Tim Baehr still has the first story he self-published: “Buck and the White Horse,” written in pencil on five stapled-together three-by-five cards. That story marked the beginning of a lifelong love of words and writing.

Although originally from New England (he was born in New Britain, Connecticut), Baehr grew up in the Midwest, first in northern Ohio and then in Michigan. He attended the University of Michigan, graduating with a degree in linguistics and going on to graduate school there to study psycholinguistics and edit a journal of language and language behavior.

Baehr moved back to the East in 1968, taking a job in educational publishing in Boston. He edited elementary-school language arts books and dictionaries for a decade and then freelanced for a dozen years as an editor, writer, and book indexer. For a few years, he also taught business writing at the Harvard Extension School and at Babson University. He finished out his career as a technical writer, retiring from IBM in 2005.

“We had fallen in love with Portland on a couple of vacation trips,” he says, “and it seemed a natural place for our retirement. We wanted an urban environment, but on a smaller scale — and without the frenzied pace and always-angry drivers of Boston.” He and his wife, Ann Landsberg, moved to Munjoy Hill in 2007. They were delighted to discover the Portland Symphony, theaters such as Portland Stage and the Good Theater, the lobster shack at Two Lights, many great restaurants, and the Sea Dogs.

At first, the only people they knew in Maine were friends in
Damariscotta. Their friends were active in Coastal Senior College in Rockland, and they pointed Baehr and his wife to OLLI.

“OLLI was a terrific source of friendships for us,” Baehr says. “We took our first courses in the Winter term of 2008, and we met many of our friends today in David Morton’s course on Joseph Campbell.” OLLI also became a major source of intellectual challenge and enrichment; in the past six years, the couple has taken well over 30 courses each. They also have served on some of the volunteer committees that help OLLI fulfill its mission.

A writing course led by Denney Morton got Baehr started on writing fiction. After that course, and a creative writing course at USM, he developed a love for flash fiction — stories no longer than 1,000 words. Soon he was offering a course of his own, guiding students through the process of writing their own flash fiction.

He soon added a course on Zen Buddhism and a workshop on knife sharpening — “In the fall, just in time for Thanksgiving.” He continues to offer both courses and the workshop regularly.

Baehr’s short-fiction writing has borne fruit with publication in some on-line and print journals. And recently he wrote and self-published a book on the basics of Zen, which he has used in his Zen classes.

In 2011 Baehr joined the OLLI Advisory Board, serving as Chair of the Communications Committee, and managing the production of the *OLLI Newsletter*. He is also nominally in charge of *Reflections*, OLLI’s annual journal of literature and art. But, he says, *Reflections* runs almost entirely as a separate entity, with its own editor and volunteer reviewers.

Some of Baehr’s other interests include cooking (mostly as sous-chef), travel, community activism, gardening, photography, and crossword puzzles.

“We’re really happy here,” Baehr says. “OLLI and the friends we’ve made here have become such an important part of our lives. It’s hard to imagine being anywhere else.”

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**Important Dates for OLLI at USM**

Mar. 17 – Start of OLLI spring term classes
Mar. 18 – Beginning of SAGE weekly lecture series
Mar. 28 – Deadline to receive refund on dropped classes
Apr. 21 – *Contrary to the Spring Catalog, OLLI and USM are OPEN for Patriots Day*
May 9 – End of OLLI spring term

**May 10 – OLLI Spring Celebration and Art Show**

May 12–16 – OLLI spring term makeup week
OLLI Advisory Board nominations close April 1

A position on the OLLI Advisory Board can be very rewarding! This leadership team helps set OLLI’s policies and programs.

We are looking for candidates with the following qualifications:

- A collaborative work style
- Previous volunteer or committee experience, particularly at OLLI
- An understanding of the academic/nonprofit environment
- Facility with using electronic communications (email and Internet)
- Availability for monthly OLLI Board meetings (August–June)
- Commitment to serving on at least one OLLI committee

You may either self-nominate or nominate someone you know. Nomination forms are available at the OLLI volunteer desk on the second floor of the Wishcamper Center or by e-mail — contact Susan Gesing at susangesing@gmail.com. Nominations close April 1.

