Profile

Amy Liston

A quiet life of poetry, music, mental health, and...football

[Amy Liston usually writes these newsletter profiles. This month, we turn the tables, with Amy as the subject.]

The youngest of five siblings, Amy was born in Connecticut and lived on a tiny street called Orenaug Avenue in Woodbury until she was eleven. On moving day she kissed the walls of her yellow room before the ten-minute drive to Middlebury.

Early loves included cats, words, baby names, playing outside, swimming, ping pong, going to Nantucket, reading the obituaries, and Dairy Delight with cherry dip. In high school she played Snoopy in the musical “You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown,” which was possibly the most fun she had ever had up to age seventeen. Singing Pergolesi’s Stabat Mater was excellent too.

Amy was an English Speaking Union Exchange Scholar to Moreton Hall in Shropshire, England, after high school. Her dormitory was a converted chicken coop, and the walls of her room did not reach the ceiling. Amy returned from that green and pleasant land with an honestly-come-by but less-than-persuasive English accent.

Amy majored in history at Brown University—a subject she would never choose today, preferring contemplative fields like literature and religious theory. She was on the crew for four years, co-captain her senior year. “Rowing was an exquisite experience,” she says, “simultaneously elemental and ethereal.”

Coming from an athletic family, Amy loves almost all sports, but she objects vociferously to boxing and hunting. When her father was at Harvard Business School, he coached John F. Kennedy on the Harvard football JV. He taught his daughters to throw a perfect

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Amy Liston (continued from page 1)

spiral before they could walk. Amy completed three marathons and one triathlon. Last summer she rode a century (100 miles) on her hybrid bicycle, which she would like to tell you is much heavier than a road bike, and thus she was very, very, slow. This New Year’s Eve she dunked in the 42-degree waters off East End Beach for the Polar Bear Plunge. She notes that it was very, very, cold, but she liked all the screaming and the guy on the paddle board with his itty-bitty brave dog.

After her first job as an editorial assistant with Merriam-Webster, Inc., Amy lived for years in San Francisco, employed mostly as a writer. She then earned a Master of Science in psychiatric/mental health nursing from the University of California, San Francisco. She studied for four years at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute. Amy has worked in inpatient, crisis, and outpatient settings, and was laid off from Maine Medical Center in 2013. A nurse-practitioner, she continues her longtime private practice in Portland.

At OLLI, Amy has enjoyed her several poetry courses with Sarah Franklin, and the profound explorations of John McLaughlin and Elizabeth Chapman. Writing the newsletter profiles has enabled her to meet and delve into the lives of many fascinating people.

In some cloistered colony of her heart, Amy is an artist. She has been reading and writing poetry recently, and attended the Stonecoast Writers Conference in 2014. Two poems and a piece about playing piano duets with her mother have been published. She is learning the ukelele. Remarkably for one whose sixth-grade art teacher wrote, “I would like to commend Amy for her cheerful and uncomplaining hard work in a subject that I know presents difficulty for her,” she is trying her hand at acrylic painting. That’ll show Miss Darrow.

Her oldest sibling, Martha, taught Amy and her sister Barbara to sing rounds and three-part harmonies from a tender age. Amy has been a first soprano with Women in Harmony, Portland’s 60-voice women’s chorus, for eight years. She calls this group “a beloved community.”

Tidbits: Amy has driven across the country six times, solo. In 2006 she did a tandem skydive from 14,000 feet. She has traveled to distant continents but is a confirmed homebody, a deeply risk-averse individual who occasionally finds it necessary to scare herself to death. She is a vegan, and interested in Buddhism. After 18 years, her opinion of Portland is that, though copacetic, it is “climatically and psychologically just a degree or two of latitude below the North Pole.” Living alone may accentuate the cold, but she does revel in her large extended family.

Amy has volunteered with the Center for Grieving Children and the Portland Free Clinic and is a Starting Strong Reading Partner at Ocean Avenue Elementary School in Portland. A goal for 2016 is to give more of herself to all animals—legged, winged, finned, or otherwise propelled.

