

B.I.L.L. BOARD

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NEWSLETTER OF THE BERKSHIRE INSTITUTE FOR LIFETIME LEARNING

Fall 2002 Semester at a Glance

The Curriculum Committee has put together an exciting variety of courses and lecturers for the fall 2002 semester. Twenty-one courses will be offered at several locations. You have already received the catalog and registration information. Courses begin on September 17 and run through October 31. Refer to the catalog for exact times and dates. The courses and locations are:

MONDAYS • BCC Main Campus, Pittsfield
Freedom on the Edge: Conflicting Demands of Freedom and Order in the American Experience — David L. Auerbach
Today's Headlines: News of the Week — James W. Cotter, Moderator
Great Awards — K. Easton, P. Flaum, B. Greenbaum, P. Knowles, J. Rubin, M. Vale and N. Vale
How Your Immune System Works — Drs. S. Wax and R. McInerney

TUESDAYS • BCC Main Campus, Pittsfield
Those Naughty Victorians — Phyllis Jaffe
World War II: You Are There — J. Katz, J. McAllister, L. Velmans, H. Vines, S. Wainrib
Forgotten Masters: An Alternative History of Theatre — James L. Rosenberg

WEDNESDAYS • Simon's Rock College
19th Century American Art and Culture — Maureen J. Hickey
Three Modern American Poets — Sharon LaBranche

WEDNESDAYS • Canyon Ranch, Lenox
Optimal Aging — Kristine Huffman, Carl Pratt

WEDNESDAYS • Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield
Changing Times, Changing Museums — Ann Mintz

WEDNESDAYS • BCC Main Campus, Pittsfield
Great Books/Great Films — Elliott Vines, Coordinator (Evening Course)

THURSDAYS • Clark Art Institute, Williamstown
Legacies of the Early Cold War — Karen Merrill
From Quaking Aspens to Sugar Maples: Forest Succession in New England — William T. Fox

THURSDAYS • Williams College
Light, Color, Vision — Jefferson Strait

THURSDAYS • Castle Street Café, Great Barrington
Wine Appreciation 102 — Jack Rubin, Moderator

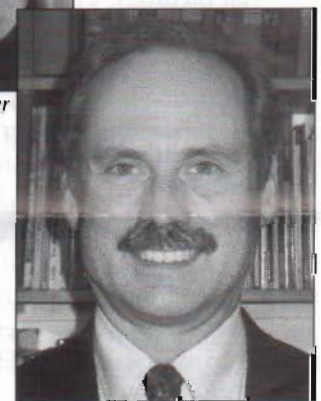
FRIDAYS • BCC Main Campus, Pittsfield
On Walden Pond — Paul Stein
Strauss' Der Rosenkavalier and Salome — Manfred Hecht
Electrical Energy Technology: Past and Present — T. Blalock, J. Nelson
The Faust Legend: Part I — Walter Bemak
History of Food: An Overview — Francine Segan



Karen Merrill, Lecturer



Ann Mintz, Lecturer



Jefferson Strait, Lecturer

SUNSHINE PHOTOGRAPHICS

Special Events For 2002-2003

September 10: Special Effects Studio and Mass MoCA

October 5: *The Scarlet Letter* — Shakespeare and Company

October 26: Walden Pond and Concord, MA

November 17-19: Salem and Marblehead, MA (2 nights)

December 15: *King of Hearts* — Goodspeed Opera House, East Haddam, CT

January 5, 2003: New Year's Brunch Country Club of Pittsfield

Watch your mail for flyers.

President's Message

Another fiscal year begins, and it promises to be one of the most rewarding periods in the exciting history of B.I.L.L. If you doubt that, read on.

I look forward to working with the new Board of Directors. Many of the concepts that were seeded last year are now bearing fruit, and there is more to do.

The fall '02, winter and spring '03 semesters are the richest mix yet of the social sciences, arts, literature and science. The new, comfortable and easily accessible South Berkshire County Community Center will house the winter semester, and the well-received winter film series at the Triplex will be expanded to a four-film schedule. The Special Events programs again will push the envelope for creativity and sociability, including a major trip to Salem. The Extended Travel Committee is currently exploring several interesting course-related travel options. In addition, last year's successful New Member Reception and Game Night will be repeated and follow on the heels of this summer's enjoyable Tanglewood picnic. No B.I.L.L. member should have any reason to feel "left out."

So now you might ask, "What's new?" The answer is, "A great deal."

