Profile

Steve Hrehovcik

Steve’s teaching method: Just jump in and swim

Steve Hrehovcik (pronounced “hero-check” according to Steve) has taught “Drawing for Beginners” at OLLI six times now. Amazingly, his students have never once used an eraser on their work. What they have employed instead is an “improver”—a small oblong of rubber that bears a striking resemblance to that handy object.

A freelance artist and writer, Steve subscribes to “the John Wayne method of teaching.” The name derives from the movie western Hondo, in which the famous actor throws a young non-swimmer into a pond. The boy swims to the other side.

His method reflects Steve’s go-for-it personality and his own survival instincts. The essential message of his e-book memoir, Rebel Without a Clue, which he says chronicles “all the silly, stupid, foolish things I’ve done,” is that “I’ve survived in spite of all that.”

As it happens, the John Wayne method also suits his OLLI students nicely. “Their motivation is high, and they are willing to stretch,” he says. “I give them things beyond their natural ability and tell them what to look for. They want to learn or improve something.”

Steve’s parents were Czech. He was born in Canada; the family moved to New Jersey when he was two. His artistic ability was evident early, and he was a fan of the television show “You Are an
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Artist” with instructor Jon Gnagy. More than anything, though, Steve wanted to become an actor.

He attended Rutgers University and then earned a degree in theater from the University of Miami. After two years with the Army in South Korea, he landed a job as a stage manager in Chicago. His self-described “checkered career” then took him into advertising when he realized that theater “was a tough way to make a living.” He first worked for Spiegel Catalogue, where he honed his writing skills.

It may be fairly said that Steve ping-ponged among various professions. After Spiegel, he enrolled at Catholic University to pursue his master’s degree in theater. While there he met Carol, the woman who would become his wife. His studies concluded, he took a position as a designer of plastic toys for a company in the Bronx, but quit for the chance to work gratis on an off-Broadway show. Soon he was back in advertising with Minkus Stamp and Publishing in New York City, and later as advertising manager for a bank in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Guess what? He quit for another theater job at the Kennebunkport Playhouse in 1970.

After the summer theater season ended, Steve served as advertising manager for the York County Coast-Star and ran his own advertising agency. He also worked as a packaging designer for Weyerhaeuser Company/Southern Container, and in advertising for Adelphia Television.

Steve has been a freelance artist and writer since 2004. From his own Kennebunk Art Studio, he specializes in portraits, cartooning, and caricatures, and loves to draw and paint horses. “They are such beautiful animals,” he says. He also teaches drawing at River Tree Arts in Kennebunk.

Steve has written feature articles on a freelance basis for the Tourist News, southern Maine’s summer arts and entertainment weekly. His work has also appeared in DiscoverMaine magazine and Travel Maine magazine.

Steve is never one to rest on his laurels; his creative output extends to diverse genres. He has written a screenplay for a film called Heart and Soul, a love story that takes place in Maine. His libretto for a musical (composer wanted!), called Devlin, Daniel, and Webster, is based upon the short story “The Devil and Daniel Webster” by Stephen Vincent Benét. Steve and his longtime friend, songwriter Bob Marier, have collaborated on a children’s e-book entitled Murfy Finds a Home.” Steve and Bob take a roadshow version of the book to local elementary classrooms—Steve narrating and Bob playing guitar. They are at work on a sequel.

Steve and Carol, married 51 years, live in Kennebunk. They are the parents of two sons and a daughter. Joshua lives with his parents and works for a document shredding concern. Noah St. John, of Uniontown, Ohio, is a former dancer who now travels widely as a motivational speaker. Gillian lives with her husband Bruce and son Baxter in Lyme, New Hampshire, where she works for a radio station.

There is no doubt that Steve is an artist. “Drawing is part of my consciousness, it’s part of what I do,” he says. Call him an artist, a writer, teacher, actor, product designer, advertising executive. He’s all that. And by the time you finish reading this, Steve Hrehovcik may well have undertaken a spate of new creative challenges.

—Amy Liston

Remember to pick up a CLYNK bag at the office for your deposit bottles and cans! Proceeds benefit OLLI.
Advisory Board

[This year we are featuring one of our standing committees in each monthly Advisory Board column. The SAGE Committee is highlighted for June, and Chair Matt Goldfarb provides this update on the committee’s activities.]

The SAGE Programs

The fall 2016 season of SAGE programs will begin on Tuesday, September 13th. Five of the programs will be held at Hannaford Hall. Hannaford Hall was already reserved and unavailable to us on the dates for the other three SAGE fall programs. These three will be held in room 102 of the Wiscamper Center. Room 102 has limited capacity, so when enrollment is opened for the fall, be aware of the importance of early registration if you intend to register for all eight programs.

