



Newsletter

AT BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

FALL 2014

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

Fantastic Fall Semester!

Twenty-one courses in the arts, sciences, literature and social sciences will be given at several locations throughout Berkshire County. They will be presented in lecture, seminar, hands-on and videoconferencing formats. Courses start on September 11 and continue through October 31. See the Fall Catalog for specific details or visit our website at www.BerkshireOLLI.org.

MONDAY

BCC Pittsfield and Great Barrington

History Shock: The View from an Embassy – John Dickson

Mythology – Paul Flaum

Saul Bellow and Philip Roth: Recording Modern American Life – James Kraft

Berkshire Poets Share Their Work and Craft – Aaron Beatty, Jerri Chaplin, Michelle Gillett, CD Nelsen, Bob Ronnow, Liskan Van Pelt Dus

TUESDAY

Bard College at Simon's Rock

Introduction to Jewish Scripture – Rabbi Ivan Caine

The Best and Worst of the Supreme Court – John Pollok

A Brief Introduction to Human Pathology – Paul Smilow

Medieval England: From Beowulf to Richard III – David Hosford

WEDNESDAY

The Clark; Williams College

U.S. Environmental Law: Its Historic Past, Its Uncertain Future – Philip McKnight

World War I: The First Year, 1914 – Greig Siedor

Frontiers of Science – Chip Lovett, Mihai Stoiciu

Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment – Julie Cassidy

THURSDAY

Hancock Shaker Village; Intermodal Transportation Ctr.;
BCC Pittsfield; NUarts Studios and Gallery

Meet the Artists: Exploring the Creative Process – Esther Budnick, Deb Carter, Diane Firtell, Ellen Joffe, Claudia Shuster

The Housatonic River and Its PCB Dilemma – Alison Dixon

George Bernard Shaw: Playwright, Poet, Puritan . . . – Nancy Vale

Reading Middlemarch – Nancy Travis

FRIDAY

BCC Pittsfield

Today's Headlines – James Cotter

Architectural Gems: Selected Sites – Beverly Blonder; Stephen Dietemann; Paula and Gregory Gimblette; Kate and Hans Morris; Milan Markovic and Alexandra Dest; Dorothy Rudolph and Jock Brooks; Warren Schwartz

The Art of Cooking Italian Cuisine – Howard and Sue Arkans

Insider Trading – Larry Greenapple

Greatest Opera Singers of All Time – Peter Podol



Lecturers
Chip Lovett and
Alison Dixon

Photo Contest Winner Fall 2014

The winning photo on the cover of the Fall 2014 Catalog was shot by Alan Rubin, Hinsdale, MA. The photo was taken at Ashmere Lake in Hinsdale with a Nikon D70 camera.

Winter 2015 Photo Contest

PRIZE: The winning photo will be on the cover of the Winter 2015 catalog, and the winner will receive a 1-year free membership to OLLI.

THEME: Berkshire area winter scene

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

DEADLINE: September 22, 2014

SUBMIT: E-mail attached photos to Bob.Desrosiers@gmail.com

Visit www.BerkshireOLLI.org for further details

President's Message

This has been a time of transition for OLLI. As you know, Barbara Hochberg, our executive director for seven years, retired in June, and Sharon Mack, who worked as our staff assistant for BILL and then for OLLI, also left.

Barbara was instrumental in facilitating our successful transition from BILL to OLLI; she established the procedures that we continue to follow and brought her very special skills to the position, for which we will always be grateful.

Meet the New Executive Director

Megan Whilden

Hello OLLI!

I am thrilled to come on board as OLLI at BCC's second executive director following the indefatigable and wonderful Barbara Hochberg. We all hope to see her in many OLLI classes now that she is retired.

I have been a fan of OLLI and its predecessor Berkshire Institute for Lifetime Learning (BILL) since I first heard about it in 2005 when I began serving as Pittsfield's first director of cultural development. Mona and Arthur Sherman were among my first visitors on the job, and I was so impressed with the vibrancy and success of BILL which soon became OLLI at BCC. It is exciting to be here with you.

