

BOLLI Banner

A Brandeis University Program
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Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Brandeis

June 2005

CAROL ALLMAN MORTON PROMOTED TO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

by Sharon Sokoloff



Please join me in congratulating Carol Allman Morton on her promotion to the position of Assistant Director of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Brandeis.

Carol is outstanding in her service to the BOLLI community. What would any of us do without her? What would *I* do without her? Carol is kind, competent, caring, respectful, a technical and trouble-shooting whiz, hard-working, good-natured, funny, smart, wise—and that is just a beginning.

Carol joined BALI (at the time) in July 2001, one year after graduating from Brandeis with a sociology degree. For two years, she worked half-time and then transitioned to full-time. Formally, she was hired as an Administrative Assistant; informally, we've always referred to her as the Director's assistant.

Carol's well-deserved promotion was delayed because one of the criteria for the Assistant Director position is a graduate degree. On May 21st, Carol graduated from Andover Newton Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity, a major milestone in her process to become a Unitarian Universalist minister. It is our good fortune that she has other milestones to attain before she can look for a "pulpit"; and thus, she is not leaving BOLLI.

Essentially, the work Carol and I, *and you*, do changes as our program develops; and this too is related to her promotion. These days, Carol virtually runs the day-to-day operations of BOLLI, both at Gosman and in the office. Her responsibilities in the office include: overseeing the production and dissemination of program materials (with the Membership, Curriculum, Lunch and Learn, and other committees), overseeing and doing all things technical including our excellent program database and website (with the Technology and Website Committees), processing money, overseeing and working with volunteers (with our Volunteer Coordinator), ordering supplies and equipment, "managing" student workers, and probably most important, responding to your never-ending and varied needs and requests.



Carol Allman Morton

As you, our members, do more, Carol takes on other responsibilities. As Carol takes on more responsibilities, my role changes as well. This transformation is consistent with our program's changing role on a broader level, at Brandeis and within the Osher Institute Network. All of this demonstrates and indicates our growth and development.

Synergy is what makes this happen—all of us working together. The whole *is* greater than the sum of its (our) parts. As you read this, join me in thanking the "part", our friend, we call Carol.

THE COUNCIL CONSIDERS

by Leona Curhan



At meetings during the Spring term, the Council, the Committee Chairs, the Chairman, and the Director focused on strengthening the core of BOLLI by offering more and different courses, recruiting and training more SGLs, and increasing the number of members.

Curriculum Committee, striving for increased diversity both in new courses and new leaders, has filled the thirty Fall class slots with twenty-seven new offerings and only three repeated courses. There will be eight new SGLs who will be participating at BOLLI for the first time. Short five-week courses to accommodate returning snowbirds in the Spring will be continued.

SGL Resource Committee is offering a Fall 2005 training course for those interested in being future SGLs, led by Director Sharon Sokoloff and SGL Chair Myrna Cohen. This course can be taken at no cost in addition to the two paid-for courses.

Membership Committee is targeting an increase of 60 new members for the 25% increase in classroom space. An in-depth five-year membership report was prepared for the annual meeting. Contact the BOLLI office for a copy of the report.

University Relations Committee invited Cheryl Sousa, Director of Athletics, to speak at the April Council meeting. She noted the synergistic

relationship between BOLLI and the Athletic Department at the Gosman facility. Events will be planned in which BOLLI and the Gosman facility will be mutually supportive. Senior membership for use of the athletic facility was encouraged.

Special programs have all proven successful and will continue to be offered. Last semester's programs included:

- Wine Tasting
- Offsite "Breakfast & Learn" with Father Drinan, hosted by George Berkowitz
- Discussion on Social Security by Jim Callahan, *emeritus* faculty liaison to BOLLI.

A program in Financial Management in Retirement by local institutions is being considered.

The popularity of **Affinity Groups**, such as *Yoga* in the morning, *Computer camp*, *New Yorker* discussion sessions, *Adventure* day trips, and *Shutterbugs* photography trips, have been recognized as unique to BOLLI.

The June **intensive courses** were again underwritten by the Werner Dannheisser Testamentary Trust. The enrollments in both courses have been successful.

During the final May meeting of 2004-2005, the Council re-elected Sy Raboy Chairman and Michael Berger Vice Chairman. Max Potter was elected Treasurer, and Len Heier was elected Secretary.

An even stronger member-driven organization is the mandate for the sixth year of BOLLI.

The **BOLLI Banner** is published by the Banner Editorial Committee:

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IN MEMORY OF LEON JICK

”Throughout my life, I’ve been asked one question, over and over: *Are you Leon’s son?*” So began a eulogy delivered by one of Leon Jick’s sons at his funeral.

