Profile

Eric and Laurie Jensen

A poet-engineer and a volunteer with a vengeance

He is an introvert — with a secret antic side. She likes nothing better than to meet people and chat them up. She loves to travel; he prefers to stay home. He is a self-described “geek” who was “seduced by computers” early in life. She was a longtime educator who explored the potential of human, rather than cyber, brains. They both swim.

Eric and Laurie Jensen met, in fact, in the MIT swimming pool, doing laps. He also occasionally performed idiosyncratic “clown dives” in that pool, dubbing his favorite the “full-squirming front lurch” (see “antic side”). Now married more than 40 years, they still swim most mornings at Cape Elizabeth High School. Indeed, three years ago Eric held firsts in his age group for backstroke in New England Masters Swimming (times that were good for fourth and fifth nationally). He also placed third among seniors in the Peaks to Portland race a few years back.

Eric and Laurie are one of OLLI’s many student-couples. They joined almost 10 years ago, she first. One of her earliest and “favorite classes of all time” was David Morton’s course on atheism. She has been a weekly desk volunteer in the OLLI office for the past seven years. She loves “helping people find what they need.” Laurie has continued to take many OLLI courses, including Jack Lynch’s course on the origins of language, Tan Larrabee’s art history offerings, and most recently, Steve Schiffman’s course on geometry and topology.

Born in Portland, Eric earned a B.S. in mathematics from MIT but took many of his classes in electrical engineering in the

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Eric and Laurie Jensen  (continued from page 1)

graduate school. At OLLI, he has plunged into humanities courses. He has taken creative writing and poetry courses with various instructors, and “Improv for Everybody” with David LaGraffe. He has participated in Denney Morton’s poetry workshop for many years, and recently self-published a book of his own poetry, *Bittersweet Battle and Other Adventures*. Eric gives a special shout-out to his fellow workshop poets, who have been there through thick and thin.

The man who began writing poetry in grade school knows another language intimately: computer code. He worked as a programmer at MIT for several years after graduation, and taught a computer to read aloud. He and Laurie eventually moved to Bedford, New Hampshire, where they lived until 2004. Eric automated newspaper offices and designed robot control systems. He literally spent *one day* working on the Segway when he was employed by Dean Kamen, inventor of the vehicle that was supposed to revolutionize individual travel. Laurie participated in a focus group for the Segway in its prototypical stage.

Laurie, a Massachusetts native, graduated from Wellesley College with a psychology degree and then earned a Masters in Education from Boston University, specializing in learning disabilities. She tutored reading for a while, but she found that her true interest was “how kids learn and the differences in their learning styles.” She received school certification as a specialist in the assessment of intellectual functioning — a designation that, unfortunately for Laurie, does not exist in Maine — from Rivier College, Nashua. Thereafter she dedicated herself to evaluating young people (ages 3–21) across the intellectual spectrum from disabled to gifted.

Laurie is a volunteer with a vengeance. She devoted almost 30 years to the Bedford Public Library. She now gives her time to the OLLI office and Portland Head Light, and ushers at Merrill Auditorium and Portland Stage. Formerly a volunteer for Portland’s Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, she puts those skills to use on the waterfront when cruise ships and tour buses come in. She informally helps people find their way while selling her handcrafted wire-wrapped sea glass jewelry.

Laurie has taken OLLI trips to Portugal, France, and Croatia. She “dragged” Eric along on the trip to Italy. They do go together to Nova Scotia and Campobello Island, Canada.

The Jensens live in Cape Elizabeth, in the house that Eric’s parents built on his grandfather’s land. They have two sons, Michael, an attorney in Washington, D.C., and David, a mathematician in Lexington, Kentucky. Michael and his wife recently welcomed Haley, who is grandchild number one. Michael has also been named a Fulbright Scholar, and will soon head to Sydney, Australia.

The grandparents Jensen are planning a visit.

—Amy Liston

**Senior Players on WMPG; Honor Mel Howards**

Set your dial to WMPG station 90.9 or 104.1 on Friday, May 8, from 1:00 to 1:30 p.m.

Senior Players will make their debut appearance on the “Nonprofit Insider” show. For 30 minutes they will showcase their upcoming Ninth Week performance on Wednesday, May 13.