My family joins me in having a love of lifelong learning. My mother, Kathy Whilden, is a frequent teacher at OLLI at California State University, Monterey Bay, where she co-leads a "Plein Air Writing" class. My aunt, Patricia Dougherty, a history professor at Dominican College of San Rafael, has taught at the OLLI there. I have another aunt in her 70s who is working

After an intensive search for a new executive director, I am very pleased to introduce Megan Whilden to you. Megan served admirably as the director of cultural affairs for the city of Pittsfield and initiated such events as Third Thursday, Arts Friday and Word X Word—events that put Pittsfield on the state's cultural map. We expect that she will bring her considerable creativity, marketing and media skills, and energy to the OLLI position.

Norah Bresnahan is OLLI's new administrative assistant. She has been working for BCC for the past few

on her second master's degree while her husband audits classes at Georgetown University. So you could say lifelong learning runs in my family!

We are fortunate to live in the Berkshires where there are so many cultural and educational organizations to partner with and where collaboration is welcomed and supported. To



me, OLLI at BCC represents the very best of the Berkshire community. When bright, creative and motivated people work together to create something useful and fun for both themselves and others to enjoy, extraordinary things are created!

I am not a native of New England; I am actually a fifth generation Californian from the other Monterey on the Pacific coast. I have been in the Berkshires for well over a decade and love its beauty, its sense of community and its creative spirit. My nine years as the cultural director for the city of Pittsfield gave me the opportunity to work with almost every cultural organization in the Berkshires and gave me a deep appreciation for the quality of its people, especially volunteers.

When I'm not at OLLI, you can find me gardening, gallivanting with my beau Igor Greenwald, a financial writer, or attending some of the many

years and comes to us familiar with the college and its workings as well as with all of its computer programs. She is a delightful "people" person, and we think we once again have a great team working for OLLI.

Please stop in at the OLLI office to introduce yourselves to Megan and Norah and wish them much success in their new positions.

I look forward to seeing you at classes, and if we have not yet met, please stop me to say hello.

Sandra Rubin

exciting events and hotspots to be found here in the Berkshires.

I hope you will stop by to say hi when I am in the OLLI office or when you see me out and about. I am always available by email at mwhilden@berkshirecc.edu or by phone at 413.236.2192. I welcome your thoughts, suggestions and ideas and look forward to working with each of you to ensure a bright future for OLLI and our programs.

—Megan Whilden, Executive Director

Board of Directors

2014 – 2015

Sandra Rubin, President
Norman Michaels, Treasurer
Wendy Robbins, Secretary

DIRECTORS

Lile Deinard
Bonnie Desrosiers
Robert Desrosiers
Thomas Koelle
Bill Latimer
Lois Lenehan
Wilma Michaels
Harold Shair
Shirley Shapiro
Arthur Sherman
Carl Shuster
Leonard Tabs
Howard Arkans, Immediate Past President
Bill Mulholland, BCC VP of Community Education and Workforce Development

Meet Board Member Wilma Michaels

Wilma served on the BILL/OLLI newsletter staff for seventeen years and has been its editor for eight years. This fall 2014 issue will be her last as editor. Her dedication to correct grammar and literate composition is well known by those who work with her. Split infinitives, misused semicolons and incorrect capitalization don't stand a chance—all are caught and corrected. Her dedication to correct grammar and literate composition as well as careful fact checking is well known by those who work with her.



She works with a staff of volunteers that respects her knowledge. Wilma says, "I have the utmost respect for our newsletter team—some of whom I have been working with since I joined the staff. Their expertise in editing,

writing and proof-reading contributes to the professional publication of which we are all proud. They make my task easier, and I am grateful to them."

Wilma's background is impressive. She earned a master of arts degree in Business Education from Montclair State College in NJ, was an office technologies professor for twenty-

four years at Rockland Community College and a part-time instructor of computer skills at BCC in its continuing education program. Wilma received the prestigious State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1995.