The Nominating Committee will make recommendations to the Advisory Board for people to serve three-year terms beginning July 1, 2014.

USM international students want to talk with you

You are invited to join USM undergrad English language learners in International Conversations on Thursday afternoons from 1:15 to 3:15, March 20 to May 1, in room 133 Wishcamper.

This is an opportunity to engage in fascinating conversations with students from, for example, Japan, Spain, Turkey, Haiti, Thailand, Iraq, Congo, and Saudi Arabia.

Classroom instructors will suggest topics and offer interactive activities to keep the classroom lively. There is no charge.

Please contact Jessamyn Schmidt (jessamyn_schmidt@yahoo.com or 780-4586) to join the conversations.
NOTES FROM SUSAN

Every 18 months or so, I like to repeat this column to help clarify the relationship between OLLI and USM. With over 500 new members this year, I think this column bears repeating.

**OLLI is a department of USM.** We are not a separate, independent program. We are very fortunate that USM has allowed us to be a hybrid organization of volunteer and staff leadership. As a USM department, we get free use of classrooms and office space, media support for all classroom technology, parking in the USM garage, and free use of USM’s computer labs and libraries. All OLLI money is held by the University, and OLLI has an operating budget just like every other department. OLLI money is designated as such, and is used only for OLLI.

**OLLI is part of the Division of Professional and Continuing Education.** The Division includes Summer/Winter Session, Off-campus Programs, the Center for Technology Enhanced Learning (CTEL), Professional Development Programs, Conferences, and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute National Resource Center.

**OLLI students are non-credit students of USM.** As such you are registered in the University database, and you can obtain a free USM ID card: [http://usm.maine.edu/usmcard/first-card](http://usm.maine.edu/usmcard/first-card). With this card you can use the University libraries and access the University e-mail system and computer labs. You also qualify for many of the discounts offered to USM students: [http://usm.maine.edu/sullivancomplex/university-community-recreation-fitness-discount-offerings](http://usm.maine.edu/sullivancomplex/university-community-recreation-fitness-discount-offerings).

**OLLI does NOT own the Wishcamper Center.** It is a University building. Yes, the Muskie School and OLLI contributed toward its construction, and yes, we have priority of occupancy, but it is a University building and is used by the University at large when not in use by us. This is why all OLLI groups and committees need to book space through the OLLI office. Just because there are no OLLI classes in session does not mean space is available.

**The OLLI office suite is shared by two separate programs** — OLLI at USM and the National Resource Center. Kali, Fran, and Anne are the NRC staff. They coordinate information and communications among the 117 OLLIs nationwide and work closely with the Bernard Osher Foundation in California. Rob and I work full-time for OLLI at USM, while Linda and Sue each work half-time. We are fortunate this year to have 10 office volunteers and a work-study student. We work closely with the OLLI Advisory Board, its standing committees, OLLI faculty, various USM departments, and our 1650-plus OLLI members to keep the program running as smoothly as possible.

I know this is a lot of factual information, but I hope it helps everyone understand our University relationships. Our relationship with USM is unique: many other OLLIs around the country are charged by their university for space, equipment, upkeep, and general overhead. We are very fortunate that USM views OLLI as a vital, growing program that fulfills their ideal of lifelong learning.

—Susan Morrow, Assistant Director For Program

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Get ready to celebrate!

Circle your calendars for **Saturday, May 10**, for our OLLI Spring Celebration. Watch your Newsletter for further details as our plans evolve!
Attention writers, artists, and photographers

Reflections, OLLI’s annual journal of literature and arts, is accepting submissions for the 2014 issue. Categories are poetry, fiction, memoir, essay, art, and photography. Submissions are open only for current OLLI members.

As in the previous couple of years, all submissions are “blind.” That means your name cannot appear anywhere on your submission. This is how it works. If you find this confusing, we can help; see the note below.

