



# Newsletter

AT BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SPRING 2017

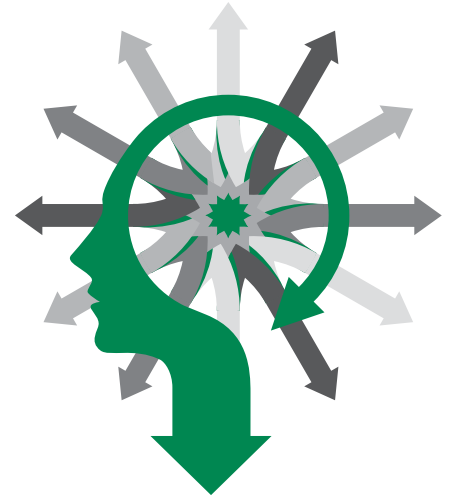
PARTNERS WITH WILLIAMS COLLEGE, BARD COLLEGE AT SIMON'S ROCK & MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

## Let OLLI's Courses Green Up your Spring!

OLLI is offering a full plate of courses this spring term. Locations are all over the county, from Great Barrington to Williamstown. Courses begin on April 12 and end on May 23.

**CLASS LOCATIONS:** Berkshire Community College, Pittsfield **BCC**; Clark Art Institute, Williamstown **TCW**; Kimball Farms, Lenox **KF**; Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge **NRM**; BCC South County Center, Great Barrington **SCC**; Williams College, Williamstown **WC**.

See the Spring 2017 Catalog or visit or visit [www.BerkshireOLLI.org](http://www.BerkshireOLLI.org) for more details.



<b>MON.</b>	<p><i>Russia in the 21st Century</i> – Kidd – <b>BCC</b>  <i>Criminal Justice, Public Policy and the Individual</i> – Toran and Bogomolny – <b>BCC</b>  <i>Further Aspects of Jazz and a Reprise</i> – Evans – <b>BCC</b></p>
<b>TUES.</b>	<p><i>Today's Headlines</i> – Tabs – <b>SCC</b>  <i>Theatre Out Loud: A Play-Reading Workshop</i> – Fisher – <b>SCC</b>  <i>An Intro to Tai Chi and Qigong</i> – Barbara Muso Penn – <b>SCC</b>  <i>The Power of Published Art: a Critical Exploration</i> – Plunkett and Kowalski – <b>NRM</b>  <i>The Best Years of Our Lives: The Gifts of Being an Elder</i> – Reeve – <b>SCC</b></p>
<b>WED.</b>	<p><i>Highs and Lows of the Himalayas</i> – O'Leary – <b>BCC</b>  <i>Women &amp; the Creative Self Returns</i> – Schorr – <b>BCC</b>  <i>Two American Masters of the Brush: Homer &amp; Sargent</i> – Brooks – <b>TCW</b>  <i>Gabriel García Márquez: 100 Years of Solitude &amp; More</i> – Bell-Villada – <b>WC</b></p>
<b>THURS.</b>	<p><i>Elemental Power: Tales of the Golem</i> – Breindel – <b>KF</b>  <i>Birding in the Berkshires</i> – Neumuth – <b>BCC and field visits</b>  <i>Plato's Republic: The Ideal Life and the Ideal City, Part 2</i> – Cameron – <b>KF</b>  <i>Lenox at 250</i> – Kennedy – <b>KF</b>  <i>Getting Hooked on Flyfishing</i> – Travis – <b>BCC and field visits</b>  <i>Abstract Art in America</i> – Diamond – <b>KF</b></p>
<b>FRI.</b>	<p><i>Berkshire Theatre Previews</i> – Spatz, Vale – <b>BCC</b>  <i>Shakespeare's Tragedies</i> – Maturro – <b>BCC</b>  <i>Wildflowers of the Berkshires</i> – Quinlan – <b>BCC and field visits</b>  <i>Who Are Your Heroes? Why?</i> – Berson – <b>BCC</b></p>

## Call for Photos of Berkshire Autumn

Want to share your scenic photos of Berkshire area autumn scenes? The OLLI Fall 2017 Photo Contest has begun. The winning photos will be on the cover of the Fall 2017 catalog, and the winner will receive a one-year free membership to OLLI. Please submit photos no later than May 5, 2017, in digital format (jpeg, tiff, png), 3.2 mega-pixels or greater, full-resolution and horizontal aspect. Limit of five photos per person, please. Email images to [olli@berkshirecc.edu](mailto:olli@berkshirecc.edu).

