March 2010

Dear Friends,

This September marks the 10th anniversary of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Tufts University and this edition of SPOTLIGHT, our literary magazine, is the fourth. I am sure all of you will continue to be pleased and impressed with the talents presented in this issue and I want to congratulate each and every contributor whose written and visual work is included in this volume. SPOTLIGHT provides an opportunity for our members to present their work and we encourage all of you to share your special gifts and talents in future issues.

A special message of appreciation to Arline Heimert, the editor, for her diligence and time devoted to compiling this issue and to the students in the Medford Vocational High School (MVHS) print shop responsible for its printing. We sincerely thank William Mahoney, MVHS Headmaster and Roy E. Belson, Superintendent of the Medford Public Schools for their ongoing support in this endeavor.

Once again, dear friends, find an hour or two and relax and enjoy reading and viewing the richness each work offers and take pride, as I do, in the diversity of talent prevalent in our program and the willingness of all the contributors to share their talent with you. We are truly blessed. Congratulations to all of you.

In the months ahead you will hear about the plans to “celebrate us” on Sunday, September 26, 2010. Please mark your calendar for what we promise will be a stellar event for all of us.

My best,

Marilyn Blumsack, Director
Tufts University
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

Tufts University Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
MA 02155
617-627-5699 or 617-627-5885
www.ase.tufts.edu/lli
Welcome back dear Colleagues to the Fourth Edition of SPOTLIGHT

From Sylvia Feinburg’s cherubic exuberant exhortation to ENJOY at the beginning to Lorraine Campbell’s rhapsodic enumeration of the joy that creativity brings, we hope you take delight in the variety of talents and interests expressed within these pages by your fellow Tufts learners.

As you travel through clouds of red powder in India with Denise Pappas, take sides in electronic battles with Kevin Clancy and Sondra Szymczak, explore the salt industry with Dana MacDonald, mangrove swamps with Frank Murphy or follow Mike Martin’s bouncing red ball all the way to police headquarters, we hope these pages inspire all those who have not yet contributed to share some of their own experiences and talents in future SPOTLIGHT pages.

To our contributors go our heartiest thanks for their generosity – without you, of course, there would be no magazine –thanks also to our readers – all artists need an appreciative audience - and most special thanks to those who have contributed so greatly in mostly unseen ways – Marilyn Blumsack, for making it possible, Lisa Verdile for her artistic and computer talents, Elisa Perry for her amazing efficiency and patient forbearance, and Blake Ratcliff for his editorial help – and, of course, to Lisa’s unnamed son for not insisting on getting himself born before this project was finished.

Arlene Heimert
Editor
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Red Ball</td>
<td>Michael Martin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>Claire Flynn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sweater as a Metaphor for Life</td>
<td>Sara Hale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrink Wrapped</td>
<td>Donald L. Somers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken</td>
<td>Claire Flynn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seizure in the Sky</td>
<td>Amanda Spiro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghost Story</td>
<td>Sara Hale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great White Egret and Roseate Spoonbill</td>
<td>Frank Murphy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Jane Katims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Ganesha</td>
<td>Denise Doherty Pappas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane at Sunset</td>
<td>Brad Clompus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>Elaine Rothman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Dana MacDonald</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The River</td>
<td>Sally Rogers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Autumn Day of Splendor</td>
<td>Cordelia Overhiser</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Canadian Irish American</td>
<td>John F. Murphy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Addiction</td>
<td>Kevin Clancy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over the Hill – But Still in the Game</td>
<td>Sondra Szymczak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Works of Cape Cod</td>
<td>Dana MacDonald</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osprey</td>
<td>Frank Murphy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killing with Kindness</td>
<td>Arline Heimert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairy Tale</td>
<td>Margaret Gooch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>Lorraine Campbell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puffin Sanctuary of Maehios Seed Island</td>
<td>Len Rothman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contributor Biographies
THE RED BALL

Michael Martin

Since his wife died seven years ago Bill Forman would take his dog, Sparky, to the park every afternoon to play ball. He used a red rubber ball that, although much the worse for wear, served the purpose admirably. Bill would throw the ball as far as he could, Sparky, his tail wagging energetically, would scamper after it, snatch it up in his jaws, trot back with it and drop it at Bill's feet.

This activity had special importance for Bill. Sparky was greatly beloved by his dear Jenny, the ball was purchased by Jenny, and after she became ill, playing ball with Sparky in their back yard using this ball was one of her favorite pastimes. Nevertheless, he knew the time would come when the ball playing would have to end. Bill, Sparky, and the red ball were all getting old. He noticed in the last year that Sparky did not run as fast as he used to and got tired after only a few minutes of activity. The ball had large tooth marks in it, a few pieces were missing and its bright color had faded to a dull red. Bill was also feeling his age. He could not throw the ball as far as he used to and it was more of an effort to walk to the park.

One day in the early Fall an unusual event occurred in the park during the ball playing activity. Bill threw the ball for Sparky to retrieve and it rolled to a bench where an older woman was sitting. Picking the ball up, she saw Sparky trotting towards her and smiled. It was obvious to Bill even from this distance she had a way with dogs. She petted Sparky, scratched behind his ears, and hugged him. Sparky quickly had lost interest in the ball playing and seemed to have no intention of leaving.

Bill walked over to the bench and introduced himself. Her name was Doris Billings. She was recently widowed and lived a couple of blocks away. Yes, she had a dog until recently when it had to be put down. No, she did not come to the park often but that could change. No, she was not busy and would love to go to the movies. Yes, she would be here tomorrow at the same time. Yes, she would love to play ball with Sparky tomorrow.
On the way home from the park Bill felt more energetic than he had in years. Even Sparky acted differently. For the first time in years he strained at his leash, barked at other dogs, and when he got home, ate his dog food as if he were ravenous.

Doris was waiting for them when Bill and Sparky arrived at the park the next day. After affectionately petting Sparky she reached in her purse and pulled out a small gift-wrapped package.

“This is for you, Sparky!” she said quietly. “I will open it for you.”

The package contained a new red ball without a blemish, or teeth marks. Sparky looked up at the new ball, his tongue hanging out, and his eyes shining.

“Shall I throw it for you?” she asked with hesitation.

Sparky first looked at the old ball in Bill’s hand and then at the new one. Bill felt a strange feeling in the pit of this stomach. As Doris threw the new ball across the grass, Sparky did not move. He seemed to not be sure about what to do and looked expectantly at Bill.

Without realizing what he was saying Bill suddenly spoke in a low voice: “Go get it, boy!” Sparky bounded across the grass like a puppy. As Sparky retrieved the new red ball, Bill felt awkward and unsure about what to do with the old one. Should he save it or dispose of it? If he threw it away, would this be a betrayal of Jenny? He thought it would not be and in fact Jenny might even approve. He excused himself and walked to a trashcan twenty-five feet away. When he was sure no one was looking, he lightly kissed the old red ball and gently placed it in the can.

***

It did not remain there very long. The very next morning as Leo Starsky was rummaging through the trashcans in the park he found the old red ball. He picked it up and automatically gave it ten squeezes with his right hand and then ten with his left. His usual practice was to sit on his favorite bench and survey the passing scene: retired people reading the paper, young mothers pushing their baby carriages, joggers, kite flyers, and people walking their dogs.
But the discovery of the old red ball caused his thoughts to drift to his days of glory in the fight game. Then he was known as Tiger Starsky, the leading contender for middleweight championship of the world. He was said to have had the hardest left hook of any middleweight in the world and was on his way to the title. Squeezing a red rubber ball similar to the one he had found today was a small but essential part of his training.

“What went wrong?” he wondered as sat down on a bench continuing to squeeze the ball as he did in the old days. After his third round knock out of Lefty Lopez it seemed as if nothing could stop him. There was the accident of course: a car crash that caused a mild concussion. Although he recovered in a few weeks, it seemed to him he could never take a punch as well after that. Then there was his wife leaving him. This adversely affected his training. But whatever the reasons the outcome was clear. He lost his next two fights and did not get a chance at the title. He retired from fighting shortly after that and tried various jobs from bodyguard to waiter, from gardener to garbage man. But nothing seemed to work out.

He thought many times of coming out of retirement and trying a comeback. Although he was thirty-seven, he was still in fair shape and with hard training he could get tough and fast in a couple of months. He could do it!! He could win! To be in the ring again! To throw the left hook again followed by a short right cross! Bang! Bang! To see again his opponent’s knees buckle and he would move in for the kill! He could feel the muscles tensing in his arms and back. He could almost smell the sweat and hear the crowd roar.

Suddenly he became aware of his unconsciously squeezing of the old red ball. He stopped and examined the ball. It was old and beat up with ragged edges. He looked down at himself. He had big roll of fat around his middle, and his once muscular arms were thin and weak. His clothes were shabby and worn. Abruptly he felt tired and very old.

He got to his feet and with all his might threw the red ball down the path toward the entrance to the park. He saw it bounce up off the path and come to rest next to a low fence, which formed the border of the park.
Hector was running hard down 2nd Street toward the park. Unsure of whether the police were in pursuit, he did not slacken his pace. One more short block and he would be safe. His plan was to enter the park by hurdling over a low fence, dive into a clump of bushes near the entrance, put on the women’s clothing and a wig that he had hidden there, retrieve his racing bike which was parked near by and peddle to safety. It would be one more success for what the press had come to call the Running Robber, a robber who sped away on foot and then seemed to disappear into the city.

He had planned it down to the smallest detail. Given his outstanding running speed—he was the former state 220 hurdle champ in high school—he could make it to the park in less than 90 seconds from the door of the bank. The police would arrive on the scene in at most two minutes after the alarm was given. Even supposing the alarm was sounded while the robbery was in progress, it would take the only about 60 seconds for him to get the money in the bag. By the time the police arrived he would almost be inside the park. About thirty seconds to put on different clothes and fifteen seconds more to get on the bike and start peddling toward other entrance, he would be almost out the other side of the park in less than a minute.

