Profile

Bob Bahm

New SAGE chair to lead a very successful program

Bob Bahm happily divides his time between volunteer commitments at OLLI, where he serves as chair of the SAGE committee, and the Portland Symphony Orchestra, where he helped create and now coordinates a busy volunteer network.

As chair of OLLI’s SAGE committee, Bob embraced his new role. He views it as a wonderful and challenging opportunity. Bob recognizes what a well-designed program SAGE already is, owing to the years of excellent leadership of Betty Smith and her committee.

He sees the committee’s task as keeping up with precedents already set, rather than significantly altering anything. “When something isn’t broken, it doesn’t need fixing.”

His vision is to continue to steer a very successful program, along with the eight other committee members. The team is fast becoming adept at seeking out good speakers and interesting subjects.

Bob notes that, to his surprise, his retirement life has become as enriching and fulfilling as his professional life once was. Having served for nearly 40 years in the mental health profession, Bob, a clinical psychologist, retired in 2008 and moved with his wife to the Portland area.

A native of the Brookline area near Boston, Bob received his PhD in Clinical Psychology in 1970. He is a past president of the American Psychological Association’s Division 22 and a recipient of its Lifetime Achievement Award. He has also taught psychology at Tufts University and the New England School of Social Work.

Important OLLI Winter Term Dates

Dec. 3 – Open registration for OLLI winter courses begins by phone, mail, and drop-in.
Jan. 1 – OLLI and USM closed for New Year’s Day.
Jan. 8 – OLLI winter term classes start.
Jan. 17 – Deadline for dropping classes to receive a full refund.
Jan. 21 – OLLI and USM closed for Martin Luther King, Jr., Day.
Feb. 14 – OLLI winter term classes end.
Feb. 18 – OLLI and USM closed for President’s Day.

WEATHER CLOSINGS
If USM is closed, OLLI is also closed, and THERE WILL BE NO CLASSES. For the most current information call the USM Storm Line at 780-4800 for a recorded message.

In this issue:
Photos of Italy trip, OLLI Movers and Shakers, New Special Interest Group, One Book/One Community
See the Calendar on page 5.
Twenty-nine OLLI travelers enjoyed Sorrento and Rome from November 10 to 18. It was a wonderful trip with great people, marvelous food, knowledgeable guides, in an amazing region of Italy. Mamma mia! We visited Sorrento, Capri, Naples, Pompeii, and Rome. Here are just a few photos:

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season. See you in January!

—Susan Morrow, Assistant Director for Program
OLLI Advisory Board

My message this month is about the great support from our committee volunteers and from you all as OLLI members.

We have just completed a very successful raffle (our third year of raffles) with the highest amount ever raised to support scholarships. Thanks to Henry Warren and his committee and to those who purchased raffle tickets.

Additionally, we had a very successful second Book and Bake Sale, which will benefit scholarships, necessary classroom technology upgrades, and our memorial funds. Thanks again to Henry and his committee for their involvement and hard work.

OLLI budgets alone cannot fully support scholarships and technology upgrades. These fund-raising activities and your support of them are necessary for OLLI to be successful in providing continued learning opportunities to our members.

On another note, our 26 winter term offerings are among our most numerous ever, so check out the catalog and select a course to take.

—Dick Sturgeon, Advisory Board Chair
rbsturgeon@juno.com; 773-3174

Attention all bakers

Thank you all so much for the wonderful contributions you made to the OLLI Cookie Sale. Our table was laden with a beautiful variety of sweets and we had back-up as well, which we did use.

We had very few items left, and those went to the Boys and Girls Club. I personally thank you for your time and efforts, and OLLI does as well.

You made this event a huge success.

Isn’t it wonderful to be part of such a special community!

—Dona Sherburne
Bahm (cont’d from page 1)

Psychology at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

His early professional career included serving part-time as chief psychologist at a state clinic. In 1988, he turned to full-time private practice out of his home office in Groton, MA, providing therapy to individuals, couples, and children.