We intend to broaden availability of educational formats. For this purpose, the Curriculum Committee created a new, exciting Special Projects series that is based on a large network of senior participants from major cultural and educational facilities. This series will present many highly regarded speakers at a variety of educational venues.

B.I.L.L. is committed to "lifelong learning." Until now that commitment focused inward on its members. Is it time to consider a broader perspective? Current statewide budgetary crises have seriously curtailed local area educational programs that provide quality support for children. Can, and should, the educational and professional resources of the B.I.L.L. membership be helpful? To answer these questions, a highly qualified Educational Outreach Committee has been formed, and their work is progressing well.

Articles describing the activities of the Special Projects series subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee and the Educational Outreach Committee are contained in this issue of B.I.L.L.BOARD. I believe their efforts merit the full support of the membership.



Educational Outreach Committee

B.I.L.L. members have expressed concerns about problems facing some of our Berkshire County school districts. As a result, we have formed a committee to plan a way for our membership to help our local schools. Chaired by Sue Gorham, this committee is in the process of developing a mentoring program that will bring B.I.L.L. members into the schools to work with the young people of Berkshire County.

We hope to begin a pilot program during the 2002-2003 school year. A letter will be sent out shortly seeking volunteers. Please read the letter carefully and consider joining us in this most worthwhile activity.

B.I.L.L.BOARD

Bonnie Desrosiers, *Editor* • Home (413) 442-5490 • e-mail: bdesros1@berkshire.rr.com
Peri Caverly, *Editorial Assistant*; Marge Lewis and Wilma Michaels, *Proofreading Assistants*

The New York Botanical Garden

Once when I was fishing and caught no fish, someone said I should have been there yesterday when the fishing was great. The trip to the Botanical Garden was so great; it could have been yesterday. The weather was perfect — a beautiful day sandwiched between days of rain. Sun made all the greens greener and the flowers more colorful. The newly renovated Enid A. Haupt Conservatory was filled with flowering perennials and annuals and the tropical gardens, dripping with humidity, transported us into the jungle.



A highlight of the trip for me was the tour by a very experienced docent who showed us the depths of the Rock Garden. Alpine and desert areas were all in flower.

The 250 acres of the Botanical Garden can be toured by tram, and I was able to get off and take a leisurely walk on my own through the wild and uncut forest in the center of the preserve. I explored parts of the Bronx River and the nation's oldest extant tobacco factory, the Lorillard Snuff Mill, constructed in 1840.

Although I have been a member of the Garden for many years, this was one of the most comprehensive and beautiful visits I have taken. Thanks to Carole Schwimmer and Sandra Josel for a wonderful day.

— Norman Avnet

A Special Message

On behalf of Berkshire Community College, the BCC Foundation and most directly the BCC Library, THANK YOU ALL. This has been a particularly difficult year for us as budget cuts threatened not only our programs but the people who make those programs work. Once again, when we needed support the membership of B.I.L.L. was there to help the College. This year your very generous gift will assist us by restoring vitally needed funding to the BCC library, funding that was drastically cut by the State.

Over the years B.I.L.L. has generously assisted us with support for student scholarships, a concert piano for the Boland Theater and a variety of other projects that have added to the quality of education at BCC. Through your contributions and support we have been able to provide services that might not otherwise exist, and these value added opportunities enhance the lives of our students and our community.

I know I need not tell any of you the value of being a part of a learning community. You have all helped to make BCC a stronger learning community and for that we are very grateful.

— Jamie L. Sidgmore
BCC Foundation Executive Director

Getting to Know You

WILMA MICHAELS

"I never wanted to be anything other than a teacher," says Wilma. "I had many teacher/role models when I was in school who had positive influences on my career decision." She adds, "I still love working with students — whatever their age. Teaching is wonderfully satisfying."

Wilma feels that her organizational skills make her into the successful teacher she is. Along with those skills, she brings warmth and humor to B.I.L.L. This mixture is why Art Sherman said during convocation, she is considered "Godmother to the B.I.L.L. office" and "Keeper of the English Language."

Bronx born, Wilma met her husband, Norm, when both were students at CCNY. She received her MA at Montclair State College in Business Education and taught at Rockland Community College in the Business Department as an Office Technologies specialist for 24 years coordinating the program for 12 years. She became a full professor in 1990. Wilma was the recipient of the State University Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1995. Berkshire Community College hired her to teach LifeLong Learning computer workshops when she and Norm moved to the Berkshires as permanent residents six years ago. They fell in love with this area when both worked as camp counselors here in 1959.