## Spring 2017 Photo Contest Winner

Congratulations to Sue Purdy of Dalton for winning the Spring photo contest. Her photo of Pink Lady Slippers, a Massachusetts indigenous orchid, appears on the cover of the Spring 2017 OLLI Catalog. Sue also wins a free one year OLLI membership!

## President's Message

The Winter semester is almost over and I'm pleased to say attendance is equal to last year. Considering how the OLLI membership and the Berkshires thin out during the winter months, this is a positive sign. Our membership level remains steady at 1000+ and we are planning for our spring semester and an open house.

After much deliberation, I have decided to step down as President at the end of our fiscal year in June. I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to Megan Whilden, Executive Director, the OLLI Board of Directors, the BCC Administration, the Committee Chairs and their members, and the many OLLI volunteers for their hard work and dedication during my tenure.

During the past 20 months, much has been accomplished to reinforce the infrastructure, to support future growth and to introduce new products that will broaden OLLI's appeal. A new three-year strategic plan is in place, allowing us to define and measure our progress against our goals. A new state of the art website is operational, providing access for on-line registration, membership renewal, payments, donations, and current news. Shared Interest Groups (SIGs) have been formed to create more contact in a social setting among members. I'm pleased to announce there are nearly 20 SIGs presently operating. My thanks go to the leaders of each SIG for their efforts. A new event, University Day, was introduced last August. The event was attended by 70 OLLI members in Great Barrington at the campus of American Institute for Economic Research. Lectures were given on Economics by Dr. Polina Vlasenko and on Cybersecurity by Dr. Adam Segal. A luncheon presentation was given by State Senator Ben Downing.

In closing, I've tried to add to the present and future success of OLLI at BCC. I've enjoyed meeting the OLLI membership and extend good luck and best wishes to the next President.

— Leonard Tabs

## Cokie Roberts Will Be 2017 Mona Sherman Memorial Lecturer on May 24



OLLI is delighted to host journalist, author and NPR commentator Cokie Roberts as the speaker at the 2017 Mona Sherman Memorial Lecture. The event will be at 6 pm on May 24th at the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington. The Mona Sherman Memorial Lecture is free and open to the public. As in prior years, the lecture will immediately follow OLLI's Annual Meeting.

Cokie Roberts is a political commentator for ABC News and NPR. In her more than forty years in broadcasting, she has won countless awards, including three Emmys. She has been inducted into the Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame, and was cited by the American Women in Radio and Television as one of the fifty greatest women in the history of broadcasting. In addition to her reporting, Roberts has written six New York Times bestsellers, most dealing with the roles of women in U.S. history.

The lecture series honors the late Mona Sherman, a former OLLI President who had a transformative effect on the OLLI program, beginning when it was still known as BILL, the Berkshire Institute for Lifelong Learning. By presenting a nationally known speaker each year, the series honors her memory and her love of learning. Thanks to the generosity of the Sherman and Sharkey families, the lecture is free to the Berkshires community that Mona loved. Please consider reserving your lecture tickets in advance. Last year's lecture featuring TIME magazine columnist and bestselling author Joe Klein was sold out.

## Making Sense of the 2016 Election

### Speaker Alec MacGillis Talks to Capacity Crowd



On Friday, December 9th, one month after the 2016 presidential election, OLLI hosted award-winning political author and journalist Alec MacGillis for a lively and sobering discussion on the election and its aftermath. The event was held at the Berkshire Museum, in conjunction with the museum and the *Berkshire Eagle*. There was a full house of close to 200 attendees listening followed by a question and answer period.

Pittsfield native Alec MacGillis covers politics and government for ProPublica, a non-profit on-line investigative journalism organization which has twice won a Pulitzer Prize.. MacGillis has also reported for *The New Republic*, *The Washington Post* and *The Baltimore Sun*, where he and collaborators were Pulitzer Prize finalists for their coverage of the Beltway sniper. His work has also appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker* and *Harper's*. MacGillis is the author of *The Cynic*, a 2014 biography of Sen. Mitch McConnell.

## OLLI and the Age Friendly Berkshires Project

One year ago the OLLI Board completed a strategic plan which said, among other things, that OLLI should serve the Berkshires retired community better and more broadly. With that in mind, several OLLI members have been working with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to qualify the Berkshires as an Age Friendly Community.

