Profile

Joan Chadbourne

Fostering open conversation about aging and dying

OLLI students know that two things are certain in life: death and taxes. We can’t do anything about taxes, but we have choices about how we age and die. Joan Chadbourne believes, “When we approach these topics consciously, we can make the best decisions for our lives.”

She’s taught OLLI courses, most of which deal with these topics, since 2008. By encouraging participants to engage in discussions, Joan builds a lively learning environment. Everyone has a chance to share diverse ideas.

She wanted to be a teacher for as long as she can remember. She earned a B.S. in education from the University of Delaware and later earned a doctorate in counseling psychology at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

After earning tenure at the University of Connecticut, Joan left the academic world to become an organizational consultant and has worked with some of the best organizations in Maine. She has also consulted throughout the United States, Mexico, Canada, and Europe.

In her personal life, Joan found inspiration during the time her parents were dying. “It was a moving and peaceful experience. We became closer than ever. Any defenses that had separated us dissolved. I experienced the kind of pure love we all yearn for.”

The experience raised two questions for her: How can I love so wholeheartedly before death is at the door? How can I let people know about this possibility and help them to have it?

Continued on page 4
I have just returned from the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute National Conference near Chicago. This annual, three-day event gives all OLLIs a chance to meet, network, share, and learn from each other. There are 117 OLLIs nationwide, with a wide variety of programs and structures. We are not a “one size fits all” sort of association. After hearing many variations, I am pleased to say our structure here works quite well.

OLLI at USM currently has a 15-member Advisory Board. Though it has no authority or fiduciary responsibility at USM, its role is to advise the functioning of the Institute. The Advisory Board sets OLLI policies and procedures and offers classes, lectures, workshops, trips, and special events.

The Board has eight standing committees: Education, Community, Strategic Planning, Resource Development, Volunteer Coordination, Communications, Nominating, and Executive. These committees focus on the function, direction, and programs at OLLI. Often standing committees establish subcommittees to focus on one aspect of programming, such as a special event, trip, or lecture. Subcommittees are accountable to the Standing Committees, which are accountable to the Board. Ultimately, the Board advises me, and I’m accountable to the University.

We are extremely fortunate to have so many dedicated volunteers who work countless hours for OLLI. We have worked hard to make OLLI an open and transparent organization that is accessible to all members while maintaining quality programming through accountability. The volunteer base we have allows us to react and support programming that our membership desires, keeping us current and relevant.

—Susan Morrow, Assistant Director for Program

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### Newsletter News

At the last Advisory Board meeting, I asked the Board to clarify some policies about the content of the OLLI Newsletter. Specifically, I wanted the Board’s input about links to websites and about topics suitable for the Newsletter. The Advisory Board has voted on the following policies:

- Links to other websites must be to sites that are local, noncommercial, nonsectarian, exclusively for or about seniors, and of interest to the OLLI community.

- Topics for inclusion in the Newsletter should be for and by the OLLI community. We would like to see more letters about OLLI happenings, articles about OLLI courses and outings, or profiles of OLLI instructors and other volunteers.

Ideas and articles can be submitted to ollinews@usm.maine.edu or mailed or dropped off at the OLLI office. The Newsletter Committee reserves the right to accept or turn down articles, and to edit them for length or clarity (as with any publication).

—Tim Baehr, Newsletter Chair
OLLI excursion to Garden in the Woods

Save the date, Thursday, May 26, for a springtime trip to New England’s premier native plant garden in Framingham, Mass. Enjoy 1,000 species of wildflowers in a unique setting that features a garden of rare and endangered plants. We will be joined by well-known local landscape gardener and OLLI member Ellen Klain, who will speak to us during the bus trip.

When we arrive at the Garden in the Woods, we will be divided into small, docent-led tours, after which there will be free time to explore. There are limited cart tours for those needing assistance with mobility. For others, the walking tours will require only a very moderate pace.

The price includes a three-course lunch at the historic Longfellow’s Wayside Inn in Sudbury, Mass., the oldest operating inn in the country, dating from 1716. The inn offers secluded grounds and a gift shop.

Departure from Portland will be at 9 a.m., and we will return at 6 p.m. The all-inclusive cost is $77 per person for bus (including driver’s tip), lunch, and tours of the Garden. Register by mail with your check to OLLI, P.O. Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104, or by phone at the OLLI office with credit card by calling 780-4406. There will be no refunds after May 6.