So far his robbery of the First National Bank had gone swimmingly. Hector estimated he had gotten over one hundred thousand dollars. He managed to put the money in the bag in much less than sixty seconds and had made good time from the bank entrance to the park. So far he was ahead of schedule.

In the distance he could see the low fence of the park coming up. It would be an easy hurdle—one that he could do in his sleep. As he approached the fence in smooth powerful strides, he was not even breathing hard. He leapt over the fence in perfect form and expected to land easily on the grass beyond. But his foot hit some object and he was thrown violently to the ground. There was sharp pain in his ankle. He tried desperately to stand but he could not: his ankle was either broken or severely sprained.
As Hector sat on the ground he looked around for the source of his mishap. There was no difficulty in finding the culprit. Unquestionably it was the red ball laying about five feet away. He crawled over to it, picked it up and examined it with interest. It was old and beat up. He shook his head in disbelief. This old red ball is what felled the notorious Running Robber?

In the background and getting louder and louder by the second were police sirens. What could he do? He realized not much. He had obviously been seen heading toward the park. In a minute or so the police would be everywhere. It was futile to hide or try to fight it out. Police cars screeched to halt at the gate and uniformed officers ran into the park. They saw him immediately sitting on the grass by the fence. He screamed “Don’t shoot! My ankle is broken!” as he tossed his gun on the grass in front of him and he raised his hands over his head.

An older officer called out: “Drop whatever is in your right hand!” Hector did not know what he meant at first. But then he realized he was still clutching the old red ball. He released his grip and the ball fell to the ground, bounced a few times, and rolled to a stop a few feet away. Police officers rushed in, searched, and cuffed him.

Picking up the old red ball, a police sergeant examined it, and looking at Hector’s swollen ankle, smiled knowingly. He put the red ball in his pocket. Speaking to a younger officer he said, “The Chief will never believe how we caught him.”
Looking out my window at 7AM, I see her approach her car. She is petite-has long black hair flowing like a lazy river down her back.

Whatever the season or weather, she dresses in vibrant colors-orange, magenta, iridescent lime or electric blue. Great landings for butterflies, I think.

There is a certain jauntiness and cadence to her walk. It seems she is full with mirth and music. In the evening, passing her window, I hear salsa. It’s contagious. I want to rumba down the walk.

Her name is Maria – just Mary would not suit her. I met at the door once. She gave me a big hug and said, “Have a great day!”
THE SWEATER AS METAPHOR FOR LIFE

Sara Hale

My mother taught me to knit, at my request, when I was eight years old. I wanted to make myself a sweater.

"What color?" She asked.

"Red." I said. That suited my ‘eight year old’ vision.

We got the wool. I think we went together to buy it, enough for a pullover with long sleeves.

I worked diligently. I got through the ribbing, knit two, pearl two, and was well into the body. It was a challenge to know in which direction I was going if I stopped in the middle of a row. At the end of a row I would hold it at arm's length and survey my work. There were a couple of ‘funny’ spots but I had faith that when this ‘wonder’ was complete they would somehow disappear.

When I got up about 4 inches into the ‘stockinet’ stitch my progress slowed. I thought I was spending as much time as ever but it just didn't seem to get any longer! I began to lose heart, returning to it after longer and longer intervals.

Finally my Mother said, "Would you like me to finish it for you."

"Yes" I said. I can still remember the feeling of gratitude. No remonstrations. No hanging my ego out to dry.

My mother did finish the sweater and I wore it a few times but it had lost its luster.

My mother, in her 100th year, said, "I want to knit a sweater for Charlotte Petty. She has outgrown the one you made her. She needs a size eight. I want to make a cardigan and I want it to be pale rose."

"OK. I'll get you the wool and a pattern." I said.
The yarn store had a dismaying array of ‘rose’ yarns. Would she like this one? Or did she mean something like this? I finally settled on one. The pattern said about three and one half balls, knitting worsted weight, machine washable. I took it all to my mother.

"That's not rose. It's lavender."

Fortunately Charlotte's grandparents were there when I submitted it for approval. They voted for Rose, definitely Rose.

"Just cast on the stitches and get me started. I want to do 'Knit two, purl two.'"

"Why don't you do the back first?" I said.

"Yes, that's a good idea. Eighty stitches, remember, eighty. I'll count. I won't talk to you."

"Eighty?"

"Yes, eighty."

"Just do a few rows so that I can see the pattern."

"There are five rows."

"Fine, I'll be able to do it now."

When I returned a week later, "I had to start over," she said. "I think you can save the yarn. Just rewind it."

Out of her bedside table came a little tangle of what was left of the ‘start’, a knit, a couple of pearls, a dropped stitch, a few extra stitches. The yarn was split in places from many re-dos.

"I think I have eighty. You count."

If you count the “yarn-overs” and the odd stitch picked up from something below. I got roughly eighty-one.

"Oh well, that's easy to fix." “Just knit two together.” “I counted it over and over.”
"I think we had better start it again." I said, and to myself, "You are patient. Just keep doing this till she finally says, 'I think you better do it'."

Now we are into the fifth or sixth start. I have three tangles to rewind. Some look easier than others. We had extra yarn at the start. Now I'm wondering if I can match the dye lot.

I started it again today. I got up above the ribbing and into the stockinet for the second time.

"They won't give me time to finish the row." "They are always in a hurry." "They have other people to bathe and dress." "So I get mixed up."

"I want you to cancel my paper for the summer." "I don't want to fill my head with all that election stuff." "I'll just concentrate on getting this sweater done."

In some way this sweater is my mother's lifeline. "I knit, therefore I am worthy." I understand that. We'll just have to wait and see how it plays out.

We are both in uncharted water.
Friday, January 18, 1991

The meeting that my wife Nancy and I had scheduled with our first child Matt and his therapist, who he called his shrink, had been cancelled and rescheduled for Monday. It was to be a short meeting, a kind of graduation from therapy, as he put it. He had invited his two sisters individually to such a meeting over the last week and they had assured us it was interesting and helpful, but no big deal.

Monday, January 20, 1991

We drove into Boston, parked and went into the psychologist’s waiting room at about 7:25 for the 7:30 meeting. Matt arrived at the appointed hour and the three of us were ushered into a small office. Matt introduced the female therapist and we all sat down. Nancy and I were curious but not alarmed as Matt began to speak.

“I’m gay,” he said. “I’m a gay young man living in Boston.” “That’s who I am.” There was a stunned silence. I looked at my son and said, “Are you telling me you have had homosexual relations with other men?” He looked directly at me and said, “Yes.”

I leaped in: “Don’t you realize what you are doing with your life?” “Don’t you realize you can’t have a successful career and life?” Nancy said, “How long have you known?” Her questions struck me. It seemed to imply that it was a done deal and she just wanted to know the date of the “occurrence.” My reaction, on the other hand, was this it certainly was not a done deal and I could and would talk him out of it. There was no further discussion. The therapist stood up and, as Matt also stood, said, “Time is up.” I was dumbfounded. We moved out the door and were suddenly in the street.

As we left the building, Matt asked if we could give him a ride back to his apartment. Before I could reply Nancy said, “It’s awfully cold, Donald.” I said, “Sure.” It was a short silent ride of about five blocks. As Matt got out of the car, Nancy rolled down her window and said,
“We love you Matt and we’ll be in touch.” It was a long mostly silent drive back to the suburbs that night. We were overcome and did not sleep well.

For the next two weeks Nancy and I were in shock. We went through our daily activities but did not discuss the “gay situation” much. We did agree that we both still loved our son very much. Matt sent us two books on the topic. One was entitled, “Beyond Acceptance” and the other, “Coming Out to Parents.” I glanced at them briefly but could not bear to read them.

For the next six weeks we never got around to calling Matt. Our daughters told us that Matt would love to hear from us, but, if we had been in shock the first two weeks, we were in aftershock now. Matt called and left a message on the machine; “You have not called me for two months and it seems like you have disowned me and thrown me out of the family.” This woke us up. We called him back and invited him out for Sunday dinner.

Upon his arrival, we both embraced him and told him of our continued strong love for him. The rest of the day was not spent in a detailed discussion of his homosexuality but of our acceptance of him and an appeal for some time for us to adjust.

It did take time to adjust. We asked ourselves two questions. First was, “How could he do this to us?” and second, “Where did we go wrong?” These questions grew out of thoughts and feelings that included a sense of loss, shock, confusion, pain, anger, guilt, and a desire to shift the blame. I gave into denial by not thinking about it, which served as an anesthetic. When I did think about it, I asked myself questions; lots of them, and they all began with the words, “What if…?”

What if I had spent more time with him?

What if had spent more time teaching him how to shoot a basketball? Hit a baseball? A tennis ball?

How about hunting or fishing?

What if we had spent more time talking about sex and what it means to be a man? And on and on.
My grief stemmed from the loss of my son as I had assumed he would be when a grown man and for me guilt was strong component of that grief. Little by little as Matt grew up, he proved different than my expectations. I had hoped that he would be tough and love competitive sports. He was not tough and did not love sports. I had hoped that he might want to be a military fighter pilot, as I had been; yet he showed no interest.

Time is a great healer and gradually I came to realize that I had lost only the man of my expectations. My son was strong, healthy, educated, self-sufficient, and happy and I loved him and was proud of him.

Our second child, Cheryl, is happily married, lives in Virginia and is the mother of a nine-year old son, Charlie. We see the three of them often.

Our third child, Donna, lives a few blocks from Nancy and me, where she shares a house with another professional woman. She called us ten years ago on a Saturday morning in tears and said she had to come see us because she had something to tell us.
BROKEN

Claire Flynn

Cherished Memory Keeper,
A shadowy, shattered looking glass
  is your world.
What is happening?

The milk dish is in the cupboard.
The dishes in the oven-
The sink is overflowing.
What is happening?

Look in to my eyes!
  Feel my touch!
  Say my name!
What is happening?