Mark your calendars: radio show on May 8 and performance at the Wishcamper Center on May 13 in Room 133 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. This will be followed immediately by a Special Recognition Award to Mel Howards for founding Senior Players in 2000 and an opportunity to purchase a signed copy of Mel’s new book of essays, *Provocations: The Wit, Wisdom, and Whimsy of Mel Howards*. 
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.

OLLI NEWSLETTER
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Please send newsletter material to the OLLI Office, via our e-mail.

Deadline for the June issue is May 15.

OLLI Runs on Volunteers ● OLLI Runs on Volunteers

Advisory Board

Volunteer appreciation luncheon

May seems like an appropriate time in the OLLI year to give thanks to all of the non-faculty volunteers who make our program so successful. The Advisory Board appreciates all the office volunteers, committee members (special event, ad hoc and standing committees), SIG chairs, and everyone else who pitches in to help. We hope to see all volunteers at our annual volunteer appreciation luncheon on May 19.

OLLI survey

Here is a brief summary of results from the survey given to OLLI members in March 2015. For results about computer use, keep in mind that all but 19 responses were done via the e-mail version of the survey.

The numbers below correspond to the questions on the survey.

1. Gender and Age: Respondents were 73% women and 27% men. A little over half of respondents were in the age group 65–74, and 80% were in the age group 60–79. 16% were over 80. There were very few respondents in the age group 50–64.

2. Marital Status: 55% of respondents were married or partnered, 19% widowed, 16% separated or divorced, and 9% single.

3. Highest Education Level: Almost 88% of respondents have a Bachelor’s degree or higher; 57% have a Master’s degree or higher.

4. Years Lived in Southern Maine: Almost 75% of respondents have lived in Southern Maine 10 years or more; 13% have lived in Southern Maine less than 5 years.

5. Years as OLLI Member: About 60% of respondents have been OLLI members five years or less. Only 15% have been members more than 10 years.

6. Time to Travel to OLLI: 80% of respondents live within a half hour of OLLI at USM.

7. Technologies Used: 95% of respondents use a desktop or laptop computer. An estimated 93% use a cell phone or smartphone.

8. Communications Methods Used: 99% of respondents use e-mail, 49% use texting, and 37% use Facebook. There is some use of Skype, LinkedIn, Twitter, and FaceTime.

9. First Heard about OLLI: More than 71% of respondents first heard about OLLI through word of mouth. Small percentages heard of OLLI through the OLLI catalog, the Maine Senior College Network, and the OLLI website.

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10. Get Current Information about OLLI: The most frequent sources of information about OLLI are the on-line catalog (80%), e-mails from OLLI (73%), the mailed OLLI catalog (73%), and the on-line newsletter (64%).

11. Special Interest Groups: 30% to 35% of respondents participate in Special Interest Groups. The most popular groups are Book Club, Outdoor/Walking Club, and OLLI Night Out.

12. SAGE Lectures: 60% to 70% of respondents did not attend a SAGE lecture in either Spring 2014 or Fall 2014. The largest group of attendees attended only one or two lectures in each season.

13. Importance of OLLI: 91% of respondents said that the academic experience at OLLI is important or very important to them. 61% reported that the social experience was important or very important. OLLI overall was important or very important in the life of 72% of respondents.

14. Satisfaction with OLLI: 92% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the academic experience at OLLI; 76% were satisfied or very satisfied with the social experience; 86% were satisfied or very satisfied with their overall OLLI experience.

15. Comments, ideas and suggestions: Respondents provided 275 comments on the survey (41% of total respondents).

Thanks to Dick Leslie and Janet Stebbins for preparing this summary. The Advisory Board will discuss the survey results, including the comments, and factor this information into future planning and policy decisions. Thanks for your participation!

—Susan Gesing, Advisory Board Chair
susangesing@gmail.com, 967-5660

Important Summer Term Dates

May 12: Online registration for OLLI summer courses begins at 10 a.m.

May 12–13: Onsite help setting up online student accounts and registering for classes available in the Computer Lab at Wishcamper from 10 a.m to noon and 1 to 3 p.m.

May 19: Phone registration begins

May 25: OLLI and USM closed for Memorial Day

June 23: OLLI summer term classes start

July 2: Deadline to receive refund on dropped classes

July 3: OLLI and USM closed in observance of Independence Day

July 30: OLLI summer term ends

Aug. 4–6: OLLI summer term makeup week

Remember to pick up a CLYNK bag at the office for your deposit bottles and cans!

