Is It Your Turn?

I have participated in many courses at Osher Lifelong Learning Institute that I have enjoyed and I now feel it is my turn to contribute.

~ Philip Bloom, Spring 2006 Study Group Leader

Is it your turn to become a Study Group Leader? Osher LLI @ Tufts invites you to become a study group leader for the 2006 fall term. Contact Sam Brown, Chair of the Curriculum Committee, at sambr@comcast.net or the Osher Office for information and assistance.

Spring 2006 Lunch and Learn Announced

Osher LLI @ Tufts Members Go to the Museum

While some Osher LLI @ Tufts members were walking the beaches of Florida, Mexico, and the Riviera, one group of Osher LLI @ Tufts members journeyed to the MFA one day in February for a tour with Bob Wohlgemuth. The fortunate museum goers, all students in Bob’s splendid fall course Monet to Today, were Jean Bellow, Marilyn McCaffrey, Ken Nimblett, Cordelia Overheiser, Anne Read, and Ann Steinberg. Structuring the visit with the same meticulous care that he demonstrates in all of his classes, Bob led a three-hour tour of the exhibits Facets of Cubism and Degas to Picasso as well as other related art work. Everyone is clamoring for Bob to lead another museum visit in the future.

In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.

Albert Camus, 1913-1960

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The Director’s Corner

What a day!! One weatherman says it is a blizzard, another, a severe winter storm. What difference does it make? It’s all white, blowing and wet and accumulating quickly. So, here I sit, in front of our fireplace, feeling the warmth and enjoying the glow of its flame, relaxing and mesmerized in the moment. My thoughts, as they always do, return to you, dear people. I smile as I recall the many happy moments we have experienced with one another and how far we have come over the years. I can’t believe it has been five years since our program began, but it has. Hundreds entered our lifelong learning ranks, and most remain as members dedicated to our principles, knowing that together, as a team, we will continue to grow and enjoy this learning adventure and without your commitment and dedication, we cannot survive.

Please take the time, as I am doing now, to reflect on all we have achieved together and then pick up the phone or email to tell us what we can do together to make this an even better LLI in the next five years. You all know that we can’t do it alone. We need and want all of you to be more active, if you can, in any capacity you choose.

My reverie is interrupted by the sound of a plow truck coming down the street. As I leave the coziness of the fireside to find a shovel and go outside, I am still smiling because I am thinking of you. Please call.

My love, Marilyn

We Would Like to Invite Your Friends

New Members help keep Osher LLI @ Tufts fresh and lively. Do you know people who would enjoy Osher@Tufts?

Do you belong to an organization or group whose members would like to learn about Osher LLI?

Give us their names and contact information and we will do the rest. It’s that simple!

Send your contact information to:
Lisa Trapasso
Marketing Manager
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
617-627-627-6215
LisaTrapasso@tufts.edu

Visit our website at:
www.ase.tufts.edu/lli

Spring 2006 Lunch and Learn Schedule

Mondays only - Alumnae Lounge     12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

March 20   Sam Sommers, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Tufts University
Psychology and The Legal System

March 27   Elizabeth Christiansen & Nadia Stegeman, Students, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, Tufts University
SOS – Animal Disaster Relief: Hurricane Katrina

April 3    Neal Chayet, WBZ News Radio 1030
Looking at the Law

April 10   Rocco Carzo, Athletics Director Emeritus
Jumbo Footprints

April 17   William Moomaw, Professor of International Environmental Policy
Energy, National Security and Climate Change:

April 24   Lorenzo Vidino, Fletcher student and author of Al Qaeda in Europe
Three problems or one?

Al-Qaeda
Spotlight on Study Group Leaders  

Miles Uhrig

Miles Uhrig has been associated with the Lifelong Learning program at Tufts since its beginning, but that is only part of the story. He is a native New Englander, born in Melrose, educated in local public schools, and a graduate of Lexington High School. While in high school he played varsity golf and hockey. After graduation, he entered Tufts, where he also played golf and hockey, en route to his Bachelor’s degree. He remained at Tufts for another year, graduating with a Masters degree in Education.

Miles taught for several years, first at Groton Jr/Sr High School, where he notes that with a graduating class of about 15, you taught “everything and anything” and handled extracurricular activities as well. One of Miles’ extracurricular activities was as Director of Audio-Visual Programs. After three years, he moved to Lexington High School for a year, and in June of 1956, returned to Tufts in the Admissions Department. He remained there until retiring in 1994 as Director of Admissions.

