Happy 15th Birthday to Us!

This fall’s OLLI course catalog lists 78 classes and workshops for an expected membership of over 1500 people. We will hold fall classes and workshops six days a week and on Thursday evenings in a handsome, recently-built classroom building with all the latest media equipment. Several Special Interest Groups meet at non-class times. We host day trips and longer journeys overseas, and we hold special events such as the popular Wrinkle in Time series.

It was quite different fifteen years ago.

On Friday, September 12, 1997, a group of seniors and instructors gathered in Payson Smith Hall on the USM campus for the first classes of the USM Senior College.

Initially, the plan had been to offer just four classes, two in the morning and two in the afternoon. But a trend began that has continued to this day: the response was more enthusiastic and larger than anticipated. Three additional classes were thus added to the roster, in order to accommodate the numbers of students who wished to enroll. The seven classes would be familiar today: World Religions; Current Issues, Domestic and Foreign; Environmental Awareness; History of Art; Estates and Wills; The Last Great Stage of Life; and Ballroom Dancing. (Notably, three of the initial instructors have classes listed in the catalog this fall: Rabbi Sky, Terry Foster, and Wallace Nutting.)

How did this all begin?

The organization was first established as “USM Senior College,” thanks primarily to the efforts of Rabbi Harry Sky and Terry Foster, along with significant support from USM.

Rabbi Sky, retired in 1989 from Temple Beth El, had been learning about and investigating programs geared toward educating older adults. He approached Richard Pattenaude, then President of USM, with the idea that USM should host a senior college. Richard Pattenaude, in turn, sought the help of Terry Foster, who was then serving as USM’s Director of Extended Academic Programs (later to be known as “Division of Outreach”).

Incorporating suggestions from Richard Pattenaude, Rabbi Sky and Terry Foster put together a nine-person Senior College Executive Board, with the aim of developing a needs assessment, resource identification, and recruitment and promotion plan for a Senior College. A generous funding grant was secured from USM to help with start-up costs, including mailing campaigns and special events.

Early on, the Board discovered just how much interest there might be in a senior college. On Memorial Day weekend of 1997, the board hosted an open house at the USM Student Center. Terry Foster remembers that 200 to 300 people were expected; 550 showed up.

Continued on page 4
Profile

Joan Aldrich

A lifelong learner, she has much to give

Joan Aldrich describes herself as a “lifelong learner” and regards OLLI as a “playground of continual learning,” where she has much to offer and much to receive. Chair of the Education Committee since last November, she is aiming to use her educational background, teaching, and recent work experiences in ways to benefit OLLI.

Joan, a Maryland native, traveled down the academic road with the aim of becoming a college-level religion instructor. She began her studies at Berea College in Kentucky which is a work-study institution that charges no tuition or room and board. Joan also spent an exchange year in Japan.

She then earned her M.Div. at Bangor Theological Seminary. Then followed studies at the University of Virginia, where she concentrated on African religion and earned a M.A. in Religious Studies. Her master’s thesis, The Quest for Immortality in the Epic of Gilgamesh, was to later inspire a course at OLLI.

Joan came to Maine when she married her husband, a clinical psychologist. She found that teaching comparative religion at the Maine college level had a high barrier: The major institutions had incorporated religious studies into their philosophy departments.

However, Joan had been doing spiritual counseling and that fit well with seeking a M.S. in Counseling at USM. That led her into work as clinician/counselor for Spurwink Services at Westbrook and Old Orchard Beach. Her clients included children from kindergarten to grade 3, and their parents. Many of the families had troubled backgrounds. She found this experience “heartbreaking.” Her work experience also included being a Human Resource Development graduate assistant to the USM department chair Jack Sutton.

Joan’s religious studies and her varied work experience helped prepare her to join OLLI and eventually teach classes. She notes: “I believe in discussion classes. Each person has something to offer and something to receive.” Joan believes that at our age “we are becoming more conscious of time, and we have a greater opportunity to choose the memories we want to keep vibrant.”

Her selection as Education Committee Chair is “an honor,” she says, praising those who have agreed to serve with her. She says the group “is a somewhat quiet, introspective group with backgrounds in varied areas that results in a think tank atmosphere that hopefully leads to some exciting contributions to OLLI.” The committee’s goal is to bring in at least 60 course offerings for each fall and spring term, and at least 25 each winter and summer. The committee has various plans under consideration, including a return of the well-received “One Book, One Community” event.

Joan hopes to repeat her course on “The Epic of Gilgamesh.” Meanwhile, her present course is “Our Search for Meaning,” co-taught with Ed Schwartz.

—Don King

Did it!