Day has dissolved into
  perpetual darkness.
The sun has collapsed on
my broken Memory Keeper.
The plane ride started smoothly enough. The late afternoon sun streamed through the little windows as my husband, teenage daughter, 10 year old son and I boarded our Jet Blue flight from Buffalo to Boston. A week visiting my in-laws, made stressful by our son's Aspergers diagnosis which includes anxiety, constant need for routine and difficulty in different situations, was ending. The last leg included this quick hour flight and an hour drive home to New Hampshire. My son, Jason, and I sat together in two seats while my husband and daughter sat across the aisle. Last year our same return flight, after being delayed a few hours by violent thunderstorms, was turbulent. Today the flight attendant made the usual life-jacket instructions, which, even though I have been on hundreds of flights just hearing about putting on my oxygen mask first and then making sure my son has one, makes me fearful of all the scary possibilities. After take-off Jason and I plugged in our earphones and settled in to watch TV for the next hour. Luckily Sponge Bob was on for him to watch and I started enjoying The Blue Collar Comedy Tour with Jeff Foxworthy and his gang. Suddenly, just as I was drying my eyes from an especially funny joke, my husband was standing in the aisle in front of me starting to lift up my tray table.

"Go to the back of the plane- a baby is choking!" my surgeon husband demanded. He had been in the bathroom in the back and noticed this commotion while I was busy laughing at TV. Knowing that as a pediatrician I could help, he had rushed to get me. I hesitated to get up. For more than 15 years I have been a pediatrician in general pediatric practice; but I falter at emergencies. At my work, I mainly see well-child checkups or common issues such as ear infections and strep throats. Over the years I have gotten to know patients and families and can sometimes predict what illness they have almost before examining them. Even with the more complicated patients such as asthmatics or diabetics it is comforting to know there is always help nearby in the form of specialist, other doctors, nurses and equipment.

Now after my moment's hesitation I propel myself down the aisle imagining disaster and hoping for calm, noticing how all the other passengers were craning their necks to see towards the back of the
plane.

In the flight attendants’ little space, where they usually make coffee, was a young toddler with an oxygen mask covering most of her little face. Her eyes were rolling back and her clenched fists were jerking. A young man was holding her and I later found out he was a surgeon in training and had been sitting across from the family. He quickly told me that he at first thought she was choking on a piece of chocolate chip cookie, then realized she was having a seizure.

I held the baby across my knees as I crouched in the minuscule space and used the only tools I had on the plane to examine her; my eyes and my knowledge. Reassuringly she was breathing and her lips and fingers were pink and I exhaled with some relief. My years of work taught me she was not going to die in front of me. In all likelihood her seizure would stop quickly without any heroic measures from anyone. At her age seizures were not uncommon with feverish illness and rarely meant anything more severe.

In the commotion I hadn't realized till now that also squished in the small space in addition to the flight attendant, the surgeon in training and me was a crying woman and a man who looked as though he was going to throw up. After I quickly found out from the Mom that the little girl had had a fever and runny nose all weekend and they were traveling home planning on seeing the doctor in the morning, I shared some thoughts about febrile seizures with the mom, knowing were I her, I would want someone speaking with me.

The flight attendant informed us an ambulance was meeting the plane; we were going to get emergency medical clearance to land at Logan. I handed my sweating, breathing package back to her mom and quickly took my seat next to Jason. He had quietly stayed in his seat, with my husband and daughter reassuring him I would return soon and to keep watching Sponge Bob. Within minutes we landed and, proceeding down the aisle came the girl's mom, her lips quivering; eyes red and swollen, clutching an overflowing baby bag to her chest. The Dad next, hoisting the sleepy toddler sucking her thumb on his shoulder. The flight attendant brought up the end of the procession holding the car seat. I touched her mom's arm as she passed my seat; "She's going to be OK- I promise" came out. Surprising me; I didn't even know her name and I would never know if this family or my own would be all right.
When I was eight years old my parents and I moved to Greenport, Long Island. My father was involved in the local shipyard as a Naval Architect. They were producing mine sweepers for the U.S. Navy to clear German mines from the shipping channels in the North Atlantic. These boats were one of only two wooden ships produced during World War Two. The other wooden boat was the P.T. or "Mosquito Boat". My father was a wooden boat specialist.

Housing was short everywhere in the country and my parents were delighted to procure an antique farmhouse, the "Cottage" on the Floyd Estate. It came complete with furnishings, extensive grounds, a gardener, and a three-car garage.

The house was in two parts, the oldest part dated from the early 1700s. The kitchen with the old fireplace hearth had a built in "Dutch oven". There was a wood burning stove inserted in the hearth and
also an electric stove on another wall. The parlor beyond the kitchen had been turned into a formal dining room with its own fireplace. Upstairs were three tiny bedrooms and a bathroom. Connecting to this oldest part of the house was a new addition, twice the size of the original house. They connected on the ground floor through a den and on the second floor through a door in my bedroom. Each part, new and old had a basement with a separate furnace. In the middle of the first winter, my parents closed off the new half of the house and we moved into the older house, to conserve heat and the expense of oil. When the weather warmed we could open the doors and spread out into the "new" part with its large bedrooms, bathrooms, Living room and sun porch.

I remember our time there as idyllic. We quickly added two cats and a large German shepherd, my first pets, to the family. I loved the seasonal thing, the small warm winter bedrooms with one little window each, slanting floors, doors with the old iron latches; then the spacious summer quarters with many windows, thrown open to catch the air from the sea, close on both sides of this "North Fork".

Being in the house from aged eight until eleven years, I am a bit hazy about the time sequence, which year, which winter, I began to hear the foot steps crossing the floor in my ‘summer’ room, coming to the door now closed for the winter, to my little winter room.

I think it must have happened two or three times before I thought it was noteworthy enough to tell my mother about it. What clinched it in my mind was the behavior of my dog. ‘King’ slept on my bed with me, a narrow old iron cot. He would curl up in the hollow of my knees and when I wanted to turn over he had to get up and lie down again on the other side. I can still feel the process, his resistance against the blankets, warm from his body, the final reluctant rising with the rattle of his dog tag, and then waiting till I felt the newly cold sheet warm with his body heat against the back of my knees as we both drifted back to sleep.

I remember hearing the footsteps and feeling King rise and stand over me. His lips were drawn back in a snarl, fangs bared, his hackles raised, and he was shaking so that the whole bed vibrated. Even in my nine or ten year old mind, I knew terror when I saw it. There I lay, watching the dog and the door, wondering what would happen next. He didn’t bark, just the constant desperate snarl. Then
he stopped, lay down in his usual place, still shaking, and we went to
sleep.

I told my mother about our experience. I remember one vivid
nightmare of being chased through the upstairs to the back stairway
down to the kitchen by a skinny white apparition. I also remember
joining a waiting wasp under the covers, being stung, crying loudly
and meeting my frantic parents at the back stairs clutching my hip.
They had looked at each other said, "the Ghost", and rushed up the
stairs to meet me at the top.

One night while my mother was sitting on my bed after tucking me
in, the footsteps came toward the door. I thought, "Wow!" "Now
she'll believe me." I couldn't believe 'whatever' would be so bold or
dumb to 'do it' with my mother there, ineptitude or my good luck.

King stood over me, next to my mother, facing the closed door,
snarling and shaking. We were transfixed. My mother said later, "I
was afraid that if I had opened the door, the dog would have dropped
dead from fright."

I wish I could tell you about how the problem was resolved, but we
go on living in the house. I accepted whatever reassurance my
parents offered and continued to play with my friends, my cats, and
my dog. I don't remember hearing the footsteps again and I'm sure
that when the summer came, we opened the door as usual and King
and I moved into our summer quarters, the room of the footsteps.
Great White Egret and Roseate Spoonbill
Pelican Bay, Naples, Florida, Photos by Frank Murphy
UNTITLED

Jane Katims

Oranges, it seems,
yet called something else – tangiolas?
That’s not quite right. Mingerines?
Ok, let’s just say oranges, four of them,
cradled in a glossy, clay-gray bowl,

their skins – pock-marked,
shiny, dimpled, rough, pungent –
wrapping juice, pulp, fiber, pits.
Between the two longest, plumpest
oranges, a sleek, steely knife gleams.

The rabbit in the woods
by bushes on the bike path
catches sun through trees;
her fur is grey-speckled brown;
she appears past the bulky,
yellow house with a homemade
skating rink in front (which
turn to garden come Spring).
I call her Pocahontas,
for she pokes her head out (just),
an impulse primitive and social.

I’m not telling more
about the rabbit,
or about the oranges –
they are strange, secretive.
And, who’s to say what’s
beneath my skin – or yours?
In yoga, my favorite pose is Warrior One, where I turn, bend deeply at the knees, stretch out my arms, extend my hand and, to quote my teacher Maria, “cover my territory.” But being alive and aware, any day, anywhere, I question, “Exactly what IS my territory?” I am constantly adjusting to new rules, new boundaries, new turf.

In September, I accompanied my husband Dean to four different cities in India where he was inspecting medical laboratories for the College of American Pathologists. On a daily basis, Dean is my “true North,” a devoted and adored partner. He has “ants in his pants” for great escapes into new territory. His suitcase is always packed and with our younger son off at college, I was glad to go along for this ride.

We stayed at those amazing first class Taj hotels, with servants hovering everywhere, pushing our elevator buttons, placing and replacing our dinner napkins as we entered and exited magnificent feasts. Our every guest desire was anticipated and acted upon. “Large pours” of wine greeted us at the Taj Club. Rich as rajahs we were made to feel!
Everywhere we encountered statues of Ganesha, the god of good luck and good fortune, prominently displayed at every commercial venue. In Indian mythology, Ganesha is that elephant-headed god seen giving a blessing. He originally had a normal head, but one day his father god (in a jealous rage at his wife) chopped off their son’s head and replaced it with an elephant’s. How this god came to stand for prosperity, I have no clue! But I did feel lucky because we arrived in Ahmedabad (the capital of Gujarat and Gandhi’s hometown) in time for Ganesha’s holiday party called Lavangh. Just as Italian-Americans line the streets of Boston’s North End parading a statue of St. Anthony on his feast day, so too, multiple Ganesha statues decorated by neighborhood devotees are hand-carried or driven around on small trucks, and eventually taken to the sea for ritual submersion.

