



Newsletter

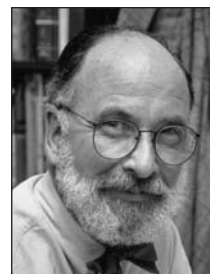
AT BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WINTER 2008

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

Winter Semester at a Glance

Beginning January 11 and continuing through February 27, OLLI at BCC will be offering a variety of new and exciting courses for the Winter 2008 semester. For your convenience, classes will be held in various venues throughout Berkshire County. See the catalog for complete details or visit our website at www.BerkshireOLLI.org.



Lecturers: Ryan Taylor, Opera; Tracy Wilson, Music; Hilary Russell, Poetry

MONDAY

Telling Tales: Reading Short Selections Aloud
"The Play's the Thing..."
America: Democracy or Plutocracy

Lenox Library

TUESDAY

Tuesdays at the Movies
Unusual Trips: Following the Road Less Traveled

Triplex Cinema & Lenox Library

WEDNESDAY

Today's Headlines
Inside Music: Part II
A Celebration of Poetry
The Show Must Go On: The Making of a Season

Lenox Library & Berkshire Music School

THURSDAY

Endangered Freedoms
The Internet: A Walk Through the World-Wide Web
Failed Scientific Theories: It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time

Lenox Library & Simon's Rock

FRIDAY

The Art of Oriental Brush Painting
Environmental Problems: Local Solutions
Classical Archeology of Ancient Greece and Rome

BCC Great Barrington & Lenox Library

Dates to Save

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES

January 26 — William Schurtman,
Tales of a Trial Lawyer

February 9 — Laurie Heatherington,
Inside Psychotherapy: The Science of the Art

CLARK ART SERIES

March 6 — Art and History

March 13 — Art and Poetry

March 20 — Art and Drama

March 27 — Art and Music

Flyers with specific information will be mailed to you.

Photo Contest Winner

Wilma Michaels of Stockbridge, MA, an active OLLI at BCC member, submitted the winning photo entitled "Winter Wonderland in Stockbridge" which appears on the cover of the Winter 2008 OLLI Catalog. The photo was taken on February 23, 2007, in front of her home at White Pines. It was taken with a Canon PowerShot A520 camera (4.0 mega pixels) at F5.6 and 1/800 second.

OLLI Photo Contest

PRIZE: The winning photo will be on the cover of the Spring 2008 catalog, and the winner will receive a 1-year free membership to OLLI.

THEME: Berkshire area spring or summer scene **DEADLINE:** January 7, 2008

SPECS: Digital format (jpeg, tiff, bmp), 3.2 mega-pixels or greater

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

Visit www.BerkshireOLLI.org for further details.

President's Message

I am delighted to report good news.

First, we are making efforts to develop new educational partners. Howard Arkans, Barbara Hochberg and I visited with the Provost of Bennington College, and we are planning to visit Southern Vermont University and at least one college in New York State. You will hear more about our efforts in the near future. We recently met with Mary Marcy, Provost of Bard College at Simon's Rock, and will have some exciting news to report from this contact.

Second, by the end of the fall semester, we expect to have five courses videotaped and one video lecture taped from our Distinguished Speaker Series as we endeavor to reach people who cannot attend classes. Thanks to Joe Gerard, his crew and our friends at Public Access Television for producing these new videos.

Third, Mona Sherman and Barbara Hochberg have made great progress in acquiring new Cultural Partners. They have reached an agreement with 19 and are negotiating with more. The results so far have yielded additional courses for the winter and spring semesters as well as agreements from organizations which gave us courses in the past to continue to do so. In addition, there will be free advertisements in movie theaters, more venues for our activities, discounts for various cultural activities and other benefits. See the article on Cultural Partners in this issue.

One of our goals as specified in the Affiliation Agreement with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute is to increase course offerings by 20 percent. Our thanks go to the Curriculum Committee and subcommittees for the hard work they do in developing these courses to help us meet our objective.

Stephen Radin

Meet the New Executive Director

BARBARA HOCHBERG

As Executive Director of OLLI at BCC, I have an awesome job. Awesome has a popular connotation (used liberally by the younger generation) that is certainly applicable. I use the word primarily in the old-fashioned sense of awe—an emotion of mingled reverence and wonder inspired by something majestic or sublime.

The work done by BILL/OLLI members over the past fourteen years has produced a superb organization. The OLLI course catalogs, distinguished speaker rosters and special event flyers make clear the countless hours of dedicated work performed by a large group of talented individuals who develop, organize and coordinate OLLI's programs. These volunteers are truly awe inspiring. It is vital that this commitment grows and that together we inspire others to join us in the work of building upon past successes.