This profile was compiled from notes from an interview.
February is for brain activity! February in Maine is a great time to be learning new things and interacting with fellow students and teachers in an OLLI course—while watching the snow fall outside. Our 19 classes and two workshops are in full swing, and there is great energy on display as students meet and greet one another on the way to classes. What a great way to spend winter!

Lifelong learning is alive and doing very well in Maine. OLLI at USM is the only OLLI in our state, but did you know that we are one of 17 senior colleges in a Maine consortium of independent programs stretching from York County to Fort Kent?

Like OLLI, each senior college plans intellectually stimulating non-credit courses (taught by volunteers) and special learning opportunities for adults over the age of 50. Senior colleges charge $25 to $35 for annual membership, plus an additional modest tuition for each course. Your OLLI membership fee should allow you to register at the other senior colleges as well as ours.

**The 17 Senior Colleges listed by county:** (See map on page 5)

**Androscoggin County**
USM Senior College at Lewiston-Auburn

**Aroostook County**
SAGE at University of Maine at Presque Isle
St. John Valley Senior College

**Cumberland County**
Bridgton Senior College
Midcoast Senior College
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at USM

**Franklin County**
Gold LEAF Institute

**Hancock County**
Acadia Senior College
Downeast Senior College

**Kennebec County**
University of Maine Augusta Senior College

**Lincoln & Knox Counties**
Coastal Senior College

**Oxford County**
Western Mountains Senior College

**Penobscot County**
Penobscot Valley Senior College

**Waldo County**
Senior College at Belfast

**Washington County**
Sunrise Senior College

**York County**
South Coast Senior College
York County Senior College

The Maine Senior College Network administrative office is housed here in Wishcamper with Anne Cardale as Program Coordinator. Click on [www.maineseniorcollege.org](http://www.maineseniorcollege.org) for Senior College locations and contact details.

**Enjoy the OLLI Winter Term!**

—Susan Gesing, Advisory Board Chair
susangesing@gmail.com
NOTES FROM SUSAN

Winter session is bursting its seams! Fourteen out of 19 classes sold out! Several instructors expanded their classes in order to reduce the number of people on their waiting list, and still some members were shut out of their first-choice classes. This is what is known as a happy problem.

While other OLLIs and Senior Colleges struggle to attract members, OLLI at USM continues to grow. We are blessed with wonderful faculty members who offer challenging and interesting courses with wide appeal. And we have a large group of people who stay around in the winter and aren’t afraid of unpredictable weather conditions. This is why winter session continues to grow!

**Online registration for Spring classes begins Feb. 9.** Once again, there will be assistance available in the Wishcamper Computer Lab on Feb. 9 and 10 for anyone who needs a little coaching.

Here are a few tips we’ve learned in the past year:

- Many people log in to the registration system right at 10 o’clock— and we’ve actually crashed the system with so much volume. If you can’t get in right at 10, wait a few minutes and try again.
- If you do not get into the course of your choice, add your name to the waiting list. Often instructors can increase their class size.
- If you have never registered yourself online, but you have taken OLLI classes in the past, you must call the OLLI office before you can access the online system. Please do this prior to February 9.
- It’s always a good idea to log in to the system prior to Feb. 9 to be sure you remember your password. You can always request a new password. We have found it is best to type your password, not cut and paste it. And be very careful of zeroes and O’s, ones and L’s, etc. If a password seems too confusing, request another. Once you are into the system, go under “My Account” and “Change Password.” We recommend that you keep your password simple, write it down, and put it in a safe place (but one where you can find it).
- If you need to call the office during registration, please leave a message if you do not get a person. The phones are crazy busy and we’re answering them as fast as we can.
- Scholarships and gift certificates cannot be processed through the online system. These must be attached to a registration form and brought/mailed to the OLLI office.

—Susan Morrow, Assistant Director for Program

**Reminder**

If USM is closed or has modified hours due to weather or other circumstances, OLLI will also be closed or have modified hours. The USM Storm Line is 780-4800. Radio and TV announcements may not be current.
Important Information

The Spring Term is from March 21 to May 13.

