

# B.I.L.L. BOARD

WINTER 2005/06  
VOLUME 14  
NUMBER 2

NEWSLETTER OF THE BERKSHIRE INSTITUTE FOR LIFETIME LEARNING

## A "Cool" Winter 2006 Semester Awaits You

From January 16 through February 23, B.I.L.L. will again be offering a varied assortment of new and exciting courses for the Winter 2006 semester. Monday and Wednesday classes will be held at the Lenox Library. Tuesday and Thursday courses will be held at Simon's Rock College Lecture Center in Great Barrington. See the catalog for complete details.

### JANUARY 16 – FEBRUARY 23

#### MONDAY • Lenox Library

*Short Stories of Henry James* — James Kraft

*Conversations With...* — Barbara Greenbaum and William Vogt, Moderators, with guests Ed Burger, Linda Ellerbee, Deborah Herman, Claire Pace, Ellen Spear  
*Sleep: Unlocking the Mystery Enveloping One-Third of Our Lives* — John Harrington, Simon Peimer, Jack Ringler

#### TUESDAY • Simon's Rock College Lecture Center

*From Novel to Movie: The Art of Screenwriting* — Stephen Glantz

*The Comedy of Jerry Seinfeld* — Florence Shapiro

*Accent the Positive* — Joyce Freundlich

#### WEDNESDAY • Lenox Library

*Today's Headlines* — David Orenstein, Moderator

*Great Adventures* — Don and Helene Calman, Michael Eaton, Bryan Ekstrom, Jonathan Kramer, Raymond Materson, Judith Shaw

*Winston Churchill: Greatest Man of the Twentieth Century* — William Vogt

#### THURSDAY • Simon's Rock College Lecture Center

*Great Experiments* — Stanley Applebaum, Michael Bergman, Robert Desrosiers, George Haus, Tony Segal, J.A. Wheelock, Jr.

*DNA: From the Origins of Life to Pharmaceutical Plants* — Rick Intres

*Moving Forward in Healthcare* — Paula Aucoin, Richard Basile, Gray Ellrodt, Joseph Gold, Allen Kantrowitz, Todd Lasner, Andrew Lederman

## Dates To Save

**January 8:** New Year's Brunch,  
Ventfort Hall, Lenox

**MONDAYS AT THE MOVIES:** The Films of Dustin Hoffman • Triplex Cinema, Great Barrington

**January 9:** *The Graduate*

**February 27:** *Kramer vs Kramer*

**March 13:** *Tootsie*

**March 27:** *Rain Man*

**CLARK ART SERIES:** More Than Meets the Eye • Clark Art Institute, Williamstown

**March 9:** *The Classical Past*

**March 16:** *The Medieval World*

**March 23:** *Mixed Messages – The 17th and 18th Centuries*

**March 30:** *Message? What Message? The 19th and 20th Centuries*

## Do You Need a Ride to Class?

We want you to attend classes this winter!

If you need a ride to class, please let us know by completing the Course Registration Form in the winter 2006 catalog. If you can drive people in your neighborhood, please add "D" after course number and name. If you need a ride, please add "R" after course number and name.

We will try our very best to locate a ride for you with someone in your neighborhood who is taking winter classes.

— Wilma Michaels, Chair  
Membership Committee

### New Year's Brunch

Sunday, January 8, 2006 at 11:30 AM  
Ventfort Hall, Lenox

Launch the New Year  
with Family and Friends!

Enjoy the Ambience of the Gilded Age.  
Delicious Food by our B.I.L.L. Chefs and  
Music by the Chord Sharks Barbershop Quartet



## President's Message

I hope your fall has been wonderful and the approaching New Year brings you and your family good health and much happiness.

The comprehensive offerings of the fall '05 semester evoked much praise for the diversity and content of the courses. B.I.L.L. members, who winter in the Berkshires, will have available the exciting combination of courses and special programs outlined on the first page. I urge you to participate; the venues are conveniently located at Simon's Rock College and the Lenox Library. The March program presented jointly with the Clark Art Institute will be outstanding.

Two of the goals I discussed at the Convocation were to increase current member participation and enrichment opportunities and to increase membership by reaching out to the community at large where many know little, if anything, about B.I.L.L. To guide us in both of these efforts, we sought to obtain a better understanding of the interests, desires and background of our membership. Volunteers (to whom I am deeply grateful) conducted a professionally developed, statistically significant, random telephone survey of the membership. Wilma Michaels was instrumental in bringing together this group of phone volunteers and has certainly energized the work of the Membership Committee.

