Bernard Osher: A Tribute on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday

Bernard Osher’s father taught him that education and giving back to the community were keys to a good life. His great generosity today reflects those early messages. Bernard Osher is third on the Chronicle of Philanthropy’s list of top American philanthropists.

Thirty years ago, he created the Bernard Osher Foundation which provides funds for higher education and the arts. His foundation supports a national network of lifelong learning institutes for people age 50 or better on the campuses of 115 colleges and universities from Maine to Hawaii.

Tufts University joined this network in 2005 when the Bernard Osher Foundation awarded our Lifelong Learning Institute a grant of $100,000 for membership growth and program development. We were awarded $100,000 grants again in 2006 and in 2007. When we reach our goal of 500 members at the end of this academic year, our Institute will qualify for an Osher Foundation endowment of one million dollars.

The nation’s first Osher Lifelong Learning Institute began as Senior College at the University of Southern Maine. The local Rabbi, Harry Sky, had joined with the leadership of the university to create an opportunity for adults to gather for the pure joy of learning.

After officiating at the funeral of his brother, Rabbi Sky spoke with Bernard Osher about his three-year effort to establish a Senior College at Southern Maine. Impressed with the program, Mr. Osher endowed Senior College with a donation of $2.5 million and decided to support similar programs elsewhere.

Mr. Osher grew up in Biddeford, Maine, and graduated from Bowdoin College. He managed his family’s hardware and plumbing supplies store in Maine and then went to work at Oppenheimer in New York before moving to California. There he became founding director of World Savings, one of the largest US savings institutions. In 1970, he bought Butterfield & Butterfield, a fine art auction house that, under his management, became the fourth largest auction house in the world. In 1999, he sold the company to eBay.

Bernard Osher is a community leader in San Francisco where he makes his home with his wife Barbro who is Consul General of Sweden. He collects American paintings, studies opera, and enjoys fly fishing and hiking.

The Osher Foundation also provides scholarship support for students returning to four-year institutions in the regular undergraduate program after a significant break in their studies. Last year the Osher Foundation provided substantial scholarship support for students in Tufts REAL (Resumed Education for Adult Learners) program. The REAL program is eligible to receive further support and the University, another one million dollar endowment.

Happy Birthday Bernard Osher and thank you for enriching our lives here at Tufts through your generosity and vision!

by Joyce Ananian
Dear Friends,

Very often you may hear me say the word “community” when talking about Tufts University or our own Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Please allow me to reflect on what “community” means to me. It is fellowship; a body of people coming together to share because they care. It is YOU, my dear friends and Osher LLI members, and yes, the Administration here at Tufts who allow us to come together so that we may share because, I know and you know, they care as well. Late last spring I was honored to attend the fourth national conference of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes all 112 of them at Chateau Elan in Braselton, Georgia. Lynne Romboli of Brookhaven and I presented two workshops at the conference which were highly accepted and I came away with an incredible sense of pride in belonging to this large “community” of programs, each unique, each offering opportunities for academic as well as social activities to thousands of “third agers” (the new term for “seasoned citizens”) in their own local areas. It was an aweing experience to realize what a large and important “community” of learners the Osher Foundation has created because of the vision of its founder, Bernard Osher. I came away with an even greater appreciation for our Osher LLI and with renewed energy and inspiration for ways to maintain and develop our program to attain the membership requirements so that this wonderful University will receive the one million dollar endowment by June, 2008. We have systematically: recruited study group leaders from our membership and from the University graduate schools; offered e-learning courses for homebound members or other members throughout the world who want to experience learning technologically from the wherever they are located whether it be in the Sudan, China, Chile, Indonesia or Brooklyn, New York; formed alliances with institutions who embrace the concept of lifelong learning for their members or residents; initiated EDventures so that our members would be able to socialize, participate in community service projects, or simply share further knowledge about mutual areas of interest...whenever there was a call, we came together, this “community” of learners to actualize their needs. We are all part of the network of life, engaged people who contribute their time, energy and expertise nurturing our program. Join with me this new year as we celebrate the success and growth of our “community” of learners. As we enter the fall term, I encourage all returning members to welcome new members and make them comfortable and help them acclimate to our program. Go to our website, read our publications: OUTLOOK and SPOTLIGHT, check our weekly announcements for information about our myriad of activities and try to volunteer in whatever capacity you feel comfortable. New members, and there are many this year, need to feel our warmth. We need their ideas, friendships and stimulated minds for this quality, vibrant “community.” All of us are caretakers of this wonderful program and must look forward and plan for its ongoing excellence. I feel an immense pride in being Director and encourage all of us to remain steadfast and active. This is YOUR “community” and we want and need you now, tomorrow and in the future. I enthusiastically look forward to working and sharing with you and ask that you become part of the whole.

