Reflections from Our Retiring Board Chair

I’ve always said that this job is like running a lap in a relay race. As my lap (six years on the OLLI Board, the last three as Chair) comes to an end, I offer a set of realizations and understandings about this wonderful program, and the journey.

1. I am awed by the fact that so many at OLLI do so much as volunteers.

2. People are finally relaxed enough now to be open and eager to learn broadly, i.e. not just in their field.

3. The things we hated about school—criticism, competition, derision, embarrassment, and fear of same—are missing here. They have lost their hold over us anyway.

4. Teaching and learning are recursive here; teachers learn as much from students as students do from them.

5. Education is in its best form here: a mutual enterprise.

6. Learning new things at this age can be really fun, as well as being good for your brain and overall health.

7. Social interactions, connections, friendships, gatherings, new perspectives from OLLI cannot be overestimated.

8. OLLI has been growing by seven percent a year, year after year, with no advertising. Something’s working.

9. We have been blessed with a series of great OLLI Office leaders, from student workers, to desk volunteers, to staff, to Directors.

10. We have been blessed by the number of talented individuals who have served on the OLLI Board.

11. We are thankful to be the first OLLI; thank you, Osher Foundation for starting with us and sticking with us.

(Continued on page 2)
Reflections from Board Chair  (Continued from page 1)

12. The amazing breadth, depth, and variety of courses offered here are a true reflection of the membership. How did we get to be so fortunate?

13. Problems of all sorts can be fun to solve (or at least invigorating).

As the baton is passed to the next runner, I see OLLI is in great hands, with great prospects.

Many thanks, and all the best.

—Janet Stebbins

Reflections in Production

The 2019 edition of Reflections, OLLI’s annual journal of literature and art, is now in production. Many thanks to the 51 OLLI members who submitted 97 poems, stories, memoirs, essays, art, and photos!

The selections committee is now engaged in the difficult but satisfying process of choosing which submissions will be included in the 26 pages of the publication. Among the art and photo submissions, two are selected for the front and back covers. Notifications of the results will be sent to the contributors in a month or so, after the first layout is complete.

As in the past several years, submissions were “blind,” that is, the identities of the contributors were removed (but recorded for later) from the submissions before they were sent to members of the selections committee.

The production process involves formatting the accepted written submissions for typeface and size, so the layout artist has consistent materials to work with. The submissions are then proofread before being forwarded to the layout artist.

Reflections, like all of OLLI, runs on volunteers who devote many hours to this labor of love.

Artwork and photos are forwarded to the layout artist in electronic format.

The initial layout of Reflections is reviewed by the selection committee chairs and the production team. It then goes through one or more additional rounds of corrections and minor tweaks before being sent to the print house.

Finally, a reception is scheduled, usually in October, for the official release and distribution of Reflections. This year’s Reflections will be the 19th edition; it’s been around for almost as long as OLLI.

Next year will be Reflections’ 20th anniversary, and (very) preliminary explorations are afoot to make it a special occasion. As is customary, the submission deadline will be around the first of April, 2020. Submissions will be accepted beginning in February 2020. All current OLLI members are invited to submit—not just those in writing, art, or photography classes or Special Interest Groups. Submissions guidelines evolve from year to year and will appear in this newsletter and on the OLLI website, and will be announced via e-mail in December or January.
Education Committee Seeks Ideas

Betsy Wiley (my Education Committee co-chair) and I had a few responses to last month’s brief article, “How Do Classes Come About at OLLI.” We received more ideas, and two individuals expressed interest in teaching a class in response to suggested topics.

Here is what we’ve received so far:

- Judaism (Matt Goldfarb is interested in teaching.)
- Indigenous People’s Issues (Steve Piker is interested in teaching.)
- Gardening

We were encouraged by the response, so we are launching a regular newsletter article that lists recent suggestions for courses.

Here is the list for June:

- Wine Regions of the World
- Bridge Instruction
- Spanish Conversation

Do you have an idea for a course? Would you like to teach one of the proposed courses, or one of your own making? Let us know!

(By the way, I taught a class on genetics this past winter after reading that this topic was of interest in an OLLI survey.)

—Walt Allan
Education Committee Co-Chair

OLLI Bake Sale a Boon to the OLLI Scholarship Fund

Thank you to the many bakers who generously baked or otherwise procured wonderful goodies for the OLLI Bake Sale during the Book Sale. With the contributions of many, the OLLI Bake Sale raised nearly $400 for the Scholarship Fund to enable all to sign up for courses.

However, in the midst of the excitement, I was unable to keep track of everyone who helped as bakers, sellers, wrappers, and general support. Please accept my thanks for all of your efforts to make this Bake Sale a worthwhile event.

Keep your eye out for other bake sales next year. Thanks to all!