For questions or further information, call Anita Jones (797-3612).
Chadbourne (continued from page 1)

Joan found the answer to her questions 10 years later, when she brought together her professional and personal experience. In 2004, she and nine colleagues co-founded Innovation Partners International. The consulting firm based its practice on Appreciative Inquiry, an organizational-change process. Based on their best consulting practices and their experiences with dying parents, Joan and her consulting partner, Tony Silbert, created Healing Conversations, a structured way to engage in meaningful discussion and create more satisfying relationships.


Besides teaching OLLI courses, Joan now devotes herself full-time to coaching individuals and families dealing with issues of aging and dying. She also speaks and presents workshops around the country. “Starting a new career at this stage of life is exciting and energizing,” she says.

—Don King

### Why doesn’t OLLI offer a course on my favorite subject?

Because you haven’t organized it yet. There are all different ways to do it. Which suits you?

1. Invite a variety of experts to each give one two-hour session. Then your only responsibility is to introduce them, and sit back.

2. Grab a buddy with similar interests and arrange to share a course.

3. Find the perfect book and set up a series of discussions based on it.

4. Or make up something else. You may even discover that you are the ideal person to teach a course on your favorite subject!

OLLI people who are interested and knowledgeable in just your favorite area will join you. There’s never a question of their enthusiasm. Terry Foster, who has given as many as three courses in a semester, says that he’s never given a course that he hasn’t learned something new from the people in the course.

When you give a course, you get to talk about what you’re interested in with people who are interested in exactly the same thing. You get your annual membership paid for, two free courses, and an invitation to the pre-semester faculty lunch and discuss.

Leave your phone number and e-mail at the OLLI desk so an experienced faculty member can help you work out the details.

### “Great Courses” offerings expanded

Three “Great Courses” video programs have been added to the OLLI library: “A History of England from the Tudors to the Stuarts,” taught by Robert Bucholz; “Nutrition Made Clear” by Roberta Andling; and “The History of Christian Theology” by Philip Cary.

OLLI students are encouraged to check the catalog list in the OLLI office and sign out any programs that interest them. A listing of all the other courses appeared in the April *OLLI Newsletter*; if you’ve misplaced your copy, you can check the online version at [http://tinyurl.com/OLLI-April](http://tinyurl.com/OLLI-April).
Exciting maritime trip set for June

Maine has a venerable history of building some of the best and fastest four-, five-, and six-masted wooden sailing ships on the East Coast. Shipyards dotted our coastline, and the grand homes of ship owners can still be found in most coastal Maine towns, from midcoast to Down East.

We invite OLLI members to join us as we explore some of the grand and glorious maritime history of the state of Maine.

On Saturday, June 18, OLLI Excursions will take you to and through the delightful Maine Maritime Museum in Bath, along with a restful yet educational Lighthouse Cruise past the array of historic sites along the Kennebec River and Boothbay Harbor.

The museum’s campus encompasses a historic and still-working shipyard with five of its original 19th century buildings, an active waterfront, and the widely praised museum itself.

Bring your lunch for a picnic on the campus’s water-side grounds and then spend part of your afternoon learning about Maine’s 18th- and 19th-century shipbuilding culture and maritime heritage.

The afternoon will be topped off by the spectacular three-and-a-half-hour narrated cruise past the lighthouses that dot both the Kennebec Historic Waterway and Boothbay Harbor. And best of all, we’ll be seeing these structures as they were meant to be seen—from the water!

Squirrel Point, Seguin, the Cuckolds, and Fishermen’s Light still evoke images of the days of sail and mariners’ reliance on lighthouse keepers to ensure that their ships and valuable cargoes were safe from all harm.

Sign up early for this adventure, as we expect demand will be great, and we can offer only 38 spaces on our excursion. **Total cost of $77** includes bus and the driver’s gratuity, entry to the museum campus, an educational museum tour led by trained docents, and the lighthouse cruise.

Our coach will depart from the Wishcamper Center at 11:30 a.m. and return at approximately 7:45 p.m.

Register by mail at OLLI, P.O. Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104, or reserve by phone via the OLLI office at 780-4406.

**NOTE:** There will be no refunds for cancellations made after June 4. Also, the cruise vessel is not handicapped-accessible.

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Senior Guide

The OLLI Newsletter, with guidance from the Advisory Board, does not normally publish links to websites and resources outside the OLLI/USM community. We have decided to make an exception with the following website because it it (1) exclusively for seniors, (2) non-commercial, and (3) acknowledges the value of life-long learning by linking to the Maine Senior College Network, of which OLLI is a member.