As chairman of SAGE, I was lucky to have a seasoned committee consisting of Bob Bahm, Ann Landsberg, Jack Lynch, Lou Marcucci, Marti Rosenblum, and Lois Winter; Bob Goettel joined as a new member of the committee. We were also assisted by Lynne Gammon, Barb Sturgeon, and Cally Dow as volunteers on the registration desk. I wish to thank each of them for their service. OLLI can be proud of them for their collective efforts as volunteers.

Here are some facts about SAGE and the committee:

1. Our speakers are recommended by OLLI members and the committee and are secured six months in advance of their presentation;
2. Each of our speakers is vetted by committee members and other reliable OLLI members;
3. The committee keeps a list of 80 potential speakers for evaluation;
4. The chief factor in approving a potential speaker is that he/she is an effective communicator;
5. We strive to choose speakers whose personal story is compelling in negotiating the challenges we all face;
6. We strive to find wide-ranging, interesting, and topical subjects;
7. We strive to select programs that will appeal to OLLI members;
8. Our committee is dedicated to fostering and augmenting a sense of community.

We are dedicated to serving the best interests of OLLI and wish to thank the OLLI community for its continued support.

—Matt Goldfarb, Chairman
NOTES FROM SUSAN

I recently read an article from the Pew Research Center with the headline “World’s centenarian population projected to grow eightfold by 2050.” It goes on to say that in 2015 there were a half a million centenarians (people ages 100 and older) in the world, which is four times as many as in 1990.

But now the growth rate is expected to accelerate. Current projections suggest there will be 3.7 million people 100 or older in the world by 2050.

As I was thinking about this, I realized that all of us have a better chance than ever to live to be 100 than any other time in history. It’s rather mind-blowing to think about. I remember being in elementary school and having to figure out how old I would be at the turn of the century.

The year 2000 seemed like a lifetime away. Now it looks like it’s possible that my friends, siblings, and even I could become a centenarian. And with current projections, my children have an even greater chance.

Here’s hoping that medical advances can keep pace with the aging process so we can be healthy, active, and vibrant as the years roll by.

—Susan Morrow, Assistant Director for Program

There’s No Biz, Like OLLI Biz...The Week That Was...

Applause, applause to the Chair, Ruth Story, and the Writers’ Showcase Team, for their program offered on Monday, May 2nd. The audience was interested and totally immersed in the art of writing and the works of the OLLI writers/presenters. I saw heads nodding in agreement with comments from Portland’s Poet-Laureate, Gibson Fay-LeBlanc, on the art of writing, and I observed the audience’s appreciation of excerpts read from the authors’ original manuscripts.

The Resource Development Committee Chair, Dick Leslie, led his team in a very successful Book & Bake Sale, on May 6th and 7th, all to benefit the OLLI Scholarship Fund. Let’s give Dick and his team a round of applause!

The Photography Gallery was spectacular. Sharon Roberts and the OLLI Photography Club mounted an amazing array of photos. It should not have been missed. Congrats to all!

On May 7th, the Book & Bake sale continued—and MUCH MORE. The Reader’s Theater Class performed a series of short plays, both comedy and drama. “Good Girl” was a big hit with the audience, and the feedback for the entire program was complimentary. Just ask those in the know about the “birds.” The Recorder Ensemble presented a delightful program of music that resounded throughout the Wishcamper Center, followed by the OLLI Singers whose rendition of “Shenandoah” was an audience pleaser and well done. Hats off to all the performers!

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THEN the Dance Class, led by instructor Jack Lynch, performed for a very enthusiastic audience. The dancers were full of exuberance and panache. Their high spirits won the audience’s hearts and minds. It was a joy to behold!

After lunch, the Senior Players performed a delightful selection of short plays and monologues. Some of the scripts used in their production were written by members of the Senior Players group. One such script, written by Sally Hinckley, “Dominatrix Du Jour,” and performed by Barb Finn, was a big hit. Congrats to all the Players.

There was so much content to the day, I just cannot reiterate all that happened at our 2016 Spring Celebration. I can only say I’m sorry if you missed it. Everyone I observed left Wishcamper with a smile on their face, music in their hearts, and most of all, they had fun!

—Paula Johnson, Chair

Walking Club Plans Two June Outings

In May we had another successful walk, this time in Biddeford, with 27 members attending.

On Wednesday, June 8, we will take the ferry from Cousins Island to Chebeague Island for a guided walk with Penny Asherman, who took us around Knight's Pond last year. This walk will require preregistration with Rae because of space limitations.