Thank you…

Marilyn Blumsack, Director

Osher LLI Director Published in The Senior Times

Marilyn Blumsack has published an article “Learning Goes On For a Lifetime” about Osher LLI at Tufts in the September 2007 issue of The Senior Times: The Voice of Today’s New Seniors, a publication widely distributed throughout New England. There is an interesting profile of Marilyn on the website of the Tufts Office of Graduate Studies:

http://gradstudy.tufts.edu/GradStudy-Com_Article-GradStudy_Com_Article_Details_1182429849159.html

Check our website for Osher LLI news, activities, calendar, publications, forms, and resources!

www.ase.tufts.edu/lli
Profiles of Osher Leaders by Fred Laffert Jr.

Sam Brown

Sam Brown was born in the Boston area and grew up in Brookline, where he went to high school. He attended Tufts and graduated in 1962 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He notes that his extended family includes several other Tufts alumni. Since he had been in the Air Force ROTC, he spent three years on active duty and then began his engineering career at Polaroid.

He began in manufacturing engineering and worked his way into technical management through various assignments. During his Polaroid career, he also attained an MBA in Operations Management from Boston University. In 1981, he went to Holland for two years to run the Dutch factory. All of these years were in film manufacture.

Upon his return to the US, he began to work in camera manufacture, principally on industrial cameras. This involved program management and marketing and included working with contract manufacturers and suppliers, many of these in the Far East. A lot of travel was involved, much of it international. Finally, after 36 years, he retired from Polaroid.

Sam began his retirement by taking some courses at Harvard’s Extension School, but heard about the Tufts program and decided to try it. He has been here since and is well known to many of us, most recently as chair of the Curriculum Committee. Sam also serves on the Executive Committee and as a Study Group Leader.

He is also active in SCORE (Service Corp. of Retired Executives) where he does volunteer consulting. As part of SCORE, he teaches a seminar on business plans.

Sam’s family consists of his wife of 40 years, Susan, two daughters, and three grandchildren. His hobbies include woodworking, reading both fact and fiction and newspapers, particularly foreign newspapers available on the Internet. After all of this, he and Susan still find time to do some traveling.

Tania Friedman

Tania Friedman was born in New York City, a first generation American. Her parents met here after both arrived in New York in the years following World War I. Her mother was French and her father, who was Polish/Russian, had escaped from the Bolsheviks after being caught in the Russian Civil War and wended his way to New York. He proudly became a US citizen in 1941.

Tania grew up and went to school in N.Y. Since neither parent spoke English when they arrived, they spoke French at home, one of the five languages her father spoke. She learned English when she went to school, and she recalls some amusing results when her parents tried to help with her homework. She also took ballet and piano lessons. After high school, she attended Columbia University for two years.

After leaving school, she worked for the Committee of Economic Development, radio and television, and for the Thoroughbred Racing Association where she handled the pension plan for racing officials. In 1967, she moved to Boston and became the Administrator of the Harvard Medical School Admission office. She worked there for almost 25 years, until retirement. During this period, she was also Program Chair and Vice President of the Massachusetts Association of Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors.

In retirement, Tania took up sculpting, which she does when time permits, and also did volunteer work for the Physicians for Human Rights. When she decided to take some courses, she found a Tufts TILL brochure at the Brookline library, called, and registered. She has been here since and is currently on the Curriculum Committee, is the book reviewer for Osher Outlook, and is one of the editors of Spotlight, our literary and arts magazine.

Tania also attends and arranges for speakers for the MIT Honorary Matron’s luncheons and belongs to a book club. Her husband, Jerry, a retired MIT physics professor, graduated from the University of Chicago, where he did his Ph.D. research under the supervision of Enrico Fermi who developed the first nuclear reactor. Tania and her husband reside in Brookline and enjoy traveling, music and the arts.
Emre Kayhan: Scholar and Study Group Leader  

by Caroline Freeman

Scholar and university professor-to-be, PhD candidate and study group leader now, Emre Kayhan brings to his Osher offerings a lifetime of experience in and learning about the region in which he grew up and now specializes. His Spring study group, "The Middle East and the United States," and a new course for Fall 2007 “The History of Islam” offer Osher members a detailed view of the history and religious and political background of that part of the world now so bound up with American interests.