Tim Baehr’s short story, “The Wedding Dance,” has been published in the Spring/Summer 2012 issue of Soundings Review, a publication of Northwest Institute of Literary Arts in Freeland, Washington.

[Want to share news about your publication, award, or the like in the past couple of months? Send us a note: ollinews@usm.maine.edu]
ADVISORY BOARD
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OLLI members are invited to attend Advisory Board meetings, which usually take place on the second Friday of the month. Check with the OLLI office for time and place. Please contact the chair if you wish to address the Board.

WEB SITES
Maine Senior College Network
www.maineseniorcollege.org
OLLI National Resource Center
www.osher.net
OLLI at USM
www.usm.maine.edu/olli

OLLI NEWSLETTER
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Jo Morris, Layout Editor
Tim Baehr, Managing Editor
Please send newsletter material to the OLLI Office, via our e-mail. Deadline for submission is the 15th of the month before the newsletter is published.

Ed ucation Committee News

The Education Committee’s mission is to shape the curriculum, and recruit faculty, lecturers, and workshop instructors to provide a variety of educational opportunities for OLLI members in a creative and inclusive learning community.

We welcome three new committee members this year: Anita Jones, Peter Stead, and Barbara Sturgeon. Continuing from last year are Joan Chadbourne, Ken Hamilton, Val Hart, David LaGraffe, Joy Larrabee, Rich Machlin, David Morton, Mary Jo Steckevicz, and Henry Warren. Speak to any one of us, drop a note in our office mailbox, or e-mail the chair at aldrich1822@gmail.com.

We strive to shape a curriculum that will appeal to both thinkers and doers, and that will feature not only academic learning but also personal development and physical well-being. We work in support of the OLLI administration and try to carry out their goals. We are provided a lot of creative freedom and feel supported by the administration’s enthusiasm for new ideas.

This year, we hope to encourage more OLLI members to consider teaching, or perhaps team-teaching, a course. Another course concept is for a facilitator to arrange for eight people to join in presenting a single course, one speaker per session, offering eight perspectives related to the same topic. This has been done in “Great Decisions” and in the new course being offered by Friends of the Kotzschmar Organ, “A Pipe Organ in Portland City Hall.”

We would like to offer at least one panel discussion featuring OLLI members. We also hope to offer another “One Book, One Community” event. And we are considering the introduction of something akin to a “Socrates Café” event, where people would come to Wishcamper on a Sunday afternoon, and spend a couple of hours schmoozing over coffee and baked goods, discussing a particular topic, to be determined upon their arrival.

We will focus on faculty development and enrichment by offering more Brown Bag Lunch Events, some to encourage members to consider first-time teaching at OLLI, and others to offer topics of interest to current faculty.

To help insure that classes taught by first-time faculty are well-publicized, and to encourage members to try out new learning experiences, we hope to develop an “OLLI Sampler” event, where members could meet a number of new instructors and hear them talk briefly about what they will be teaching in the next semester or two. Our thanks for this idea goes to John Sutherland.

We look forward to a stimulating and productive year!

—Joan Aldrich, Chair
What were the early years like?

Back in 1997, students had to be 55 or older to enroll; now, the age for membership is 50. Membership fees were the same as they are today, $25.00, and tuition costs were $50.00 for the first class and $25.00 for the second.

Because we shared space with the University, classes were offered only on Fridays, when fewer University classes met. Senior College students could take only two classes, one each in the morning and afternoon.

From 1997 to 2008, most classes were held in Payson Smith and Luther Bonney Halls of USM. A special tradition that arose on Fridays during that first eight-week term, and then continued for many years, was that members lunched together, first in the basement of Payson Smith, and later in the USM Student Center. Pat Muzzy recalls the spirit of camaraderie of those days, and notes that today the Special Interest Groups create opportunities for members to bond in a somewhat similar way, where good friendships form through shared interests.

How did the Senior College expand?

Beginning in 1999, the Senior College idea began to spread. After lobbying efforts from our board, the state provided seed money for a Senior College Initiative. This led to the employment of Kali Lightfoot, a portion of whose task was to spread knowledge and enthusiasm for Senior College throughout the state. This eventually led to the establishment of the Maine Senior College Network and the 17 Senior Colleges that exist today.

How did we become OLLI?

By 2000, Bernard Osher had become aware of the USM Senior College. Osher, a former banker then living in California, had Maine connections. He was born in Biddeford, Maine, and his brother still lives in Portland. Bernard continues to have a great passion for education and the arts; he took up weekly piano lessons in his 80s (which sounds like some of our OLLI students). He has been described as “the quiet philanthropist,” and has said that reading letters from the recipients of his generosity is the high point of each day.

