

B.I.L.L. BOARD

FALL 2003
VOLUME 12
NUMBER 1

NEWSLETTER OF THE BERKSHIRE INSTITUTE FOR LIFETIME LEARNING

Fall 2003 Semester at a Glance

The Curriculum Committee has put together an exciting variety of courses and lecturers for the fall 2003 semester. Nineteen courses will be offered at several locations.

You have already received the catalog and registration information. Courses begin on September 15 and run through October 31. Refer to the catalog for exact times and dates. The courses and locations are:

MONDAYS • BCC Main Campus, Pittsfield

Reading Charles Dickens — Paul Stein

The Civil War — Paul Flaum, Stuart Murray, Rick Wilder

Architecture: The Home, the Workplace and the Community — Abraham Sperling

Taking Ten: An Exploration of the Ten-Minute Play — Dennis Krausnick, David Smilow, Nina Shengold

The Life of the Cell: In Health and in Disease — R. McInerney, S. Wax

TUESDAYS • BCC Main Campus, Pittsfield

Reading Very Short Stories — Alexander (Sandy) Drescher

Celestial Navigation, GPS and Inertial Guidance Systems — Brian McCue, Andy Miller

Crafts in the World Market — June Nash

The Rehnquist Court and Civil Liberties — Stephen E. Gottlieb

WEDNESDAYS • Simon's Rock College, Great Barrington

Attention Must Be Paid: The American Theater 1946 to the Present — Phyllis Jaffe

So You're a Grandparent! — Claudia Shuster

WEDNESDAYS • Canyon Ranch, Lenox

Optimal Aging — Kristine Huffman, Mark Liponis, Carl Pratt

WEDNESDAYS • Evening Course • BCC Main Campus, Pittsfield

Great Books/Great Films — B. Edmonds, J. Freundlich, L. Rubin

THURSDAYS • Clark Art Institute, Williamstown

The Law and the Literature of the Environment — Philip R. McKnight

Arts and Letters of France: Moments of Greatness — John Brooks, Nicole Desrosiers, Peter Low, Simon Wainrib

History and Biology of Australia — C. Barre Hellquist

FRIDAYS • BCC Main Campus, Pittsfield

Today's Headlines — James W. Cotter

The Hills Are Alive: Music in the Berkshires — Phyllis Curtin, Ronald Feldman, Andrea Goodman, Kevin Rhodes, Joseph Silverstein

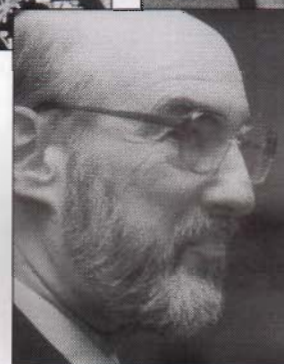
Architecture (see Mondays)



Claudia Shuster,
Lecturer



Peter Low, Lecturer



Stephen Gottlieb, Lecturer

Special Events For 2003-2004

September 3: Historic Deerfield Village, MA

September 14: *Very Good Eddie* — Jerome Kern, Goodspeed Opera House, East Haddam, CT

October 4: *Lovely Day* — Miniature Theatre of Chester, Chester, MA

November 3: Rembrandt Exhibit — Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

January 4, 2004: New Year's Celebration

February 1, 2004: *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* — Capital Repertory Theatre, Albany, NY

President's Message

As I write my first column as president of B.I.L.L., I am honored to coordinate the efforts of this outstanding organization and to follow in the footsteps of some truly special people.

Nine years ago, Tom and Judy Easton planted the seed for a new kind of educational organization in the Berkshires. Under the leadership of Len Stolzberg, Ann Dulye, Norman Avnet and Art Sherman that seed grew into a sturdy tree which bears fruit throughout the year. The main branches are a series of courses in the arts, social sciences, literature and sciences that broaden the horizons of our members.

Other branches blossomed as the tree grew. Special events programs took us to museums, performances and other exciting activities. Special curriculum programs brought articulate experts to talk to us about their fields of endeavor. Social events such as our New Year's Brunch, New Member Reception and the summer picnic at Tanglewood added another dimension to our program. New growth is beginning to flower both in extended travel opportunities and educational assistance to local schools. We are indeed fortunate that B.I.L.L. was planted and continues to grow in the Berkshires.