Wilma and Norm have two daughters and three grandchildren living in New Jersey. Both Wilma and Norm are community activists. Wilma has been co-chair of Tanglewood's Host Family program for the last three years and previously served as B.I.L.L.BOARD editor for three years. Currently, she is an associate editor of the B.I.L.L. catalog as well as serving as second Vice President. Norm, a CPA, is B.I.L.L.'s financial advisor, and serves as treasurer and member of the Board of the Berkshire Opera Company.

Wilma and Norman feel they are lucky to have made so many good friends through B.I.L.L. In case one thinks Wilma is all work and no play, she enjoys playing poker — and knows very well when to hold and when to fold, a life lesson as well as good poker advice.

— Marge Lewis



Helping B.I.L.L. Members to Teach

Many B.I.L.L. members have expressed an interest in sharing their knowledge and expertise with us by teaching a class. They hesitate, however, because they are concerned about their lack of experience in making a presentation in a classroom atmosphere.

At the same time, there are B.I.L.L. members who could share their skills in teaching methods. We would like to put these two groups together. The first step is to organize a group who would be willing to assist people in putting together courses. If you would be interested in serving as a mentor in this program, please let me know. Together we can help B.I.L.L. continue to expand its course offerings.

You can reach me at 413-623-6171 or at mpf29@juno.com.

— Paul Flaum

Keep Us Posted

Are you leaving the Berkshires for the winter? The Postmaster has informed us that bulk mail, which B.I.L.L. uses for its Berkshire County mailings, is not forwarded but discarded. Let the office know your temporary forwarding address (with dates) whenever you are away from Berkshire County so that we can send mail directly to you. Otherwise, you will not receive your catalog, issues of B.I.L.L.BOARD, or Special Events announcements. Please call the B.I.L.L. office at 499-4660 Ext. 456 or e-mail us at smack@berkshirecc.edu to give us your winter address information.

CORRECTION

Genevieve Driscoll's last name was misspelled in the "B.I.L.L. 2001-2002 Volunteers" list of the Summer 2002 issue. Please accept our apology.

Exploring Our Geologic Past

In late May, after completion of the course *The Dynamic Earth*, Professor Michael Bergman of Simon's Rock College and fellow Professor Don Roeder conducted a one-day geology field trip. The class viewed excellent examples of the rich and varied geologic features of western Massachusetts and the Connecticut River valley. Sites visited were located in Dalton, Savoy, North Adams, Shelburne Falls and Holyoke.

PHOTOS BY DICK DEGENHARDT AND BOB DESROSNIERS

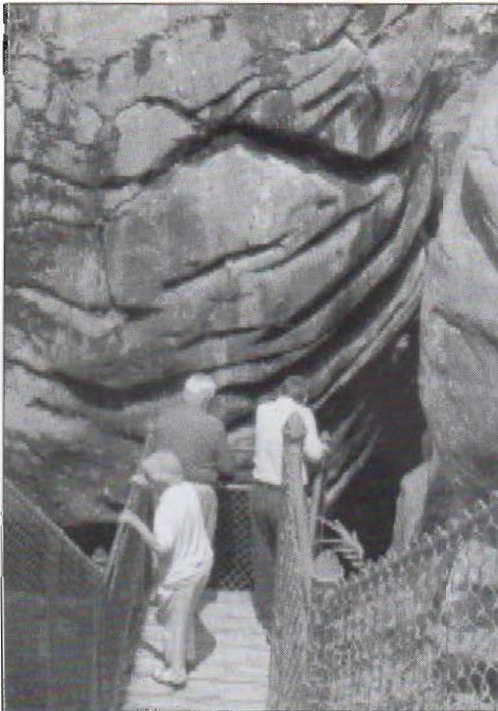


Class members hike toward the talc deposits in Wahconah Falls State Park, Dalton.



Behold quartzite! Professors Bergman (center) and Roeder (left) lead the discussion at Wahconah Falls.

(Below) Water has eroded a deep chasm in the marble at Natural Bridge State Park, North Adams.



The banded and folded metamorphic rock in the riverbed at Shelburne Falls is magnificent. There are also many "glacial potholes," some of which still have a scouring rock in the hole.



A tilted thrust fault of sandstone schist is juxtaposed against ancient basement rock (1.2 billion year old gneiss) on the side of Rte. 116, Savoy.



This marble quarry at Natural Bridge State Park, North Adams, was utilized from 1810 to 1947.



The shore of an ancient lake can be found along Rte. 5, Holyoke. These ripples in the sandstone are about 200 million years old.