Born in Istanbul, Turkey's most populous city, and raised and educated in that city and in Ankara, Turkey's capital, Emre strayed from the family path--both his parents and his sisters are lawyers--and chose an academic career in political science and international relations. For his final year of college, he was awarded a scholarship to leave his Turkish university and study at Harvard. He received a BA from Ankara University in 2000 but decided to remain in the United States for graduate work. In 2002 he received a master's degree from The Fletcher School; he then entered the PhD program at Fletcher. As part of his preparation for teaching at the college level, he has taught undergraduate courses in the Tufts political science department: Turkish Foreign Policy, U.S. Policy in the Middle East, and Middle Eastern Politics. He also founded and has served as president of Fletcher's Eastern Mediterranean Student Group. In addition to his academic study and teaching experience, Emre has served as a research associate at London’s International Maritime Organization and in Hamburg, Germany, at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

Maritime law--the law of the sea--is one of Emre's major interests, developed not only through study but through experience as a scuba diver, a hobby he has pursued in a number of oceans and seas. His other major fields of study at Fletcher have been Middle Eastern politics and international organizations. He is now writing his PhD dissertation, titled "Between Apology and Utopia: A Study of the Sources of Turkish Conduct," and focused on relations between Turkey and the European Union, which Turkey hopes to join in the near future. Finishing the dissertation and receiving the PhD from Fletcher are targeted for the end of 2007, or, "at the latest," May 2008. After that, Emre intends to spend a year in postdoctoral study or teaching in the United States. He will then return to Turkey to stay, he says, and to seek a teaching position at a university in either Istanbul or Ankara.

In his eight-week Osher study groups, Emre attempts to cover material as completely as Tufts undergraduates do in a full semester. He firmly believes in Osher's mission: "It is important to have a life-long learning process," both professional and personal. His intention is to pursue this end for himself in Turkey, continuing his scuba-diving, his academic and research interests, and his teaching career there.

Osher LLI at Tufts Enrolls Students from Around the World

Osher LLI at Tufts is a leader in the use of E-Learning for Lifelong Learning. This fall we have students from around the world enrolled in our three online study groups: Non-Violent Conflict Resolution: Practical Alternative to the Use of Military Force taught by Rachel Schiller, Fletcher Scholar; and two sections of Writing From Life taught by Grace Talusan, Lecturer in English & Xianghui Xing. Students, many of them Tufts Alumni, are based in these locations from South America to Africa to China.
2007 Volunteer Recognition Awards

Congratulations to Marie Murray, Angela Paison, and Bob Wohlgemuth

This award is an opportunity for us to say thank you to those who play an invaluable role in helping us achieve our mission. A volunteer's commitment of time and talent is crucial to the strength and vitality of our program. Thank you, our dear Volunteers of the Year, for your commitment and devotion.

-- Marilyn Blumsack

Bob Wohlgemuth and Marie Murray

Angela Paison

Marie Murray, Angela Paison, and Bob Wohlgemuth are the recipients of the Tufts Volunteer Recognition Awards for 2007. Ken Fettig, Executive Board Chair, presented the awards at the June 2007 Annual Meeting.

Bob Wohlgemuth is honored as the Founder and Coordinator of the EDventures program. He developed the guidelines and gives support to each activity. In addition to being an SGL of legendary status for his art study groups, he has been an active member of the Curriculum Committee since 2002.

Marie Murray and Angela Paison. Their many hours and years of dedication as Hospitality Committee members and workers is being recognized. Congratulations to this well-deserving team who have been nurturing others with friendship, love, and food since 2001.

Previous recipients of the Volunteer Award along with Director Marilyn Blumsack formed the committee that selected this year’s award winners.

Volunteer Of the Year Award Recipients 2003 - 2006:

- Sondra Szymczak 2003
- Ken Fettig 2004
- Mel Prague 2005
- Marilyn McCaffrey 2006
- Maralyn Segal 2006

Marie Murray, Angela Paison, and Bob Wohlgemuth are the recipients of the Tufts Volunteer Recognition Awards for 2007. Ken Fettig, Executive Board Chair, presented the awards at the June 2007 Annual Meeting.