As we all know, keeping a tree healthy requires constant attention — B.I.L.L. is no different. It needs to be fed new ideas and, occasionally, pruned. We need people who will nurture the tree as well as enjoy its fruits. Over 1,000 of us are members of this fine organization. Each of us makes a contribution to maintaining the health of B.I.L.L. guaranteeing its continued growth.

By now you have seen our 2003 fall course offerings. I am sure you will agree that this will be our best season yet. I look forward to meeting many of you at those exciting courses and activities next semester.



A Day in the Bronx

Listening to Mozart on a beautiful spring day, their proboscises probing a very attractive plate of fresh fruit, they would make Nabokov's lepidopterist Humbert Humbert very happy. You've guessed it, we are walking through and surrounded by fluttering butterflies in this new exhibit at the Bronx Zoo.

Not far from the Butterfly Zone is Tiger Mountain. The exhibit, which just opened in May, is one-half the size of Central Park. It contains six Siberian tigers on view from behind a glass wall, part of which is one side of their swimming pool. The goal of the Wildlife Conservation Society is to have animals engage in their normal behaviors, which should be interesting since the ratio of females to males is five to one.



“Arthur Avenue” lies between 184th and 187th Streets, ten short blocks from the zoo and just south of Fordham Road. What a destination for anyone who wants an Italian food experience. In these few blocks there are fresh pasta shops, myriad delis and groceries and eight bakeries — four sell bread and four sell pastries. Here, at the Calabria Pork Store, you find mozzarella so fresh it oozes and sausages in dozens of varieties hanging from the ceiling. Or stop at Mike's Deli, see a mozzarella demo and be offered so many samples you can skip lunch.

This part of the Bronx deserves revisiting. Call me when you want to go.

— Carol Sabot



DICK DEGENHARDT

A Special Message

Each year we have come to you and asked for your support, and every time you are there with a gift that makes a real difference at this College. From scholarship support, to a new piano, to library funding — the impact of B.I.L.L. is very visible on this campus.

In these tough economic times, we are most appreciative of your vision, generosity and support of Berkshire Community College. I know that I speak for the students, faculty and staff when I thank you for your contribution this year to our library.

— Jamie L. Dobrowolski
Executive Director
BCC Foundation

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

Bravi tutti! On behalf of the Berkshire Opera Company, I am writing to express just how thrilled we were that so many B.I.L.L. members were able to join us for our recent *La Traviata* performances. It was wonderful to meet so many of you and to see that you are just as passionate about great opera performances as we are.

Thank you for your ongoing support and enthusiasm, and we look forward to seeing you again at opera performances in the future.

— William J. Powers
Executive Director
Berkshire Opera Company

B.I.L.L. BOARD

Bonnie Desrosiers, *Editor* • 413-442-5490 • e-mail: bdesros1@berkshire.rr.com

Peri Caverly, *Editorial Assistant* • Helen-Mary Shaffer, *General Assistant*
Marge Lewis and Wilma Michaels, *Proofreading Assistants*

Keep Us Posted

Are you leaving the Berkshires for the winter? 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, Special Events and Special Projects announcements because the Post Office will not forward them.

Please call the B.I.L.L. office at 499-4660 Extension 456, or e-mail us at smack@berkshirecc.edu to give us your winter address information.

DID YOU KNOW...

B.I.L.L. is a not-for-profit educational organization. Contributions made to B.I.L.L., a 501(c)3 organization, are tax-deductible by the donor. Contributions can be made through the B.I.L.L. office.

Getting To Know You



MONA SHERMAN

Mona Sherman is one of B.I.L.L.'s most active members. As past Chair of the Curriculum Committee, she oversaw the development of a wide array of high quality courses. The ongoing and overwhelmingly successful Special Projects program inaugurated last year, with its cadre of distinguished lecturers and fascinating topics, is another example of her dedication to B.I.L.L. She presently serves as First Vice President and is in line to become president in July 2005.

Mona is a "company person." She is totally involved in the welfare, development, growth and success of B.I.L.L. New ideas fascinate her and she is open to receiving suggestions from others. She is excited by meeting different people, forging new relationships and developing liaisons with cultural organizations in the Berkshires. Despite the enormous success of her programs, Mona insists that the credit should be given to the people with whom she works.