The Age Friendly program was launched by the World Health Organization and in the United States is sponsored by AARP. The movement seeks to treat everyone with respect, regardless of age or status, and to enable people of all ages to participate in community activities. An Age Friendly community is a place that makes it easy for older people to stay connected, healthy and active. Each of these programs encourages localities to determine the needs of their older citizens and find ways to meet those needs through local action.

The initial step in the qualifying process has already been completed. The Berkshire County Age Friendly Survey determined the attitudes and desires of older residents in 2015, and the findings of that study have been published. Those fact-based conclusions are now informing the drafting of an Action Plan for the Berkshires.

The Action Plan will recommend goals and strategies in eight domains: outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and inclusion, work and civil engagement, communication and information, and community and health services. OLLI is currently preparing draft recommendations in the work and civil engagement domain.

Various communities in the Berkshires have formed an Active Agers Advisory Group, and that group will be reviewing the draft of the Action Plan. Visit [AgeFriendlyBerkshires.com](http://AgeFriendlyBerkshires.com) for more information.

— Carl Shuster

## Winter Open House Draws a Crowd



Above: Lance and Chelly Serman, Ellen Tabs, Monica Sinclair and Judy Cromwell



Above: Membership Committee members Barbara Lane, Michael Margolis and Shirley Shapiro



Left: Virginia O'Leary and Arthur Sherman

Below: Carol Sabot, Kenneth Stark, and Enid Michelman



PHOTOS BY MEGAN WHILDEN

# The Stockbridge Indians

## Maintaining a Bond with the Berkshires

The Stockbridge Indians were members of the Mohican tribe. Mohicans settled in the Hudson River area near Albany in the 1600s, and the Stockbridge tribe later migrated to the Housatonic River area. Their complex history involves many moves, wars, diseases, trade conflicts and a conversion to Christianity.

The name Mohican derives from “Muhheconnuk” which means “The People of the Waters that are Never Still.” The Mohicans’ first contact with Europeans was in 1610 when they went aboard Henry Hudson’s ship on the Hudson River to meet “pale-faced” men for the first time. This began an important trade relationship between the tribe and the Europeans. The Indians offered food and furs for European guns, other new materials and most significantly, wine and drink. As trading continued, alcoholism became a major problem for the Indians. They also suffered greatly from European diseases, including smallpox, scarlet fever and measles, against which they had no immunity.

In the 1700s, trade and land conflicts with their rival tribe the Mohawks and with the Europeans caused the Mohicans to move east to the Stockbridge area. In 1739 they became known as the Stockbridge Indians when their village (then called Indian Town) was incorporated into the newly formed town of Stockbridge. It was in Stockbridge that they experienced major changes in their tribal life: Mohican religion and education were greatly influenced by Christian missionaries.

In 1734, John Sergeant, a young Yale graduate, came to live with the Indians. He intended to convert them to Christianity and to teach them the English language. Some Indians, noting the Europeans’ prosperity, thought the Christian God must be more powerful, and they agreed to be converted. In 1739, with interest in conversion growing, Sergeant built his Mission House in Stockbridge.

The Stockbridge Indians were loyal to the colonists and supported them in the Revolutionary War, but they were not rewarded. After the war, the Massachusetts General Court instead ordered them to move from Stockbridge. The tribe then made the first of several forced moves, to land offered by the Oneida Tribe near Oneida Lake in New York. Later the New York government forced them to move again, this time to Indiana.

Forced Indian relocation continued in the 1800s. In 1832, under President Andrew Jackson, Congress passed a law requiring all Indians in the east to move to lands west of the Mississippi. Ultimately, the Stockbridge Indians were allowed to live in Wisconsin, where they established a reservation and named the area Stockbridge.

In the 1840s the Stockbridge tribe was joined by the Munsee tribe and formed the Stockbridge–Munsee Band of the Mohican Nation, which still exists in Wisconsin. This band maintains a close bond with Stockbridge, Massachusetts, which members consider their homeland, and tribal representatives make periodic visits to the area. On their last visit in April 2016, as tokens of friendship, they presented a blanket and a peace pipe which now hang in the Stockbridge Library Museum and Archives.