- Prepare your submission. Make sure your name does not appear anywhere.
  - Written works must be a Microsoft Word document in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format. We cannot read documents in the Mac .PAGES format; you can export a .PAGES file as an .rtf file.
  - Art submissions must be in .jpg or .jpeg format. Other formats such as .tif or .bmp are probably okay but not preferred. This is easy for photos taken with a digital camera. For printed photos, paintings, drawings, and the like, you can take a digital picture.
- Download the appropriate submission form. There’s a separate one for written and art submissions. Get them here: https://usm.maine.edu/olli/olli-reflections-magazine.
- Open the form in Microsoft Word and fill it out. Be sure to include the title of your work. That’s the only way we can keep track of you and your submission.
- Open your e-mail program.
  - In the Subject line, type Reflections. (If you don’t, your submission will probably get lost.)
  - Send the form and your submissions as attachments to olli@usm.maine.edu.

“Help! I don’t know how to do all this!”

E-mail Tim Baehr at tbaehr@aol.com or call Linda Skinner at 228-8225 and ask her to have Tim call you. She’s the traffic manager for submissions, and she’ll be glad to help.

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Attention all OLLI artists, photographers, and crafters

The Creative Arts Committee’s annual one-day spring exhibit will be held on Saturday, May 10, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Come and show off your wonderful OLLI talent! Details are on the application forms, which are available in the OLLI office. Application forms must be turned in by April 28.

OLLI Open Art Studio participants display their work in upstairs gallery

Donna Sherburne’s Open Art Studio group is exhibiting in the upstairs gallery this spring. Be sure to take the time to view the talented work of your fellow OLLI classmates!

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Special Interest Group Council to be held

A Special Interest Group Council meeting will be held in early March. SIG Chairs/Coordinators will be notified of the date and time in advance of the meeting. This is a place to celebrate SIG successes and address any areas of concern.
**Announcements / Calendar / Special Events**

**Ski Club members keep busy on trails and slopes**

Did you know that OLLI has a **Ski Club Special Interest Group**, encompassing both downhill (DH) and cross-country (X-C) groups?

**Let’s take a look at cross-country skiing:**

*Reported by Bev Blair, X-C Chair/Coordinator*

Based on past experience, the X-C Ski group did not plan any excursions until January. If only we had known what a great ski month December would turn out to be this season! Our first trip in January would have been on the 15th to L.L. Bean’s Fogg house property. That didn’t happen because of lack of snow.

The next trip was to Harris Farm in Dayton, led by Susanne Maarten. Two of us skied there. I thought it was great! Our cold faces and fingers warmed up quickly.

Also planned were trips on Feb. 5 to Gull Crest Recreation Area in Cape Elizabeth, led by Bev Blair. And on Feb. 18 to Pineland, led by Valerie Wisch.

Coming up on March 5 is a trip to Breton Woods, N.H., led by Susanne, and on March 18 to Smiling Hill Farm in Westbrook, led by Valerie.

People who are on the X-C ski list will be notified before each trip. If you would like to be on the e-mail list and also receive the directory of members, contact Bev Blair at bblair@maine.rr.com.

**Now let’s look at downhill skiing:**

*Reported by Lois Winter and Pris Nelson, DH Skiing Co-Chairs/Coordinators*

We’ve been having a great time on the slopes, enjoying our fellow ski companions. We schedule trips when the mood strikes, when the weather forecast is amenable, and when folks are available. Our ski trips this year have been to Shawnee Peak in Bridgeton, on their $25 Tuesdays, and to Sunday River.

We do not do trips on Saturdays and Sundays; there is no pressure to ski together. We do like to all gather together for lunch, and gas and toll costs are shared by all. Anyone who is member can post a trip to a ski area of his/her choice to all members. The participants would then arrange the meeting spot and departure time, and decide on drivers. On average, we’ve announced a trip once each week, although a few have been cancelled or re-scheduled. From two to seven skiers have joined us for each trip.

The Downhill Ski Club offers those of us who like to ski a chance to meet new friends who also enjoy the sport. It keeps us happy through each of our winter snowstorms, ready for another outdoor adventure!

The DH Ski group’s Co-Chairs/Coordinators are Pris Nelson and Lois Winter. If DH skiing is your forte and you desire more information, you may contact either of them by e-mail at pris.nelson47@gmail.com or lwinter@maine.rr.com.
Walking Club’s plans for March

Walking Club members will walk Wednesday, March 12, at Evergreen Cemetery. If snow permits, we may want to bring our snowshoes.

