Sarah Franklin epitomizes the life-long learner. Just a recent example: In February she traveled with Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel) to Phoenix. One of the highlights was her visit to the technologically futuristic Museum of Musical Instruments.

Fortunately, Franklin is also a life-long teacher. Retired in 2000 after almost four decades of teaching high school English, she joined the OLLI faculty more than 10 years ago. She has taught numerous classes on the writing and appreciation of fiction and poetry. This month she and her friend and colleague Betsy Wiley will wrap up their latest joint class, “Laughter and Longing: Four 21st-Century Novels.”

The woman who spent 18 years at Deering High School and was chair of the English Department at Cape Elizabeth High School jokingly refers to her former self as “that dictatorial, curmudgeonly English teacher.” Her specialty was helping students prepare for the AP exam. She also taught drama, but when asked if she herself is an actress, she replies wryly, “Only in the classroom.” That said, she is a lover of theater, once seeing 27 plays in 10 days.

Of late, Franklin enjoys the relaxed learning environment at OLLI, where her classes are known for a healthy dose of humor. But she remains unswervingly committed to literature, and finds it “satisfying to work with people who are truly readers and who want to do this exploring [of books and poetry].” They share “the excitement of discovery.”

A native of Oberlin, Ohio, Franklin attended high school in Philadelphia and then went on to Bates College. She received an MAT from Harvard and spent most of her teaching career in Maine. She lived for three years in Manhattan and considers it an exhilarating

continued on page 2
interval “that confirmed my commitment to intellectual growth and new experiences.” She also spent five years at the independent St. Mark’s School in Massachusetts.

A self-described “radical” whose family talked politics around the dinner table, Franklin has taken OLLI classes on history, current events, and elections. The novels she has taught have addressed anti-war and unionist themes, among others.

Years ago, Franklin attended the Stonecoast Writers’ Conference three times, studying under eventual poet laureate Mark Strand and other masters of the craft. She participated in summer seminars of the National Endowment for the Humanities and directed the NEH Teachers Academy here in Portland.

She is a world traveler whose favorite destination to date may be Crete. She taught for two years at the International School in Prague after her retirement from the Portland system. Upon returning from Prague, she taught another AP class at Portland High School, which she greatly enjoyed.

Franklin is deeply gratified by her rich interactions with hundreds of high school students. These academic relationships went well for the most part, with the glaring exception of that disgruntled senior who set her house on fire. She was unscathed, but her cat Joe did not make it.

The “hopelessly gregarious” Franklin gets involved wherever opportunity presents itself. She tutors a Somali family in English. She is a docent for the Maine Historical Society (MHS)/Longfellow House. Last summer she gave tours of the Old Port to cruise ship visitors. An active member of Portland’s First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church, she also leads tours there. She participates in both an MHS book group and a private book group.

A Portland resident, Franklin is the mother of two sons. In recent months she has witnessed the full cycle of life within her family. Last October she lost her beloved older brother Pete (about whom she has written several poems), and then welcomed her first grandchild, Simone, in December.

Life does go on. Franklin is preparing another poetry class for the OLLI summer session, and is planning to spend most of next winter in Arizona.

After the winter just past, who can blame her for the getaway? All we can do is hope she hurries back to the OLLI classroom.

—Amy Liston

Important Dates for OLLI at USM

May 9 – End of OLLI spring term

May 10 – OLLI Spring Celebration

May 10 – Annual One-Day Spring Art Exhibit, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

May 12–16 – OLLI spring term makeup week
ADVISORY BOARD
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OLLI members are invited to attend Advisory Board meetings. Check with the OLLI office for date, time, and place. Please contact the Chair if you wish to address the Board:
dicksturg13@gmail.com

NOTES FROM SUSAN

“What’s your favorite part of OLLI?,” someone recently asked me.

I immediately started going through my mental checklist: classes, lectures, workshops, meetings (no, definitely not meetings), special events, interest groups, trips. It became clear to me that my favorite part of OLLI is all the amazing, creative people I have met and am privileged to work with on a daily basis.