Wedding Bells for Lisa Trapasso

On November 11, 2007, Lisa Trapasso, Marketing Manager for Osher LLI, is marrying Chuck Verdile at St. Maria Goretti Parish in Lynfield. Lisa and Chuck will be spending their honeymoon at The Turtle Bay Resort on the North Shore of Oahu. The Osher Community sends them its warmest wishes.

Lisa and Chuck’s engagement picture shows them at age three!
Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World’s Worst Dog  by John Grogan.  

Are you looking for a delightful read? John Grogan, a journalist, has written a heartwarming book that will have you laughing and weeping. John and Jenny were newlyweds when they decided to get a dog thinking this would be good preparation for raising a family. They have their satisfying careers, a great house, and no additional responsibilities. Their lives changed when they brought home Marley, a lovely puppy, who grew to be a ninety-seven pound Labrador retriever with boundless energy. He crashed through screen doors, ate through drywall, devoured whatever he could get hold of, and was terrified of thunderstorms. The solution was obedience school. But, alas, Marley flunked out. This is only one of some of the book’s funniest moments. Despite his energetic and mischievous personality, he was gentle with the children and let them climb all over him.

The book takes you on the journey of this family’s life with Marley, who is frustrating, funny, and beloved by his family members. We go through the excitement of Jenny’s first pregnancy, her bout with depression, and John’s overcoming some deep rooted family concerns. Marley & Me is humorous and has poignant moments. It is about Marley, from puppyhood to grey whiskers and “his” family’s growth. It is a tale of loyalty and how dogs become an integral part of a family. A reviewer, Marietta Dun, wrote “…it gets at the heart of the animal-human bond, with humor and with pathos in a deeply personal manner.”

by Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff, & Dr. Paula Kahumbu; Peter Greste (Illustrator)

Owen is a baby hippo who was orphaned in the 2004 tsunami that hit the Kenyan coast; Mzee is a 130-year-old giant tortoise. These two picture books tell the story of how Mzee became Owen’s surrogate mother.

Owen was rescued by some fishermen in Malina, who worked incessantly to save him. He was taken to a Kenyan animal refuge. Isabella, Craig Hatkoff’s seven-year-old daughter, saw Peter Greste’s extraordinary photographs of Owen and Mzee and persuaded her father to write the story of this unusual pair. He contacted Dr. Paula Kahumba, manager of the Hal- ler Park preserve on the outskirts of Mombassa, and met with her. These two books recount the reluctance of Mzee to be a surrogate parent and Owen’s persistence which resulted in their becoming inseparable.

Owen and Mzee have devised their own language using sounds that are not indigenous to either of their species. When Owen wants Mzee to move to the left he nudges Mzee’s left rear foot. The concern of their caretakers is that when Owen reaches 7,000 pounds he could inadvertently harm Mzee. Their remarkable friendship is a lovely story to read to your grandchildren and one that is sure to capture your heart and imagination.


For videos and further information go to: www.owenandmzee.com/omweb/owndmbooks.html
Fran Lanouette - I love the idea of this "summer vacation" segment for the newsletter. I spent May, June, and July escaping my home so all variety of workmen could demolish and renovate my bathroom and 1/2 bath. The result is wonderful but I lived with toilets, tubs, and sinks in my living room, endured multiple city inspections, and a stream of strangers coming and going daily. I loved the company I hired and would recommend them highly but I was happy to see them leave. As the end of summer approached I took a temp job at the Tufts Bookstore to get them through the student invasion. It was a fun but physically exhausting job. As a teacher I never worked this hard physically, standing on my feet for eight hours and helping to clean up at the end of the day. It was stimulating, though, to see the enthusiasm and promise of the students. Between the two halves of my summer I had surgery for carpal tunnel on my right wrist and am having the left one done in October.

Maralyn and Robert Segal - Finally at the end of September, Maralyn and Robert Segal are eating their heirloom tomatoes they have hovered over and lovingly watered since June. Other summer activities included a week in Lenox MA, a week with grandchildren in Seattle, a week sailing (Robert), and one in Manhattan (Maralyn).

Judy Wessell - I went to Venice for seven days: Art, Art and more Art!