On Tuesday, March 25th, we will be walking on the Bliss Woods Trail off South Freeport Road, which is before the big Indian statue on Route 1. This is a new walk in the woods for us, and there is sure to be snow on the ground.

For both walks we will meet at 10 a.m. at the Back Cove parking lot across from Hannaford’s to carpool. Bring your lunch and dress warmly. On some of these cold days, we have found that hand warmers are very effective. Be sure to wear proper foot gear, which means paying attention to the weather.

If you have questions, call Rae Garcelon at 846-3304 or e-mail her at raeallan@aol.com.

Veranda Noodle Bar is the Night Out site for March

Join us in welcoming spring with a spring roll or other light and lively Asian fare from the menu of the Veranda Noodle Bar. Located at 14 Veranda St. (near the corner of Veranda and Washington in Portland), this popular place is our OLLI Night Out destination this month. You can check out the restaurant and its menu here: http://www.verandanoodlebar.com/

Save the date: Tuesday, March 25, at 5:30 pm. Reservations are required by Friday, March 21. Call or write me so the restaurant can be ready for us.

Hope to see you there.

—Barbara Bardack
OLLI Night Out Coordinator
865-2009; lascala2@comcast.net

Brown Bag Lunch

During the last week of Spring Term, the Education Committee will offer a Brown Bag Lunch for all OLLI members, both faculty and students. The topic will be “Peer Teaching and Peer Learning at OLLI.”

The lunch will be held on Monday, May 5. The place will be announced in a future newsletter.

Guest panelists are Bill Gregory, Fred Brancato, Jean Sheridan, Peter Stead, David LaGraffe, and Mike Brady. Each will speak for about five minutes, after which the panel moderator, Henry Warren, will facilitate a 20-minute question-and-answer period.

Mark your calendars, arrive with your lunch, and join us for a relaxed and informal event, spotlighting and celebrating our shared learning experience at OLLI.
Muskie School, OLLI to host talks with Blaine House candidates

The University of Southern Maine’s Muskie School of Public Service and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, in collaboration with the Maine Public Broadcasting Network, will host a series of one-on-one “Conversations with the Candidates: Maine’s Next Governor.”

Independent candidate Eliot Cutler will appear on Friday, March 14, followed by Democratic candidate and U.S. Representative Michael Michaud on Friday, March 21.

Both events will take place from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Luther Bonney Hall’s Talbot Auditorium on USM’s Portland campus. The series is free and open to the public.

Governor Paul LePage has been invited to discuss his bid for re-election but has not confirmed whether he will be able to participate.

Each of the candidates will have a chance to outline his plans for Maine. Moderator Richard Barringer, professor emeritus in the USM Muskie School, will ask one or two questions and then open the floor for questions from the audience.

All sessions will be taped for future broadcast on Maine Public Radio’s public affairs show, “Speaking in Maine.”

“This series is an excellent example of how the Muskie School engages the Maine community in important issues of the day and strengthens civic life,” said Barringer. “We’re especially pleased to be working with our colleagues in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and with Maine Public Broadcasting to bring this important election home to the citizens of Maine.”

More information is available at http://usm.maine.edu/muskie/conversations-candidates or by calling the USM Muskie School at 780-4563.

Literary Fair planned for April 11

Plans are shaping up for a Literary Fair to celebrate OLLI members who have published their works and those in the midst of the creative writing process. OLLI authors who have published a book, poem, story, or essay are invited to display their works.

The Fair will take place April 11 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium in Room 133 and in the adjacent Forum. Light refreshments will be provided.

The Fair will include a keynote speaker, group discussions, and a sharing of tips on writing and publishing by event attendees.

If you have published a book or article and want to take part in the celebration, e-mail one of the co-chairs of the Literary Fair Committee, Janet Stebbins (jjstebbi@maine.rr.com) or Tim Baehr (tbaehr@aol.com).

Passages:
Carol Lohman

Longtime OLLI member Carol Lohman passed away January 29 at the Gosnell Memorial Hospice in Scarborough. Her obituary included the following: “She came, she saw, she questioned, she discovered. She did all she could, but never believed it was enough. She was a passionate humanist who loved deeply and experienced both disappointments and triumphs. When she was ready, she let go with grace. She will live on as long as people who love her remember her — and she said that’s good enough.”