Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
SPRING 2011, VOL 23

Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes 2011 National Conference
Director Marilyn Blumsack and Membership Chair Linda Carey Attend

On a typical April showers day we left New England, and two hours later we arrived, one day before Barack Obama, in a sunny Chicago. We attended the 2011 National Conference of the 117 Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes at the Eaglewood Resort in Itasca, IL. This year’s theme was Membership: Recruiting, Involving, and Retaining. Osher programs are currently in 50 states and the District of Columbia. Their presence as a networked community of learners is felt across the country, evidenced by their presence in a number of national conversations on such topics as creativity and the arts, civic engagement, brain health, and positive aging.

Kicking off the conference in the opening session the Executive Director of the Osher LLI National Resource Center, Kali Lightfoot, introduced Mary Bitterman, President and CEO of the Osher Foundation. It was Mary’s privilege to present Mr. Bernard Osher the benefactor of the Foundation. In her introductory remarks Mary made us aware of Mr. Osher’s New England roots and his history of philanthropic endeavors. We were awed to learn that currently there are close to 100,000 mature adults enrolled in an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Additionally, we learned that each of us share membership with one of every 900 Americans age sixty-plus. Mary concluded by introducing Bernard Osher whose inspiring address focused on the accomplishments of all the Osher LLIs and the pride he takes in the many successes of all the Institutes. Our first day concluded with a delicious chef’s tasting dinner of seven courses presented by the Eaglewood’s magnificent Executive Chef John Billings.

Early Thursday morning we embarked on a day of lifelong learning. It began with a plenary session featuring Terrance McNally, radio host and communications consultant. He enthralled the audience by highlighting four qualities or experiences that are crucial to organizations in building a growing, meaningful, and vital community among its members. Those four qualities are: Attention, Engagement, Activation, and Flow.

Our day of learning continued with attendance at three "breakout" sessions during which each participant chose a presentation from five offerings or a total of fifteen choices. Marilyn’s presentation at a standing-room-only session entitled Membership Matters: Getting, Keeping, Involving was very well received. Marilyn shared the goals, planning, and execution involved in our outreach Community Ambassadors programs. Some of the other sessions we attended included “Action Research,” “Registration Software,” “Collaborations for Success: Win-Win Partnerships.” We were exhausted but inspired by the quality and range of the presentations during our day of learning. The conference planners devised the perfect ending for this busy day, a "Taste of Chicago Neighborhoods" dinner. We explored tastes from the Stockyard, Little Italy, Greek Town, the Ballparks, and concluded with a table of many delicious cheesecakes.

Our final day at the conference began with a fourth "breakout" session. The seven sessions were centered on the topics: Curriculum, Membership, Volunteers, Collaborations, Marketing, Fundraising, Software, and Research. Our task was to make choices and participate in an informal discussion (continues on page 6).
Director’s Corner

Dear Friends,

Let’s not even think about the horrific winter we all had to endure and get right into spring, the time of the year when everything around us bursts into bloom. Our program enjoys the seeds planted by all our committees so allow me to reflect and take pride in all they do to make our Osher LLI world a vibrant, colorful bouquet.

CURRICULUM: Congratulations Fran et al on your productivity. An awing plethora of study groups, hundreds of members, newer and older enjoy each term. A hearty welcome to John Rudy and Merrill Hudson who recently joined the curriculum committee “team.”

EDventures: How does Bob Wohlgemuth do it? And with such ease and grace. He plants ideas and before your eyes these ideas take root, flower and grow. Just watch his eyes sparkle when a new flower springs up as it did recently when a Poetry Group became a reality. And he’s already looking for new bulbs to plant.

FINANCE: Sam Brown enjoyed the warmth of Florida this past season but when he’s present everyone smiles even when he talks fund-raising. His committee fertilizes our garden so.

HOSPITALITY: Nourishing us so well during the Fall and Spring terms. Nancy McLellan is the queen bee with Anne and Ginny her constant workers. Each Monday and Friday you see them all buzzing around Alumnae Lounge giving us the honey of their labor.

LUNCH AND LEARN: Adding nutrients to our program, Regina Kando and her steadfast committee continue to energize and refresh our Osher LLI experiences with outstanding speakers. Thank you so much.

MEMBERSHIP: Linda Carey and her flock add sunshine to the Osher LLI bouquet welcoming new members and tending to their needs throughout the year. Makes you want to be a new member all over again.