—Georgia Koch
Donna Anderson Speaks at Faculty Luncheon May 23, 2019

In 2012 Joan Aldrich called OLLI “a playground of continual learning.” The best teachers I have known—on all levels—retain a healthy curiosity about their own areas of interest, an openness to the thoughts of others—including their students—and a spirit of adventure about exploring new ideas. In the short time I have been with OLLI, I can see how apt Joan’s thoughts are. It is a rare privilege to be a part of this wonderful organization and to be a fellow learner with all of you.

Before coming to Maine I spent over 25 years working with museums; I have a masters degree in Museum Studies from the University of Toronto and was drawn to that work by my interest in public education and exhibitions as places of learning. Many years later, I spent nearly eight years running the Yager Museum of Art & Culture and teaching undergraduate museum studies courses at Hartwick College in New York. Through various learning labs and formal courses, I discovered a few essential things about teaching:

1. Teaching can be rejuvenating for the teacher—the work that I did every day for and with museums became routine for me. The excitement that my students felt for my work opened my eyes once again to the unique and fascinating world of working with art and artifacts. I felt a new appreciation for, and privilege in, working and thinking about museums.

2. The separation between teacher and student can be artificial. With the best teaching, we truly create a forum for thought and for mutually expanding our understanding of the subject and our culture.

3. One of the biggest challenges I faced was helping to build confidence and capacity in undergraduates, including students who were quite gifted but hesitant and a bit shy. As a former “shy student” and lifelong introvert, I worked with them to help to break down barriers and to make our classroom a safe and nurturing place for discussion.

4. Exploring new techniques of presentation—particularly the most interactive and creative ones—can make the classroom not only a center of experimentation but also a place where students have—YES!—fun!

Today we gather to express our appreciation for your time, expertise, energy, creativity, and generosity in teaching courses and workshops at OLLI. I see your students leaving classrooms with a spring in their step and a sense of joy and enlightenment as they move back out into the world. And I wonder—what are your secrets to creating this “magic?” I have been invited to ask a few questions of you, and I would like to open the floor to a discussion of your thoughts and techniques:

1. What are your secrets to managing and enlivening discussions, including those of challenging topics?

2. Did anything surprise you—in a good or a bad way—this year?

3. What is at the top of your “wish list” for making your classes even more of a “playground of continual learning?”

[A wide-ranging discussion ensued. OLLI students and instructors may want to share their thoughts with Donna, either in person or by e-mail at Donna.anderson@maine.edu.]
Join Another of the OLLI Excursions *Hidden Treasures* Series

“Roots in Plain Sight”

What could be more basic than to explore how the soil of Portland sustains the roots of its beauty and comfort? This OLLI Excursion will meet on three separate Mondays to explore these Hidden Treasures that beautify our city. During the morning tours we will search out the various ways Portland is highlighting the act of nurturing trees, roses, and fruits and vegetables. We will visit Deering Oaks to explore the Rose Circle, Payson Park to learn about the beginning and future of the Longfellow Arboretum, and Brentwood Gardens to investigate how public property is feeding and nurturing a broad scope of Portland’s residents.

**On June 17** Portland’s City Arborist Jeff Tarling and Ethan Newton will meet with us to talk about the various versions of the city’s rose garden, and why the previous one was purposely dug up within the past few years and a new one planted. We’ll learn about the impact of hybrid roses vs. the roses now planted and hopefully blooming during our visit.

Jeff Tarling has been the City Arborist for at least 20 years. He is a frequent guest speaker on local television and is treasured not only for his expertise in the parks, but also for his vast knowledge of the history of Portland.

**June 24** will again feature Jeff Tarling from the Parks Department, who will accompany us as we tour the Longfellow Arboretum in Payson Park. We’ll learn what has been planted and is growing in the arboretum as well as the origins of the concept and vision for the arboretum’s future. We’ll learn more about the care given to this newer celebration of trees in our “Forest City.” On the Web: http://www.arbnet.org/morton-register/longfellow-arboretum

**On July 1** Kiya Smith and Elizabeth Manning, both neighborhood residents, will meet us at the Brentwood Farms Community Garden (near Evergreen Cemetery) to talk about the origin of this local community garden. Both are founders of Brentwood, one of the first City-sanctioned Community Gardens, designed and created by the neighbors in the Deering Center Neighborhood. Kiya Smith will lead a tour of the Brentwood garden and explain how a community garden is managed over a year’s cycle. On the Web: https://www.facebook.com/Brentwood-Farms-Community-Garden-128894147133822/

Additionally, Elizabeth Manning will introduce us to an organization called “Cultivating Community.” As a Board member, she will help to increase our knowledge of its mission and programs.

We will gather at 10 a.m. at each site. Visits last about an hour and a half or so. Transportation is on your own. Further details, directions to each site, and parking information will be sent to registrants before the *Hidden Treasures* dates.