Osher came in 2000 to visit the USM Senior College and to meet with Kali Lightfoot and USM Vice-President Rosa Redonnett. He provided a substantial grant to establish our OLLI — the first Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Osher went on to make further grants available toward funding educational opportunities for people over 50. His grants have helped establish or strengthen 117 OLLIs similar to ours currently in existence throughout the nation.

And so…

Had it not been for the drive and passion of Rabbi Sky, Terry Foster, and many others, and the community spirit that they generated and nurtured, the Bernard Osher Foundation’s generous gift would never have come to this community.

Look for special features in future Newsletters, including an account of subsequent developments at OLLI (and our move to Wishcamper!), and profiles of some of the many volunteers who have made OLLI at USM what it is today. Events to be held at OLLI throughout this academic year will stimulate and encourage a sense of celebration within the OLLI community. Happy Anniversary, OLLI! Happy Birthday!

—Joan Aldrich and Tim Baehr
SAGE carries its past successes into the future

Hello all. I’m Bob Bahm, and I’m delighted to be your new SAGE committee Chair. I want to assure everyone that I intend to maintain the high standards that have already been set, and to continue to have a diverse, interesting, and relevant group of speakers for us on Tuesday mornings. Betty Smith, who began and so ably led SAGE for 20 years, decided to step down as Chair but continues serving on the SAGE Committee.

We currently have a list of about 50 possible speakers, and we don’t lack ideas for new ones. However, our experience has been that possible speakers don’t necessarily become actual speakers. So if you have a personal relationship with a prospective speaker, let us know. We are more successful in recruiting someone via a personal connection.

We’re interested at this point in recognizable names that would be a universal draw. If you know someone who fits this description please feel free to contact me at bahm143@gmail.com. I would welcome your ideas and your help in their recruitment. See you Tuesday mornings at SAGE, starting Sept. 18.

Also, I want to tell you (or remind you) that the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston is now free to all OLLI students. All you need is to show your student ID. It’s a wonderful gift by a patron from Maine.

SAGE Lecture Schedule

SAGE lectures take place in 102 Wishcamper Center.

Tuesday, September 18
1936: The Year of the Three Kings
Presenter: H. Draper Hunt, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of History, USM

Tuesday, September 25
Newcomers to Portland: Expectations and Aspirations
Presenter: Grace Valenzuela, Director, Multilingual and Multicultural Center, Portland, Maine

Tuesday, October 2
Expedition to the South Pole
Presenter: Eivind Rynning

Tuesday, October 9
The Presidential Election of ’12 – 1912, That Is!
Presenter: John Sutherland, Ph.D., Professor of History Emeritus at Manchester (Conn.) Community College, has taught at OLLI since 2003.

Tuesday, October 16
Pioneering Bluegrass in America
Presenter: Allerton “Al” Hawkes, Bluegrass Pioneer, Songwriter, Musician, Record Producer, Music Archivist

Tuesday, October 23
Portland’s Challenges and Opportunities
Presenter: Michael Brennan, Mayor, Portland, Maine

Tuesday, October 30
Election 2012 – Politics As Usual?
Richard Pattenaude, Ph.D., Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Maine System

Tuesday, November 6
Theater 101, or “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Blueberry Fields”
Presenter: Brian P. Allen; Co-founder, Executive and Artistic Director, Good Theater

Tuesday, November 13
Unsupported, Unguided Ascent of Mt. Everest’s Northeast Ridge
Presenter: William Yeo

Calendar

Sept. 11
New Student Orientation
See page 6.

Sept. 12 and 25
Walking Club
See page 7.

Sept. 16
OLLI Night Out
See page 7.

Sept. 17
Fall classes begin.

Sept. 18
SAGE begins.
See this page.
Fall term reminders

- OLLI fall term classes begin Monday, Sept. 17. To see what classes are still available, call 780-4406 or visit the OLLI office. If your class calls for required or recommended readings, check the USM Bookstore in the Woodbury Campus Center across Bedford St. from the Wishcamper Center.

- SAGE lectures will resume Tuesday, Sept. 18. To register call 780-4406, visit the OLLI office, or send your registration to OLLI SAGE, P.O. Box 9300, Portland, ME, 04104. All lectures will be in 102 Wishcamper.

- OLLI has negotiated a deal with USM whereby OLLI pays for parking in the garage so members don’t have to. Simply push the button at the entrance to gain access to the garage. The exit gates will open automatically as you leave. To park in a handicapped space anywhere on campus you must have a State of Maine handicapped placard or license plate. There are 20 handicapped spaces in the parking garage and eight in the parking lot directly behind the Wishcamper Center.