OUTLOOK and SPOTLIGHT: Marilyn McCaffrey and Arline Heimert cultivate and weed the talent within our program and continuously produce the largest blooms. Their “green thumbs” make our publications the very very best. Bravo!

NOMINATING: Watch Mel Bernstein and his committee right around this time of year when our Annual Meeting takes place. They are responsible for cultivating the blossoms in our garden each year and do it so well. Congratulations.

SPECIAL EVENTS and TECH: The newest sprouts in our program are beginning to grow and develop as we speak. Lyn Walfish, Walter Hart, Lois MacElhinney and Kathy Moss have wonderful special plants for everyone to enjoy these next several months. Watch for their announcements. Dennis Picker, Trish Roach and Rob Martin are planning technological features and a training program we can use to help us grow and flourish globally.

BROOKHAVEN: Our learning partner these past 10 years with Mary, Mary (Lynne Romboli) making our mutual gardens grow and what a wonderful garden it is thanks to Lynne and the wonderful supportive people at Brookhaven. Lynne is now the Community Outreach Director adding more sunshine to Brookhaven and its residents.

I know I am redundant when I say this, but this is a work of love. My thanks to all the volunteer effort you all expend: planting seeds, tending the garden and making it grow into the best Osher LLI there is. You are the reason my bouquet is so spectacular and magnificent and such a PLEASURE!!

Hugs,

Marilyn Blumsack

Now What Happens by Sue Trouil

In September, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of Tufts Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. It is time to think of ways to make an excellent program even better. As our functioning depends on the many dedicated volunteers who work on committees, it made sense to ask for help in pointing the way to the future. Two meetings were held in January to discuss Now What Happens with the program. Led by Linda Carey, Marilyn Segal and Marilyn Blumsack, twenty-eight members/volunteers brainstormed answers to the following questions:

1. In what ways can or should study groups be improved?
2. How can membership benefits be improved?
3. How can we build on our relationship with the University?

The participants were enthusiastic and productive. The resulting lists of ideas will inform the writing and implementation of an action plan to help our program flourish in future years.

If you have answers to these questions, contact Fran Lanouette for Q1 at: mfranlan@comcast.net; for Q2 Linda Carey at flcarey@verizon.net; for Q3 Marilyn Blumsack at Marilyn.Blumsack@tufts.edu
Amos Irwin

Amos Irwin was born in Palo Alto, California and educated through high school there. His father is a Physicist at Stanford University and his mother is a retired English professor. He has one brother who is a PhD candidate at the University of California - Davis in music composition. He attended Amherst College and received a B.A. in 2007 in the dual major of Physics and History. His senior history thesis was on Mexican land reform and he visited Mexico to do research for it. This helped him decide to focus on policy in his future studies. At Amherst he was involved in and president of “Students for a Sensible Drug Policy.”

From 2007 to 2009, Amos taught History in North Carolina under the Teach for America program. He notes that it was difficult because of the variable backgrounds and levels of preparation of the students, but that it was a very valuable experience. He hopes to return this year to see his former students graduate.

From 2009 to 2010, he and his girlfriend taught at Kunming University in SW China, where he was named the Most Outstanding Foreign Teacher. The work schedule allowed for travel throughout the country and he visited many areas, including Shanghai, Beijing, Hunan, and Tibet.

Amos arrived at the Fletcher School in the fall of 2010, where he is a masters candidate studying development economics and Chinese-Latin American economic relations. He also works as a research assistant for professor Kevin Gallagher studying Chinese-Latin American trade and investment treaties and their effects. His course load focuses on investment, economic development and trade, and Chinese foreign policy. He has led two study groups for the Osher program: The Sounds of China; Introduction to Mandarin Chinese (at Brookhaven) and The Domestic & International Complexities of Drug Prohibition.

Outside of the classroom, Amos played Ultimate Frisbee in college and in China where he played in some tournaments. He also plays soccer and squash and likes cross-country skiing, although he has not found time for it this year.

Anne Minton

Anne Minton was born and raised in Rochester, N.Y. From an early age she loved history and wanted to teach it. She first pursued that dream at the College of New Rochelle, graduating with a B.A. in history. She returned to Rochester to teach World History and World Religion.