Wilma and her husband Norman moved to the Berkshires from New Jersey in 1996 and became BILL mem-

bers in 1998. Norman has been the Finance Committee chair and the treasurer of BILL/OLLI for almost seventeen years. They have two married daughters and three grandchildren.

Wilma says, "I feel very lucky to have made so many good friends through BILL/OLLI." She has served on the Board of Directors for fourteen years. She was second vice president of BILL for four years and Membership Committee chair for two. Wilma has also been a member of the Boston Symphony Association of Volunteers at Tanglewood since 1999. She held many leadership positions including serving on the Executive Committee of which she was secretary for four years and then as vice chair of the Tanglewood volunteers 2009 through 2011.

"I am strongly committed to giving back to this community which has given so much to me," Wilma says. Her dedication has served BILL/OLLI well. And, if you have a grammar question, don't hesitate to consult her.

— Marge Lewis, Assistant Editor

Michael Albert, Ro Koelle, Tom Koelle, Susan Miller and Leon Nesis were omitted from the "Thank You, Volunteers" list in the Spring 2014 OLLI Newsletter. These members volunteered at the art show and silent auction on June 8 and 9, 2013. OLLI apologizes for the oversight. A belated but very sincere thank you.

OLLI NEWSLETTER

Editor: Wilma Michaels

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

Editorial Staff: Arline Breskin, Mary Anne Cicchillo, Ruth Degenhardt, Nancy Kahn, Marilyn Margolis, Helen-Mary Shaffer, Harriet Shair, Arthur Sherman, Selma Williams

Feature Writer: Joanna Fribush

In Memoriam

In the beginning...

Thomas Lind Easton passed away on March 1, 2014, in Williamsburg, Virginia. Together with his wife Judy, Tom founded the Berkshire Institute for Lifetime Learning (BILL) from which the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute evolved (OLLI).

In the fall of 1994, a dream for continuing education in the Berkshires inspired Tom and Judy. Recognizing the wealth of human resources in the area, they embarked on the task of forming BILL. The excitement and contagious spirit that they engendered in the community created unparalleled accomplishments.

Tom was BILL's first president and served the organization by contributing his time and effort to make it a success. He kept a watchful eye on BILL's development even after he and Judy moved from Lenox to La Jolla, California, and then to Williamsburg.

His vision, along with that of 35 like-minded community individuals, shaped BILL into the organization we know today. Having just celebrated our twentieth year as BILL/OLLI, we are grateful to Tom for his foresight. His contributions continue to have a significant impact on our lives.



Annual OLLI Meeting and Mona Sherman Memorial Lecture

OLLI's annual meeting and the sixth Mona Sherman memorial lecture were held at The Colonial Theatre on May 30, 2014. OLLI's President Sandra Rubin introduced Kate McGuire, Artistic Director and CEO of the Berkshire Theatre Group, who welcomed OLLI members to the theater.

Sandra Rubin then called the business meeting to order and presented a brief history of OLLI's origin as BILL (Berkshire Institute for Lifetime Learning) in 1994 to its metamorphosis as OLLI at BCC in 2006. She traced its growth culminating in the awarding of two grants of \$1 million each from the Osher Foundation.

She acknowledged the hard work and leadership of so many of our members over the years and emphasized the importance of maintaining fiscal sustainability. She reported that donations of \$12,246 were raised in this year's Annual Fund, while an additional \$24,000 was raised by the 20th Anniversary Committee with the publication of the journal. Sandra thanked past President Howard Arkans, chair of the Anniversary Committee, and his committee for their outstanding work planning this event.

Sandra Rubin also paid tribute to Barbara Hochberg's extraordinary work as OLLI's executive director these past seven years, wishing Barbara well in her retirement. Sandra then welcomed and introduced Megan Whilden, OLLI's new executive director.

Treasurer Norman Michaels presented the financial report for the ten months ended April 30, 2014. The total equity was \$2,289,169. The income statement for the same period showed a net income of \$4,737 in the operating account and \$108,312 in the endowment account for a total net income of \$113,049. He emphasized that we cannot touch the \$2 million endowment. We can only use the income earned from it.