Miles and his wife have three children and four grandchildren, all living in this area. They graduated from Bowdoin, Smith and Middlebury. Miles and his wife enjoy traveling and have been to Europe several times, including Tufts sponsored travels. He also enjoys reading and has had a life-long interest in history. He joined the Lifelong Learning program when it first began and has led several study groups, most on historical subjects, including his Winter group on Military Intelligence. He also led a study group on Sherlock Holmes. Miles has regularly served on the volunteer committees that operate the Osher program, including the curriculum committee, so even those of us who have not met Miles have benefited from his efforts.

Angie Paison

Angie Paison is a native New Englander, born in Somerville and educated in local schools. While growing up, she spent summers at a family cottage at Salisbury Beach. She graduated from Emmanuel College with a Bachelor’s degree in Chemistry with additional course work in liberal arts and education. After graduation, she taught in Somerville, and used her option to take courses at Tufts, from which she earned a Master’s degree in Education.

Angie married a career army man and subsequently lived for various times in Chicago, New York, and Germany where they spent a total of eight years in two separate assignments. While in Germany she taught soldiers working toward their G.E.D. Back in this area, she continued to teach 5th and 6th grade in Somerville, retiring after 32 years.

Angie and her husband had four children and today she has six grandchildren, one of whom is a sophomore at Tufts. All of them live reasonably close by, the furthest being in southern New Hampshire. Today Angie lives in Medford and spends a lot of her time keeping up with the sports and activities of her grandchildren. Her favorite hobby is gardening, but she also keeps up with cooking and does crossword puzzles.

Angie has been a part of the Lifelong Learning program at Tufts since the beginning. She enjoys attending different study groups and the learning experience. Angie has been a longtime member of the Hospitality Committee, so she is one of those we have to thank for the pleasant atmosphere they provide before the sessions and at lunch.

Why Worry About Lunch During Lunch and Learn?

Join our Lunch Bunch and enjoy six weeks of catered lunches from Carberry’s Bakery on Massachusetts Avenue in Arlington Center.
Lunch will include: sandwich, beverage and a side serving.
Cost: $48.00 payable by check to: Trustees of Tufts University

Mail payment to:
Osher LLI @ Tufts University, 039 Carmichael Hall, Medford, MA 02155
ATTN: Christine Leonard
Phil Bloom. The World This Week: Events & Issues
As citizens of the US and the world, we all have vested interest in what is occurring around us locally, nationally, and worldwide; and we each have unique opinions, understandings and knowledge to contribute to group discussion. As part of the older generation, we have witnessed much and have a long view that is biased by our individual experiences. Hopefully these experiences will be brought forward in vigorous discussion and enlightened enjoyment.

Dotty Burstein. Fascinating Rhythm: The Life & Music of George Gershwin
As a 14-year-old, I fell in love with George Gershwin—his glamorous life, his scintillating songs that spoke of the pace and excitement of the city, his concert music. I had grown up hearing "Somebody Loves Me" and "They Can't Take That Away from Me," which evoked the kind of sadness and longing that any teenager can identify with. A fellow music student played Rhapsody in Blue" and my choral group at music camp performed "I Got Plenty O'Nothin’" and "Summertime."

Elizabeth L. Chalecki. Environmental Issues
As an environmentalist, I am always interested in how people make the choices that help or hurt the environment. In a wealthy society like the United States, the choices that we make every day can help protect the environment and the knowledge that we pass on to our families, friends and neighbors can help keep it protected.

Ken Fettig. Darwin and the Theory of Evolution
It is not difficult to be interested in the Theory of Evolution by Darwin as it is in the news almost weekly. My own interest came from reading The Voyage of the Beagle by Darwin several years ago. So I read his biography and became very interested in how he changed from being a divinity student to developing a theory that rejects a loving, ever present deity.

Bob Greene & Pat Brennan. Writing a Spiritual Autobiography
Both Bob Green and Pat Brennan were inspired by Dan Wakefield’s course on writing your spiritual autobiography. Pat Brennan, in particular, has been writing her story with a group of like-minded writers. Bob Green has co-led several Adult Enrichment study groups on the writing of one’s spiritual autobiography. It occurred to them, almost simultaneously, that writing a life story in segments which represents each individual’s spiritual journey was a topic that others might appreciate and value as much as they do.