Later she entered the Ursuline Order of Nuns and continued teaching, while pursuing an M.A. in history at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. At New York University where she received a PhD in history. Her principle interest was the history of ideas. Through this period, she continued to teach World History and World Religion at the high school, college, and graduate levels. After 12 years, she left the convent, but continued to teach in Catholic graduate schools and in Cambridge, MA. In 1987 she began work at Bunker Hill Community College for a period of seventeen years, teaching World History and World Religion.

In 1988 Anne joined the Episcopal Church. She attended Andover-Newton Theological School and received an M.A. in Theology and in 1993 was ordained an Episcopal priest. She worked in parishes in New Hampshire and Massachusetts for several years.

Anne made her first visit to Israel and Palestine in 2003 as a culmination of a lifelong interest that continues today and has, so far, included five more visits. In 2003, she helped lead meetings of groups seeking a nonviolent interaction between Christian, Jewish, and Muslim women leading to better understanding and a reduction of tension between them. This organization, the Daughters of Abraham, now has twelve groups active in the Boston area with others across the country. In June 2010, she traveled to Turkey and has made two trips to Spain working with these groups. She has two more trips to Spain in the planning stages. Home, when she is there, is in Lowell.

Anne came to Osher at the request of a friend who suggested she give a Lunch and Learn presentation on Israel and Palestine. More recently, she led the study group Murder Mysteries About Israeli-Palestinian Society.
Introducing Brookhaven’s New Executive Chef, Philip Proulx
by Lynne Romboli, Director of Community Outreach, Brookhaven at Lexington

Born Elsewhere, Living Here is a popular study group that Ken Fettig is leading at Brookhaven this spring. The course is designed to expose class members to different cultures around the world. Presenters born and raised in another country before coming to the US discuss how these countries manage education, government, healthcare, defense, and other national priorities and the effect of languages, religions and ethnicities influence those priorities. Over the eight week period there are speakers from France, India, Tanzania, Germany, Ecuador, Great Britain, Switzerland and Lebanon. After each session there is a luncheon with a menu specific to that country.

When Ken Fettig first proposed Born Elsewhere, Living Here as a study group for the Spring 2011 term, he asked if Brookhaven might be able to provide a luncheon with fare from the country being featured each week. I thought the idea was superb. I met with Brookhaven’s Director of Food Service, Ken DeRoeck and our new Executive Chef, Philip Proulx. It did not take Chef Proulx long to come up with eight incredibly creative menus. We thought you would like to hear about this talented new member of the Brookhaven staff.

Interview with Chef Philip Proulx

When and how did you get interested in cooking?
I began cooking when I was fourteen years old while growing up in Chelmsford, MA. My mother and grandmother were both skilled cooks. I especially remember helping my grandmother can vegetables that my grandfather grew and cooking with those ingredients throughout the year.

What prepared you to be an Executive Chef?
I was educated at the Culinary Institute of America (CIA). I have been working in the food service industry for sixteen years including eight years as an executive chef. I have owned, operated, and sold a restaurant in Chelmsford known for its eclectic “global” use of local ingredients.

What excites you about being at Brookhaven?
It is an exciting challenge to produce flavorful yet healthy food and to provide residents great satisfaction with the cuisine prepared for them. Nothing pleases me more than making people happy with what they are eating.

How did you create the international buffet menus?
My knowledge of international cuisine began at the CIA which teaches the fundamentals of all major world cuisines. Personal study and owning a restaurant known for its use of global flavors helped me to develop the international lunch menus. Some recipes are my own, for others I referred to cookbooks and the Internet. I enjoy the challenge of preparing the items for these buffets.

What is your real passion in life?
My first passion is watching my son grow up. I am passionate about food. I watch a number of cooking shows and think about food nearly all day. My third passion is sustainability. Food has to be sustainable if we are to have a future. This passion goes beyond food to energy sources as well. My final passion is all things music. I like everything from country, to rock, to electronic and jazz.
Book Review by Tania B. Friedman

The Things They Carried by Tim O’Brien

I find myself in difficulty trying to write a review of a book of such marvelous storytelling and insight into war. The Things They Carried is not just about the 20 lbs. of equipment and 14 lbs. of ammunition infantry men have to carry, but also the weight of their internal emotions and memories. O’Brien writes:

They carried all the emotional baggage of men who might die. Grief, terror, love, longing – these were intangibles, but the intangibles had their own mass and specific gravity, they had tangible weight. They carried shameful memories. They carried the common secret of cowardice barely restrained, the instinct to run or freeze or hide, and in many respects this was the heaviest burden of all, for it could never be put down, it required perfect balance and perfect posture.