During this first year of my tenure, I will work to further relationships with faculty and administrators at our educational and cultural partner institutions. Our goal is to offer more courses at expanded times in a wider geographical area. These efforts will help us to increase membership. Our affiliation with the national OLLI organization is a major source of information and networking support that I find invaluable.

I am excited about the opportunities presented by my new position. I have spent my professional life in education having taught high school English, directed both a public and an academic library, served as Director of Development at BCC and most recently worked as a development consultant. OLLI will allow me to employ every skill I have ever developed and demand that I acquire new ones. Thus, OLLI is an important part of *my* lifelong learning plan, and I have great enthusiasm for its objectives and programs.

— Barbara Hochberg



OLLI Networking

OLLI Networking is a new program designed to encourage our members to get together and participate in areas of mutual interest. Networking groups will help OLLI members forge new connections and friendships through shared ideas, insights and interests.

These interests can include, but are not limited to, book discussions, bridge, mahjong, sports, photography, chamber music and visits to museums. Some groups have already formed: travel, writing, Shakespeare reading and skiing.

Consider starting a group to keep the winter cold and blahs at bay. We welcome your ideas for activities. If you are interested, please contact Roberta White at 518.781.3551 or e-mail at Roberta.White@verizon.net.

OLLI NEWSLETTER

Editor: Wilma Michaels

Assistant Editors: Peri Caverly and Marge Lewis

Proofreaders: Norman Avnet, Bonnie Desrosiers, Marilyn Margolis, Sandi Rubin, Helen-Mary Shaffer

Editorial Staff: Joanna Fribush, Judy Katz, Art Sherman

Getting to Know

BONNIE DESROSIERS

Whoever coined the proverb “when you need something done, ask a busy person” must have had Bonnie Desrosiers in mind. Since her retirement from the Pittsfield Public Schools after a 26-year career as a Reading Specialist, Bonnie has been very busy—especially at BILL/OLLI. She started as an office volunteer in 1999 and then served on the Board of Directors in the positions of Secretary, BILLBOARD Editor, Second Vice President and currently Catalog Editor.

Growing up in Lowville, NY, in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains, Bonnie learned to love winter sports. She enjoys cross-country skiing and is hoping to learn to use the snow shoes she recently acquired. She and her husband Bob, OLLI’s Information Systems Chair, have one daughter, Lisa, and two grandchildren, Sam and Shannon.

During her years with the Pittsfield schools, Bonnie taught grades K through 12. She was also Acting Coordinator of Reading and a workshop leader in Curriculum Development and Assessment. At the state level, she was a member of the Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program Content Committee for Reading. She served on the Berkshire Reading Council in every official capacity available and received the Council’s Literacy Award in 1999.

Bonnie’s philosophy of life is to keep active both mentally and physically. This is reflected in her current plan to learn about perennials and then design a garden to plant in the spring. Bonnie will not only try her hand at new projects, she will do her best to complete them and her best is excellent—as we know.

— Marilyn Margolis, Editorial Staff



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Tom and Judy Easton

OLLI Forms Cultural Partnerships

Our goal as OLLI at BCC is to form relationships with cultural organizations in the Berkshires and surrounding areas in order to offer our members new and exciting programs in music, dance, theater, opera, film and the visual arts.

For several years, we have worked with many of these organizations to provide educational opportunities and financial discounts to BILL members. The development of our OLLI programs has made it possible to create closer, mutually beneficial relationships with these organizations. We have adopted the concept of “Cultural Partners.”

Our mission is to create dynamic classes, seminars and events with material that our members will eagerly embrace and, which wherever practical, will provide cost savings for our members. The mission of these cultural organizations is to enhance their audiences and community participation. We provide a perfect fit.

Our Cultural Partners to date are: Barrington Stage Company, Berkshire Museum, Berkshire Music School, Berkshire Opera Company, Berkshire South Regional Community Center, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Canyon Ranch, Chesterwood, The Colonial Theatre, Images Cinema, IS183, Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival, Norman Rockwell Museum, Spencertown Academy Arts Center, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Summer Music Seminars, Triplex Cinema, WGBY and WMHT.

Cultural Partners will be listed in our catalog, and you can visit our website at www.BerkshireOLLI.org to access these organizations and their programs.

— Mona Sherman, Past President

Wine Tasting Celebration

This past spring, the fourth Wine Appreciation course was offered, and 37 participants met weekly at Spice Restaurant on North Street in Pittsfield for a series of six lectures and wine tastings.

Several of the wine lecturers had been presenters at the Wine Appreciation courses in the past including: Steve Dixon who spoke about Austrian wines, Ben Glick who focused on New Zealand wines and Jack Rubin who described various wines from Argentina and provided a surprise bonus session on reading and understanding a wine menu. Other lecturers were Danny May, selector of wines for Guido's Fresh Marketplace in Pittsfield, who spoke on the origins of the Pinot Noir grape and Ian Dick of Classic Wines, Inc., who highlighted wines from Burgundy.



