OLLI Receives Second Endowment

With the help of many dedicated OLLI members who volunteer their time and efforts to make OLLI at Stony Brook one of the finest lifelong learning programs in the nation, Director Wayne Holo and the OLLI Advisory Board are pleased to announce that the Bernard Osher Foundation, the "architect" of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute program, has awarded a second endowment to Stony Brook University's OLLI program.

For more information about this gift, awarded to OLLI at the annual Holiday Luncheon in December, read the article on page 3, "University Receives Grant to Enhance Lifelong Learning Opportunities", taken from the University’s website.

2016 Fall Holiday Luncheon
Member Relations Committee

On Wednesday, December 14 OLLI Members celebrated the end of the Fall Semester and the Holiday Season with a luncheon at the Watermill in Smithtown. Stony Brook University President Samuel Stanley began the afternoon by greeting over 230 members and office staff to shared important OLLI news. The Osher Foundation had approved our OLLI for a second $1,000,000 grant, yes One Million Dollars. (continued on page 4)

“This is a wonderful gift from the Bernard Osher Foundation, which breathes new life and energy into the Stony Brook OLLI program, and will do so for many years to come.”

- SBU President
Samuel L. Stanley Jr.

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From the President
Paul Knel

Greetings Fellow OLLI Members,

As the Spring semester winds down, I would encourage you to think about the upcoming year and how you can contribute to OLLI. We are constantly seeking an infusion of new ideas and fresh perspectives.

How Can You Help?
GET INVOLVED! GET INVOLVED! GET INVOLVED!

⇒ Attend meetings
⇒ Run for an elective office
⇒ Join a committee
⇒ Assist the Office during registration
⇒ Volunteer to help new members
⇒ Lead a workshop

This is your organization and we depend upon your support to maintain our high level of excellence. So...be an active member! Contribute your ideas, experiences, and expertise!

In the meantime, happy holidays to all and I hope to see you all at the next General Meeting on Wednesday, May 3, 2017.

Paul Knel, President

From the Director
Wayne Holo

I know the calendar and the OLLI Spring Workshop Schedule both say it’s spring, but a little sunshine and a few buds showing up on the trees on the street near our home would be more convincing. Still, for me to complain about winter weather on Long Island when I survived thirty-five Fargo, ND winters, I have to pinch myself and acknowledge how relatively mild our winters here really are compared to other places.

Spring 2017 at OLLI is underway and after so many weeks with my nose in my computer working on scheduling and room assignments, it’s really great to see the members and workshop leaders when they return. Registration went well and almost everyone seems to be enjoying the modern, spacious rooms made available through the University registrar.

Volunteers Make the Difference!

Trouble call volume is decreasing with every registration cycle, and that’s a good sign. We continue to work on improving our processes, but I believe that the biggest improvement has been the help we get from volunteers. Thanks to the talents and generosity of these members, we have begun to build a really competent team of "regulars". Until you’ve spent a few days in the office during registration, you simply can’t fully appreciate what it means to Laura, Leah, Harry and me to have this group helping out. We want to thank these volunteers and let them and everyone else know how much we appreciate their contribution. I hope I haven’t missed anyone:


We hope you are enjoying your workshops, learning, and making friends. For a list of ongoing events, be sure to visit the OLLI Events Calendar online at www.stonybrook.edu/olli/calendar.html

- Wayne Holo, Director
University Receives Grant to Enhance Lifelong Learning

Enhancing its efforts to provide lifelong learning opportunities to the surrounding community, Stony Brook University has received a $1 million endowment grant from The Bernard Osher Foundation in support of programs for seniors at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). Stony Brook’s OLLI program is the only such program in the New York City/Long Island area.

Formerly known as “The Round Table,” OLLI at Stony Brook University is organized as a program within the School of Professional Development. It is open to mature adults who are interested in expanding their intellectual horizons in a university setting. The peer-taught workshops, which carry no credits or prerequisites, are designed to offer an informal exchange of ideas among all participants within a framework of accomplishing the workshop objectives.

“This is a wonderful gift from the Bernard Osher Foundation, which breathes new life and energy into the Stony Brook OLLI program, and will do so for many years to come,” said Stony Brook University President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. “On behalf of all of our current and future OLLI members, I would like to express our deep appreciation to the Osher Foundation for its generosity and vision, which will provide resources, opportunity and encouragement for lifelong learning in an academic environment.”

“Meet the Artist” Presentations

OLLI Art Council

The Art Council once again had their exhibit and reception, in rooms SBS S102 and S149. Refreshments were served followed by “Meet the Artist” presentations hosted by retired High School art teacher, artist, and Art Council Co-Chairperson, Faye Graber.