The spring catalog was mailed recently to all OLLI members. If it hasn’t arrived by February 1, and you want a hard copy, contact the OLLI office after that date. The course catalog is also available on the OLLI website. The online catalog is for you to review the course offerings and decide what you want to register for.

**Online registration opens February 9 at 10 a.m.** The link to the online registration website is listed at the top right-hand side of the OLLI website. (The spring classes won’t be listed on the registration website [different from the catalog page] until 10 a.m., so don’t go looking for them at 7:30 a.m. on February 9 and call us in a panic because they aren’t listed. We know. They’ll be listed at 10 a.m.)

If you need assistance registering online, members of the OLLI Advisory Board will be available to help in the Wishcamper Computer Lab (Room 128) Feb. 9 and 10, 10 a.m. to noon, and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Credit cards are the only form of payment the online registration system will accept.

Scholarships and waivers cannot be processed using the online registration system. If you need a scholarship or if you have a waiver, please contact the OLLI office at 780-4406 before the online registration date to ensure they are processed in-house on Feb. 9.

On February 16, one week after online registration opens, OLLI staff will begin processing mail-in registrations and accepting phone registrations. If you want your registration to be processed faster, please consider registering online.

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**Take Steps Today to Help Us Tomorrow**

Make a lasting impact on faculty and programs by including OLLI in your estate plans. By establishing a bequest you can…

- Designate your gift for a particular purpose through your will or trust
- Leave a larger gift than might otherwise be possible during your lifetime
- Control estate assets until your death
- Enjoy membership in the Benefactor Society
- Make a lasting impact on our programs and future generations of students

We would be pleased to work with you and your attorney to help designate your gift for a particular purpose at OLLI or USM.

**Learn more:** Bonnie Vance, Planned Giving Officer  
[bonnie.vance@maine.edu](mailto:bonnie.vance@maine.edu), 780-4448,  
[usm.maine.edu/bequests](http://usm.maine.edu/bequests)

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Map of Maine Senior College  
Network Locations

(See advisory board article on page 3)
A Wrinkle in Time

**OLLI Revisits the 1950s**

Tuesday, March 8, 2016, 1-3:30 p.m.
Wednesday, March 9, 2016, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Thursday, March 10, 2016, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

The Wishcamper Center
USM Portland Campus

Take a nostalgic trip with us back to the 1950s, when life was sweet and simple—or was it? Following a keynote address by Sherrie Chapman, OLLI faculty will tap their expertise to explore all angles of “the good old days”—from the arts, fashion, and food to politics and social issues. Highlights of the three-day event include...

- Music of the Fifties — Terry Foster
- McCarthy and Margaret Chase Smith — Kathleen Sutherland
- Invention of the Computer — David Chute
- Families of the Fifties, Real and TV — Sue Jennings, Joel Kallich
- Art of the Era — Tan Larrabee
- Social Issues — Mike Berkowitz
- Automobiles and America — Joel Kallich

To register for A Wrinkle in Time:

Go online at [www.usm.maine.edu/olli](http://www.usm.maine.edu/olli) starting Feb. 9, 2016

Sign up by phone or in person starting Feb. 16, 2016

Price: $80 per person for the three-day program. Includes lunch on Wednesday and Thursday, coffee breaks, and snacks. *Enrollment is limited, and this program sells out rapidly, so register early. YOU MUST BE AN OLLI MEMBER TO PARTICIPATE.*

Sponsored by the OLLI Community Committee
Did You Know...

Have you ever wondered how Advisory Board members are selected?

The answer is that there is a Nominating Committee that is charged with identifying and recommending OLLI members to the Board. The Nominating Committee consists of two Board and two non-Board members in addition to the Nominating Committee Chair.

Because the terms of Board members are staggered there are generally two to three positions to be filled each year. The process is guided by the Advisory Board Operating Policies with a slate of candidates submitted to the Board for election at the last meeting in June.