Proceeds benefit OLLI.
NOTES FROM SUSAN

It’s time to register for the OLLI Summer classes. Online registration begins May 12. The majority of OLLI members are having no problems, but there are some things I’d like to clarify.

The registration system is not the OLLI online catalog. The catalog is posted on the OLLI website, as it has always been: www.usm.maine.edu/olli. Once you peruse the catalog and decide on which class(es) you’d like, simply go back to the OLLI home page and click on “Enroll/Register Here” in the right-hand column. The link will take you to the registration site. This is where the classes are listed alphabetically by instructors’ last names. You must have an account and password, and pay for your classes with a credit card. If you are new to the system and would like one-on-one help, the Wishcamper computer lab will be staffed with volunteers May 12 and 13.

The OLLI membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. Since all summer classes run into the next membership year, 2015–2016 membership must be paid when you register for summer classes. The new online system automatically adds the $25 membership fee to your first registration. One of the big advantages of this new system is that it remembers that you have paid your membership, and won’t let you pay it again within the year. You’d be surprised how many people try to pay for their membership more than once!

Class confirmations and receipts for payment are e-mailed to you immediately upon completion of your registration. If you do not receive an immediate confirmation, something is wrong. Call the OLLI office and we’ll help you troubleshoot.

And remember – there is nothing you can do in the online registration system that cannot be undone, so don’t be afraid to try. The OLLI staff, work-study students, and Board member volunteers are all ready and willing to assist you.

—Susan Morrow, Assistant Director for Program

Education Committee

Brown-bag lunch with Kathleen Sutherland

Kathleen Sutherland will present a lecture entitled, “Whither the Arab Spring? 2011–2015?” on Thursday, May 7, from 11:45 to 12:30 in Room 133.

Wrap up your sandwiches and come hear some suggestions about what went wrong and why, and speculations about what’s next.

OLLI Etiquette Reminders

Here are a few things to keep in mind as we attend classes and workshops:

Please do not wear anything scented: cologne, shaving lotion, moisturizer, and so on. Some of your classmates are allergic to them.

Please wear your nametag so your instructor and classmates can identify you. If you don’t have a nametag yet, stop by the OLLI office and ask for one.

Please silence all electronic devices.
Writers’ Showcase

Everyone is invited

Please Come

Listen to OLLI writers
read short selections
from their own work

Poetry — Fiction — Memoir — Non-fiction

Mix, chat, and share Refreshments

Monday, May 4, 2015

3:00 – 6:00

The Atrium and Room 133

It’s Celebration Time Again!!

The end of the Spring Term is almost upon us, and it’s time to savor and enjoy our time together. Here are all the details.

Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2015
Time: From 9:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Where: Wishcamper Building

The Creative Arts Show will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Room 113. We’ll begin the day with singing! The schedule is as follows:

9:15–10 a.m. OLLI Singers, Room 102
10–10:45 a.m. Recorder Ensemble, Room 102
11–12:30 p.m. Reader’s Theater Class, Room 133
12:30–1:00 p.m. LUNCH in the Forum

Bring your own brown bag lunch. Drinks and desserts will be provided.

1–1:25 p.m. Line Dancing Class, Room 102
1:30–3:00 p.m. OLLI Senior Players, Room 133

Keep watch around OLLI for posters and take a peek in the literature racks! Come to the performances and support your OLLI friends; visit and revisit the Creative Arts Show. "Live, Laugh, and Love!"

See you there!

—The OLLI Community Committee
OLLI Excursions Continue to Open Portland’s Hidden Treasures

This year we’ll continue with visits to sites you may not be aware of. Churches, libraries, and craft alcohol are the focus of the three separate series that will take place during the summer and fall.

June’s series will be the “Anti-Temperance!” tour. Portland’s own Neal S. Dow was the author of the “Maine Law of 1851” that turned Maine into a dry state. Portland’s ninth mayor, he was called the “Napoleon of Temperance” and the “Father of Prohibition.”

In 1917, Congress passed the 18th amendment prohibiting the manufacture, sale, transportation, and import of liquor throughout the US. The states ratified it by 1919, and it became law in 1920. Eventually things loosened up and the Prohibition Act was repealed in 1933, eighty-two years ago.