Faye addressed each of the participating artists so that they could explain how they created their work. We have beautiful talent in OLLI!

If anyone who is musically inclined and would like to share their expertise, this could be an added dimension to the Art Council.

OLLI members have also been asked to display their artwork at the Ward Melville Heritage Center’s Educational and Cultural Center in Stony Brook at the end of the semester. This way members can share their wealth of talent with the community.
This news was greeted with delight and applause as it will enable Stony Brook OLLI to continue to grow and provide OLLI members with programs and special events.

President Paul Knel and Director Wayne Hollo spoke as well. The current OLLI Advisory Board, OLLI staff, and University guests were introduced and thanked for their efforts. Past President Jeff Hollander introduced and acknowledged special guest Jaci Trignony. Jaci was a long time OLLI member, Board Member, and Chairperson of the Member Relations Committee, who left OLLI this summer as she prepares to move upstate, closer to her daughter. She said being at the OLLI Luncheon and not being in charge was a lot of fun!

Food and Entertainment

Speeches are fine, but what is a party without food and entertainment? The Watermill provided cocktails and hors d’oeuvres to start the event followed by a four course lunch with choice of main course. The consensus was that the food was delicious. Joe DePiola again provided the entertainment throughout the afternoon. OLLI members danced and danced and danced. Along with the dancing, members were socializing with tablemates and friends all the afternoon. It was amazing to realize how quickly the four hours passed.

Thanks to our Volunteers!

Of course an event of this magnitude takes lots of volunteers to make it happen. The Member Relations Committee began planning the luncheon right after the New Member Orientation in September. Many thanks to Fred Avril, Bunnye Avril, Janet Creamer, Diane Hollander, Jeff Hollander, Laurel Martin, Delores Murphy, Sue Parlatore, Sheryl Sessa, and Doris Wiesman, who worked with Co-chairs Jothi Curcio and Diane Druckman at numerous meetings before the Luncheon.

At the Watermill Bunnye Avril, Fred Avril, Carlo Curcio, Diane Hollander, Jeff Hollander, Paul Knel, Ira Kurtzberg, Laurel Martin, Ed Metzendorf, Thelma Taub, Paul Taub, and Doris Weisman worked with Jothi Curcio and Diane Druckman in various capacities to assist guests and ensure the event was stress-free and fun for all the attendees. Their help and support was invaluable.

Many thanks to Diane Hollander, who was the roving photographer. She captured the ambiance and spirit of the event through those photos. Please visit the OLLI Lounge, room 149 in SBS to see them on display and enjoy the event again.

Spring Dinner

We look forward to doing this again at our Spring Dinner in May! Please save the date, Wednesday, May 10, 2017. Join us at the Watermill from 4-8 in the evening. More specific information will follow shortly.

- Diane Druckman
Spring 2017 Offers 102 Workshops

Curriculum Committee

The Spring semester is already underway and, once again about 100 workshops are being offered. Thank you workshop leaders and co-leaders for continuing to lend your expertise and time to enrich the lives of OLLI members. And thanks to our OLLI office staff members Wayne, Laura, Leah and Harry for the multitude of administrative tasks that were carried through to get the semester running on time.

New Workshops

The list below includes a number of new workshops for this semester:

- 7 Habits of Well Rounded Investors (Anthony Isola)
- How Chance Distorts Understanding: Facts or Fallacies? (Nino Beltrami)
- Medical Marijuana: A Closer Look (Kathleen Shaff Kelson)
- Wellness and Aging (Lou D’Onofrio)
- Spy vs. Spy: Espionage in Fact and Fiction (Tasha Greenberg)
- War on Science: Why it Matters and What We Can Do About It (Al Tobin)

New Focus Adds Variety for Leaders

Many leaders change the focus of their workshops from one semester to another, but remain in the same subject area. Some of these workshops are listed below:

- Ten Great Composers: Their Lives and Music (David Bouchier)
- From Jesus to Christ (John Molfetta)
- Frank, Barbra, Elvis and Musical Guests (Gary and Suzanne Field)
- Christology: Understanding Jesus (Marianne Mione)
- Shakespeare: History, Tragedy, Comedy (Anita Edwards)
- Turn, Turn, Turn: What Retirees Can Learn from the Book of Ecclesiastes (Stephen Karol)
- History of the Future (Bruce Stasiuk)
- Seinfeld: The Catskills and Beyond (Jeff and Diane Hollander)
- Historic Theater (Arthur Bernstein)

Curriculum Special Events

Two special events that came out of the committee include a “Medical Lecture Series” (offered as a workshop) formed by Doris Weisman, and a “Concert of Music and Poetry” hosted by Betsy Palmedo, Ann Jupp and Bonnie Thivierro to be presented April 18.