*Dinosaur footprints, including this one of *Eubrontes giganteus*, a 20 foot long dinosaur, are preserved in the sandstone next to the Connecticut River.*



Columns of hexagonal cross section basalt in Mt. Tom State Park, Holyoke, were formed about 180 million years ago from lava welling up between moving tectonic plates.

New, Exciting Curriculum Projects

The Curriculum Committee, chaired by Mona Sherman, has established a Special Projects subcommittee that has cooked up a rich, imaginative educational banquet.

What are Special Projects, and how are they different from other B.I.L.L. offerings? They will be single-session educational programs offered throughout the year in contrast to B.I.L.L.'s highly successful tradition of semester-long courses and Special Event trips. Sometimes they'll offer an encounter with noted literary or academic figures in the familiar lecture or panel discussion-and-reception format; sometimes

they'll offer one-day immersion in a discipline such as poetry, medicine, science, theater or music. These sessions may take place at B.I.L.L. or at other sites and may represent a joint venture with local cultural groups.

While this is a new departure for B.I.L.L., it is a frequent curriculum component of other lifetime learning networks. The nature and subject matter of each program will dictate its format and length. When you've seen one, you have definitely not seen them all.

Humorist Roy Blount Jr. kicked off the series in July. At Shakespeare & Co. in August, author Carol Gilligan spoke to us about her work, especially her adaptation of *The Scarlet Letter*, a play that B.I.L.L. will attend on

October 5 as part of the Special Events program. On September 21, we will be visited by Dr. Bob Berman, noted astronomer and radio personality. A poetry day with renowned poets is planned for October, and Karen Shepard, a brilliant young author, will join us in November. On November 7, we will take a trip to the University of Massachusetts Medical Center Research Laboratories for tours and presentations on their advanced biomedical research.

These, along with the already rich fall and winter curriculum, the Special Events programs and the winter film series at the Triplex, should provide a full, diverse and fascinating educational plate for B.I.L.L. members.

Dr. Rodgers Addresses B.I.L.L. Convocation



RICHARD BAMBERY

Bernard F. Rodgers Jr.

On May 29 before a packed house, B.I.L.L. President Art Sherman introduced the convocation speaker, Dr. Bernard F. Rodgers Jr., Vice President and Dean of Simon's Rock College of Bard. A remarkable educational leader and innovator, his dossier includes being a special assistant to the chancellor of the City Colleges of Chicago and an assistant director of the Commission of Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Author of *Philip Roth* and *Philip Roth: A Bibliography*, he has published essays and reviews as well.

According to Dr. Rodgers, American education is failing its best and brightest students. Although education has raised the floor for the poorest students, it has not raised the ceiling of intellectual challenge for students capable of exceeding the boundaries of the traditional four-year high school curriculum.

He further stated that the essence of education is to challenge, and that goal is not being met or encouraged. The failure is due in large part to economics: there is not enough money to serve the best and brightest as well as the poorest students. Simon's Rock College was founded in 1966 as a new kind of school — Early College — to offer innovative curriculum to meet that challenge. Students complete their first year of college during what would have been their last two years of high school.

The New York City Board of Education, frantic to find solutions to its growing failures, worked with Simon's Rock and Bard to establish a free public school modeled after the Simon's Rock philosophy. Visitors to the school are impressed by the eagerness of both the students and the faculty.

Dr. Rodgers believes that such a model, one that challenges and enriches young adult students and prepares them to continue successfully to further learning, will lead to enormous changes in public education.

Marge Lewis



(left to right) Past Presidents Norman Avnet and Len Stolzberg, President Art Sherman, 2nd Vice President Wilma Michaels, 1st Vice President Paul Flaum

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Faculty Appreciation Dinner

May 22, 2002, at the Country Club of Pittsfield
Ileen Cohen, Chair



Thank You, Lecturers

The success of B.I.L.L.'s courses is the result of a tremendous effort by many individuals who are willing to share their expertise. We want to specifically acknowledge the following lecturers, moderators and panelists for their commitment and dedication for the academic year fall 2001, winter 2002 and spring 2002 — many have led more than one course:

Robert Allardyce
Brian Allen
Peter Arlos
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Mark Liponis
Julie Lowell
Mark Ludwig
Michael MacDonald
Kate Maguire
James Mahon
Dan McCleary
Robert McInerney
Betsey McKearnan
David McKearnan
Lion Miles
Nabih Nejaime
Ivan Newton
Jean Nudd
Richard Nunley
David Orenstein
David Peirce
Carl Pratt
Richard Rand
Caroline Reeves
Mark Reinhardt