That night of Lavangh, Dean came back to the hotel exhausted but excited by a dinner invitation to the home of the CEO whose lab he’d inspected that day. “Get dressed,” he told me as he changed into his best evening outfit.

On its best days, the traffic in overpopulated India is a nightmare. All that day, I had been driven around the massively busy streets of Ahmedabad trying desperately not to scream as my driver had near misses with the local population over and over again. I was exhausted even before Dean and I left the hotel- a reluctant corporate wife. Dean sat beside me in the chauffeur-driven car his host had sent for our journey. He was feeling spurned by his constant cajoling and failed attempts to make a party-girl of his bride.

Now my husband is the kind of guy who easily drives for days without stopping, but feed him into a traffic jam and you’re asking for trouble. After sitting still in a bottleneck from Hell caused by Ganesha festival traffic- not moving an inch in 15 minutes- my defeated husband ordered the driver to turn back to our hotel. While I knew it would take an hour to retrace our mile long commute, I was also relieved at not having to be “on” with company.

Despite our aborted mission, I was up for fun. Smelling firewood, body odor and cow dung, I kept my window shut. Peering out through the glass, I saw oxen driven carts carrying pilgrims, men who took turns hoisting Ganesha on their shoulders as lorries lurched in and out of potholes. Between pedestrians, cabs, motorcycles, bikes,
buses, jeeps, and three-wheeled cars traveling at 30 mph along a narrow one lane highway, I spotted a Kodak moment. There, covered in red powder from head to toe, a truck full of teenage Holi boys looked especially photogenic. Balancing themselves on the side of their vehicle, the boys raised their arms in that victory dance Americans do at football games. Their conservative province permitted no alcohol. Thus, their loud chanting, hooping and hollering showed a spirit I could only attribute to these kids being one with god. High on Ganesha, these boys were playing hard at Lavangh, in the shadow of the ashram where Ghandi took his first steps to the sea in his historical salt march tour.

So I waved at these camera-worthy party pilgrims, their grins making me forget the stench outside. I was up for fun, as were they. Quickly I pushed the “open” window button, aimed my camera and was startled by an avalanche of crimson dust from the god.

Ganesha and his friends had tricked me. No sooner had I clicked than these boys shot a packed of red powder into our back seat. Miraculously, my good dress and blond hair were spared from this gift from the god. Bypassing me, their thrust made a direct hit at my husband’s new shirt and stunned face. Showered in dust, looking like a Ganesha fan, Dean emerged from the safety of our car- a red Holi man, for sure.

The real miracle, however, was that Dean found the experience funny rather than infuriating. “I would be wild,” I told him, “if they’d gotten MY dress instead.”

Far from home Ganesha’s blessing made me recognize my territory. Thanks to my husband’s human and perspective, I can go anywhere with Dean by my side.
PLANE AT SUNSET

Brad Clompus

In lapis phase, speared contrail, tip of aphid’s head, silver, antennae swept back, imminent V of speed. Soon, the line plays out, blurs, no longer precise, yet briefly speaks – white code, dot and dash. Later, only obsidian, the plane erased, whim of the pilot opaque, entirely beyond us.
The pavements of Venice’s Piazza San Marco were wet with the mist of a chilly day in late November. The dismal weather was neither a deterrent to the flocks of greedy pigeons, nor to the scatterings of tourists gawking at a recent university graduate. The young woman must have been dizzy with her hard-won success. Trailed by friends singing, “Dottore, dottore!” she paraded in blackface, wearing a laurel wreath and stoved-in hat. She stopped to include herself in a family portrait posed by a group of Japanese tourists. She gave a startled teenager a resounding kiss to make him blush for his mother’s camera, and then scooted away to make more mischief.

Len and I leaned against one of the columns of the portico that sheltered us from the weather to survey the lively scene. We stood licking our gelato cones, a combination of two luscious flavors for each of us. Finally, tired of the shenanigans of people and pigeons, we ducked into a miniscule jeweler’s shop, so tiny that its door was built on the diagonal to allow room for a small front window. The place was called Giordan’s.

There we bought me an early birthday present, sixteen days early to be exact. It was a gorgeous amber ring, an oval stone in a setting of openwork silver. It was the second ring the Venetian jeweler had offered. The first was too small, while the third was huge and in a setting too contemporary for my old fashioned taste. The ring we selected was perfect. I thought it had been made expressly for me and had been waiting a long time in Giordan’s showcase for our arrival. The jeweler, who spoke pretty fair English, explained that it was a good piece of Baltic amber, uncommon since many good pieces now came from the Dominican Republic. Almost as an afterthought, he said that he wasn’t convinced that carrying a piece of amber in your pocket would assure you of good luck.

Back at the hotel I studied the stone, a piece of ancient sunlight with golden bubbles trapped inside. I could also see floating flecks of red and orange, bits of long dead twigs and leaves, and some hapless insect’s legs. I wanted to believe that my amber trickled from the heart of a conifer that lived forty million years ago. I couldn’t help but think of the surprise and delight of a fictional girl whose lover gave her a piece of amber suspended on a golden chain as a betrothal gift. It didn’t matter that the girl was purely
a figment of my imagination, a character in a historical novel I had just finished writing. She was as real to me as the ring on my finger.

I had described how that girl had watched the sun’s brilliance explode from the amber. How she admired the feathery fern buried in the clear depths and felt the cold stone take on the warmth of her hand. How it reminded her of the hazel eyes of a dear childhood friend, and of the earrings that same friend always wore. Maybe, I thought, I wrote that passage because I had always wanted to have a piece of solid sunshine for myself.

I knew a little about amber: that it is a form of tree resin exuded millions of years ago as a protection against disease and insect infestation. That this particular kind of resin hardened and became preserved in the dense wet sediments of an ancient lagoon or river delta. That within the fossilized amber can often be found the remains of living organisms like microbes, plants and insects, anything that made contact with the sticky substance. As soon as we returned home from our trip I turned to “Google” to learn more.

I read that amber was part of a familiar Greek myth about Phaeton, the son of Apollo, who persuaded his father to let him drive the chariot of the Sun. But the boy was unable to control the horses. So instead of keeping a steady course across the sky, the powerful beasts went wild and, like a shooting star, Phaeton plunged to his death. To mourn their brother’s death, his distraught sisters turned themselves into poplar trees and rooted themselves alongside the bank of a stream. They wept bitter tears that never stopped flowing, tears that turned to amber as soon as they fell into the water.

I learned that amber was regularly traded across Europe as far as the Adriatic and Black Seas, from whence it made its way to Asia Minor, Africa and the Far East. In ancient times amber was thought to have magical, even medicinal, properties. Amber pendants were worn to preserve chastity, and amber beads were used as talismans against evil forces. Honey was mixed with powdered amber and prescribed for asthma, gout and the Black Plague. Used alone, amber was believed to cure rheumatism and internal disorders. Burned along with frankincense and myrrh, it was thought to drive away mosquitoes. Sailors aboard ships burned amber to ward off giant serpents and other perils of the sea. In Homer’s “Odyssey” amber was among the precious decorations in Penelope’s palace. Aristotle, Plato, Tacitus, Pliny the Elder and Albertus Magnus were all familiar with its golden properties.

After reading the fanciful and the sublime I was brought down to earth by the website of a German dealer in semi-precious stones. He warned
prospective buyers to beware of plastic look-alikes, assuring customers that anyone ordering from his catalog was guaranteed the genuine article. For a moment I thought of the possibility that my amber ring was one of those fakes. After all we never did think to obtain a certificate of authenticity. I immediately dismissed the notion, convinced that a springtail insect, and the seeds of an acacia tree that once lived in an ancient forest are suspended in my amber’s golden liquid. I will always think of it as a precious legacy from the past, and a very special birthday gift.
Painting by Dana MacDonald
THE RIVER

Sally Rogers

When sleep does not come at night, I envision this place from my childhood. From the porch of Cardinal Lodge I sit and see the grassy lawn, the shallow canal, next is the tow path, then the river with its islands and rocks. I now know that this river, the Susquehanna, is the river of the famous Three Mile Island.

Was Cardinal Lodge named for that red bird or as was said, did the neighbors name it for the two clergy-men who acquired this simple cottage to be used for their fondness of fishing together. One of the men was my grandfather. The cottage nestled up to a hillside, a short path led to the top and one side offered a walk to the outhouse, replete with an assortment of spiders. The other side offered the well with cool water, and also the resident salamanders.

It seemed romantic that the canal once carried coal in barges, but the now shallow canal bed retained barely a half foot of water and from the little bridge over it, small swimming creatures offered an interesting view of water-born nature.

We could take the wooden rowboat across the river to the islands where a farmer grew cataloupes and other vegetables, and they had parties at night. We could hear their music and laughter in the evening. And we could row to the rocks where we got out of the boat and climbed over and around these assorted shapes, some even offered places to sit and sunbathe. The rocks were the reason a canal was built, for the rocks obstructed water transportation in the old days.

In the two-room cottage always hung several pairs of “water wings” which we were obliged to use until we learned to swim. Often the river’s water was muddy, especially after a storm and we waited a little until it cleared up. The tow path also offered another romantic vision, of horses pulling the barges along, with products to be sold, and people in the cabins going along too, sometimes women and children. In my day, to see the aunts and uncles coming down the tow path to visit us in the little cottage was exciting.

How different and close to nature this little cottage was, compared with a modern fully equipped cottage offering 2 TVs all electronic instruments and even a pool next to the lake! It has been a source of delightful memories of my childhood.
AN AUTUMN DAY OF SPLendor

Cordelia Overhiser

This past October a group of enthusiastic Osher members met at Brookhaven for an EDventure PLUS outing. We traveled west to Grafton, Mass., for a special tour of the “The Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine.”