President Rubin presented the slate of new and current members of the OLLI Board of Directors. New members are Thomas Koelle, Bill Latimer, Lois Lenehan and Leonard Tabs. Current members beginning their second terms are Bob Desrosiers, Harold Shair, and Shirley Shapiro. The slate was unanimously accepted. Sandra concluded by thanking retiring members of the board for their contributions to OLLI—Ruth Degenhardt, Bob Rosen and Ron Stewart.

OLLI's Executive Director Barbara Hochberg gave her last annual report. She acknowledged the great service of Bill Mulholland, BCC's Vice President for Community Education and Workforce Development, who has served as a member of the board since it became OLLI at BCC. In addition to thanking departing board members and the multitude of OLLI



Arthur Sherman, Speaker Edward Davis III, Enid Michelman

volunteers for their work, Barbara expressed her appreciation to all for their support and friendship these past seven years. Barbara paid tribute to Mona Sherman, for whom the Mona Sherman Memorial Lecture is named and who, with her husband Art, was so instrumental in bringing OLLI at BCC into being.

The Mona Sherman lecture followed the board meeting. Speaker Edward Davis III, Boston Police Commissioner at the time of the Boston Marathon bombings, spoke for about an hour on *Urban Terrorism and the Boston Marathon Bombings*. He first showed a video of the events as they progressed on the day of the bombings and the days following as the manhunt for the bombers played out. He emphasized a lesson learned—it is crucial to prepare all the local, state and federal agencies prior to such events so that protocol is clear. A question and answer period followed the lecture.

— Ruth Degenhardt, Editorial Staff



PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILMA MICHAELS

Members at Annual Meeting/Lecture: Marge Reil, Carmella Basile, Joanne Hayes, Helen-Mary Shaffer, Joe & Phyllis Jaffe, Paul & Marilyn Flaum

20th Anniversary Celebration

May 31, 2014 • Cranwell's Harvest Barn, Lenox



OLLI's Past Executive Director Barbara Hochberg, OLLI National Resource Center Executive Director Kali Lightfoot, BCC Past President Paul Raverta, BCC President Ellen Kennedy, OLLI's Executive Director Megan Whilden, BCC VP Bill Mulholland



President Sandra Rubin, Past Presidents Paul Flaum, Howard Arkans, Art Sherman, Norman Avnet (seated)



Bard College at Simon's Rock Administrators with Barbara Hochberg



OLLI Members Enjoying the Evening!



PHOTOGRAPHY: BONNIE DESROISERS, BOB DESROISERS, WILMA MICHAELS, HOWARD SHAPIRO, RON STEWART

(20th Anniversary Celebration continued)



OLLI "Outdoors" Hike and Picnic

June 1, 2014 • Mass Audubon Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, Lenox



The Hikers



*Special Events Chair
Arline Breskin serves
the cake she made*



The Picnickers

William Cullen Bryant

Berkshire Born, Internationally Known

William Cullen Bryant, who was born in 1794 in Cummington, Massachusetts, had his first poem published when he was nine years old. He continued writing throughout his life and became known as America's first poet of international stature.

Bryant's father, who was a doctor, a staunch conservative Federalist and a state senator, encouraged Bryant's education in all disciplines including Greek, Latin, science, philosophy and nature. After his early education in a district school, Bryant was tutored in languages and especially in translating Greek and Latin literature. He attended Williams College for one year and then left to study law with local lawyers; he passed the Massachusetts Bar in 1816. Although he practiced law successfully in Great Barrington until 1825, writing was his passion. In fact, he disliked the legal profession and expressed his distaste for "pettifoggery and absurd court judgements."