Arline Breskin, Special Events Chair, selected cheeses to complement the wines that were sampled at each session and graciously provided her homemade pâté for the French wines. Spice very generously provided crunchy French bread for the cheeses.

Following each session, partici-

pants were invited to have a specially priced dinner at Spice. At the end of the course, OLLI members and guests were invited to attend a Gala Wine Banquet which was also held at Spice.

This was a delicious way to learn about wines and their origins.

— Lenore and Jack Rubin

The Accident That Inspired a Novel

It is known as the accident that inspired Edith Wharton's classic novel *Ethan Frome*, but it was a tragic accident for five Lenox young people who sledded down the icy Court House Hill and crashed into a lamp post at the Hawthorne Street intersection. According to the local Pittsfield paper, *The Evening Journal*, on March 11, 1904, Emily Crosby, a student at Lenox High School, was steering a double ripper sled down the steep hill which was: "all a glare of ice and it grows steeper as you approach the bottom." She lost control, and the crash killed her and seriously injured her four passengers—all Lenox High School students. The town was shrouded in gloom.

In this novel, Court House Hill,



Edith Wharton

which starts at the monument in Lenox and goes down Old Stockbridge Road to Hawthorne Street, is called School House Hill. It was a popular

place for coasting and attracted locals as well as crowds of tourists and cottagers. As *The Evening Journal* reported: "...just last week a party of nearly 100 society people from New York and Boston came up to Lenox just to enjoy the coasting, sliding and skiing on Court House Hill. For fifty years there has been no place in Lenox quite so good as that

declivity for winter sports ... but yesterday's fatal accident is the first that has happened there." Edith Wharton was living in Lenox at the time.

The book's main character, Ethan Frome, is a young man caught in an unhappy marriage and a poor financial situation. His wife Zeena is ill and needs constant care; he yearns to escape with young and pretty Mattie,

his wife's cousin, who has come to be Zeena's caregiver. The grim setting and tragic theme are thought to parallel Wharton's own dilemmas and mirror her own bleak years in the midst of illness and depression. When she wrote the book in 1911, her husband was suffering from a nervous disorder, and her unhappy marriage was breaking up. Her depiction of the Berkshires and its residents is grim throughout. Lenox is named Starkfield, and Ethan and Mattie plan a double suicide sledding accident as an escape from their hopeless situation. In *Ethan Frome*, Wharton carried this hopelessness to an extreme by using the tragic accident as the novel's climax.

Edith Wharton divorced her husband in 1913 and traveled to France where she found romance and love in her relationship with Morton Fullerton.

— Joanna Fribush, Editorial Staff

Our thanks to Ruth Degenhardt, retired Local History Librarian at the Berkshire Athenaeum, for suggesting this subject and for her help in finding the archival material.



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OLLI at BCC's Officers



Joe Gerard, Marilyn Flaum, Stephen Radin, Howard Arkans, Norman Michaels

STEPHEN RADIN, President

Stephen, former BILL First VP, retired to the Berkshires after teaching part time at several NYC colleges, writing books on computer technology and serving as Program Administrator for the NYC Board of Education. Since retirement, he has volunteered in Great Barrington and Pittsfield town governments and in many not-for-profit organizations.

HOWARD ARKANS First Vice President

Howard began his medical career in 1973. He held a variety of positions including Senior Medical Director of

Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield and West Region Medical Director of Aetna U.S. Healthcare. He spent twelve years in private pediatric practice. He retired in 2002 and volunteers for several Berkshire organizations and is an OLLI lecturer on the movies.

JOE GERARD Second Vice President

Joe, a retired U.S. Air Force Colonel, has held many positions in both the communications and electronics fields. He managed and directed various aspects of computer, radar and communications technology. He has

served as Board Secretary and as Class Management Committee Chair of BILL. He also volunteers for Elder Services, Habitat for Humanity and Tanglewood.

MARILYN FLAUM, Secretary

Marilyn was a reading specialist on Long Island retiring after a 25-year career. A professional highlight was working with the NY State Reading Council and subsequently chairing the State Reading Conference in 1988. She and her husband Paul have been active in BILL since moving to the Berkshires in 1992. She also volunteers at Tanglewood.

NORMAN M. MICHAELS, Treasurer

Norman has been a business consultant in the market research industry for 40 years. He is a member of the New Jersey and Massachusetts CPA societies and the American Institute of CPAs. He taught at CUNY and NYU and lectures on business related topics. He also serves as Board Chair and Treasurer of the Berkshire Opera Company.

— Sandi Rubin, Editorial Staff

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Phone: 413.236.2190

OLLI adheres to a policy of non-discrimination and welcomes all people as members of our organization.

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