B.I.L.L. owes enormous gratitude to both Phyllis and Ed Epstein who made available their professional ex-

pertise to develop and interpret the results of the survey; Bonnie and Bob Desrosiers spent countless hours tabulating and computerizing the data. The results, now being evaluated by the Board, will profoundly impact how we proceed to achieve our goals. Survey results will be summarized in the next B.I.L.L. BOARD.

The need to increase membership stems from the inherent financial stability that such growth allows and not from a desire for growth for its own sake. Given our current very tight financial status, all efforts to promote this growth need to be undertaken without any budgetary impact. We are successfully moving to achieve this objective by a combination of volunteer efforts by B.I.L.L. members, professional graphics and regional marketing support, an independently-funded marketing program and receipt of grants from community organizations.

The restructured Finance Committee under Dale Grimshaw now includes a Development subcommittee chaired by Stephen Radin. Through the efforts of Dr. Norman Avnet, we received grants totaling \$8,000 from the Berkshire Bank Foundation and Williams College for the purpose of implementing a targeted marketing program. We are very grateful to them.

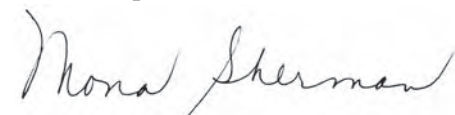
The Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) has also agreed to design, at no cost to B.I.L.L., a new informational brochure and to redesign our other publications to achieve an attractive, market-oriented format. Using the information derived from the membership survey and the

assistance of a marketing consultant, we will initiate a targeted mail-marketing program. We will also work with the staff at MCLA to explore joint efforts to broaden membership in North County.

We continue to seek grants from other institutions to help offset actual operating costs associated with courses and activities, publishing and mailing of semester catalogs and flyers and rental of locations. Significant reductions in expenditures have also been budgeted. To support this work, Dick Degenhardt developed a new web site that is simply accessible by keying in [www.berkshirebill.org](http://www.berkshirebill.org). If you haven't gone to the site, try it—you'll love it! Members can help significantly by using the new website to obtain information about B.I.L.L. and by developing a comfortable, frequent e-mail relationship with the B.I.L.L. office.

This has been a very busy time. I want to thank the Finance Committee under the new leadership of Dale Grimshaw and Treasurer Norman Michaels for developing a sound budget and a mechanism for its careful monitoring. All of the B.I.L.L. committees are working hard. They have helped me move B.I.L.L. forward to provide you with the courses and programs you want.

Above all, I want to thank the members of B.I.L.L. for their kind thoughts and willingness to roll up their sleeves and help get the job done. No president can do this alone.



### B.I.L.L. BOARD

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### New Policy

A new policy has been established by the Special Events Committee. There will be a cut-off response date for each special event for members. Non-members will be accommodated after that date.

### Winter Addresses

If you are leaving the Berkshires for the winter, please let the B.I.L.L. office know your temporary forwarding address (with dates). Call the B.I.L.L. office at 499-4660, Ext. 456, or send an e-mail to [smack@berkshirecc.edu](mailto:smack@berkshirecc.edu).

## Reserving Books

Did you know you can reserve library books at home using your computer? Log in at [www.cwmars.org](http://www.cwmars.org) and follow directions on the screen. If the book isn't available in your library, you can access other libraries in the region. You will be asked to enter your library card number and to create a pin number (4 numbers will suffice). The head librarian at the Pittsfield Athenaeum said that she is sometimes inundated by B.I.L.L. members' requests, so please use your local library to pick up books if possible.

As a B.I.L.L. member, you may also use the Jonathan Edwards Library at BCC. If you want to take a book home, you will be asked to get a library card at the Circulation Desk. I hope these resources will prove useful to you whether for a B.I.L.L. course or for your own personal reading.

— Judy Cromwell, Chair  
Literature Subcommittee

## B.I.L.L. Website

B.I.L.L. has a new website at [www.BerkshireBILL.org](http://www.BerkshireBILL.org) or [www.berkshirebill.org](http://www.berkshirebill.org). The previous site was on the Berkshire Community College server which limited the options available in redesigning the website. The new web host provides the space for our pages as well as tools to build the site.

[BerkshireBILL.org](http://BerkshireBILL.org) includes the information from the previous site along with several new features: a detailed and frequently updated "Calendar" which lists all B.I.L.L. related activities and committee meetings, a "Photos" page where links to multiple picture albums may also be found, an "Instructor's Form" that can be downloaded and sent in as an e-mail note to the B.I.L.L. Office and maps of the Berkshire Community College and Simon's Rock College campus. In addition, a "What's New" page is included to identify recent changes to the website.