Mona loves challenges. Once she becomes engaged in the implementation of a new project, she does not rest until there has been a serious attempt at mastering it. This aspect of her personality also manifests itself in her hobbies and other interests such as digital photography, gardening and tennis. In addition she and her husband Art, past president of B.I.L.L., are serious world travelers — they actually visited Antarctica a few years ago. Spending time with her nine grandchildren is another great pleasure.

When asked whether there were other aspects of her life which might be included in this article Mona playfully responded, "There are certain aspects of me which I want to remain a mystery." I had to agree that this reticence made her all the more interesting.

— Karl Easton

Special Projects Are Very Special Indeed!

Significant programs frequently arise from seemingly unrelated input. Such is the case of the Special Projects program that began in June 2002.

The completion of the Long Range Planning Study two years ago revealed B.I.L.L. as a unique entity among Lifelong Learning Institutes. We had strong support of three major sponsors, were located amidst many cultural venues and had a growing, erudite, culturally interested membership. We were an independent, tax-exempt corporation, free to develop our own educational programs and external relationships. Other institutes had successfully pursued individual lectures, something we had previously done only on a random basis. We recognized the need to broaden the base of our curriculum offerings to meet a growing, diverse membership.

To date, 17 lectures, panel discussions and joint programs with Shakespeare & Company, UMASS Medical Research Center, *The Berkshire Eagle*, Tanglewood, Berkshire Museum and Jacob's Pillow have proved remarkably successful. Well over 1,600 B.I.L.L. seats were filled as members attended these programs and lectures on humor, music, astronomy, memory, Afghanistan, Islam, literature, graphic arts, contemporary glass and theater. The relationships developed have also expanded faculty resources for regular courses.

Special Projects now scheduled for the fall include Professor Sam Crane of Williams College lecturing on *The New Government of China*, Brian Allen



of the Clark Art Institute speaking at the Berkshire Museum on *The Anatomy of an Exhibition*, Features Editor Charles Bonenti of *The Berkshire Eagle* moderating a panel on *Dining Out in the Berkshires* and a panel discussion about *Music in the Berkshires*. Many other programs are currently works in progress. Watch for the announcements!

— Mona Sherman, Chair Special Projects

Sunday by the Sea

A day of sunshine brightened our trip to Essex and Old Lyme, Connecticut, on April 27.

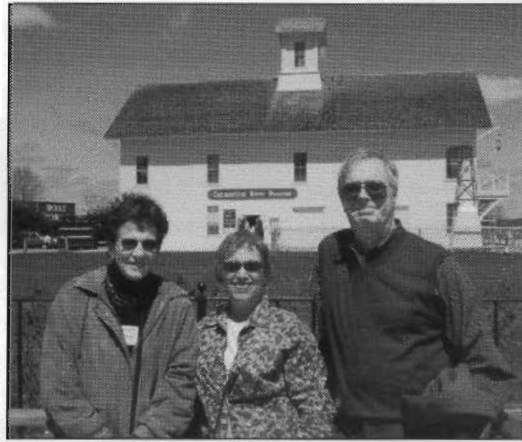
After viewing a video about tugboat life along the Connecticut River, we arrived in Essex where we boarded the *River Quest* for a meandering ride on the river. The staff on the boat noted historic points, and we enjoyed the gorgeous homes along the shoreline. The old town of Essex was interesting to walk through and provided our group with many choices for a leisurely lunch.

At the next stop, Old Lyme, we toured the riverfront home of Florence Griswold and the adjacent art museum. This enterprising lady opened her home to artists who enjoyed painting Lyme's hazy landscapes. These artists formed the Lyme Art Colony and decorated Griswold's home with their Connecticut impressionist works producing many wonderful paintings. Living and working together, they influenced each other's style creating a dynamic center for the development of American art.

The Florence Griswold Museum adjacent to the house contains the Kriebler Gallery. It opened in 2002 to accommodate an impressive collection of 190 art works donated by the Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company. Such artists as Ammi Phillips, Frederic Church, Childe Hassam and John Twachtman are included in this collection.