The campus is comprised of many acres of beautiful countryside. Our first stop was the Wildlife Clinic, where Dr. Pokras gave us an informative slide show, followed by a question and answer period. He told us the present class is composed of more than 70 percent young women. The students learn all types of medicine in their four years of study. Many health problems are very similar in animals and humans.
The students study and take care of both small and large animals: ill and injured wild animals, and New England-area farm animals with preventive and acute care. They also treat exotics, and offer a 24/7 Emergency Clinic.

It was a brisk fall day and we enjoyed a “Windshield Tour” to the Farm Research Quad where we saw some sheep feeding. We drove on, past the New Research Biosafety Laboratory, and last we visited the Henry and Lois Foster Hospitals for Small Animals. We were greeted cordially at each stop.

At 12:30 pm, we left for the historic “1761 Old Mill Restaurant” in Westminster, MA, where we had a delicious buffet. It ended with warm homemade Apple Crisp topped with whipped cream – the best I’ve ever had.

We then headed back to Brookhaven by way of the nearby Mohawk Trail. We enjoyed the fall colors, mostly yellow and oranges – the deeper hues hadn’t arrived yet.

I had a personal reason for looking forward to this trip. My daughter, Kathy Valone, works in the Internal Audit Division of Tufts University and is very enthusiastic about the program at Grafton. Now I can visualize this special setting.
My close friends called me “Murf” while I was growing up. “Murf” was a nick name for Murphy, which is undisputedly an Irish name. The fact is I am only half Irish. My grandparents on my father’s side, James and Catherine were born in Ireland and immigrated to the United States in the early 1900’s. I do not know a lot about the Murphys. My mother divorced my father when I was a toddler leaving her with my sister and me to raise by herself. I can vaguely remember my father visiting us when I was two or three years old, but I had no contact with him as I grew up. My father had a brother, James and two sisters, Catherine and Mary. I remember James and his family visiting us once when I was a child. He and his children had bright red Irish hair. I do not remember ever meeting my father’s parents or Catherine or Mary. My mother told me that Catherine and Mary never married and were drunks like my father.

My mother was also an immigrant. She left her birth place in Shelburne, Nova Scotia when she was in her late teens or early twenties. She never told me why. I suspect it was a young person’s dream of a better life that drove her. She told me that her ancestors were from England and she thought she was from nobility, but I have no evidence that this is true. Her parents Thomas and Athena Acker had four children that reached adulthood, two boys, Harold and Burns, and two girls Alva and Catherine. Alva was my mother. Alva told me that her father was a railroad worker and a part time fisherman; although he did not know how to swim. My grandparents on the Acker side died before I was born, Thomas in 1935 and Athena in February, 1946. I was born in June 12, 1946. The Ackers go back five generations in Nova Scotia. My mother’s ancestors John B. Acker and Ester Crank arrived in Shelburne in 1783 from New York. They were loyal to the king and sought refuge from the American rebels.

I lived in Germantown in Quincy, Massachusetts as a youth, a predominantly Catholic neighborhood. The local parish was St. Boniface. With the name Murphy, I fit well into the neighborhood culture. Almost everyone assumed I was Catholic. I belonged to the Boy Scout troop affiliated with the local Catholic Church. As a Boy Scout I attended many Catholic services as a youth, but never took communion because I was not a church member. My mother brought us up as Protestants.
In the spring of 1995 my wife Helen and I had an opportunity to visit Nova Scotia. We drove to Bar Harbor, Maine and from there we took the six hour ferry ride to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, and then from Yarmouth to Shelburne, my mother’s birth place. Our tight schedule permitted us to stay in Shelburne only one day. Shelburne harbor had the look and feel of the 1600’s because of its harbor and natural wooded landscape, without the intrusion of modern buildings. The year before we visited the movie “The Scarlet Letter” was filmed in Shelburne. We found a two story wooden building that housed the Shelburne County Genealogical Society, where we met a woman who was very interested in the Ackers. We told her that my mother was an Acker and was born in Shelburne. She told us that the genealogical society was hosting a reception for the Acker descendants in two days, but our schedule did not allow us to stay. We did learn about the Acker family tree. We reviewed and updated the information on my mother and her immediate family for the society records. For fifteen dollars the society sent us the Acker genealogy back to the 1700’s.

As I grew up my Irish heritage was something that interested me. What was Ireland like? Why did my grandparents leave Ireland? Where did they live in Ireland? What did they do there for a living? How has my Irish heritage affected my life? I read Frank McCourt’s memoir Angela’s Ashes and have visions that the abject poverty described in his book might be why the Murphy’s left Ireland for America. The book also describes a culture that revolves around the tavern and drinking. I believe the tavern and drinking is also part of the Murphy heritage.

Helen and I are retired now and have the time to complete the journey back in time. As an Irish American I needed to understand my past so my children and their children, Helen and I could appreciate our heritage as our lives move forward.

This past March 29 was our fortieth wedding anniversary. We had reason to celebrate and had the time and the money so we planned our trip to Ireland. The tour was thirteen days from departure to the return home. We left sunny Punta Gorda, Florida for Shannon, Ireland on May 9. We flew coach and were crowded in the middle and window seats and could only catnap. After six hours in the air we could see the emerald isle below us. As we approached the runway at Shannon airport we were overwhelmed with how green the countryside was.
The visit was all that I had hoped for. The bus trip started at the Bunratty Castle near Shannon and continued clockwise around the coast of Ireland and Northern Ireland arriving back to Shannon thirteen days later. There are many lasting memories including the Cliffs of Moher, Belfast and Saint Patrick’s grave, Dublin and the Guinness Brewery, and the Irish singing and dancing at the Merry Ploughboy Pub in Dublin. At the Trinity College in Dublin I purchased the Murphy code of arms and a short history of the Murphy family. I learned that the family name Murphy is derived from the Gaelic personal name “Murchdh,” which is composed of the elements “muir,” meaning sea and “cadhh,” meaning warrior. I grew up by the sea in Germantown, but cannot relate to being a warrior. The surname Murphy is the most common name in Ireland. Although there are Murphys throughout Ireland, there are many living in County Cork. Perhaps that is where my grandparents had lived.

I was impressed by the beauty and history of Ireland. The government is socialistic now and provides for its citizens. Perhaps if the socialistic government had existed in the early twentieth century, my grandparents might never have left and I would not have become a Canadian Irish American, in fact, I might never have been born.
I’m writing this on a standard lined writing tablet (not yellow but a subdued gray color). I admit this because I’m trying to kick the habit, the dreaded habit of buying electronic gadgets that are a “must” as rationalized by me for the timesaving characteristics. “Timesaving” is an oxymoron like “Congressional oversight.”

Wait a second! I’m getting ahead of myself.

“My name is Kevin and I’m an electronics addict!” That’s how I start each “EA” (Electronics Anonymous) meeting. Yes, they have a 12-step program for those afflicted with this disease.

A twelve step program is a set of guiding principles outlining a course of action for recovery from addiction, compulsion, or other behavioral problems. Originally proposed by Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) the process involves:

• Admitting that one cannot control one’s addiction
• Examining past errors with help of a sponsor
• Making amends for these errors
• Learning to live a new life with a new code of behavior

Excuse me for a minute, I need to call my sponsor. I just fell off the wagon and used my i-Phone to look up “12-step program” using an online Wikipedia definition.

Now, where were we? (By the way he told me to put the i-Phone away immediately; they have books that you can use the look up definitions!)

It started simply enough by buying a small electronic English-Spanish dictionary and using it occasionally, just on weekends, recreationally really, just taking a break from the monotonous task of fingering the little red-covered book I used with my Spanish lessons. Now I’m using an electronic “Five language translator” with currency calculator. Where will it stop?
Let's inventory my bag before I start rehab. Yes, my electronics backpack! In no particular sequence I'll pull them out:

- i-Book computer – 1,100 digital pictures
- i-Phone computer – Email, text, cell phone, MP-3 player (800 songs)
- Digital Camera – 6X zoom and flash features
- Electronic Dictionary
- Five language translator – aforementioned
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Digital bedside clock
- Charger cables for all devices (each one has a different connector)
- USB cable for the digital camera
- Extra batteries, of course
- A bag of plugs to fit European, Scandinavian and South American wall sockets to ensure 100 percent charges for all devices at all times. (Did I mention I was Obsessive Compulsive? No? Well, that’s another story.)

I’m sure I forgot something but that’s enough electronics for now. Total weight is over 11 pounds. Whew! I need an ibuprofen just thinking about what I’ve been carrying around all the time.

I’ve been married 39 years but I’m seeing signs that I won’t make it to 40 if I keep this up. The rolling of the eyes when I stop talking mid-sentence to answer the cell phone is one sign and another is when the grandkids say I had an important call and that’s why I’m not playing with them.

Walking down the street answering emails and texts can be challenging with pot holes and bikers popping up out of nowhere. Do I have to sit on a park bench to get some work done?

Co-workers wonder what their status is when I cut them off with the humiliating one-way question/statement: “Do you mind if I take this call, it’s important.” Click!

My perfect driving record is being seriously challenged by attempting to look at beeping emails while driving around town. Two warnings in three days is telling me something.

That was when I realized I was using electronics excessively (headache, blurry eyes, and thinking of email all the time) so I tried to cut down on my own. Only two electronics a night and not before 5PM. (It worked for alcohol, I
think.)  At first I couldn’t decide which electronics I’d use, then, after deciding, I would watch the clock for the appropriate time. It worked for a while but then I’d move the time up a little each day and go longer into the night. People were getting emails after midnight from me and wondered what I was doing up.

My wife was making noises about my electronic gadgets in bed but I couldn’t stop. Then it happened!

10:12PM and I was online checking my email, I get a text message and call waiting at the same time. My wife turned out the light. I had a meltdown and went cold turkey that night. I shut everything off.

I’m still an electronics junkie but with the help of my new friends at EA, “I choose not to use!” Thank goodness there is a government program to help us addicts wean ourselves off the need for electronics and the rush that it gives us. They give us paper products like note cards, post cards and this writing tablet to ease the pain of withdrawal.