- As a courtesy to your instructors and fellow students, please wear your nametag to OLLI classes and events. If you don’t have one already, please pick one up at the OLLI office. Note: Your nametag is not the same as your OLLI/USM student photoID.

- Please turn off your cell phone, pager, or any other device when you come to class. And please don’t come to class wearing perfume, after-shave, or other fragrances. Some students are allergic to them.

Check your e-mail, OLLI Newsletter, and the OLLI website (www.usm.maine.edu/olli) for details about OLLI events, trips, and special interest groups.

OLLI Creative Arts Presents

Our fall term show features works by Paula Steffan, Linda McLoon, Norm Abelson, and Kathleen Sutherland. Be sure to visit the Gallery Wall on the second floor.

To plan and set a date for your own showing, you’ll find entry forms in the OLLI office.

Did you know...

…that OLLI’s membership year runs July 1 to June 30, and not on a calendar year? If you haven’t renewed since June, your membership has expired. We know summer is busy and some people just don’t get around to paying their membership, so we actually continue to send e-mails, newsletters, and catalogs through September even if your membership has not been renewed. This is the September issue. If you have not paid your 2012-2013 membership, this will be your last newsletter until it is renewed. Catalogs and e-mails will not be sent to you either. Don’t let that happen! Renew your membership and stay on top of OLLI news, course offerings, and notices.

Books, Cookies, and Volunteers

Only you can provide these ingredients for the upcoming book sale at the end of the fall term, and now is the time to get started.

The Resource Development Committee will mix the ingredients and set the tables for two days of fun.

So start gathering those books, find your best cookie recipes, and let Henry Warren (653-1198) know if you can volunteer for a few hours to make all this happen. Watch the Newsletter for details about book and cookie drop-off times.

Welcome new students!

An orientation for new OLLI students will be held Tuesday, Sept. 11, at 1 p.m. in Wishcamper Center Room 102.

After a PowerPoint presentation, OLLI Board members Sue Gesing and Pat Muzzy will answer questions.

Parking is free in the nearby Parking Garage on Bedford St.

All are welcome!
Walking Club planning treks in Saco, Gray

The Walking Club has had several good walks this summer, and we are all looking forward to a cool, crisp fall.

**Wednesday, Sept. 12.** We will return to Horton Woods in Saco, where we had a most interesting walk last year. This is hilly terrain with some uneven footing. After the walk we may drive to the nearby beach to enjoy our lunch.

**Tuesday, Sept. 25.** We will try Libby Hill Forest in Gray, where a few of us walked last fall in the rain. We will go to Cole Farms for dessert.

As usual, we will meet at 10 a.m. at Back Cove parking lot across from Hannaford to carpool. Bring your lunch, water, and bug repellent. Walking sticks will be useful.

Questions? Directions? Phone Rae Garcelon at 846-3304.

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**OLLI Night Out opens season at the Foreside Tavern**

OLLI Night Out is back! We will gather for a Dutch treat dinner once a month except for December and January. We will notify you of dates and locations each month in the Newsletter. Spouses, partners, and friends are welcome and do not have to be OLLI members to attend.

The first dinner will be Sunday, Sept. 16, at 5 p.m. at the Foreside Tavern on Route 1 in Falmouth. You can visit the Tavern’s website at [http://www.theforesidetavern.com](http://www.theforesidetavern.com) for the location and menu. We will be happy to help if you need further information.

Please let me know by Sept. 14 if you plan to join us. Hope to see you there. (Love that hanger steak salad!)

—Barbara Bardack, OLLI Night Out Coordinator
e-mail: [lascala2@comcast.net](mailto:lascala2@comcast.net)
Phone: 865-2009

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**Reading Theatre lives!**

Love acting? Afraid you’ll forget the lines?

Be afraid no more — we have Reading Theatre! Can’t make the Reading Theatre Acting Class? No problem.

The OLLI Senior Players Special Interest Group does Reading Theatre on Wednesdays at 3 p.m. at the Wishcamper Building.

Tonia Nazdo Medd will direct, and Cheryl Squires will coordinate. Reach Cheryl to express interest or ask questions at 744-8873 or [nenegirl@myfairpoint.net](mailto:nenegirl@myfairpoint.net). She’ll tell you the room, once she knows.

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**Keep those CLYNK bags coming!**

Our successful CLYNK recycling program continues to bring in money to OLLI. Pick up your CLYNK bags at the OLLI office, fill them with deposit cans and bottles, and drop them off at any Hannaford. And thanks!

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**Thank you...**

...for reading the OLLI Newsletter on-line! We have reduced expenses significantly since we started on-line publication. Remember, you can always print out the on-line Newsletter.