partly it is the presence of both female and male writers. Partly it is the mix of religious imagery with fun, lowbrow writing. But mostly it is the language and the poetry. Laura is particularly struck by Chaucer's dream vision poetry with its beautiful sounds and visions.

Currently living in Sheffield, Laura has a son, Zachary, who is 23 and attending graduate school. Her partner is Paul Banevicius, a photography teacher at Berkshire School in Sheffield. She now teaches English at Lee High School. Laura writes poetry, and her book, *Spring's Third Day*, was published in 2010. More recently, Laura wrote five poems to be performed with music as part of a musical

Thanks to OLLI Instructors, Speakers and Presenters

Many people work hard to make OLLI courses and programs possible. We acknowledge here our instructors, lecturers, moderators and panelists (both members and nonmembers). They are all volunteers, and many have led more than one course. We offer our deep thanks to them all. Their generous assistance and expertise make OLLI possible as we know it.

Colin Adams
Stephanie Anderson
Howard and Sue Arkans
Stefan Asbury
Michael Ballon
J. Peter Bergman
Beverly & Scott Blonder
Margo Bowden
Julianne Boyd
Cornelia Brooke Gilder
Jock Brooks
Chris Coggins
James Cotter
Susan Cross
John Delano
Esteban DelPilar

Joan Del Plato
John Dickson
Stephen Gerard Dietmann
Vivian Dorsel
Shawn Fields
Andrew Fisher
Paul Flaum
George Gela
Gregory & Paula Gimblette
Wende Greenberg
Ellen Grenadier
Stephen Hannock
Laura Hansen
Adam Hinds
Phyllis Jaffe
Kevin Jones
Dori Katz
Sue Killam
Edwin Kolodny
James Kraft
Thaddeus B. Kubis
Lisa Landry
Ronald Maitland
Denise Markonish
Jonah S. Marshall
Richard Matturo
Philip McKnight
Rangan Murali

Jim Nejaime
Casey O'Donnell
Brenda Oppermann
David L Orenstein
John Pollok
Frederick & Dorothy Rudolph
Marney Schorr
Warren Schwartz
Anthony Segal
Greig Siedor
Efrem Sigel
Laura Gross Smith
Lawrence Snyder
Anastasia Stanmeyer
George Stassa
Lenny Tabs
Joe Thompson
Alexandra Tinari
Nancy Travis
Nancy Vale
Barbara Waldinger
Jesse Waldinger
Stacy Wallach
Phyllis Webb
Martin Weinstein
Joe Wheaton
Elizabeth Young
Jeremy Yudkin

Meet a Board Member – Peter Bluhm

Peter Bluhm, editor of this newsletter, brings to OLLI a personal history in the Berkshires as well as an impressive professional and organizational background.

Peter credits his grandparents for introducing him to the delights of the Berkshires. As a youngster in Brooklyn, he looked forward all year long to his summers at their Stockbridge cottage. He lived in upstate NY during high school, college and law school. Then after a short stint in the Navy, Peter and his wife, Valerie, chose Montpelier, VT as their home and were a part of that community for 35 years.

Peter's professional goal was always to work in government service. As a lawyer, he specialized in the area of telecommunications regulation. He worked in several Vermont agencies, the Vermont Public Service Board, the National Regulatory Research Institute, and consulted for state

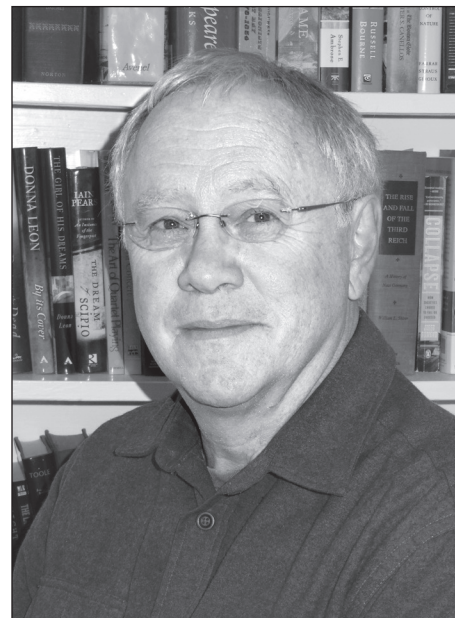
and federal regulatory clients. Peter also has had a continuing interest in education and has served on several school boards.