Although learning about these talented artists was the focal point of the trip, it also provided an opportunity to enjoy the sunshine on the boat, on the Griswold porch and on the lawn near the river.

— Marilyn Flaum



Letter to the Editor

Dear B.I.L.L.BOARD Editor:

Just a year ago, as we were contemplating both the opportunities and potential pitfalls of retirement from our long careers, my wife and I considered a number of issues. Where did we want to be? Did we want full retirement, or did we want to maintain a foot in the work-a-day world? What life-style suited us best? Prime among the considerations was our desire to be near or have ready access to university or college courses.

In the end, we decided that we did not want to continue to own two homes (one in Connecticut and another near Tanglewood). We wanted to be in an area where people valued the cultural arts; we wanted a beautiful, even rural, setting. That was the perfect description of the Berkshires.

Even before our official retirement, through the kindness of our neighbors and friends in the Berkshires, we were introduced to B.I.L.L. and its offerings, both educational and social. Through the enthusiastic kindness of Wilma and Norman Michaels, Mona and Art Sherman and others, we got into the B.I.L.L. mold over the next few months.

What a "trip" it has been! Whether the courses dealt with politics, art or music, the classes were excellently taught and the "students" were every bit as bright and interested as the instructors! And how we appreciated the informative and newsy announcements of cultural offerings that daily came to our e-mail boxes from "SMACK" (B.I.L.L.'s own Sharon Mack).

So . . . are we glad we came to the Berkshires full time! And special thanks to the folks at B.I.L.L. — it wouldn't have been the same without you.

— Carl and Claudia Shuster

Lecturers Have Their Say ...

From Michael Bergman, Spring 2002

The Dynamic Earth

"Teaching a B.I.L.L. course was a great experience. Although my regular students are bright and engaged, the students in *The Dynamic Earth* course were unmatched for enthusiasm. I never got through as much material as intended with the never-ending stream of questions. It was gratifying to see people so interested in earth science."

From Barbara Greenbaum, Fall 2002

Great Awards

"When I was asked to do a class for B.I.L.L. called *Great Awards*, my anxiety blinded me from appreciating the pleasure I would get from such an experience. To be in front of a class of such well-educated, interesting people is truly a challenge and a joy. I hope I can continue to have this special privilege."

From Walter Gehring, Winter 2003

Naked Eye Astronomy

"Would you like to share your interest or expertise? B.I.L.L. classes are populated with the most interested, attentive and responsive individuals that you could imagine. Teaching one of these classes is a most rewarding experience."

Ireland – Yesterday and Today

We walked Irish history, century by century — the mysterious tombs of Knowth; Trinity College and the Book of Kells; Blarney Castle; General Humbert's trail; the area of the Battle of the Boyne; the home of Daniel O'Connell the Liberator, winner of civil rights for Ireland's Catholics; the mansions of the Victorian-age landowners.

We gloried in the Irish landscape from the majestic cliffs of Moher and the rock slabs of the Burren to the lushness of the Golden Vale.

We saw Sean O'Casey's classic *The Plough and the Stars* at the Abbey Theatre. And of course we drank the pints (or, abstemious Americans that we are, the half pints) all along the route.

All this, wonderful as it was, is open to any well-organized group tour. But we happy few, the ten B.I.L.L. overseas travel pioneers, had a crucial added dimension with the high-quality lectures, expert guidance and daily insights of Kevin Cahill, our resident scholar and group leader. Kevin also tweaked the standard itinerary to add depth to our experience — notably, by taking us to the Museum of Country Life and to Tom Hennigan's stony 10-acre farm. There, we heard and saw first-hand how Irish subsistence farmers worked and lived until a few decades ago.

For this traveler, at least, the trip added up to the ultimate B.I.L.L. study course.

— Judy Katz



The watchtower atop the 650-foot high cliffs of Moher, the most spectacular stretch of a spectacular coast.



A quintessential Irish evening — music, relaxation and pints of Guinness. Pubs sometimes line the main streets of towns and cities five abreast.



Eileen Knowles preparing to kiss the Blarney Stone.

A typical traffic hazard in the West of Ireland.



Off to stately Muckross House in a jaunting car. Touristy? Yes, but great fun.