Today the Stockbridge-Munsee Band consists of approximately 1600

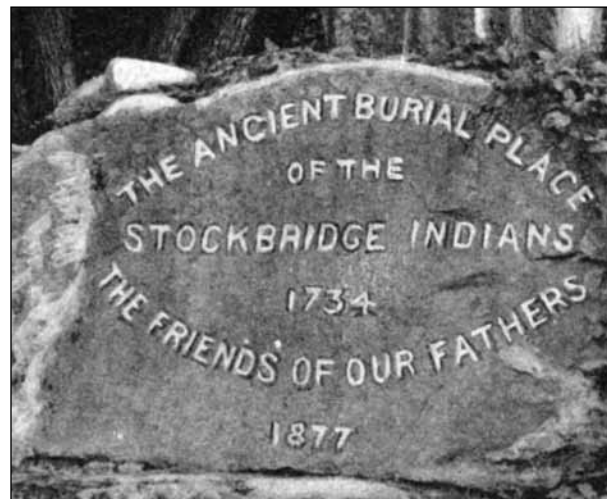


*Chief Eton Oh Kuam of the Stockbridge-Munsee Band*

members; about 600 live on the reservation in Bowler, Wisconsin. The band runs the Mohican North Star Casino and Bingo Enterprise, which successfully generates funds for tribal welfare and economic development.

In Stockbridge, John Sergeant’s Mission House is located on Main Street and is open to the public in the summer. A small Indian Museum is also on the property. A monument to the Stockbridge Mohicans, erected in 1877, still stands at their ancient burial place. The Stockbridge Library has an extensive collection of books and documents on the tribe. The history of the Stockbridge Indians and how we treated them give us much to study and ponder.

— Joanna Fribush



## Thank you to our Instructors and Speakers

OLLI thrives because of the generosity of our instructors and speakers, who share their insight and knowledge with our members and the public each year. The following instructors and speakers contributed significantly to OLLI in 2016. Please join us in extending our sincere gratitude for all they do to enhance the quality of life in the Berkshires. And please join us for our annual instructor thank-you party in June (details coming soon).

Kyneret Albert  
Howard Arkans  
J. Peter Bergman  
Michael Bergman  
Robin Berson  
Michael Birch  
Scott & Beverly Blonder  
Peter Bluhm  
Julianne Boyd  
Ralph Bradburd  
Josh Breindel  
Jock Brooks  
John Burns  
Michael Vincent Bushy  
Hanan Caine  
William Cameron  
Roselle Chartock  
Carol Chiavetta  
Debora Coombs  
James Cotter  
Jonathan Croy  
Joel Curran  
Stephen Dankner  
Herbert Diamond  
Stephen Gerard Dietmann  
Vivian Dorsel  
Benjamin Downing  
Richard Evans  
Karel Fisher  
Russell Freedman  
Kinney Frelinghuysen  
Gregory & Paula Gimblette  
Edward Gollin  
Carl Goodman

Barbara Greenbaum  
David Greetham  
Laura Gross Smith  
Phil Halpern  
Gwendolyn Hampton-VanSant  
Charles Haynes  
Drew Herzig  
Marc Hoechstetter  
Frederic Hyman  
Markes Johnson  
Gordon Josephson  
Jamie Keller  
Susan Kelly  
Mehernosh Khan  
Joe Klein  
Larry Klein  
Daniel Kramer  
Sandra Kreiger  
Thaddeus Kubis  
John & Nina Lipkowitz  
Benjamin Liptzin  
Benjamin Luxon  
Alec MacGillis  
Cecilia Macheski  
Kate Maguire  
Maggie Mailer  
Richard Matturo  
Philip McKnight  
Wilson Mertens  
Kevin Moran  
Jim Nejaime  
Ed Neumuth  
Virginia O'Leary  
Mary O'Malley  
David Orenstein  
Norton Owen  
Jay Pasachoff  
Allison Pascelli  
Ileana Perez Velasquez  
Eric Peterson  
Debra Ann Pollack  
John Pollok  
Dennis Powell  
Megan Reisel  
Ben Rose  
Leyla Rouhi  
Steven Rubin  
Frederick & Dorothy Rudolph\*

Doug Salvatore  
Robert Savage  
Marney Schorr  
David Scribner  
Adam Segal  
Anthony Segal  
W. Anthony Sheppard  
Steven Somkin  
Kenneth Stark  
Lance & Chelly Serman  
Kait Stinchcomb  
Matthew Strassler  
William Sturgeon  
Stephen Sweet  
Henry Sweren  
Kirk Swiss  
Leonard Tabs  
Alexandra Tinari  
John Trainor  
Nancy Travis  
William Travis  
Nancy Vale  
Dan Valenti  
Kelley Vickery  
Polina Vlasenko  
Abbie Von Schlegell  
Zachary Wadsworth  
Barbara Waldinger  
Stacy Wallach  
Nancy Walters  
Martin Weinstein  
Tom Werman  
Daniel Wollman  
Ben Wood  
Elizabeth Young  
Jeremy Yudkin  
Joshua Yurfest

\*deceased

### Save the Date – Annual Meeting

OLLI's annual meeting, which is open to the public, will be at 4:30 pm at the Mahaiwe on May 24, immediately preceding the Mona Sherman Memorial Lecture. For more information, visit [BerkshireOLLI.org](http://BerkshireOLLI.org) or call 413-236-2190.