In retirement Peter was able to return as an adult to the place he fell in love with as a child, the Berkshires. He and Valerie were drawn here by the arts, culture and outdoors, and also to be near their daughter in Chatham, NY, with two grandsons, 7 and 3. Their son lives in Maryland and has a 1 year-old boy. Peter joined OLLI in 2012 because he enjoys the intellectual stimulation and discourse. He was drawn to the editorship of the Newsletter because it's an interesting challenge—different from the technical writing he's always done and requiring visual appeal.

Peter continues to serve the community by volunteering at the Great Barrington Unitarian Church and is on the Lee Planning Board.

He impresses those who know him with hobbies like climbing all 48 New Hampshire peaks above 4,000 feet, building his own house and playing viola.

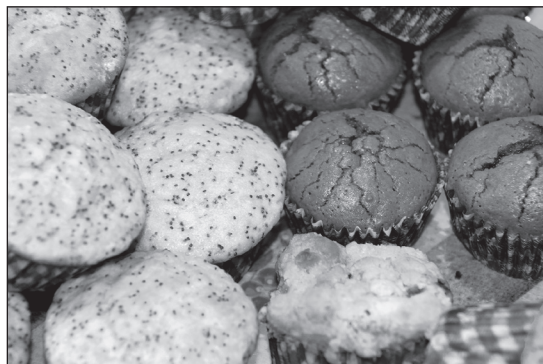
— Linda Halpern



OLLI Annual Theater Brunch



On October 11th, over 100 OLLI members and guests enjoyed a delicious brunch cooked by dozens of OLLI volunteers. There was also a fascinating lecture by Phyllis Jaffe followed by a matinee of Barrington Stage Company's production of *Veils*.



Above: Volunteer chefs Joan Brotman and Judy Cromwell at work preparing omelettes.

Some muffins on offer.



Clockwise from middle-left: Happy brunch customers Barbara Mandler with Milton Rubin, Sue Gorham with Helene Calman, Phyllis Jaffe (speaker) with Arline Breskin (brunch organizer) and Bill and Linda Grabel.



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Thad Kubis continued

coast, through the Caribbean and the Mediterranean. He teaches sailing in New York City and Philadelphia and holds a Masters license from the U.S. Coast Guard.

Thad is teaching the course *Two Faces of Photography* during the upcoming winter semester. Then in the Spring of 2016, he will teach an “on location” photography course based on four key elements of composition. He is also on OLLI’s Marketing Committee. In September 2016, Thad will lead an OLLI trip to Tuscany which will have two tracks: photography and Etruscan archeology (details to follow from the OLLI office).

— Sandi Rubin

Marney Schorr continued

Since arriving in the Berkshires, Marney has become involved in community arts. She has organized workshops with organizations such as The Mentor Network, Project Reconnect, The Brien Center, Berkshire Pathways, the Whitney Center for the Arts, the Berkshire Museum and the Pittsfield Public Schools.

Currently, Marney holds art therapy groups at NU Arts Gallery & Studios in Pittsfield, where she also exhibits and sells her artwork. After leaving clinical work behind in favor of community arts, Marney became inspired to create Art Therapy for Personal Enrichment to foster wellness and community in the Berkshires. Now her focus is on making art therapy accessible for everyone. She offers uniquely themed art therapy groups to the public, including art therapy with nature metaphors, vision boards and altered books. More information can be found on her website at www.marneyschorr.webs.com.

— Harriet Shair

Laura Gross Smith continued

“Wu Xing” performance in five movements that was commissioned by Crescendo Chorus of Lakeville, Connecticut. Laura also leads a physically vigorous life. She practices yoga regularly and runs at least six miles every day.

Laura has taught four OLLI classes in the past, and in the 2016 winter term she is offering *Light Reading: Illuminated Manuscripts of the Dark Ages*. She enjoys the OLLI class discussions where she finds the students eager and knowledgeable. In OLLI courses, she says, she can delve deeply into the material she really likes and encounter points she never considered. Even after a long day, Laura reports she leaves her OLLI classes energized by her interactions with the students.

— Peter Bluhm