I’m a little nervous about opening the birthday present the kids got me. It’s called a “Kindle.” The problem is I have a project due in the morning concerning a city in Germany called Dusseldorf. I guess I could open the Kindle and just check out a few chapters and then close it immediately. That wouldn’t be cheating, would it?
OVER THE HILL – BUT STILL IN THE GAME

Sondra Szymczak

Okay, I admit the 20th century left me in the dust, and the prospects for the 21st are not much better. I am a confirmed Luddite who mistrusts anything that can be unplugged. There is, therefore, no computer in my house.

I was called “chicken” by friends who swore by their computers. Once used hers to play Solitaire – all day long! And, yes, she is a college graduate. Another Bridge with people from all around the world; interesting, but not for me. Look at all the joys I was missing – Google, Amazon, etc. After all these years I know myself pretty well. If I had a computer, I would probably plop myself down in front of it all day not to play cards but to explore. To me, time is too precious to waste. Give me a quiet corner and a book any day.

I’ve heard so many sad tales of lost data, stolen personal information and “spam” – who needs the bother? Well, in 2000, I found that I did. I was serving on a Tufts Alumni Association committee when the chair announced that she planned to conduct most of our business by conference call and e-mail. Oops! This left me two choices: get e-mail or get lost.

I spotted an ad for something called a MailStation and rushed to Target to check it out. The machine is a 7x10 inch keyboard that can send and receive e-mails but cannot accept attachments or any message longer than 90 lines. Longer messages would be stored and could be accessed by a computer (fat chance of that!) Okay, this would work for me. I hurried home, plugged it into the phone line, and activated my new toy. My first e-mail was to that committee chair to tell her I was on board.

I recently celebrated my 50th college reunion, again as co-chair. Our core committee has been in place for 25 years with good results. Our General Chair had all of our class data on her computer – and yes, it crashed just when we needed it most. She is an attorney and had all her client data on that machine also.

While she tried to find a “techie” to retrieve the lost data, the rest of us returned to the old methods. Fortunately, I am a pack rat and have hard copies of everything since our 25th reunion neatly on file. Tufts supplied
current addresses (more or less), and we assembled a huge committee to help us reach every class member. Reunion was a huge success. We attracted people who had not set foot on campus since graduation and are now keeping in touch – by email!

My MailStation and I have functioned well together. As a past president of the Association of Tufts Alumni, I have access to all those wonderful young staff members at the Office of Alumni Relations who gladly pull research and type documents for me. In addition to getting the work done, my system gets me out of the house when cabin fever threatens – a win/win solution. Now, maybe it’s time for a cell phone…
SALT WORKS OF CAPE COD

Dana MacDonald

Our world today is concentrating on new sources of energy that are different than the established methods in place. The need is recognized but attention is devoted to finding alternate sources to avoid projected shortages, reduce the current environmental impact, increase levels of self sufficiency, or reduce costs. The solution, with these objectives in mind, is to a great extent dependent on using natural resources such as the sun or wind to accomplish the targeted results. This article is a story of a successful effort in the past to use the sun’s natural resource as a means of satisfying a need.

Throughout history, salt’s ability to preserve food was a foundation of civilization. There are many examples of finding the ways to utilize this natural resource by individuals, communities, cities, states and empires. Like many resources, the source of salt from the sea water and rock salt in the ground was not coincident with the area where it was most needed. This mismatch provided opportunities for creative, hard working people to obtain the salt and move it to where there was a demand for it. Cape Cod was for a 40 year period able to profitably obtain salt from evaporating sea water, using it locally and exporting it to other markets.

The evaporation of sea water to get salt was not unique to Cape Cod. Europe, as an example, obtained salt from both evaporation and from salt mines. In the early 1600’s, a man was sent from England to begin a salt works in Plymouth but failed to convince the Pilgrims of its usefulness. His European methods called for the evaporation of sea water by boiling the water in huge iron pans until only the salt was left. This method was unsuitable for the New England climate and conditions.

The Pilgrims were not fishermen in the beginning but the Indians taught them to gather fish and use them for food at home and fertilizer for their crops. The vast supply of fish available in Cape waters created conditions where the fish being caught far exceeded the needs of local communities. This resulted in a huge demand for salt to preserve dried fish for export. Further demand for salt came from the fur trade industry that also needed salt to preserve the hides for export. Their sources of salt were mostly from the Caribbean and
Southern Europe which was placed at risk due to the British success in sharply reducing salt import shipments during the Revolutionary War.

The increased demand for a reliable source of salt caused people to find supplies locally. Initially, they tried to use the European method of boiling sea water in large iron kettles long enough to create salt crystals as the sea water was evaporated. This method was very inefficient because enormous supplies of wood were needed for the fires under the kettles. It took, as an example, two cords (about 260 cubic feet) of firewood to boil down 400 gallons of sea water to produce one bushel of salt. It also required a great deal of labor.

The 20 year period from 1776 to 1796 was the time when local sourcing efforts really evolved into a successful enterprise. It started with Captain John Sears of Dennis working out ways of increasing the efficiency of “solar” evaporation. He built a large wooden vat ten feet wide by 100 feet long which allowed the sea water to be exposed to the sun and that included a series of shutters to cover the vats when it rained. Initially, the vats leaked and the salt yield was only eight bushels. This was corrected by caulking his vats and his yield rate increased to 30 bushels. The operation, however, was still too inefficient as the sea water had to be hand carried in pails to the vats.

Captain Sears salvaged a “bilge” pump (used to suck water from the bottom of a ship) from a British Warship that had been wrecked off the Cape. The pump eliminated the need for the manual labor of lifting and carrying the pail of water from the ocean. There still, however, was a great deal of labor involved in working the pump making the processing cost still too great to obtain a competitive selling cost for the salt.

Major Freeman, from Harwich, found a solution by suggesting the pump be attached to a windmill. Captain Sears set a small pump on the top of a wooden structure and attached a windmill to it. These machines were called “salt mills” and carried about six yards of canvas on each windmill blade. Additional labor saving ideas were found by replacing the rain shutters with a sloping roof attached to oak rollers which made the roof easier to move back and forth over the vats. Finally, the water was drawn for the vats on the incoming tide to get as high a salt content as possible.
Captain Sears now had an efficient and profitable method of evaporation and was successful in getting a patent for it. It was considered to be superior to salt obtained by boiling sea water even when considering that operations were limited to the months of March to October with periodic closure of the units when it rained. The vats were always covered at night most often by men, women and children of the community. The movement of the oak rollers under the roofs sounded to them like thunder.

The evaporation process was done by older men and boys and took about three weeks to complete depending on the weather. The steps in the process started with the sea water being raised by a central windmill driven suction pump (salt mill) and then flowed through watertight (with lead) hollow wooden pipes to a series of vats. The first vats called “water rooms” were the highest above the ground. The sea water remained there from three to five days until favorable evaporation took place. The sea water then flowed through the wooden pipes by gravity to the next lower vats which were called “pickle rooms”. Here the fluid remained for about a week and evaporated into a brine with salt crystals beginning to form on the surface. The brine was then allowed to flow by gravity to the last and lowest vats called “salt rooms”. The crystals began to consolidate here into large heavy cubes and in time everything sank to the bottom of the vats. The process was now complete and the salt was raked together, loaded into barrels and delivered into the warehouses for storage.
The salt works always included a central salt mill(s) for pumping and vats for evaporation. Some locations integrated these salt operations with the drying of fish in a flake yard. Here is a picture of one of them

Salt Works, top view.

The Cape people quickly responded to the financial advantages of the salt works enterprise and recognized the ideal natural conditions that existed for it throughout the Cape. The mostly long dry summers with the sun high in the sky were most favorable for evaporation. The waters were more salty because of the extension of the peninsula out into the ocean. There were large areas of open space along the water's edge mostly owned by the Cape Codders themselves. Widespread construction of salt works quickly changed these landscapes as vats appeared as far as the eye could see.

Salt Works Systems doubled from 1802 to 1810 with half of the salt made at the Cape being used in the fishing and fur industries and the remainder was shipped outside of the Cape on Packet Ships and Cape Schooners. Between 1810 and 1830 the Salt Work capacity increased over 300 percent although the War of 1812 substantially reduced the maritime movement of salt and fishing exports.

The Cape Cod Economy, including the fishing and salt industry, increased during the first half of the 1800’s along with the rest of the country. Much larger catches of fish were realized as a result of larger fishing vessels and improved fishing techniques. All of these increases were matched by Salt Work capacity growth and the industry was, by this point, a significant contributor to the economic health of the Cape. The Salt Works Systems became so profitable
that many owners became well-to-do members of their communities. This period was referred to as the “Golden Years”. The following pictures are a typical view of the landscapes.

By 1840, the Salt Works business had reached its zenith. There were 13 Cape Towns that had Salt Works. There were a total of 658 establishments that annually produced a total of more than 660,000 bushels of salt or over 26,000 tons. The business declined over the next 20 years. As demand dropped and profits declined below the cost of processing, more establishments were torn down and the lumber was used on any project that needed boards even in houses.

The chief reason for the decline in demand was increase in competition from the salt springs in New York State. These springs were fed from enormous salt reserves in that area that stretched deep underground from Canada to New York State and Pennsylvania. Processing of the salt began during the War of 1812 when the maritime shipments of salt were restricted by the British Navy. The largest salt industry was in Syracuse, New York. The water from the springs was so salty that evaporation time and costs were much cheaper than those of Cape Cod. In addition, shipping costs were reduced when the Erie Canal was built around that time which allowed bulky and low priced goods such as salt to be inexpensively shipped to western areas such as Chicago and easterly to New York City.
There were several other reasons for cost differential to exist between the Cape and the New York areas. The Cape industry lost both their Federal and State tariff protections which had increased the cost of salt imported from outside the U.S. The cost of Maine Soft Pine also increased at that time. The wood had been used exclusively to construct and repair the Salt Works Structures. There was a continuous need to repair the structures as they broke down from being exposed to the natural environment and storms that both destroyed and damaged the units. The competitive forces and the increased cost of wood resulted in the owners deciding not to repair the units but to allow them to fall into complete disrepair. The landscapes began to appear more and more like the following picture.