Criteria for selection include previous volunteer experience (especially at OLLI), a commitment to work effectively within a collaborative decision-making body, and an ability to think and plan strategically. A job description defines the responsibilities of Board members.

If you have any questions about this process or the Nominating Committee, you may e-mail the Nominating Chair at joylaraby42@gmail.com.

OLLI Book Sale Reminder

This is a second notice and reminder of the upcoming book sale in early May. Proceeds support OLLI scholarships. It is not too early to put aside books to contribute and also to start saving paper and plastic bags, which we will need at the sale.

If you have neighbors and relatives who are readers, feel free to encourage them to join you in saving books to contribute to the sale.

Reflections

Submission deadline: April 1, 2016

It’s time to polish your original creative work for submission to the 16th edition of Reflections.

Specific rules are on the OLLI website. Do not submit without reading them.

Here is a general idea of some of the requirements:
- You must be a current OLLI member.
- The submission must be your original work.
- You may submit up to two pieces in each genre: Poetry, Prose, and Art.
- Submissions must be done online. Paper submissions will not be accepted.
- We regret that we cannot accept revisions to your submission after we receive your entry.
- Simultaneous submission to other publications is O.K. But if you submit the same piece or pieces to other publications, you must notify the other publications if you are accepted by Reflections. Or, conversely, you must notify Reflections if your submission is accepted by another publication.

Submit a brief biography with your entry—35 words or less, sharing some things you’d like readers to know about you.

Submissions are blind; this means that your name and your submission will be kept separate. Tim Baehr will manage and track submissions. He is not on the Reflections committee and will not be reviewing submissions.

You’ll find detailed submission rules for the 2016 Reflections online on the OLLI website.

Remember: the deadline is April 1
Walking Club visits Gilsland Farm, Winslow Park

In February we are planning two snowshoe outings, weather permitting. Even if we cannot snowshoe, we will walk somewhere, so save the dates.

On Wednesday, Feb. 10, we will be at Gilsland Farm, the Audubon Center in Falmouth. They have a few pairs of rental snowshoes available, but call them (781-2330) beforehand to be sure.

We are able to eat our lunch inside there.

On Tuesday, the 23rd, we will be going to Winslow Park in South Freeport, where we can enjoy ocean views as we snowshoe. Then we’ll head to Bow St. Market to eat lunch.

For both outings, we will meet at 10 a.m. at Back Cove across from Hannaford on the Marginal Way end of the parking lot. Bring water and your lunch. Dress warmly. If you have questions or are a first-time walker, please call Rae at 846-3304 or e-mail her at raegarcelon@gmail.com for additional information.

From the Education Committee
Brown Bag Workshop for Aspiring OLLI Faculty

On Monday, April 4, from 11:45 to 12:30, Jack Lynch and a panel of veteran OLLI faculty will hold a Brown Bag workshop for OLLI members who might be considering teaching a class.

This will be an opportunity to present your idea for a course and receive feedback. First-time faculty are also invited to share their experiences. The workshop will take place in room 211 of the Wishcamper Building.

Questions? E-mail John Sutherland at jsuthkarina@gmail.com. Come one, come all!

OLLI Wine Club

Good News! The Wine Club—an OLLI Special Interest Group (SIG)—is back after a year’s hiatus. OLLI members can learn about wine in an easygoing supportive atmosphere designed to unravel its mysteries.

Our next exploratory wine tasting will be held this February in the early evening at an informal foodie-friendly restaurant (with parking), less than two miles from Wishcamper. An antipasto board will accompany the wine.

For more information, to be included on the SIG’s mailing list, and to learn how to register for each event, please e-mail Jack Lynch, at your earliest convenience, at this address: jlynch001@maine.rr.com. (Former Wine Club members with unchanged e-mail addresses need not write.) All are welcome—no experience necessary.

Remember to pick up a CLYNK bag at the office for your deposit bottles and cans! Proceeds benefit OLLI.
Pictures taken by travelers on OLLI’s Trip to Spain