**OLLI NEWSLETTER:** *Editor:* Peter Bluhm *Feature Writer:* Joanna Fribush  
*Assistant Editors:* Linda Halpern, Judy Katz, Sandi Rubin, Myrna Schneiderman,  
Rose Scotch, Ruth Weinstein, Katherine Zdeb  
*Proofreaders:* Magda Gabor-Hotchkiss, Marie Milazzo, Harriet Shair

## Instructor Corner

### Katherine Kidd Russia in the 21st Century

Katherine Kidd was born in Idaho and grew up in Oregon. She attended elementary school in Oregon and spent an exchange summer in Holland. She then went to Pacific Lutheran University in Washington state, where she received her BA degree in History and German. While there she spent her junior year in Vienna. Her experiences as an exchange student instilled a passion for foreign affairs.

After working for a few years in Colorado, Katherine next went to Harvard University where she received an M.A. in Russian Studies. She met her husband, John, who is a Lutheran minister, while in Cambridge.

After completing their studies at Harvard, the Kidds lived in Argentina. They experienced the end of the Peron regime, a coup, general strikes and the shut-down of human rights organizations.

Returning to the U. S. they settled in Pennsylvania. Katherine worked as an administrator at Cedar Crest College. She then realized her true calling was teaching, so she attended the University of Pennsylvania and received a PhD in International Relations.

Next, Katherine and John moved to Connecticut where she taught at Sacred Heart College and then Fairfield University. At Fairfield, in addition to teaching, Katherine worked with Russian university faculty members who were re-envisioning their courses after glasnost. These instructors were being permitted to teach new things, and they needed some guidance. A U.S. Department of State grant allowed internet communication and enabled four Russian faculty members per year to attend Fairfield and be mentored by faculty members, sit in on classes and get help creating syllabi. Katherine has also written a book entitled *Political Parity Reader* which will be coming out next year.

Upon retirement, the Kidds moved to the Berkshires. Katherine knew about OLLI before moving here since Fairfield University has a similar program. She attended the OLLI Open House in September where she was recruited to teach a class. She loves to teach. She said: "I enjoy the excitement of people learning new things." She volunteers at Taconic High School working with students to help position themselves for their college applications. She also loves to garden and to read.

Katherine sits on the board of the Vesper Foundation, an organization committed to linking arms with leaders of overlooked communities and helping them devise ways to create a healthy future.

The Kidds are very proud of their two daughters. Elizabeth is married and lives in Boston with her husband and two children. She is the Chief Program Officer for the Hunt Alternatives Fund, a foundation concerned with the empowerment of women and girls. The other daughter, Christine, is recently married and lives in Brooklyn. She works for the Center for Employment Opportunities dealing with people recently released by the criminal justice system.

We are delighted to have Katherine and John as new members of the OLLI community.

— Sandi Rubin



### Bill Cameron Plato's Republic: The Ideal Life and the Ideal City, Part Two

The dictionary defines philosophy as the: "study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality and existence...." What a vast topic! Yet Bill Cameron, who has made it his lifelong study, helps OLLI students to wrap their minds around philosophy, and relate classic texts to current themes. His first OLLI class, *Dialogues of Plato*, was successful, and he inspired many participants to continue studying Plato in his fall class on *The Republic*. He will resume that subject in the spring.

Bill's presentation skills and unique professional experiences account for the popularity of his classes. He attended high school in Albany, NY, followed by Canisius College, a Jesuit institution in Buffalo. His credentials include a master's in philosophy at SUNY Albany and a doctorate in philosophy at the University of Toronto.



Early on, Bill showed a talent for educating all kinds of students. While pursuing his doctorate, he held several adjunct positions, among them instructor of philosophy at Attica Correctional Facility. Later, his experience as an administrator and union member in the Pittsfield schools stimulated an interest in labor relations. This led to his pursuing a

law degree from Western New England College School of Law.