I’m regularly given the opportunity to watch a totally new idea take shape. I see the excitement generated when creative, interesting people get together. I feel the energy in the building when OLLI members are engaged in a vibrant community. I feel great satisfaction when a plan is successfully carried through to fruition.

I appreciate being part of an organization of amazing volunteers who are willing to share their time and passion with others. I am proud to be part of a University that recognizes the value in a volunteer-driven adult program, and supports our mission. I am constantly inspired and awed by OLLI at USM and all of its members.

What an amazing program we have created together!

—Susan Morrow, Assistant Director for Program

PASSAGES

Ellen Askari

OLLI member, USM teacher, and Maine native Ellen Askari died on March 12, less than two months after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. She was an accomplished immunologist and teacher. In addition, she volunteered in the AIDS Buddy Program, winning recognition with a “Six Who Care” award from WCSH-TV.

Details are in her obituary (http://tinyurl.com/AskariObit1) and a feature article (http://tinyurl.com/AskariObit2), both in the Portland Press Herald.
I write on behalf of HUAC. No, not the infamous House Un-American Activities Committee. I refer to “The Heretofore Unheralded Authors Club.” This completely unorganized group includes the many authors, including myself and other OLLI writers, who have published one or more books in relative obscurity. And who nevertheless keep writing.

Rarely do we get the attention we received at the first OLLI Literary Fair, April 11. We HUAC members are in debt to Denney Morton, Janet Stebbins, Tim Baehr, and their hard-working Fair Committee. They brought attention to authors who write and publish books that generally are not reviewed in The New York Times, do not haul in huge bucks from publishers, do not go viral on the Internet, or anywhere else, for that matter. Yet they do have a place in the American literary world.

We write because we have to. Or we have a message to send. Or we have a story banging around in our heads that just won’t go away. Most of us have a loyal, if relatively small, band of readers who find something useful or of value or entertaining in our words. May the Lord grant all of them long life, and a continuing thirst for the written word!

I am sure my fellow authors are grateful, as I am, to all those whose labors made the first OLLI Literary Fair such a success. I can hardly wait for the second one, next year.

—Norman Abelson

The festive look of the Forum highlighted by the flowers, the wonderful desserts by Scratch, the flowing activity schedule, the concise book displays, the enlightened, witty, personal, and entertaining talk by Betsy Sholl, and the brief moving presentations by the writers’ panel, all contributed to the overall satisfying feeling that OLLI supports a vibrant writing community.

On the following page, see more photos taken at the Fair by Tim Byrne.
Scenes from the first annual OLLI Literary Fair

TIM BYRNE PHOTOGRAPHY
OLLI Excursion June 18
Boston Harbor Cruise and John F. Kennedy Presidential Library

Join us for an exciting and stimulating day in the great city of Boston. The Excursion starts with a Boston Harbor Cruise in the morning, followed by an afternoon traveling back in time at the JFK Presidential Library.

The narrated Harbor Cruise is rich in historic facts and stories that will provide a new appreciation of the harbor’s active, rich, and diverse history. We will learn about the heroic tales of the Revolutionary War and the local legends of the sea. Highlighted will be various historic places in both the inner and outer harbor, such as the nation’s oldest continuously manned lighthouse, “Old Ironsides,” and the Old North Church.

Because the boat has only a small snack bar, plan on bringing a picnic lunch to eat on board while you enjoy the tour.

In the early afternoon we will go to the JFK Presidential Library, which has a wide array of engaging exhibits. We will be welcomed by staff and shown a 17-minute introductory film highlighting the early life of JFK, through his years in Congress, and up to the 1960 Democratic National Convention. The tour takes approximately 90 minutes and begins with JFK’s accepting the nomination for the presidency. It is a totally self-guided tour, filled with rich multimedia experiences. Special Exhibits will be announced upon our arrival. Look for more information on the web site: [http://www.jfklibrary.org/](http://www.jfklibrary.org/)

**Total Cost:** $70, including a tip for the driver.

**Transportation:** The tour bus will leave the Wishcamper Center at 8 a.m. and return to Portland at approximately 6 p.m.

**Reservations:** Reserve your space with a credit card by calling the OLLI office at 780-4406. Or mail your check to OLLI, USM, PO Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104.