The trip to Ireland, June 2 to June 16, 2003, was the first Extended Travel program organized under the auspices of B.I.L.L. A special thank you is extended to all who submitted photos for this article.

Dr. Schapiro Addresses B.I.L.L. Convocation

On May 28 before a large audience, President Art Sherman introduced the convocation speaker, Dr. Morton O. Schapiro, President of Williams College. Dr. Schapiro began his career at Williams in 1980 as an assistant professor of economics. He became an associate professor in 1987 and a full professor in 1990. After serving as Dean of the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences and Vice President for Planning at the University of Southern California, he returned to Williams College in 2000 to become its 16th president.

Dr. Schapiro is considered one of the nation's leading authorities on the economics of higher education with particular expertise in the area of college financing and affordability. He has not only appeared before U.S. Senate and House committees on educational and economic issues but has received many grants for research in those fields.

In his address, "Keeping College Affordable," Dr. Schapiro stated that higher education is an industry in America. There are 3,500 non-profit higher educational institutions in the United States with 15.3 million students enrolled. Two-thirds of U.S. high school graduates go on to attend non-profit colleges or universities. This represents a \$300 billion per year cumulative expense which is 3 percent of the gross domestic product.

Even though enrollment rates are setting records, there is a concern that higher education is not leading to equalization. Research has shown that enrollment rates for minorities have not increased to the same extent as those for Caucasians, and there is higher enrollment from families with higher incomes. These gaps have steadily widened over the last 23 years.

Higher education, in general, has been impacted by a decrease in state support, a move away from need-based to merit-based financial aid and the "boom-bust" in private industry. Community colleges provide an opportunity for a higher standard of living for those who attend them. To emphasize this point, Dr. Schapiro read excerpts from *The Berkshire Eagle* Letters to the Editor written by a Russian student who had transferred to BCC and then successfully completed his undergraduate degree at Williams College.

— Reported by Sue Gorham



Morton O. Schapiro

NICHOLAS WHITMAN

B.I.L.L. OFFICERS, CHAIRS, and ADVISORS

- PRESIDENT
Paul Flaum
- 1ST VICE PRESIDENT
Mona Sherman
- 2ND VICE PRESIDENT
Wilma Michaels
- SECRETARY
Joseph Gerard
- TREASURER
Norman Michaels
- DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE
Genevieve Driscoll
Herbert Eskwitt
Sue Gorham
Barbara Greenbaum
Aleva Henderson
Margo Krupp
- STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS
Dr. Norman Avnet, Curriculum
Arline Breskin, Special Events
Ilse Browner, Nominating
Barbara Caplin, Membership
Bonnie Desrosiers, B.I.L.L. BOARD
Fran Dichter & Joseph Gerard,
Class Management
Ronald Gilbert, Media
Barbara Mandler, Public Relations
Norman Michaels, Finance
Enid Michelman, Extended Travel
Elliott Vines, Parliamentarian
- OTHER COMMITTEE CHAIRS
Roz Avnet, Faculty Appreciation
Robert Desrosiers, Information
Systems
Sue Gorham, Educational
Assistance
- PAST PRESIDENTS
Arthur Sherman
Dr. Norman Avnet
Ann Dulye
Len Stolzberg
Tom Easton
- ADVISORS
Joel Greenberg, Legal
Martin Schlanger, Financial
- COLLEGE LIAISONS
Nancy McIntire, Williams College
Don Roeder, Simon's Rock College
Alexandra Warshaw, BCC
- FOUNDERS
Tom and Judy Easton



Left to right: Past President Len Stolzberg, 2nd Vice President Wilma Michaels, Past President Norman Avnet, 1st Vice President Mona Sherman, President Paul Flaum, Past President Art Sherman

Faculty Appreciation Dinner

May 19, 2003, 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 2002, winter 2003 and spring 2003 — many have led more than one course.