“And by answering, ‘Yes, I am’, people always responded effusively, each with their own story:

- *Oh, I love him; what a remarkable man!*
- *What a teacher!*
- *What a preacher!*
- *What a spellbinder!*
- *What an encyclopedia!*
- *What a person!*

I’ve heard this every day of my life. It made me feel so proud!”

But foremost for Leon Jick was his family. One son, speaking on behalf of all his brothers, exclaimed, “I loved my father.

I turned to him for knowledge, insight, and advice—not only as a child but also as an adult.”

Brandeis President Jehuda Reinharz called him, “a caring colleague, inspiring mentor, and loyal friend”.

Bernie Reisman, a founding member of BOLLI, made these observations about Leon:

“Over the course of his life, Leon Jick made a significant impact on the American Jewish community, as well as on world Jewry. For me, personally, Leon played a central role in launching me into the world of academia at Brandeis.

We often talked about the fact that in over thirty years of professional activities, we enjoyed sharing ideas, various ventures, and never exchanged a harsh word. It was a mutually supportive relationship.

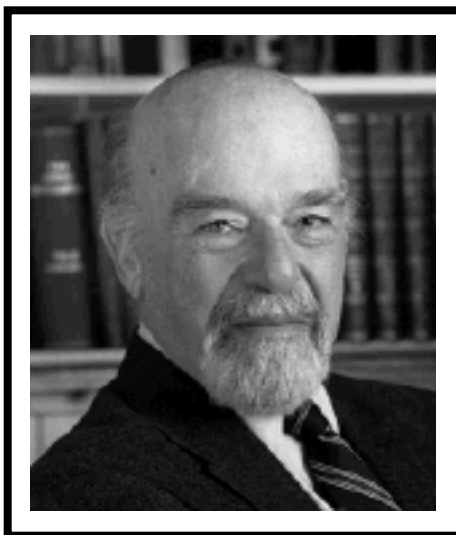
“When BALI began and we were looking for input from the Brandeis community, Leon stepped forward and offered to teach a course. He taught four semesters until illness intervened.

“I will surely miss my wonderful friend and scholar! And I know that is true of the hundreds of Brandeis students he taught, the greater Jewish community as well as those of us at BOLLI.”

As a BOLLI Study Group Leader, Leon Jick was known for his large classes and his charismatic delivery. He led:

- *When Will the Messiah Come? The Impact of Messianism in the Jewish Experience*
- *The American Jewish Immigrant Experience in Literature, Theater, Film, Music, and Art*
- *How Jews and Judaism Came to America: Transplantation and Transformation, 1654 to the Present*
- *The Middle East - From Abraham to Arafat*

May his memory be a blessing to his wife Millicent, their four children Theo, Todd, Andy, and Dan, his brothers Sidney and Hershel, and to our community.



Leon A. Jick, 1924-2005

VOICE OF A NORWEGIAN SWAMP YANKEE

by Eileen Mitchell

"I have never outgrown my childhood.
My world today is so close to my childhood."

—Victor Ford.



Victor still lives in the three worlds of his childhood: school, music, and church. Wednesday, he teaches at BOLLI; Saturday, he attends Symphony; Sunday, he goes to church. He calls himself a *Swamp Yankee*.

He is a Yankee descended from Andrew Ford, who settled in Abington in the 1640s, and he is a Swamp Yankee because these ancestors were never rich. Victor's Norwegian heritage comes from his mother who immigrated to the U.S. in 1917.

Victor grew up in a triple-decker in the Fenway during the Depression, when the streets were safe. "During the Depression everyone was equally poor." As the youngest child, he always knew he would attend Boston Latin, following his three older sisters who went to Girl's Latin. A lifetime of walking and traveling throughout New England inspired Victor to lead study groups at BOLLI on *Boston Neighborhoods*, *Literary Postcards from New England*, and *Boston Through the Centuries*.

In the 1930's he began listening to symphony broadcasts on the radio. In 1945 he heard his first live performance of the Met at the Boston Opera House. In 1946 he attended his first BSO performance—as an usher. Today he still takes a bus once a year to hear the Met in New York. Victor's family attended a small Baptist church near Copley Square. He identified with the blue-collar congregation who hoped for a better life for their children. For 22 years Victor

served as minister at the Charlestown Congregational Church. "It was not genteel suburbia, and it was more fun."

He and his siblings inherited two traits from their parents: long memories and a talent for languages. His father was a stores keeper—keeping storage records to track inventory for clubs, hotels, and the Charlestown Naval Yard during World War II. His mother spoke Norwegian, but Victor did not learn it until he studied Scandinavian languages and literature in college. He eventually studied in Germany and Norway. Then 10 years ago, in retirement, Victor went to Reykjavik, Iceland, for further study and exploration. Immersed in his Scandinavian roots, Victor has led study groups at BOLLI on *Viking History and Literature* and, most recently, *Sailing the Northern Seas*.