Gresh Lattimore. Rise of Anti-Americanism
The United States always has faced criticism from abroad. Recently radical Islamic groups have railed against America as “the Great Satan” from a frustration with the omnipresence of American economic, military and political influence in their backward lands. After the 9/11 attack by al-Qaeda, America enjoyed a brief outpouring of sympathy from most of the world. But the Bush Administration’s go-it-alone policies quickly soured this sympathy with its pre-emptive invasion of Iraq and other political initiatives worldwide. The study of America’s fall from grace internationally is a fascinating topic to learn and discuss.

Ed Neidorf. Introduction to Computers
A significant number of folks of my generation do not know how to use a computer, lack confidence when using one, or are not using their computer in a manner that utilizes a reasonable amount of its capability. My interest in leading a study group on computers at an introductory level is to get people interested in using a computer, give them some understanding of the jargon, and show them some of the basic capabilities they may not be aware of.
Aaron Price & Matthew Templeton. Exploring the Stars and Planets

Aaron Price has worked for the American Association of Variable Star Observers for eight years where he studies variable stars and is responsible for education and public outreach. He is the creator and head writer for the Slacker Astronomy podcast (www.slackerastronomy.org). He is interested in how astronomy can be used to bypass stereotypes of scientists as dull, and preconceptions of science study as irrelevant. Matthew Templeton has been studying variable stars for most of his astronomical career. His other astronomical interests include the history of astronomy through the 19th century, and public outreach and science popularization.

Mel Prague. America the Beautiful: Grand Canyon

The Grand Canyon is likely the most incredible sight in the world. I personally have visited it about eight times, have flown over the Canyon by light aircraft, white-water rafted the Colorado River for 7 days through the Canyon, and, once during the month of January visited the Canyon after a heavy snowstorm. Shirley and I were there almost privately. In the winter the air is crystal clear and snow on the ledges of the cliffs were an exciting contrast to the beauty of the place.

Allan Shepp. Hemingway: The Writer, the Man

My interest in Hemingway comes from what he wrote, and who he was, recently stimulated by visits to his home in Key West, and by recent biographies. Was he the "greatest American writer," or only a smaller "macho" writer? He was obsessed with ego, strength, women, drinking, boxing, killing sports, war, violence, and death. He was difficult, petty, and violent. But he invented the American novel and short story. He defined WW I and its lost generation, the depression, the world spiral through Spain into WW II. He taught us to hold onto the outdoor traditions, and the need to be "true" in art and life.

Jerome Kornreich. Great Decisions 2006

I have always had a keen interest in politics - even considered it as a possible career when I started graduate school. Reading "Great Decisions" provides me (and my fellow students) with valuable insight into current foreign policy problems, thus enabling me to contact government leaders with my thoughts.

Grace Talusan. Writing from Life

We tell stories constantly to ourselves and to others. I love hearing people’s stories, especially because the way they recount the story reveals so much about who they are at that moment. Think about stories you have repeated throughout your life and how you have told them differently depending on who was listening, what it is you wanted from your audience. I write from life experiences to find out what I think, to impose structure and form, and to make meaning from events that I do not fully understand.

Ted Wall. Mysteries of the Quantum World

Ted Wall used a scientific tool – molecular spectroscopy – that incorporates quantum mechanics. Quantum theory explains things very well for purposes of practical engineering, but introduces deep conceptual paradoxes that challenge common sense. In the end, the paradoxes highlight the limits on common sense. Ted feels that all of us use the products of quantum theory; and all of us ought to appreciate the limits Nature puts on us. "What one fool can understand, another can." (Feynman)

Patrick Meier. Disaster and Conflict Early Warning Systems

I am interested in the topic of disaster and conflict early warning systems because I believe catastrophes can be mitigated if not prevented. Earthquakes, tsunamis and hurricanes have inflicted mass human suffering and physical destruction. Similarly, violent conflict is responsible for untold misery and desperation. In the study group, I suggest that these tragic events can be prevented.
The Birth of Venus
by Sarah Dunant

This book while not great literature is an interesting read. Sarah Dunant is a writer of thrillers who became interested in the Italian Renaissance while living in Florence. She realized that what was missing in the many accounts of this period were the women – women and creativity, women in art, and women in marriage. In The Birth of Venus she weaves culture and art into an interesting story set in Florence during the late 15th and early 16th centuries. The prologue introduces us to Sister Lucrezia who is dying. Her dowry to the church “included a lavishly decorated marriage chest filled with books and paintings fit for the attention of the Sumptuary Police.” When Sister Lucrezia dies, a tattooed snake with the head of a man is discovered on her body.