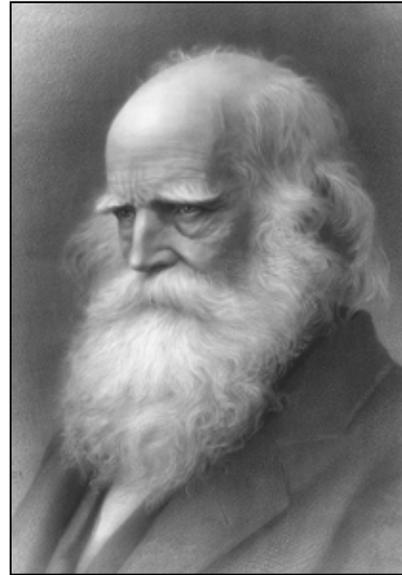
Through his friendship with the Sedgwick family of Stockbridge, he got a job with a New York City literary magazine, which led to his long-time position as editor of the influential *New York Evening Post*. This daily paper, founded by Federalist Alexander Hamilton in 1801, had become more liberal over the years as had Bryant's beliefs. Under his 50-year leadership,

"his editorials expressed an enlightened and liberal attitude upon the great issues of the day . . . including slavery."

While living in New York, Bryant's literary reputation gained him acceptance into the city's literary, artistic and political circles. He began a campaign to set aside an area for an uptown park, which became Central Park, promoted the Metropolitan Museum of Art and worked for many other areas of city improvement.

Bryant was an outspoken critic of slavery and an early supporter of Abraham Lincoln. It was a significant honor that he was chosen to introduce the little known westerner to the New York area at Cooper Union. This event launched Lincoln's campaign for the presidency.

Bryant's poems reflect his political and philosophical attitudes. *The Embargo*, a satire on President Thomas Jefferson's embargo on foreign imports to American ports, was published in 1808 and caused considerable reaction against President Jefferson.



Critics are said to have doubted that a young teenager could have written it and attributed it to his Federalist father. Later, when Bryant became a liberal, he wished to forget this youthful indiscretion, and it is not included in his poetry collections. His most famous

poem, *Thanatopsis*, a meditation on death, does not refer to God, but in *To A Waterfowl* he writes, "There is a Power whose care...Will lead my steps aright."

William Cullen Bryant is remembered and honored in New York City by a statue standing in Bryant Park and in the Berkshires by his birthplace, The Homestead in Cummington, which is open year round for tours. He died in 1878 shortly after his last speech in Central Park in which he wished for the day "when the rights and duties of human brotherhood shall be acknowledged by all the races of mankind."

— Joanna Fribush, Feature Writer

Upcoming Events and Lectures

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS SERIES

AUGUST 23 • Keith Lockhart, music director and principal conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra

SEPTEMBER 13 • J. Benjamin Taylor, "The Fundamentals and Implications of Midterm Elections in American Politics"

SEPTEMBER 27 • Cara Davis, "The Other Side of America's Premier Cultural Resort"

THURSDAYS AT THE CLARK • Michael Cassin, the Clark's Director of the Center for Education in the Visual Arts, will be presenting a series of four lectures titled *The Four Elements: Earth, Air, Fire and Water*.

Dates: **October 30, November 6, November 13, November 20** Time: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 4 • United States Military Academy, West Point, New York

OCTOBER 12 • Barrington Stage Company; *An Enemy of the People*; Arthur Miller (Adapter), Henrik Ibsen (Author); Brunch at BCC; Speaker Phyllis Jaffe

Look for e-mails with details about these events and check our website at www.BerkshireOLLI.org for more listings.



AT BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Pittsfield, MA 01201
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Faculty Appreciation Dinner – May 20 at BCC Dining Room



FAR LEFT: Former Executive Director Barbara Hochberg and Event Chair Adele Cukor

LEFT: Lecturer Vivian Dorsel, Guest Senta Brodeur and Lecturer Cliff Brodeur, Lecturer Rabbi Josh Breindel



Treasurer Norman Michaels, Co-chair Literature Committee Hope Hagler Guest Ellen Tabs and Lecturer Len Tabs



Lecturer Charles Flint and Guest Joy Flint Lecturer Nancy Vale