After law school, Bill worked in a New York state regional education division, and at the same time served two terms on Pittsfield's School Committee. After a decade as director of personnel and negotiations in Pittsfield schools, he briefly worked as superintendent of schools in Salem, MA, before returning to the Berkshires as superintendent of the Central Berkshires Regional District, retiring in 2014. He was lured back to serve as interim superintendent of the regional district encompassing New Ashford, Richmond and Hancock before retiring a second time.

Bill's classes offer a thorough examination of topics, close readings of texts, and provocative discourse. A leisurely pace allows for lively discussions and reflection on current events. For instance, last fall's sessions on The Republic led inevitably to conversations about the political campaign then in progress. He explains that, in order to understand a philosopher, one must first determine the question that the philosopher is trying to solve. Then it becomes possible to follow the thread of their argument. Bill's ability to respond to thorny questions comes from his wide reading interests, which include politics, history, poetry, philosophy and fiction.

In addition to accumulating and reading books, Bill enjoys cinema, especially classic movies on TCM. He and his wife, Joy, who live in Pittsfield, have three children and four grandchildren. — Linda Halpern

*Pictured at left: OLLI executive director Megan Whilden, OLLI A/V chair Joe Gerard, and Pittsfield Community Television education TV coordinator at the awards ceremony.*

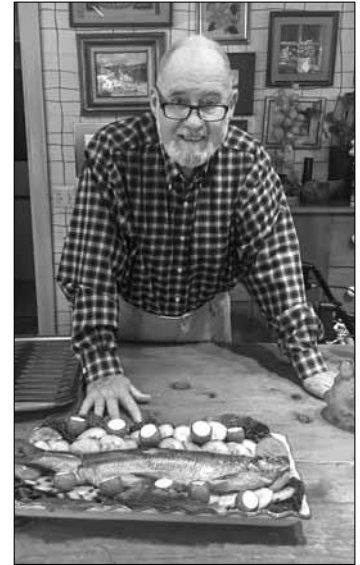
## Norman Avnet – In Memoriam

Norman Avnet was a force of nature at OLLI, from its earliest beginnings 22 years ago. A founding member of the Berkshire Institute for Lifelong Learning (BILL), as OLLI was known then, he served as President and in other positions on the Board of Directors, as moderator for Today's Headlines, and, always, as enthusiastic student. Norman was known to many at OLLI for his friendly, intelligent, curious nature.

Current Board President Leonard Tabs noted, "Norman is the reason I got involved with OLLI in the first place. He first invited me to moderate Today's Headlines, which led to my serving on the OLLI board. I will always be grateful to him for his invitation."

Norman Avnet was a board certified radiologist and Chairman of the Radiology Department at Berkshire Medical Center before retirement. He was a founding board member of the Berkshire Community College Foundation, where he endowed a scholarship in honor of his late wife Rose Avnet.

Our hearts go out to his family and to Selma Williams, his devoted companion for the past seven years and an OLLI member. Gifts in memory of Norman Avnet may be made to OLLI either online at [BerkshireOLLI.org](http://BerkshireOLLI.org) or by mailing a check to OLLI at BCC, 1350 West Street, Pittsfield, Mass. 01201. A memorial service for Norman Avnet will be held Sunday, March 26, at 11am at Temple Anshe Amunim, 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield, Mass. — Megan Whilden



## OLLI Receives Award From Pittsfield Community Television

OLLI was honored to receive the Member of the Year Award this winter from Pittsfield Community Television for providing many years of videotaped courses to be shared with all on Pittsfield Community TV, as well as our new interview show, Hello OLLI! Accepting the award for OLLI were longtime A/V chair and OLLI board member Joe Gerard and OLLI's Executive Director Megan

Whilden. Joe and OLLI volunteer Bob DesRosiers have taped over a dozen courses over the years that have then been replayed on PCTV for all to enjoy. Both the OLLI courses and the Hello OLLI interview show can be viewed on demand at [www.pittsfieldtv.org](http://www.pittsfieldtv.org). It's another way OLLI gives back to the Berkshires community.





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## Mentoring Luncheon

OLLII mentors and mentees met at BCC in December for an informal luncheon. It seems a good time was had by all.

*Below: OLLI Mentoring Committee co-chair Claudia Shuster and OLLI Director Megan Whilden*



*Left: BCC mentee Lauren Scapin with her OLLI mentor Bob Youdelman*

*Below: BCC mentor liaison Kari Dupuis with BCC mentee Judy McNutt*