Now Portland has become active in creating craft beer and alcohol, and OLLI has the opportunity to go on an “Anti-Temperance!” exploratory tour of some makers and their tasting rooms.

Our first visit will be on Monday, June 1, to the Rising Tide Brewing Company in the East Bayside neighborhood. Opened by a young couple just five years ago, Rising Tide is a production brewery (rather than a brewpub) that hand-crafts small batches of specialty beers. One of its beers was featured in a 2014 Wall Street Journal article. Website: http://www.risingtidebrewing.com/

June 8 will find us at the Liquid Riot Bottling Co. on Commercial St. to learn about their distillery named in honor of Portland’s 1855 rum riots. Gin, rum, and whiskey are its specialties. Learn how distillers achieve the “full burn, focused nose, punchy mouth.” After the tour and tasting, you can have a delicious lunch at the restaurant on the premises. Website: http://liquidriot.com/

On June 15 we will go to Munjoy Hill and the Maine Mead Works. Mead is coming back into fashion and is the most ancient form of alcoholic drink. Made from honey, it was known in Asia in 7000 BCE and was the sophisticated wine drink of ancient Greeks, Beowulf, and all good Visigoths. The fermentation system used by the Maine Mead Works is unique in the US. Website: http://www.mainemeadworks.com/

We will gather at 10:30 a.m. at each site. Directions and details will be sent out several days in advance. Transportation is on your own. Visits last about an hour and a quarter.

Cost for each tour is $10 and includes one flight of tasting samples in each tasting room. Registration is limited to a maximum of 20 OLLI members. Deadline for registration is May 22. No refunds thereafter.

To reserve, use one of these methods:
- Beginning May 1, by using the online OLLI registration system (www.usm.maine.edu/OLLI)
- Beginning May 6, by mailing your check to OLLI, PO Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104
- Beginning May 6, by calling 780-4406 to pay with a card
- Beginning May 6, by registering in person at the office.

For further information call Gael McKibben at 774-7177.
Walking Club to Revisit Two Old Favorites

As we proceed into our Maine spring, we will enjoy two of our perennial favorites.

On Wednesday, May 13, we will visit the Fore River Sanctuary and Jewell Falls, Portland’s “only natural waterfall.” This presents varying terrain with some uneven sections of the trail and some elevation, but overall is not a difficult walk. You can check it out online: http://tinyurl.com/JewellFalls.

On Tuesday, May 26, we will enjoy the coast along the Prout’s Neck Cliff Walk and will eat lunch at a home nearby. This is one of our longer walks, and it offers some beautiful views.

For both walks we will meet to carpool at the Back Cove parking lot across from Hannaford at 10 a.m. Bring your lunch and water. Watch the weather so you can wear proper foot gear. If you have questions, please call Rae Garcelon at 846-3304.

Interested in Bike and Nosh Get-Togethers?

If you like to bicycle, how about joining a group of OLLI members for a ride, with a delicious treat along the way?

We are assessing interest in forming a group that might plan such get-togethers once every couple of weeks during the warmer months. If you are interested, please contact Shoshana Hoose at shoshanahoose@gmail.com by May 10.

OLLI’s going to Spain

Details cannot be finalized by the time this Newsletter is posted, but here’s a brief summary of the Fall OLLI trip.

We’ll be going to Spain Nov. 13–23. We will be staying in three cities: Madrid, Seville, and Barcelona. While in Seville, we’ll include trips to Granada and Toledo. Transportation between the major cities will be by high-speed train.

Cost will be around $3,100 plus insurance; add $500 for a single. Final details will be available by May 15 in the OLLI office. E-mail Susan if you’d like a final itinerary e-mailed to you (smorrow@usm.maine.edu).

Diners Heading Back to The Good Table

This month we plan to welcome Spring and the new life beginning by visiting a veritable garden spot on our local restaurant scene.

The Good Table, where we met in 2013, is a long-established family business. They use fresh, local ingredients — some from their own beautiful garden — to create innovative dishes, often with a Greek flavor. Their lovely porch is as welcoming as the dining rooms and the staff.

Please consider joining us for this event.

When: Thursday, May 21, at 5:30 p.m.
Where: 527 Ocean House Road, Route 77, Cape Elizabeth. See their menu here: www.thegoodtablerestaurant.net
Reservations: Needed by noon, Wednesday, May 20. Call or write Barbara Bardack at 865-2009, or lascala2@comcast.net.