**Reservation Deadline:** Friday, May 30. There will be no refunds for cancellations after June 6.

For further information, call Ellen Richards (712-0498) or Gael McKibben (774-7177).
OLLI Excursions goes in search of three of the city’s hidden gems

On May 21 we will explore the Maine Charitable Mechanic Association’s library, founded in 1820, the same year Maine achieved statehood. The library was “established for the improvement of the minds of the city’s apprentices.” It is the eighth oldest private membership library in the country and was the primary library in Portland until the late 19th century. The Association’s granite building was completed just before the outbreak of the Civil War and was used as City Administration offices after the Great Fire of 1866. We will tour the building’s library, the ballroom, and the cupola, which allows a 360-degree view from Congress Street. An extra special treat (and entirely unconnected!) will be studio visits to OLLI faculty member and artist Juris Ubans and to Rebecca Goodale, book artist and Program Coordinator for USM’s Center for Book Arts. On the Web: www.mainecharitablemechanicassociation.com

On May 28 we will turn our attention to the Portland Room of the Portland Public Library, the top research and preservation resource for the City of Portland. Librarian Abraham Scheckter will introduce the rich archives devoted to Greater Portland’s history and development, from its earliest years to the present. Included are rare manuscripts, maps, and documentation on residents, businesses, the city’s publishing houses, many newspapers, and more. The Special Collections also includes pertinent artifacts as well as rare books and book arts. On the Web: http://www.portlandlibrary.com/locations/main-library/portland-room/

On June 4 we visit the Maine Historical Society’s Brown Library, an unrivaled collection dating from the 16th to 21st centuries. It includes personal papers; diaries; maps; and records of businesses, proprietorships, and towns. Every county in the state is represented. This library is the state’s most comprehensive resource for the study of Maine and New England history. Special collections include major photographic holdings, broadsides, postcards, railroad and engineering drawings, and the largest single collection of architectural plans in the state. Among the Library’s many treasures is the Declaration of Independence, one of 26 known copies printed on July 4, 1776. On the Web: https://www.mainehistory.org/library_overview.shtml

While there, we will also be introduced to The Maine Memory Network, a project of the Maine Historical Society. It has been digitizing over 30,000 entries during the past 12 years and has created Maine History Online, a 21st-century digital museum. This interactive site tells the stories of Maine and its people, through essays, exhibits, historical images, documents, and objects drawn from the Maine Memory Network’s more than 260 contributing organizations across the state.

We will gather at 10:30 a.m. at each building. Transportation is on your own. Tours have been scheduled so that afterwards you can attend the Farmers’ Market and eat lunch in the Longfellow Garden, or dine at one of the restaurants in Monument Square.

Cost for each tour is $10; you may sign up for the series or for each individual tour. Tours are limited to 20 participants. Deadline is Wednesday, May 14. No refunds after May 19. The May 20 and 28 visits last at least one hour; the June 4 visit lasts two hours.

To reserve, mail your check to OLLI, PO Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104; call 780-4406 to pay with a credit card; or register in person at the office. For further information, call Gael McKibben at 774-7177.
New destination for the Walking Club

On Wednesday, May 14, we visit a new site, the Blackstrap Community Forest in Falmouth, which offers nine miles of hikes in forests with several small brooks running through them. Pay attention to the weather, as there may be wet or marshy areas underfoot. Be prepared and wear appropriate gear.

Blackstrap Community Forest information is here: http://tinyurl.com/BCForest

On Tuesday, May 27, we will enjoy the beautiful ocean view along Cliff Walk at Prout’s Neck and have lunch nearby. We will meet at the Back Cove parking lot across from Hannaford at 10 a.m. to carpool. Bring your lunch and water. If you have questions about the walks, please call Pat LeFebvre at 883-2936.

OLLI Night Out: Let’s meet to eat!

May’s OLLI Night Out takes us to Buga-boo Creek Steakhouse, 264 Gorham Road, South Portland (near the Maine Mall).