**Registration for each venue is limited to a maximum of 20 members and each costs $10.** To make your reservation, use OLLI’s on-line registration system at www.usm.maine.edu/olli. Deadline for registration is June 14. There will be no refunds for cancellations thereafter unless the space is filled from a waiting list. For further information, call Barb Hager at 253-5477 or Gael McKibben at 774-7177.
Senior Moments

[Note: From time to time, we report on some of our OLLI members’ achievements, usually the publication of a book. The name was chosen to claim a positive interpretation of “senior moment.”]

Nancy Bills

Nancy’s memoir, *The Red Ribbon*, was highlighted last month. This month, on June 6 at 7:00 p.m., Longfellow Books will host a book launch for the memoir. Nancy’s website is [http://nancybills-memoir.com](http://nancybills-memoir.com).

Fred Kilfoil

Fred has organized, and is participating in, an event called Outrunning Alzheimer’s. In this event, he and others are running from Fort Kent to Kittery (about 360 miles according to Google Maps) —in his words, “in an effort to raise awareness not only of the devastating effects of Alzheimer’s, but also of the amazing work currently underway to find a cure for this devastating disease.” The Facebook page for Outrunning Alzheimer’s is at [http://outrunningalzheimers.com](http://outrunningalzheimers.com).

Pat Davidson Reef

Pat Davidson Reef’s *Bernard Langlais Revisited* is now appearing on the bookshelves of museums and bookstores around the state. Her knowledge of children’s literature, plus her friendship with many Maine artists, led her to create this children’s book about a Maine artist with a very distinctive style.

This is the second in her Maine Art Series for Young Readers. The first, *Dahlov Ipcar, Artist*, spent several weeks on the Best Seller List and was a finalist for the 2018 Next Generation Indie Book Award.

Though retired as a teacher, Pat has continued her journalism career as a reviewer of museum and gallery exhibitions, and recently as a book reviewer. You can read more here: [https://www.evensi.us/bernard-langlais-revisited-book-launch-signing-maine-historical-society/310486565](https://www.evensi.us/bernard-langlais-revisited-book-launch-signing-maine-historical-society/310486565)

North 43° Bistro

Last Call for Dinner with OLLI

Here we are at the end of our dining out season. How we will miss each other!

Our last dinner will be at a gorgeous place in South Portland … the late and beloved Joe’s Boathouse, now spiffed up and called North 43 Bistro. If weather permits, a seat or even a stroll can be had on the Spring Point Marina to enjoy the boats and the water.

Notable on the menu: griddled house-made focaccia bread, burrata salad, veal bresaolatini filled with prosciutto, etc. They even have a burger. This is a definite winner … don’t miss it.

On the Web: [https://www.north43bistro.com](https://www.north43bistro.com)

When: Tuesday, June 18, at 5:30 p.m.

Where: North 43 Bistro,
1 Spring Point Drive,
South Portland, 747-4009

Reservations: Call or write me by noon Monday, June 17

Come with an appetite and suggestions for next year.

—Barbara Bardack
bravalascala@gmail.com
829-1240
Walking Club Visits Peaks Island, Gilsland Farm

On Wednesday, June 12, walkers will be going to Peaks Island for a walk around the island and a guided tour of the Fifth Maine Regiment Museum (Click for website), where we will eat lunch. We will be meeting at Back Cove at 9:00 a.m. to carpool to the ferry, an earlier time than usual, since we will need to find parking and purchase tickets for the 10:15 boat. ($3.85 for seniors). Bring your lunch, water, and sunscreen. We will probably take the 2:45 return boat, or you can return earlier on the 12:45 boat if necessary. Depending on where you park, please bring $4 or $5 to chip in for parking.

On Monday, June 24, we will visit Gilsland Farm in Falmouth to enjoy the peonies. There’s plenty of parking; so arrive there by 10 a.m. to meet the group. Be aware of ticks and dress with arms and legs covered to be on the safe side. We will eat there after the walk. Bring your lunch and water. Please call me at 846-3304 if you have any questions or are a new walker.

—Rae Garcelon

Bike and Nosh Group

We are now getting some nice weather for biking. We had a great ride in May around the Old Orchard Beach area. So far, three rides are scheduled for June:

- Tuesday, June 4, 10 a.m. – “Gorham Fields and Farms”
  A bucolic ride of about 16 miles.
- Tuesday, June 11, 10 a.m. – “Kennebunk and Kennebunkport”
  A scenic coastal ride of 22 miles.
- Sunday, June 23, 3 p.m. – “Cape Elizabeth Route 77 and Parks”
  A ride to beaches and lighthouses, around 7 to 12 miles in length.

If you’re not already on the bike group e-mail list, please contact Deidre St. Louis (deedee.st57@yahoo.com) to join the list and get detailed information on these rides.

Rides usually include a stop for food, either along the way or at the end of the ride. Participants must be OLLI members and must sign a 2019 release form. Helmets are required on all rides.