When Bob and his wife, Jan, retired, they wanted a city-like atmosphere close enough for visits back to Boston. “As we were considering Portsmouth and Portland, we fell in love with a house in Falmouth and ended up actually buying it three full years before retiring. What we eventually found here in Portland surpassed all our expectations. Now we hardly ever go to Boston.”

Bob’s description of what he found sounds like an advertisement from the Portland Visitor’s Bureau: “Portland has everything we want: a community feeling, educational opportunities, art, civility, and especially good restaurants. We’re in heaven here.”

Bob credits his wife with connecting him to OLLI. “She’s the one who looks around at what’s being offered and found OLLI. I sort of piggy-backed, beginning with a course on the geology of Maine, and now am enrolling in OLLI courses ever since.”

In January 2012, Bob joined the OLLI faculty and taught “Psychotherapy — Behind the Scenes.” Currently he also delights in teaching topics other than psychology, enjoying researching and mastering subjects that interest him.

Bob felt honored when he was approached by friends who have served on the SAGE committee and was asked to consider volunteering to become its chair.

Following every SAGE lecture, the committee meets to work on the next semester’s speaker list and to assign responsibilities for the upcoming lecture, such as checking off names of pre-enrolled attendees. So far, SAGE has never had a speaker who has canceled at the last minute. However, “if a speaker can’t make it,” Bob adds, “there’s nothing to worry about. We have a list of speakers, mostly from OLLI, who could step in at the last minute.”

Bob, along with other committee members, is currently working on a detailed set of procedures, which will help clarify all the functions and responsibilities of the SAGE committee.

Regarding the ongoing deliberations about the advantages and disadvantages between Hannaford Hall and room 102 of the Wishcamper Center, Bob says, “While the seating at Hannaford Hall is indeed more comfortable, the speaker is at a distance from the audience and sees, at best, a half-filled hall. In Wishcamper the speaker and the audience are closer and feel more connected. Most important, speakers have that ‘Wow’ factor when they see that full house.”

—Don King

SAGE ends on a high note

The Fall 2012 SAGE lecture series ended with a presentation by William Yeo, who in 2006 attempted an unsupported, un-guided ascent of Mount Everest. Without sherpas to carry their gear, Yeo and a friend hauled their equipment in stages up the mountain. Yeo’s account was accompanied by many slides and videos.

The entire SAGE series was a success. At every lecture, the room was full or nearly so.

Bill Yeo
which she did for 4 years.

Mary K. adds “I always felt comfortable in what I call a family feeling at that time and afterwards. It was being able to work with very wonderful people such as Barbara Scola, Terry, Diane McIlhinney, and the growing number of dedicated and loyal volunteers and volunteer instructors. Over a four-year period we were able to launch Harry’s excellent idea and watch it flourish over the ensuing years.”

The Portland native (Munjoy Hill) came to Senior College after a successful career that combined family and business. She rose through the ranks of the insurance industry (her husband Lee and their three children were in the same field) to become, as she proudly states, president of the National Association of Insurance Women. She traveled all over the country in her official capacity.

Mary K’s hobby was “volunteering,” and the list of her accomplishments is impressive: teaching defensive driving for ten years, winning the Governor’s Award; becoming a Eucharistic Minister at The Maine Medical Center in the first program established there; acting as a docent at the Portland Museum of Art and Portland Harbor Museum; volunteering at Mercy Hospital; and being honored by the Southern Maine Agency on Aging with its Living Legacy Award.

A “working mother” before it was common, she would find herself baking a cake at 9 o’clock at night for one of her kids and being “volunteered” to become a Girl Scout leader.

As Mary K. says of her volunteering: “I had a lot of energy.”

—Don King
New special interest group: “Elders for Future Generations”

With an intense and close election now behind us, many of us are asking how we can become more involved in the ongoing cultural and political process.