The OLLI Chorus, with 35 members, has been singing away since February 13 under the very capable hands of conductor Miles Massicotti. Plans for the chorus to sing at some events are being pursued at this time. However, a smaller select group of choristers will sing the National Anthem at CitiField (home of the NY Mets) on July 16 thanks to Ira Kurtzberg. He is currently looking into ticket availability for the game.

Summer Workshops

We are looking for workshops to be offered for a four-week session this June. Please let either Ed (saab92@optonline.net) or Ira (ibkurtz@hotmail.com) know if you are interested.

Events & Trips—Save the Dates

Special Events Committee

The Special Events Committee of OLLI is setting up two trips for this Spring semester. They are as follows:

Museum of Natural History - March 23, 2017

We will do the Planetarium, Imax and Cuba exhibit as a group.

- 10:30 to 11:30 - Highlights tour
- 12:00 to 12:30 - Planetarium Dark Universe

Narrated by Neil deGrasse Tyson, this Space Show celebrates the pivotal discoveries that have led us to greater knowledge of the structure and history of the universe and our place in it- and to new frontiers for exploration.

- 2:30 to 3:15 - Imax 3D Humpback Whales - Lunch on our own

St. Patrick’s Cathedral and Temple Emanu-El - April 20, 2017

- Jothi Curcio
Profile of an OLLI Leader...

Robert Ober

For several years, Bob Ober has been teaching an OLLI course entitled “Law and Politics.” Topics have often involved Supreme Court cases and the politics of the day. The course has been enhanced with guest speakers -- among them elected officials and business leaders.

Bob was raised in Forest Hills, in Queens, NY. He attended high school there and was a member of the tennis and golf teams. He majored in physics at NYU where he obtained BA and MS degrees. After graduation, he worked briefly as a systems analyst. In 1962, he joined the U.S. Army. Having become interested in aviation, he learned to be a pilot and was hired to fly for Pan Am in the mid-1960s. He remained with them for 25 years, and then, in 1991, went over to Delta for 11 years. He became a “training Captain,” teaching other instructors on how to train airline pilots.

Bob’s wife, Lynda, was a medical technologist. They have two children and five grandchildren. Their son became a neurologist, and their daughter was for years a producer for CBS-TV. Their son, David, became a fine college tennis player and was twice an "all-American." Bob and David compete togther regularly as a father-son team in national tournaments. Bob also spent two years on the PGA tour trying to become a pro golfer.

In recent years, Bob has been a consultant and media specialist in the aviation industry. During the last decade, he has been a consultant for the Democratic party. Furthermore, he has written procedures and regulations for the FAA and the aviation industry.

He has lived in Setauket since 1968. For enjoyment and exercise, he still plays tennis and competes nationally with his son.

Here is an additional interesting piece of information about Bob: Many decades ago, one of his relatives was Lord Mayor of Dublin, Ireland!

- Elio Zappulla

Who Am I and What am I Doing Here?

Robert Mirman, OLLI President-Elect

My name is Robert (Bob) Mirman and for those members who don’t know me I am President-Elect of OLLI. How did this happen to me after only being a member since September 2012? Good question.

Background Information

First let me tell you a little about myself. I’m married for almost 48 years. My wife Shelly and I have two daughters and four grandchildren. My favorite colors are obviously pink and purple. I can also name every Disney princess.

I retired from the investment and financial services industry in 2012 after almost forty years. I am a former president of The Greater Smithtown Chamber Of Commerce.

I have served on the OLLI membership and fundraising committees. I served on two nominating committees, chairing one.

I have made many new friends at OLLI and feel that this is one of the best groups of people to spend my days with.

Volunteer Experience

I never thought of becoming your President. I have always been a volunteer in many organizations going back to my fraternity days. I am also a veteran after serving four years in the U.S. Air Force. I was asked by a handful of people to run for President-Elect and said yes.

Does that make me special? Absolutely not. This is a vibrant, educated, special group of people. I hope to meet more and more of you over time. I hope more and more of you volunteer your time. The rewards can be plentiful. Not monetarily of course. But meeting new people, taking new workshops, running a workshop, going to special events, etc.

The possibilities are endless in terms of how your life can be enriched.

- Robert “Bob” Mirman
The Chronicles

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