Mel and Laura Bernstein - This was a great summer for enjoying the beautiful New England weather, hiking, biking and canoeing around Walden Pond. Our major trip was to Great Britain for two weeks, participating in a nine-day conference on the nature of war held in London and Oxford. We also arranged time to visit with relatives outside of London, taking in some notable cathedrals, museums, and the eye-filling English countryside. While in London, we attended an excellent production of Eugene O’Neill’s The Emperor Jones at the National Theater. We also managed to squeeze in shorter but equally enjoyable trips to Hadley, Northampton, Falmouth, and Williamstown.

Marie Murray - I had a kind of sad summer learning the ins and outs of a RARE disease when in June, my husband broke out with a rash on his back that went on to peel off most of his skin. Swollen feet and hands and itching eyes went with it besides a whole summer without GOLF! The worst of it is no one knows whence it comes and if it will ever go. Pityriasis rubra pilarus is its name. Just hope you never experience it. His pills cost $400 per month. Simplicissimus – he’s not sick only a bit heartsick.

Jerry Kornreich - I participated in an Elder Hostel course on the Golden Movies in Vermont. I attended one grandson’s graduation from UNH and another grandson’s graduation from Yale. And I joined a bridge group that meets weekly.

Betsy Rotondi - The summer of ’07 began on a special note for the Rotondi family. Paul, husband, father, papa, etc. threw his caution overboard and joined the official ranks of AARP. That’s right, he retired. On Sunday, July 1, I hosted what I had hoped would be a surprise voyage on Lake Winnipesaukee to celebrate this occasion. We almost made it. But at the last hour people began arriving at our home rather than at the town docks. With no alternative to offer, I admitted the grand event and drove Paul into town where we boarded a lovely semi-sized steamboat, The Winnipesaukee Belle. The eighty-five guests were there on a perfect day for the cruise. We toasted Paul, reconnected with family and friends, and ate a delicious meal. We danced to lively and reminiscent music and ended with a boogie of Otis Redding’s Turn Me Loose. Then Paul and I took a few minutes to enjoy the fresh mountain air and begin plans for the rest of the summer and the rest of our lives.


Kris and John Salo, along with fellow Tufts alumni, cruised the fabled Blue Danube, starting in Budapest and ending in Passau.
Save the Dates for the Osher 2008 Season
January 23 - February 15, 2008
March 17 - May 12, 2008
June 9 - 14, 2008

Programs at Brookhaven – Fall 2007

OCTOBER 2007
Oct. 17  Jack Craig Music Program. Topic: The Story of American Song Series – 1900s (7:30 pm)
Oct. 18  Habitat Program. Topic: TBA (1:00 pm)
Oct. 18  Lecture: Charles Greenleaf of Mercy Corps (8:00 pm)
Oct. 20  All Gershwin Music Program sponsored by the American Association of University Women – Massachusetts (7:30 pm)
Oct. 25  Lecture: Courtney Cazden, Professor Emerita, Harvard Graduate School of Education.
         Topic: McCarthyism, Blacklists and the University of Illinois (8:00 pm)

NOVEMBER 2007
Nov.  1  Vocal Concert: The Needham Retired Men’s Glee Club (8:00 pm)
Nov.  8  Lecture/Live Demo with Maya Ruettiger-Cruciana, naturalist.
         Topic: Owls – A Question of Design (7:30 pm)
Nov. 13  Jane Blair Art Lecture: Surrealism (11:00 am)
Nov. 14  Lecture: Jeannette Clough, CEO, Mount Auburn Hospital (8:00 pm)
Nov. 15  Habitat Program: Getting Ready for Winter (1:00 pm)
Nov. 15  Lecture: Professor Gary Hylander, Stonehill College. Topic: TBA (7:30 pm)
Nov. 27  Slide-Illustrated Lecture: Michael Perry of Dreams Unlimited,
         Maine Lighthouses (8:00 pm)
Nov. 28  Jack Craig Music Program. Topic: The Story of American Song Series – 1910s (7:30 pm)

Correction: In the first edition of SPOTLIGHT E-Learner from Punta Gorda, FL, John F. Murphy’s name was listed as John F. Murray and in his essay “Her Father’s Death” the last paragraph was missing. We apologize for these errors and include the ending of Mr. Murphy’s essay:

“Charlie will always be remembered by the community, his friends, his children and Elaine for his love of life and people. I will miss Charlie. I know Helen will.”