We will meet in the Back Cove parking lot across from Hannaford at 9 a.m. for this outing, to carpool to the parking lot in Cumberland. Cost of the ferry is $10 per person round trip if you purchase a round-trip ticket online. See http://www.chebeaguetrans.com/On-line-tickets-2.html.

The ferry leaves at 10:30 a.m. and will return at 2:30 p.m. Since we will all be traveling together, do not plan to go if you are on a tight schedule.

On Tuesday, June 28, we will make our annual pilgrimage to the Gilsland Audubon Farm in Falmouth to view the peonies and walk around the area. We will meet at Back Cove at 10 a.m. to carpool for this outing or you can meet us at Gilsland.

For both walks you will need bug spray, sun screen, your lunch, and water. The Gilsland site is more likely to have ticks. Please be mindful of that. If you have questions, please call Rae at 846-3304 or e-mail her at raegarcelon@gmail.com. If you are a first-time walker, please notify Rae for further instructions about the Audubon walk.
SAGE Winds Up Spring Season

OLLI’s spring series of SAGE presentations has just finished. This spring saw eight fascinating presentations ranging from back-stage revelations to TV stories to national parks to philanthropy to graduate education to music criticism and performance to multiculturalism.

Look for another outstanding series this fall!

Dinner in June to be Season Finale

This month’s OLLI Night Out will be the last until we resume in the fall. We will be meeting at The Good Table, in Cape Elizabeth.

This intimate family place dates back to 1986 and features food from local farms and producers of dairy items, maple syrup, apples, chicken, lobster, and more. They have a lovely garden to stroll in, and diners can chat around comfortable round tables. For menus, directions, and so on, you can visit the restaurant’s website at www.thegoodtablerestaurant.net/.

When: Tuesday, June 14, at 6 p.m.

Where: The Good Table, 527 Ocean House Road. (Route 77) Cape Elizabeth

Reservations: Must be in by Sunday, June 12, since the restaurant is closed on Monday the 13th.

Call or write Barbara Bardack at 865-2009; lascala2@comcast.net

Don’t miss being with us for this delightful event!

The spring SAGE presenters (Left to Right, Top to Bottom):
Aimee M. Petrin, Portland Ovations; Bill Green, WCSH-TV; Lucas St. Clair, Elliotsville Plantation; Eliot Cutler, Maine Center for Graduate Professional Education; Meredith Jones, Maine Community Foundation; Allan Kozinn, Portland Press Herald music critic; Reza Jalali, USM Multicultural Student Affairs; Robert Lehmann, USM School of Music.
Join the Bike & Nosh Group for Rides in Fryeburg and Falmouth

The OLLI Bike & Nosh group has two rides coming up in June. If you want to participate and you haven’t yet signed up for the group, please write to Shoshana Hoose (shoshanahooose@gmail.com) to get a release form and other information. If you are already signed up, please tell the ride leader that you plan to join us.

Sunday, June 5, 10 a.m., Explore the Back Roads of Fryeburg. We will bike 26 miles (all but two miles on roads) and stop midway at a country store for delicious snacks.

Meet at the Maine Tourism Association Visitor Center on Route 302 in Fryeburg. Notify Shoshana Hoose, the ride leader, by June 2 if you plan to come: shoshanahooose@gmail.com or 766-6854. If enough people want to carpool from Portland, some of us can meet at Wischemper Center. If a rain date is needed, those who sign up will be notified.

Tuesday, June 21, 9 a.m., Bike and Hike around Mackworth Island. Meet at East End Beach in Portland and ride to Falmouth. Distance is 12 to 15 miles plus a hike of 45 minutes to one hour. A road bike would be fine as it is pavement except for a short bit on Back Cove Trail. Pack a picnic lunch to eat at the beach, or buy a sandwich on the way. No rain date is planned right now. Contact ride leader Ginny Remick at 772-8980, write to ginnyleejoyce@yahoo.com, or text her that morning: 671-2463.

Save the dates for our July rides: July 8 at 9:30 a.m. in Portland and July 18 on Long Island in Casco Bay.

Gallery Wall

Have you had a chance to take a look at the Gallery Wall outside the OLLI office yet? If not, stop by and see the spring exhibit. We have some wonderfully talented folks here at OLLI.

Speaking of talented people, would you like to see some of your work up there next semester? Watercolor, pen and ink, oil, photography, collage, and much more are welcome. If you can frame it and hang it, we’d love to hear from you. Contact Sidney Lincoln, linck7s@myfairpoint.net, for details.