Before entering the convent, Sister Lucrezia was Alessandro Cecchi, the daughter of a wealthy textile merchant in Florence. Unlike her sister and two brothers, Alessandro is a gifted intellectual and is well versed in Latin and Greek. When we are introduced to her, she is 14 years old and in a Florence where Lorenzo de Medici has just died. The French have invaded and the monk Savonarola’s power is on the rise. The times are turbulent; and in this era of repression, an educated woman is considered on par with prostitutes and homosexuals. She risked being tortured, imprisoned or being put to death by hanging or being burned on a pyre.

With the support of her mother and her faithful slave Erila, she teaches herself to draw and make engravings from Cennini’s “Treatise on Technique.” She surreptitiously learns to paint with the help of a painter working in the family chapel.

As Savonarola’s influence increases, the situation of women becomes more precarious. Alessandro’s parents arrange a marriage to an older, educated aristocrat to give her freedom she so desires. Although Alessandro does not understand how marriage will increase her freedom, she learns this is so as her husband’s romantic desires lie elsewhere.

Alessandro questions how the church she loves could be so steeped in corruption and could, under Savonarola’s influence, denounce the art and beauty she loves. She asks herself “did that really mean I approve of one that sold salvation and let its bishops and popes siphon off church wealth into the pockets of their illegitimate children?” Despite these feelings, Alessandro enters a convent with her daughter after some dramatic events. Through her life she chronicles what is going on in art and in her times. In the end she realizes she had been only a mediocre painter, but it was enough to be part of an era of such great artists as Botticelli and Michelangelo.

As one finishes this historical novel, parallels to fairly recent events come to mind.
What makes lifelong learning at Tufts so interesting is the rich history our members bring to our group learning experience. One such member is Don Somers who was introduced to our program by Ken Fettig, his tennis doubles partner.

Don grew up in Los Angeles during World War II. He could identify pictures of warplanes sold at the dime store and dreamed of flying some day. He joined the service at 20 during the Korean Conflict. Only one of every thousand men who applied got accepted to flight school and only 70 percent actually completed the 18-month program. Don Somers was one of the few who made it. In March 1953 he was awarded his wings at age 22. Don married a few days later and he and his wife, Nancy, had three children over the next 10 years.

Don’s Navy experiences were recently published by his daughter, Cheryl Somers Aubin, a freelance writer, in the Navy magazine, Foundation. Cheryl tells how Don was deployed as a Naval Aviator to the USS Boxer, and he was catapulted into the sky. One morning Don in his F9F-6 and three other planes were launched to check out a possible enemy aircraft in the area. Don spotted the bogey and was given the order to “engage and destroy.” The division leader, Lt. Tierney, answered “WILCO” and Don armed the plane’s guns with 800 rounds of 20mm shells. As the formation flew closer, Lt. Tierney saw French markings on the plane and the heads of passengers through the windows and called out, “Hold fire! Hold fire!” He radioed back to the ship, “Bogey is a passenger plane with French markings. Breaking off the attack.” The planes left the area and Lt. Tierney and his group were congratulated for saving the Navy from making a horrible mistake.

By the final days of Don’s cruise, his flight log recorded 64 carrier landings and 50 catapult shots. After four years of active duty, Don stayed in the Navy reserves for an additional 13 years. He still attends squadron reunions and has marched in a July 4 parade with other Korean veterans. These days his flying consists of introducing his grandson to flying with a model aircraft carrier.

Much of Don’s work life was spent as a management consultant and executive developer around the world. Now he and Nancy run the Sudbury Bed and Breakfast. Don continues to lead a rich and interesting life as a member of Tufts lifelong learning program.

One kind word can warm three winter months.

Japanese proverb
## SPRING 2006 Session  March 20 to May 15, 2006

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<td>Phil Bloom</td>
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<td>Leaps of Imagination: Narratives Through Time and Space</td>
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<td>Darwin, and The Theory of Evolution</td>
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### Distance Learning

- **Writing From Life (Osher Grant Course)**
  - Grace Talusan

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