Katherine Rich Perlow
Jack Ringler
Bernard F. Rodgers Jr.
James Rosenberg
Deborah Rothschild
Georgeanne Rousseau
Jean Rousseau
Jack Rubin
Lenore Rubin
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Kenneth Savitsky
Reba Schecter
Elske v.P. Smith
Abraham Sperling
Paul Stein
Jack Stern
Morton Sussman
Nathaniel Thompson
Cherie Vergini
Elliott Vines
Harriet Vines
Barbara Viniar
Lisa Volmer
Simon Wainrib
James Warwick
Sandor Wax
Richard Weingarten
John Wood
Dee Ann Zimmer

From Quaking Aspens to Sugar Maples



HENRY ART

Old plow furrows in the Hopkins Memorial Forest

The fall course on "Forest Succession in New England" will focus on research conducted in the Hopkins Memorial Forest (HMF). The HMF extends from the Hoosic River in Williamstown westward to the crest of the Taconic Range in New York State. When the last Pleistocene glacier retreated northward about 13,500 years ago, an old growth forest dominated by beech, sugar maple, red oak and white ash grew up and persisted until colonial times.

In the mid-1700s, much of the old growth forest was cleared by settlers and replaced by small farms with

plowed fields, pastures, meadows and woodlots. In the 1880s, Colonel Albert Hopkins consolidated many of the small farms and formed the 1,636 acre Buxton Farms. After Hopkins died in 1912, his widow continued to operate the farms until she auctioned the farm equipment in 1924. She deeded Buxton Farms to

Williams College in 1934, and it became known as the "Hopkins Memorial Forest."

In 1935, Williams College sold the HMF to the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) for one dollar. The USFS used it as a base for "studies in reforestation of abandoned farm land, forest genetics, and forest management" until 1972, when its headquarters was moved to New Hampshire. Ownership then reverted to the college. The Forest was expanded to 2,430 acres and, from 1972 to the present, the faculty and students in the Environmental Studies Center at Williams College have conducted research on forest succession.

Participants in the B.I.L.L. class will be introduced to the 12 major tree species that are found in the Forest, and the role that they play in its ecology. Bill Fox, Hank Art, an Ecologist at Williams College, and Andrew Jones, the manager of the Forest, will lead a walk through the woods to visit several sites including an old grove of sugar maples, a possible ancient shoreline on glacial Lake Bascom, and the first canopy walkway located in a northern hardwoods forest. The geology, glacial history, and landscape of the Forest, and how they influenced forest succession will be discussed.

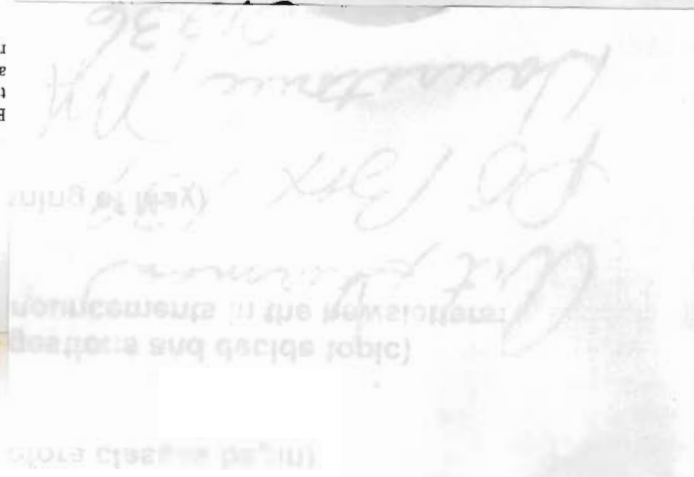
"Remote Sensing," which includes the use of aerial photographs and satellite images, can be used to trace the forest succession of the HMF. A series of maps will show how the distribution of the 12 major tree species in the Forest has changed through the past 70 years, and how forest succession has progressed "from Quaking Aspens to Sugar Maples."

— William T. Fox

William T. Fox, Professor Emeritus, Williams College, will be teaching a course entitled From Quaking Aspens to Sugar Maples: Forest Succession in New England in the fall 2002 semester.

Phone: 413-499-4660, Ext. 456 Website: www.berkshirecc.edu/lifelong/bill.html E-mail: smack@berkshirecc.edu

B.I.L.L. adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination towards its members and students and will admit all those who apply regardless of race, religion, color or national origin.



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