The industry that started with Captain Sears' creation with a capacity of 30 bushels of salt grew to many more establishments with a capacity of more than 600,000 bushels. They all disappeared as the structures were taken down and the wide expanse of shore land returned to its original state. The memories of the Salt Industry faded and there have been few efforts to recall its importance and regional history.

A great deal has been written about Cape Cod but very little about the Salt Industry. I found two books and an article that were very helpful in my search. They were “The Saltworks of Historic Cape Cod” by William Quinn and “A Sense of Place By the Sea” by Nancy Barr and “19th Century Saltworks in Cape Cod” by D. Scott Nickerson. The Internet was, as usual, an interesting and informative source of Salt history and the New York State Salt Springs.
Osprey
Pelican Bay, Florida
Photo by Frank Murphy
KILLING WITH KINDNESS

Arline Heimert

A clump of feathers grow by my birdfeeder
On this brightly balmy day in early Spring
When purple striped crocus strive
To push aside
Brown clotted coverlets of leaves

Did I kill with kindness?
Lure some sad bird to death by sunflower seed?
These are not the feathers of new life
Downy, soft and sheltering -
They are the prickly quills of wing or tail
Of cat kill, hawk swoop or even of coyote
The feathers look like dove – grey with white
That gentle cooing that I love -
but not enough to tell me
who it was that fell so silently

What killer leaves no evidence – no bones, no beak, no feet
just circlet of  stark feathers?
Once I found dark entrails and a beak –
finicky eater I presume?
Once I saw a hawk abduct a struggling squirrel
and later found just tail and long clawed foot.
But sleuth of nature I am not.
This  killer is both devious and sly.

I'll have to get a guardian for my dogs -
At fifteen pounds they ‘d make a hefty snack
A hawk could kill them by miscalculation,
Talons overreaching – yet could maim
prey too large to carry off.
No take-out meal for clutching talons these
But please – Don’t try.
My peaceable kingdom is no more
A killer prowls, the sun is clouded over

Suddenly spring, time of new life,
is swallowed by death
And the world turns another notch.
The hated human god-child had escaped her snare, fumed Envidia, gnashing her teeth like the maleficent, ostracized spirit she was. True, Lucilda – so radiant, winsome, and blithe – had pricked her finger just as the curse intended and withered suddenly into a stooped and wrinkled crone, decrepit before her time, reduced to scrubbing the scullery floor and mumbling by the fireside, so impaired in her faculties that she retained only the scantiest memory of her former favored condition. But so kind and purely loving had been the look she cast upon the dashing young prince, visiting from afar, that it had at once invested her with a semblance, in the smoky, flickering firelight, of her previous lovely appearance, and so compelling was that vision that, as if in a trance, he had kissed her on the spot. Now, therefore, restored to her proper youth, beauty, and royal station, she was immune to Envidia’s malice forevermore.

Angie closed the exquisitely illustrated storybook, but hesitated to return it to its bookstore shelf. The charm of the familiar, if variant, tale attracted her, but what message was it likely to impart, whether intended or not, and where was the truth in that message? Did it imply, despite much evidence, that pure loving kindness could surmount every trial and obstacle? Or was it suggesting that such kindness could have little romantic force unless allied in some way with youth and physical allure, rare and exceptional beauty most of all?

She did not see how she could yet adequately explore such questions with her child. Knowing the bond between Lucy and her own mother, Angie knew that her daughter, at seven, would have no difficulty in discounting age as a barrier to heartfelt affection. But later, in adolescence, might she not experience the same difficulties Angie herself had encountered in exaggerating her physical imperfections and so doubting her attractiveness to the opposite sex? Fortunately, the situation had resolved itself satisfactorily in Angie’s case once she met Lucy’s father, not especially dashing by anyone’s account, but possessing a personality that agreeably clicked with her own and a way with
him that, to her, was irresistible. Still, looking back, she wondered which state she had found the more difficult: her early anguish at feeling herself hopelessly gawky and subject to inevitable rejection or her struggle, once the bond with Sam was formed, to delay marriage until she could emerge from her college years with degree and teacher’s certificate in hand. For an opposite case, there was her sister Louise, whose dashing prince, so to speak, had soon proved false and who had met with no better match in the years since her divorce from him. Was she not deserving of better fortune, although no storybook heroine?

But surely it was only a fairytale princess whose story could merit a magical fairytale ending even though every young reader, if a girl, would naturally feel allied at heart with the beautiful storybook heroine. What twists and turns, and what resolution, would Lucy’s journey take? Whatever it involved, it could surely not be so simple as awaking from a spell to find everything delightfully arranged to fulfill her fondest hopes. Or if in a sense that should come about, as Angie might consider had been the case with her, it would only be in a sense, after all. Oh why set impossible standards or raise expectations that worldly experience was sure, at least partially, to dash? Better return the book to its shelf and look for a better one.

Still, something in the captivating illustrations tugged at her and stayed her hand. Most of all, the resemblance to her own daughter she detected in the pictured heroine held her entranced. Was not Lucy, at heart, as lovely and radiant a being as any storybook princess? And did she not deserve life’s full rewards? And would the book not convey that she was viewed in just that light by the one who gave it to her?

Oh, she could not resist the book, Angie decided. It simply appealed to her, and if its import raised questions, there were other reading choices to balance it. Without further ado, she would buy it.

* * *

Lucilda cast her gaze across the wide landscaped lawn and gardens to the woods in the distance. Tomorrow, following the grand pomp and circumstance of her wedding in the morning, she would enter those woods to begin her journey of several days to the prince’s castle. And what would she find on arrival? By all accounts, a castle and regal state not so different from those she had known all her life.
Would she meet with adventures in the forest? She had no reason to suspect so, for the prince’s retinue was well-armored and strong, and from all she had heard, the exploits of the prince and his knights had subdued the territory for miles around. She sighed. Yes, she could love the prince; she had known that from the start; she would surely bear his children and love them too. But it seemed something was missing, something belonging between what had been and what lay before.

And for some reason, it was the dark forest that now possessed her imagination and filled her with longing. Oh, could she not slip away on that journey, run away to find herself lost in it, discovering what it offered of potentiality and surprise, of trial and endeavor and endeavor’s possible reward? Alas, she feared she could not. Her destiny, surely, was set. She was told she had been under a spell and through the aid of the prince was set free, but she had no memory of it. She remembered her childhood years and years of growing up; then it seemed there had been a period of sleep with half-recalled dreams somewhat bizarre, from which she had awakened in a burst of happiness to find herself back in familiar circumstances, with further happiness promised her, yet with a restiveness not to be satisfied.

For it was now, she felt, that she was truly enmeshed in a spell. She was clasped in a pattern, gilt-edged – those clasps, gilded though they were, fastening her within covers like the leather sides of the carriage that would bear her on her way. If she just had the magic to break free! Little does she sense her own powers of enchantment or know that they bind her. To she owes enthrallment to her fate.
Art has brought great joy to my life – I see colors I would have never noticed before, shadows, shapes, and forms.

I am a painter not an artist – that is I enjoy mushing around with paints never knowing what will reveal itself. On most canvases there is at least one failed try of a completely different subject than the one that finally emerges.

My inspirations come from my own photos, National Geographic pictures, some from magazine pictures cut on the diagonal, some are born just from my unconscious and some from the shapes that appear on the canvas or paper.

After being defeated by transplant watercolors in which you can’t correct mistakes, I work mainly in acrylics, an opaque water-based medium which is extremely forgiving.

(The cover of SPOTLIGHT is one of Lorraine’s many and varied works of art. Her artwork has also been displayed at Brookhaven.)
Our Contributors

Lorraine Campbell
Lorraine was born and grew up in Massachusetts, attending Lexington High School and then Boston University. She worked in Boston. After marrying, her family moved to upper Bucks County, PA, where they lived on a farm (although they were not farmers) for 40 years. Gradually over the years, she tried sketching, took various night school courses, and spent several years attending a local small art school.

Kevin Clancy
Kevin loves flying and traveling. As the number two son of a career Naval Officer, he crossed the United States by car four times before he was thirteen and spent 8th and 9th grades in Naples, Italy. After attending the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD, Kevin received his Navy wings and flew A7s off the USS Enterprise (CVAN 65). Kevin then flew for the Airlines for 31 years piloting the B-272, B-747, B-757, and B-767. Recently the law concerning mandatory retirement for commercial pilots was changed by Congress and Kevin has returned to flying for JetBlue here in Boston. Married for 40 years Kevin and his wife have moved 25 times. They’ve been in Boston for 13 years.

Brad Clompus
Brad holds a BA in English from Grinnell College, an MFA in English from the University of Iowa Writers’ Workshop, and has done Ph.D. studies in English and American Literature at Tufts University. Brad is the author of two poetry books, Talk at Large (Finishing Line Press, 2008) and Trailing It Home (Main Street Publishing Company, 2007). His essays and poetry have appeared in such journals as Cream City Review, Poet Lore, West Branch, Willow Springs, Tampa Review, Natural Bridge and Tar River Poetry. Brad has taught writing at Tufts University, Bentley College, and Baruch College – and has been on the faculty of the Arlington Center for the Arts since 1996.

Sylvia Feinburg
Sylvia has for several years taught a very popular course in drawing at Tufts LLI. She is a Professor Emeritus, Eliot Pierson Department of Child Development at Tufts, holds a BS in Art Education from Massachusetts College of Art, an M. Ed. in Child Development and Early Education From Tufts and an Ed.D. in Child Development from Harvard University. Her undergraduate work in art education was followed by graduate work in child development. Her early years of teaching art to children were followed by many years at Tufts in teacher education, child development and early
childhood education. She takes joy in helping others – both adults and children - find excitement and satisfaction in self expression in art.

She has lectured extensively throughout the US and has received two awards for excellence in teaching from Tufts University. She paints on a regular basis and in the winter she teaches drawing in Sarasota, Fla.