PDF versions of the course catalog, B.I.L.L.BOARD and flyers for upcoming Special Events and Special Projects are available for viewing. Adobe Acrobat Reader is needed to view the documents. If you don't have Acrobat Reader on your computer, links are provided to enable you to obtain a free download of the software.

The new site allows B.I.L.L. to provide timely information to its current as well as prospective members. Visit today and take a look!

— Dick Degenhardt, B.I.L.L. Webmaster

*Happy Holidays and Happy New Year*

## Tutors Needed

B.I.L.L.'s Educational Assistance Committee is seeking members who would like to tutor Pittsfield elementary students for all or part of the 2005-2006 school year. Tutoring would require one hour (or more, if you like) per week during school hours or after school. An on-site tutor guide will be available to help you in your volunteer work. For more information, please e-mail Patricia Moynahan at [pbm22k@berkshire.rr.com](mailto:pbm22k@berkshire.rr.com).

## Henry James

James Kraft is returning for the winter session to explore the short stories of Henry James. Those taking the course will be expected to have read the first two stories, *Daisy Miller* and *An International Episode*, prior to the first class. You will find the complete reading list in the winter 2006 catalog. Happy reading!

— Judy Cromwell, Chair  
Literature Subcommittee

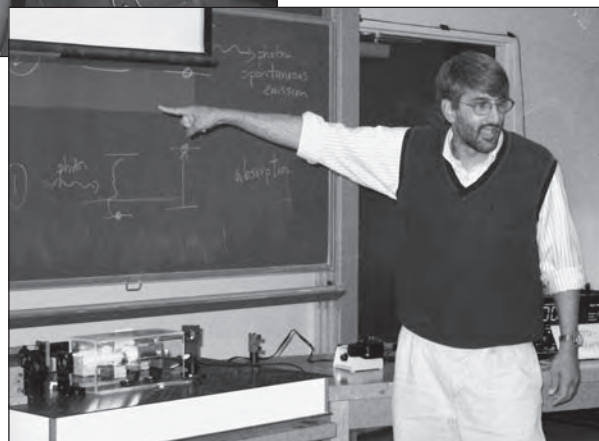
## Were You There?



Above: *Let's Make Music*

Above right: *Uncle Joe Stalin:  
Not Your Average Joe,  
Not Your Average Uncle*

Right: *Celebrating Genius:  
Einstein 100 Years Later*



## Calder in Richmond

When Alexander Calder—the master of mobiles and stabiles—visited the Berkshires in the 1930's, he was barely on the threshold of his long rise to prominence as a leading figure in the world of modern art. The son and grandson of classical sculptors, he followed a far different path in his youth, ranging from an illustrator for the racy *Police Gazette* to a tramp steamer crewman. But eventually, he turned aside from the engineer's life he had trained for and headed for Paris to live the life of an artist.

It was the era of new directions in those postwar years of the 1920's when conventions of the past were cast aside by artists and writers. Calder, along with Mondrian, Arp and Miro, was in the midst of the great creative surge of modern art. Calder's contribution was very much his own—figures made of looping wire and metal shapes hung from the ceiling. He described it as art from above, rather than below.

In his cluttered Paris studio, Calder made a circus of wire acrobats and animals that performed for his friends, and



they recognized the humor and vitality of his work. His favorites were the colorful shapes that balanced in space, moving fluidly in the air, free to change constantly. Call them "mobiles," Mondrian suggested. They were interesting enough to merit exhibits in Europe, where Calder carried them around in a suitcase for display wherever a showing could be arranged.

Then there were trips back and forth across the Atlantic for summer visits at his parents' home in Richmond. His

father made sculptures for the Berkshire Museum, and it was in his studio on Swamp Road that Alexander also worked during his visits. He turned out toys for his sister's children as well as mobiles and gouaches. These appeared in 1933 at the Berkshire Museum in one of his first exhibits in America. Some of his toys are on display there now along with two mobiles that hang in the auditorium.

Calder became one of the giants of American abstract art. His works are found in the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City as well as in many other museums throughout the world. In later life, he also created soaring forms of metal so large that they could not be housed in his studio. In a way, they mirrored his life from small beginnings to larger than life "stabiles." It is possible to imagine, as he regarded the Berkshire hills from the Richmond studio, that the magic of our countryside had its effect on him just as it has had for so many other artists who have visited here.

— Robert Hartford

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B.L.L. adheres to a policy of  
nondiscrimination and welcomes all  
people as members of our organization.

Website: [www.berkshirebill.org](http://www.berkshirebill.org)

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