What are our responsibilities towards future generations?

What sort of planet, nation, and government are we going to leave in our wake? How might we join with others, to identify our areas of concern and advocate for the common good?

This fall, Fred Brancato, former chair of OLLI’s Advisory Board, offered a workshop entitled, “Elders for Future Generations.” The intent of the workshop was threefold:

- to foster awareness of contemporary American cultural attitudes towards older people; our roles as wise, caring, and more vocal elders; and our responsibilities to future generations
- to educate participants about how to encourage government to think of future generations when making public policy decisions
- to develop our strength through networking, and to move towards greater advocacy

Enthusiasm for Fred’s workshop was so keen that the group went on to meet for a third Saturday. Interest was then expressed in an “Elders for Future Generations” Special Interest Group focusing on the workshop’s goals. The Community Committee granted SIG status to the group.

Ongoing discussion will be peer-facilitated. The first meeting took place on Friday, Nov. 16. Future meetings will be announced in the Newsletter. All OLLI members are welcome.

The overriding concept of the SIG is to form an expanding, broad-based network of informed, active elders. Members see a responsibility to influence cultural and public policy that will promote the well-being of future generations. This includes peace and social justice work.

It is not clear how much direct advocacy work will be attempted. But for now, we seek to become better educated together about the issues.

As active and socially aware elders, we can draw inspiration from the words of Desmond Tutu, Chairman of The Elders, an independent group of global leaders who work together for peace and human rights: “Despite all of the ghastliness in the world, human beings are made for goodness. The ones that are held in high regard are not militarily powerful, nor even economically prosperous. They have a commitment to try and make the world a better place.”

(See http://theelders.org/)

desmond-tutu.

Stay tuned for further information. For a more detailed description of the group’s goals and concept, e-mail Fred Brancato at opus2@maine.rr.com.

—Joan Aldrich

Book Sale and Raffle results

Thanks to all the hardworking volunteers and generous members whose efforts led to a very successful book and cookie sale. The raffle generated $855 for the scholarship fund. First prize (two free classes) went to Carol Supple and second prize (one free class) to Priscilla Platt. The book and cookie sale brought in $1915, for a total of $2770, significantly more than last year. We also made a substantial donation of leftover books to Goodwill. The work room and downstairs closet are now available for normal use!

—Henry Warren
Walking Club to have holiday lunch at Becky’s

The Walking Club will hold its annual holiday luncheon at Becky’s Diner on Wednesday, Dec. 12, at 11:30. Becky’s is located at 390 Commercial St., in Portland.

If you have walked with us sometime this past year, we invite you to attend.

The room we’ve arranged for holds only about 20, so we encourage you to call Rae Garcelon immediately at 846-3304 to reserve a spot. Also, if you make a reservation and find you cannot attend, please let us know so that we can make room for someone else.

One Book/One Community is coming!

*American Nations: A History of the Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America* by Colin Woodard has been chosen for the return of this one-day One Book/One Community event, the last week of Feb., 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Watch for the specific date in the January Newsletter.

An award-winning journalist and author (his books include *The Lobster Coast*), frequent TV and radio guest, and speaker to standing-room-only gatherings across the country, Woodard will be our keynote speaker as we explore how earliest immigration and later migratory patterns have shaped how we think politically and culturally.

Fascinating and so relevant to post-2012 election analyses and political movements, *American Nations* is featured in the USM bookstore holiday catalog. Now widely available in paperback, the book’s price is $16.

Treat yourself to this book and look for further details and the registration form in the January OLLI newsletter. Colin Woodard’s talk, several workshops, refreshments, and lunch are included in the registration fee.

Be sure to sign up early as space at Wishcamper is limited! Details, dates, and a registration form will be published in the January Newsletter. For more information before the next newsletter, contact Elsa van Bergen: evanbergen@maine.rr.com

Colin Woodard