In these stories, he goes beyond the horrors of war with insights into courage, the effects of combat trauma, and the struggle for recovery as the memories persist. Traumatic experiences are portrayed with credibility and perception. O’Brien’s depiction of combat trauma has been praised by mental health professionals.

O’Brien served in Vietnam and draws on his experiences there, but the lines he draws between fiction and reality are blurred. His take is “The story truth is truer sometimes than happening truth.” Norman Bowker, one of the soldiers upon returning home comes to realize that people “wanted good intentions and good deeds” instead of the truth.

Tim O’Brien graduated from Macalester College in Minnesota, his home state. He was accepted for graduate studies at Harvard. At first he opposed the Vietnam War and toyed with the idea of moving to Canada in order to avoid the draft; but in the end he reluctantly went into the fray.

When asked about the goal of a writer of fiction Mr. O’Brien replied “The goal, I suppose, any fiction writer has, no matter what your subject, is to hit the human heart and the tear ducts and the nape of the neck and to make a person feel something about what the characters are going through and to experience the moral paradoxes and struggles of being human.”

He succeeds in this powerful, unsentimental and yet at times lyrical novel. This book is a must read.

Thank You

The Danish Pastry House Bakery & Cafe
330 Boston Avenue Medford, MA 02155
781.396.8999
http://www.danishpastryhouse.com

Have you been enjoying the delicious pastries in Alumnae Lounge on Friday mornings and at Lunch and Learn? These lovely sweets are donated to us by The Danish Pastry House at the corner of Boston Avenue and Winthrop Street, just by the Tufts campus. All bakery items are made fresh each day, so at the end of the night volunteers from local charities swing by to pick up the extras. Our Tufts Osher LLI program has become a happy and grateful recipient of this generosity. When you stop by The Danish Pastry House to dine be sure to tell them you are from Tufts Osher LLI and thank them for donating their world-class pastries and delicacies.

Editor’s Note: Thanks go to Nancy McLellan, Hospitality Chair, who picks up the pastry donations from the Danish Pastry House and delivers them to Alumnae Lounge on Friday mornings for our enjoyment.
Start thinking about the summer program at Osher. This year’s program, Summer Journeys of Place and Mind, will run from June 6-16, featuring study groups, workshops, and seminars on the Tufts campus, at Brookhaven and beyond. The sampling of offerings listed here demonstrates the breadth and variety of choices. There is something for everyone, from classroom discussions and presentations to field trips and walks, taking advantage of the outdoor pleasures of early summer in Boston.

A few of the experiences you can have during a lively and busy two weeks:

- Two talks on the History and Traditions of Tufts presented by the pre-eminent Tufts expert, the always entertaining Sol Gittleman, professor emeritus and retired Provost of the University. The talks will be followed by a walking tour of campus one week and a bus tour the next week led by students.
- A four-day study group on historic Boston women includes a field trip.
- A guided walk through parts of the Mt. Auburn Cemetery
- Fascinating History, a look at events that gripped early Boston: the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti, the story of Lizzie Borden, the Roaring 20’s, Boston’s Haunted History.
- A workshop on Preserving Heirlooms, with opportunity to get personal advice on your own treasures.
- Writing Poetry or reading James Joyce’s The Dubliners
- Two scholar-led study groups, one on Terrorism and Pakistan and one on the Ethics of Friendship
- Boomers are particularly invited to a forum on issues relating to retirement: “Adjusting to the Retirement Time Zone and Other Challenges of Leaving a Job” and “How to Have Enough Money the Rest of Your Life.” There will be opportunity for networking between the two sessions.
- Journey to the Southwest: Pueblo Katsina Dolls, by Tufts’ American Studies professor, Joan Lester.
- Eleanor Lintner will lead her tenth music study group with: Two Great Tenors: Pavarotti and Domingo

Join us on campus or at Brookhaven for a stimulating, invigorating, and renewing program. Hope to see you.

See the summer catalogue online at: http://ase.tufts.edu/lli

(continued from page 1) to answer questions and raise concerns. It was a perfect format to assimilate our experience with learning, sharing, and networking.