This is a casual dining place with a rustic Rocky Mountain lodge atmosphere. The menu includes steaks, pasta, prime rib, smoked baby back ribs, and fresh and saltwater fish. See the website here: http://www.bugaboocreek.com/

DATE: Tuesday, May 13
TIME: 5:30 p.m.
RESERVE: By noon Monday, May 12. Call or write me at 865-2009 or lascala2@comcast.net.

Hope to see you there.

—Barbara Bardack
OLLI Night Out Coordinator

Brown Bag Lunch

“Peer Learning and Peer Teaching at OLLI”
Monday, May 5, 11:40 a.m. to 12:40 p.m., Wishcamper 211

The Education Committee will offer a Brown Bag Lunch event for all OLLI members, both faculty and students, featuring panelists Bill Gregory, Fred Brancato, Jean Sheridan, Peter Stead, David LaGraffe, and Mike Brady. Henry Warren will be panel moderator, and will facilitate Q & A with the audience.
Here is an opportunity for you to support the efforts of your friends and peers at OLLI. And who knows: you might join in the fun too.

The day looks like this:

**Art Show** ● All day ● 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Amazing art and photography for your viewing and enjoyment.

**Reader’s Theater Class** ● Performance 9:30-11:00 a.m., Room 133

Three one-act plays involving murder, pick-up lines, and contingency morality. Don’t miss it!

**Recorder Ensemble SIG*** ● Performance 11:15-12:00 Noon, Room 102

Enjoy the musical prowess of this wonderful group of musicians.

**BROWN BAG LUNCH** ● Forum, 12:00 Noon

*Please bring your own lunch; drinks and desserts will be provided.*

**Singers SIG*** ● Performance 12:30-1:15 p.m., Room 102

Come and hear the melodious voices of our Singers, who love what they do and do what they love.

**Senior Players SIG*** ● Performance 1:30-2:00 p.m., Room 133

The Players’ amazing actors will perform three skits for your entertainment. You will not stop smiling.

**Line Dancing Class** ● Performance 2:15-2:45 p.m., Room 102

The dancers are primed and ready to go! You may learn a few steps, too; you will not want to miss it.

**Presented by your Community Committee.**

*SIG = Special Interest Group*
“Why doesn’t OLLI offer a course on my favorite subject?”

Maybe it’s because you haven’t put your idea into a course concept yet!

OLLI’s Education Committee is here to help!

There are various ways to go about creating an OLLI course:

1. You could be the coordinator for a course that utilizes several different guest speakers, each providing one two-hour session. It takes a bit of work to get this rolling, but the model has worked beautifully in a number of courses.

2. Choose a book that you have loved, and set up a discussion course on that book or its topic. You could follow the Great Books Foundation guidelines and use our copy of *Shared Inquiry*, which describes this process, or you may have your own approach.

3. Film is another excellent medium for a discussion course. Choose a topic and select six or eight films related to it. OLLI classrooms are set up to show DVDs, from the classroom computer or from yours.

4. Using a discussion model, you can make up anything else that you like — the beauty of OLLI is that you can learn as you go, tackling a topic along with your class participants. Teach your passion, and you’ll find that enthusiasm can be contagious!

   [Attend the Education Committee’s Brown Bag Lunch event on May 5 at 11:40 a.m. in Wishcamper 211 to learn more about peer learning and peer teaching at OLLI. See page 8.]

5. Find another person to team up with; each of you could cover half of the weeks during an OLLI term; or you could both lead all 6 or 8 weeks together.

Contact the Education Committee by e-mailing Joan Aldrich at *aldrich1822@gmail.com*, or by leaving a message for us through the OLLI office, 780-4406. We’d be glad to help you develop your course concept!

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**We need artists and craftspeople to benefit The OLLI scholarship fund**

We are planning the first Holiday Arts and Crafts Festival in conjunction with the OLLI Fall Book Sale.

- Rent a table for $10 and sell your art or craft items.
- Contribute one item to a Silent Auction.

Table Fees and proceeds from the Silent Auction will go to support **The OLLI Scholarship Fund**. Anything else you make is all yours!

You must be an OLLI member to participate.

Let Julie Neuls know if we can count on you. Please e-mail her at *jneuls@maine.rr.com*