**Claire Flynn**
Claire received a BA in English and History from Regis College and a M.ED from Suffolk University. She has taught in the Reading Public Schools system as a classroom teacher and reading specialist. Currently, she is an adjunct instructor at Middlesex Community College. Reading and writing poetry has been an avocation for many years. The moon, the color purple and the conquest of good over evil hold much fascination for her.

**Margaret Gooch**
Margaret, a native of Jackson, Mississippi, graduated from Texas Christian University (TCU), obtained a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, and after teaching English for several years at Meredith College and elsewhere, received an M.S. degree in librarianship from the University of Denver. Thereafter, until retirement, she worked as a reference librarian at the Tisch (Wessell) Library of Tufts University. In addition to taking Osher classes these past two years, she has participated in EDventures interest groups and proudly serves on the Lunch and Learn Committee. She has enjoyed numerous vacation visits to Colorado, along with the occasional travel elsewhere in the United States and abroad, and enjoys keeping up with family in Mississippi and Tennessee.

**Sara Whitaker Hale**
After graduating from College, 1955 University of Arizona, I married a local rancher’s son, Kenneth Hale. Ken has an all consuming interest in language, any language, which he learned quickly and with fluency. He decided he wanted to study linguistics and pursued a PhD at Indiana University. Our lives proceeded with an academic career at two state universities and finally in 1967 he was appointed to the linguistics faculty at MIT. Along the way, we did three years of research on the Aboriginal Languages of Australia and raised four boys. Ken kept his interest in Native languages of the Americas and we continued to visit, teach, and do research in Arizona. In 1977, I returned to school and completed work for my RN. I pursued a second career in Psychiatric Nursing until I retired in 1996. Ken died in 2001 and I had to start a third life as a single woman. Since then I have done some
traveling, moved to a small house, and enjoy my courses at the Osher Program.

**Arline Heimert**
Arline is a graduate of Harvard College and the Simmons School of Social Work. She worked as a reporter and feature writer sequentially for the Boston Globe and the Boston Herald. Later, as a psychiatric social worker, she worked at MGH and McLean Hospital, at a battered women’s shelter and as a facilitator for parenting groups. She and her husband, Alan Heimert (Powell M. Cabot Professor of American Literature) were for 23 years the Masters of Harvard’s Eliot House, working to create a community of some 450 undergraduate, graduate students, and faculty. With their children, they traveled to almost every continent (not Antarctica). At the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Tufts University, Arline currently serves on the Curriculum Committee and as the editor of SPOTLIGHT, and writes when her dogs permit (they find her hard to train).

**Jane Katims**
Jane (BA, University of Wisconsin, M.Ed., Lesley University) presently teaches contemporary literature and creative writing at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education and at Tufts Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. She has previously taught at Middlesex Community College, Buckingham Browne and Nichols, and the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis. She has authored numerous radio series for Wisconsin Public Radio, one earning her a *George Foster Peabody Award in Broadcasting*. In 2004, she was awarded a John Woods Scholarship in Fiction Writing. She is the author of a poetry collection, *Dancing on a Slippery Floor* (2007). Her short story “Until Now” appeared last spring in *Pearl Magazine* (#40). Jane is presently working on a collection of short stories. [www.janekatims.com](http://www.janekatims.com)

**G. Dana MacDonald**
Dana retired after 20 years as a management consultant. Prior to retirement he spent a similar amount of time as a senior manager in a variety of industries. He has been a very active volunteer since retirement, serving pro bono as consultant to a variety of non-profit organizations. He is an avid reader and has received a number of awards for his acrylic paintings. He has generously loaned several of his paintings to serve as covers of SPOTLIGHT. He is a Tufts graduate, class of 1948, and has been an involved participant in the Tufts Lifelong Learning program since its Inception.
Mike Martin
Mike is a dutiful father of two, a proud grandfather of four, a happily married man of forty-seven years, a contented retired philosophy professor, an author of many obscure but profound books and articles, a tough but mild-mannered ex-Marine, the oldest graduate of ImprovBoston’s five-level program, the strongest man in the Brookhaven community, and a modest, self-effacing mensch. He is spending his golden years working out in the fitness room, teaching improv classes and a course on Ethics, writing funny short plays and short stories, and defending non-belief.

Frank Murphy
Frank retired in December 2007 after a 49 year career as an engineer, manufacturing executive and Chief Financial Officer during which he was fortunate to travel the world and make friends in many places. He now spends the summer and fall in Lexington, MA, and the winter and spring in Naples, FL, with ample travel to other places sprinkled in. Participation in lifelong learning programs both at Tufts and Florida Gulf Coast University, along with walking, golfing, and bike-riding are keeping him intellectually and physically healthy. Everywhere he goes he is accompanied by his camera, accumulating photographs to share from trips, especially of southwest Florida wildlife.

John F. Murphy
John, E68, is retired from the U.S. Chemical Safety Board and the Dow Chemical Company. John is an internationally recognized expert in chemical plant process safety and chemical plant accident investigation. He and his wife Helen live in Punta Gorda, FL, where he presently does consulting and coordinates the Osher Lifelong Learning online book club.

Cordelia Overhiser
Cordelia moved to the area in 2000. Right after that she heard Saul Gittleman speak at the Winchester Senior Center about lifelong learning. She became very interested and decided to come to the program at Tufts because her daughter worked here. She has been attending classes and enjoying Osher LLI for over 7 years. She is proud of her connection with Tufts Osher LLI as she makes up a 3rd generation of her family at Tufts. Her daughter is employed on campus and her granddaughter is working on her masters. Cordelia has always loved art and has enjoyed painting for many years.

Denise Doherty Pappas
Denise has been a study group leader for four classes in memoir writing and one class in adoption in literature at Osher. An English teacher with a master’s
from Brown and an MBA from Simmons, Denise also teaches Business English for Diplomats at the Fletcher School. She and her husband, Dr. Dean Pappas, have two sons, a videogame designer and a student at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

**Sally Rogers**  
Born in New Jersey, Sally has been a 50 year resident of Arlington, Ma. and loves New England. She is an active gardener and loved leading nature walks with Habitat for preschool, kindergarten and first graders until “I could no longer keep up with them” She and her husband are very much involved in the Arlington Historical Society and with community theater. As a science major in college and former lab technician and office administrator she loves taking courses in liberal arts. She and her husband have two children and two grandchildren who all live in this area.

**Elaine Rothman**  
Elaine moved to Brookhaven in Lexington, MA, with her husband Len in 2007. After retiring from her job as a high school guidance counselor in Tenafly, NJ, she embarked on a second career, that of a writer based in Connecticut. She has published several pieces of short fiction, as well as countless essays and feature stories which appeared in newspapers, magazines and newsletters.

**Len Rothman**  
Early in 2007, Len and his wife Elaine moved to Brookhaven from Litchfield, CT. Len served in World War II, graduated from George Washington University, and had a professional career with the Internal Revenue Service’s Office of International Operations. Ever since his teenage years, one of his favorite pursuits has been photography. He also enjoys wood-working.

**Donald L. Somers**  
Don has been a faithful student at Osher Lifelong Learning. He and his wife Nancy, originally from California have lived in Sudbury MA for the last 35 years. After 2 years of college Don enlisted in the US Navy where he became a fighter pilot flying off the aircraft carrier the USS Boxer during the Korean War. During this period he married his childhood sweetheart. He and Nancy have three children, two girls and a boy. One of his daughters teaches memoir writing at senior centers in the Washington area and urges Don to keep on writing.

Don wrote his first memoirs mostly about his military adventures. After the war he received his bachelor’s degree from UCLA and went on to USC for a
Masters Degree in Business. After several successful years in manufacturing management he joined a management consulting firm owned by Harvard Professor Sterling Livingston. This was followed by the co-founding of THE FORUM CORP where he served as senior vice president and board member for 25 years before retirement.

**Amanda Spiro**
Amanda graduated from Tufts in 1987 with a degree in Social Psychology. She then went on to Albert Einstein college of Medicine where she met her husband of 17 years, Ken Weintraub (Brown ’87). She currently lives in Nashua, N.H., where she is a part-time pediatrician and full-time mom to Rachel and Jason. Over the last few years, she has taken a few writing courses including some with the online Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. In her free time, she enjoys writing, reading, and yoga, and spending time with her family.

**Sondra Szymczak**
Sondra (J59) is enjoying retirement after 34 years of working at Jordan Marsh. She is very active at Tufts, having been, among other things, chair/ president of the Tufts Alumni Council and president of the Association of Tufts Alumnae.
OSHER LLI MEMBERS

YOU’RE INVITED to CONTRIBUTE to SPOTLIGHT, the magazine that celebrates the many talents of CURRENT MEMBERS involved in lifelong learning.

The editor, Arline Heimert, would like to hear from you!

SPOTLIGHT features:

* Poems  * Essays  * Memoirs  * Research  * Commentaries

* Works of art  * Photographs  * Short stories

GUIDELINES

- Works submitted cannot have been previously published.
- Maximum Length is approximately 3,500 words.
- All submissions MUST be typed in regular Arial 14 point font, with the exception of poetry, which may be in any 14 pt. script or calligraphy font (See attached format example).

E-mail your submission to Marilyn.Blumsack@tufts.edu or snail mail four copies to:

Spotlight Magazine
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Tufts University
039 Carmichael Hall
Medford, MA 02155

- Please include mailing address and telephone number with every submission.
- DEADLINE for submissions is: JANUARY 15th, 2011
- Accepted work may be subject to minor editing. Not every submission will appear in the next issue of Spotlight.
- Original artwork and photographs can be returned if a self-addressed envelope is included with the submission.
FORMAT

The following is the format to be used for all submissions.

Font: Arial
Size: 14 pt.

***SAMPLE***
Title: ALL IN CAPS

Author’s Name

- Leave two spaces between author and title. Center align title and author. Omit “By”.
- Begin the first paragraph three spaces below author name.
- Indent five spaces to begin paragraphs. Use single spacing within each paragraph.
- Leave at least 1.25” for the left margin.
- Do not number submissions as the entire document will be paginated at the printer.
- Please include a short, four- to five-line autobiography.