Here is the link: [http://www.maineseniorguide.com/](http://www.maineseniorguide.com/)

The Senior Guide features topics under headings like Senior Communities, Home Support, Health & Wellness, Estate Management, Resources & Products, and Social Seniors. Each main heading leads to various subcategories, from which one can search for resources.
Thank you, OLLI volunteers!

Members and volunteers are the reason OLLI exists at USM. Come honor our volunteers on May 20 and celebrate the special day with all our members.

Ninth Week activities will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. all over Wishcamper. There will be memoir, poetry, and short fiction readings; lots of music, by both recorders and singers; dramatic performances; and art, all presented by and for our OLLI community.

There will be a short ceremony to recognize our volunteers at about 11:30, followed by an OLLI lunch buffet, provided by the Advisory Board. If you’d like to be included for lunch, you must RSVP to the OLLI office no later than May 13. We hope everyone will accept this invitation, but we do need to know how many lunches to provide.

If your time is limited and you can’t come for the entire day, here’s the projected schedule. You might want to save it and bring it with you.

All day: Dona Sherburne’s Open Art Studio in Room 103
          OLLI Creative Arts group in Room 113 and possibly other first floor areas, as needed.
9:30-10:30 Ruth Story’s Memoir Writers workshop—readings
10:30-10:30 Denney Morton and Tim Baehr’s Fiction workshop—readings
10:30-11:00 Domenica Cipollone’s recorder class—performance
11:00-11:30 Denney Morton’s Poetry workshop—readings
11:30 Volunteer Recognition by Mary Collins, Volunteer Coordination Committee
        Chair, followed by OLLI lunch buffet
1:00-2:00 Terry Foster and the OLLI Singers
2:00-3:30 OLLI Senior Players, led by Paula Johnson and Jeffrey Roberts

We anticipate that all these presentations will be in Room 133, except the OLLI Singers, who will perform in Room 102.

We hope everyone will have a really good time, applaud the efforts and achievements of the participants, and—especially—appreciate one another and the community we have in OLLI. See you May 20!

—Judith Harris, for the Community Committee

Reminder of membership and volunteer luncheon

May 20, 11:30-1:00

On Friday, May 20, the Community and Volunteer Committees are providing a thank-you lunch for all members, during which OLLI’s wonderful volunteers will be recognized. Plan to come and enjoy the Ninth Week performances and eat lunch with your friends — just like the good old days.

Please RSVP for lunch by Friday, May 13; call the OLLI office at 780-4406.
OLLI Night Out at Outback Steakhouse

Have you been to the Outback Steakhouse, 147 Western Ave., in South Portland? Join OLLI folks on Monday, May 23, at 5 p.m. for this social gathering. This is a “dutch treat” meal.

For reservations and/or transportation, e-mail Terry Foster at tfoster@maine.edu or leave a message on his USM phone at 780-4895. Have dinner in a lively setting with lively friends!

Meleshkova and Knox display their artistry

The OLLI Creative Arts Committee is proud to announce that OLLI photographer Jim Knox and OLLI artist Olga Meleshkova are exhibiting their work in the Wishcamper lobby throughout the spring semester. Please take time during your busy schedule of classes to enjoy the work of these two fine OLLI artists.

New journey planned for Walking Club

The Walking Club will travel to Topsham on Wednesday, May 11, to walk on the Cathance River Preserve at Highland Green. This is a new walk, as it was rained out last year. We hope to have a guided tour.

The club will walk on Goose Rocks Beach at Kennebunkport on Tuesday, May 24, and eat lunch at a nearby home.

For both walks, meet at Back Cove at 10 a.m. to carpool and get directions. If you have questions, call Rae Garcelon at 846-3304.

Recycling program benefits OLLI

OLLI students are reminded to participate in the recently launched bottle and can recycling program to benefit our organization.

Pick up a specially marked CLYNK green bag at the OLLI volunteer desk and use it to return your beverage bottles and cans to any Hannaford store. The deposit refunds generated by these bags will go to OLLI.

OLLI tuition and membership raffle

Don’t miss the chance to win two free fall term courses and a 2011-2012 membership. Your odds are much better than playing the Lottery!

Look for raffle tickets in the Wishcamper lobby or in the OLLI office May 2 to 13. The bargain price is one ticket for $5 or three for $10. The winning ticket will be drawn during the Ninth Week festivities on May 20 at OLLI.

We’re online!

The OLLI Newsletter is now online and in color. Go to http://usm.maine.edu/olli/olliusm/ and click on “OLLI News” in the left column. On the next page you’ll find a link to the Newsletter. Or you can Google “OLLI USM news” and click on the first search result.