Marsha Altschuler
Hank Art
David Auerbach
Michael Ballon
Stephanie Beling
Walter Bemak
Marcia Bernstein
Philip Bhark
Thomas Blalock
Kevin Cahill
Robert Chandler
Subhash Chandra
Peter Cocks
Barbara J. Cohen
Leonard Cohen
Lenore O. Congdon
Kenneth Cooper
James Cotter
Tom Daly
William Darrow
John de Kadt
Steve Dixon
Mat Dorment

Karl Easton
Gray Ellrodt
Stuart Feder
David Finck
Paul Flaum
William Fox
Walter Gehring
Cynthia Geyer
Ben Glick
Roger Goldin
Barbara Greenbaum
George Haus
Thomas Hayes
Manfred Hecht
Samuel Herrup
Maureen Hickey
Diane Hitter
Ed Hornstein
Kristine Huffman
Mark Hyman
Phyllis Jaffe
Frank Jakubowicz
Allan Katz

Judy Katz
Charlotte Kaufman
Philip Knowles
James Kraft
Sharon LaBranche
John Leavey
Mark Liponis
Barry Lubin
Kate Maguire
Sarah Marshall
James McAllister
Robert McInerney
Karen Merrill
James Michelman
Jeff Migdow
Lion Miles
Ann Mintz
J. Keith Nelson
Jean Nudd
David Orenstein
Paul E. Perachi
Mark Pettus
Carl Pratt

Jack Ringler
James Rosenberg
Jack Rubin
Lenore Rubin
Alex Sabo
Francine Segan
Paul Smilow
Elliott Snyder
Grace Snyder
Jesse Spector
Andrea Staskowski
Paul Stein
Jack Stern
Jefferson Strait
Thomas Sullivan
E. Ahmet Tonak
Ann Trabulsi
David Turcan
Loet Velmans
Elliott Vines
Harriet Vines
Simon Wainrib
Arthur Wasser
Sandor Wax
Dick Whitehead
Robert Wilkins
Robert Williams

Shaker Sites in the Berkshires

The Shakers were a religious sect led by Mother Ann Lee who settled in Watervliet, New York, in 1776. She traveled and inspired converts and communities throughout the region. Besides the familiar settlements at Hancock, Mt. Lebanon and Tyringham, there were lesser known "out-families," missions and Shaker gatherings in the Berkshires.

Though short-lived, one of the most notable was in Savoy, Massachusetts. New Lebanon Elder Calvin Green converted nearly 100 men, women and children during 1817. Most continued to live in their own homes and built a dairy, school, meeting room and gristmill. Plagued by drought and locusts, many moved to New York State settlements in 1822 but returned to their



Shaker Barn, Tyringham

properties from time to time. The last Shaker in Savoy died in 1901. Stone foundations, wells, cemeteries and a Shaker homestead remain.

Nine Pittsfield religious dissenters were recorded as Shakers in 1789. Shaker properties were located in the southwest corner of "Stearnsville" near the junction of Melbourne Road and Lebanon Avenue. They owned a gristmill and a fulling mill by Shaker Brook. Fulling mills prepared wool cloth by washing and shrinking it to form a denser material. A map of 1876 shows thirteen Shaker buildings on the north side of Route 20 from just west of the railroad overpass to the Hancock line. The iron mine was near the tracks.

Shakers from Enfield, Connecticut, bought timber tracts in the northwest corner of Becket and adjoining Washington. They managed mills on Shaker Mill Brook where stone foundations can still be seen.

Some early Richmond residents became Shakers in the 1780's. A Shaker barn was near the northern border of Richmond on the west side of Dublin road close to Scace Brook. By 1820 two Shaker families were



Second Meeting House, New Lebanon, NY

established just over the border in Canaan, New York. They owned properties near Queechy Lake and at the present site of Berkshire Farm Center where Shaker buildings still exist. These two communities were active until 1884 and 1907, respectively.

In West Stockbridge, Shakers from Tyringham owned a mill near the center of the village, which they sold about 1867. It was situated near what is still called Shaker Mill Pond.

Mother Ann Lee held meetings with Shaker "out-family" sympathizers in Cheshire and Richmond in the summer of 1783. She also stayed at a cottage in Mount Washington where she and a local Brother held meetings. Since July 1987, the little wooden house has been owned by the state.

Sources are available upon request.

— Emilie S. Piper

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

B.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.

B.L.L. Sponsors:
Berkshire Community College
Simon's Rock College of Bard
Williams College

Return Service Requested

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PITTSFIELD, MA
PERMIT NO. 79

Berkshire Institute For Lifetime Learning, Ltd.
Berkshire Community College
1350 West Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