The concluding general session featured the nationally renowned broadcast journalist Susan Stamberg who is Special Correspondent for National Public Radio. Susan described a few of her heroes who exemplify lifelong learning at its best, how they engage the world and create treasures of ideas and objects for all of us to admire, enjoy, and learn from. She included all of us by saying, "Some of my best friends are OLLIs!"

We reluctantly left this inspiring talk before its conclusion to hurry to the airport to catch our returning flight. As we reflected on the highlights of the Conference we chuckled over the many, varied, and wonderful dining experiences, including breakfasts, lunches, snacks, and the spectacular dinners. We recalled a friend's joke concerning his recent cruise.

He said he boarded the ship as a passenger but left as cargo. We hoped the airline would not have to change our status!

For our part we both came away from this national conference exhilarated and refreshed from meeting and making new friends, learning new practices from our OLLI colleagues and reassured and taking pride that we have one of the best Lifelong Learning Institutes in the country thanks to the vision of Tufts University and the Bernard Osher Foundation and the commitment and support of the you, dear members. Thank you!

by Linda Carey and Marilyn Blumsack

Save the Date
Tufts Osher LLI
Annual Meeting
June 21, 2011, 10:30AM

Think About Summer! by Fran Lanouette, Curriculum Chair
The Friendship Club
A Year in Review! by Regina Kando

We celebrated a milestone this past December - our first year together as a group. The Friendship Club is for Osher Lifelong Learning members that are single, either widowed, divorced or never married individuals that would like to share experiences and camaraderie. We have increased our membership and are always on the lookout for new members. The past year has brought us many lasting friendships and Edventures. We visited the Museum of Fine Arts for Art in Bloom, the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, the Institute of Contemporary Art, and after that we were treated to a tour of the Moakley Court House. We have enjoyed several student productions on campus at the Balch Theater and attended some opera performances at Granoff Music Center.

Everyone really enjoys our Sunday Brunch excursions. We all soaked up the gorgeous ocean view while we dined last July at the Red Rock Bistro in Swampscott. We have had an excellent line up so far this year that began with a well-attended Brunch at Sam’s Bistro in Reading.

Plans are now in the making for this year’s schedule of events. For one of our many great outings in March, a group of us attended Seductive Subversion: Women Pop Artists 1958-1968 at the Art Gallery located in Aidekman Arts Center. We attended the student production of The Importance of Being Earnest, and a Sunday Brunch at Posto Restaurant in Somerville. On April 14 we attended a student production of Arabian Nights at the Balch Arena Theater.

We have both men and woman members and try to have events of interest to both genders. If you are reading this and it sounds interesting and something you would like to participate in, please contact me at reginakando@comcast.net. I look forward to hearing from you.

WE NEED YOU!

The Curriculum Committee is seeking Study Group proposals from members for our Fall term which begins September 12. Study groups can run for eight weeks or four weeks and you can lead the study group alone or team up with another member as co-leader. We know you have a great study group in you and hope you will share it this Fall. The guidelines for proposals and a proposal form can be downloaded from our website at www.asd.tufts.edu/lli or requested from the Osher office at 617-627-5699. Forms are available at Alumnae Lounge on class days during the rest of the Spring term. To allow for review by the Curriculum Committee and to meet our publishing deadline, Fall proposals need to be received by the first week of May. If you would like to talk about an idea for a study group or have other questions, please contact Fran Lanouette, Curriculum Committee Chair mfranlan@comcast.net (781-391-2079) Thanks for your interest in leading a study group for your fellow Osher members.

Hospitality Chair Nancy McLellan is in need of volunteers to help with the food and table setup on Mondays and Fridays in Alumnae Lounge. See Nancy in Alumnae Lounge, or contact her at nlm66@comcast.net

Marketing: Tufts Osher LLI is looking for a few technical marketers (used to be in Marketing/Advertising) to brainstorm for a few hours on how to better market the Osher LLI program. If you are willing to spend a few hours please contact John Rudy at 781-861-0402 or john.rudy@alum.mit.edu

Osher Outlook

Osher Outlook, the newsletter of the Osher Institute for Lifelong Learning at Tufts University, is published four times a year: fall, winter, spring, and summer. Submit Letters and articles to the Editor at osheroutlook@gmail.com

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