Victor Ford

Victor moved with his wife and three sons to Lexington and joined Brandeis University as Registrar and Protestant chaplain. As Registrar, he controlled and charted classroom assignments. As chaplain, Victor often promoted dramatic readings, especially of *The Book of Job*. Today his greatest joy is his three grandchildren.

Five years ago Bernie Reisman asked him to teach at BOLLI. Victor already knew he wanted to explore new topics, beyond religious studies, in his retirement. His passion for teaching now covers anything related to Boston or Scandinavia. "I didn't have a reason to say no, and I could never say no to Bernie—a charmer who is always trying to help people."

**CLASSROOM
HIGHLIGHTS**

You Too Can Be a Study Group Leader

BOLLI is a peer-led learning community. We need you to step up and lead new and exciting courses. Never taught before? No problem! There are plenty of people who will be happy to help you plan and lead a course. Don't think that you know anything that would be of interest to others? You'll be surprised. Talk to Sharon, Carol Morton, or Norm Weizer, chair of the Curriculum Committee.

INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

by Sharon Sokoloff

Building infrastructure is one of the favorite development tasks that Carol and I have at BOLLI. It is a large part in the process of running an organization and achieving goals.

Here are some infrastructure improvements you will see when you return to Gosman in the Fall:

1. A permanently installed electric screen for films and other presentations in the Napoli Room. This benefits the Gosman community as well as Brandeis in general since Napoli is a favored spot for conferences and meetings.
2. A new flexible room divider in the large multipurpose room, giving us one added space for classes. This increases our capacity for classes at Gosman from 24 to 30 a semester.
3. Changes in how the lights work in the multipurpose room so that the lighting may be controlled separately for each room.

4. Our own “portable computer lab”. We are purchasing 16 new laptop computers—14 PCs and 2 Macs—for you to use at Gosman in the computer classes.
5. A “wireless-ready” Gosman. The University did this for us in order to accommodate the Computer Bar in The Gathering Place.
6. Bright and visible banners that read, *Osher Lifelong Learning Institute @ Brandeis*. These identify Gosman as the home of our program and inform people who we are. These banners are funded by a portion of a gift from Raisa and Mort Newman’s daughters in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary.

The first three upgrades are courtesy of the Werner Dannheisser Testamentary Trust gift. The computers are funded by our Osher grant. One step at a time, we progress.



BOLLI ADVENTURERS AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE

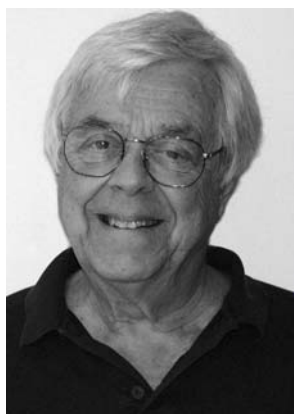
29 BOLLI members and one SID student enjoyed a day of culture and nature in the Wellesley College Art Museum and the college’s arboretum.

photo by Richard Glantz



LUNCH AND LEARN COMMITTEE

by *Bob Russo*



The Lunch and Learn Committee process is evolving as the lessons taught us by running past programs have become evident. The program is now one semester ahead of schedule, and it is our intention to retain this position. Sufficient lead time makes it possible for the program to offer many of the speakers and subjects

suggested by our members. It is really helpful for members to become involved in the process. What better way to cover a subject you feel passionate about than to propose a speaker whom you have heard and feel will contribute to our program? Please send us that person's name and contact information.

When firm semester dates are set, the speakers' names submitted by BOLLI members and the Committee are evaluated and assigned. The evaluation and assignment takes into consideration the subject, the frequency of such a subject and its relevance to the group, and the reputation of the speaker. The Committee then pursues the selected speakers. The potential speaker is briefed on the program and is given three dates to rank in order of preference. The schedule template is constantly updated in order to avoid any conflicts. Occasionally it becomes necessary to ask a speaker to select

another date so information on the speakers' availability and willingness to move is noted. It is essential to include a number of Brandeis faculty, because the faculty is both extremely cooperative and has consistently delivered superior quality sessions. They often will agree to step up if we have a last-minute cancellation. The speakers are mailed specific instructions prior to their date and are called to reconfirm at least ten days in advance.

A second Committee meeting is used to "touch base" with Committee members, assess our progress, and make any necessary adjustments to the program. The third and final meeting is to wrap up the nearly completed session and begin planning for the next semester.

A number of new features have been introduced this past semester:

- The person who proposed a particular speaker introduces that speaker, which makes for a more member-driven activity
- An email about the subject and speaker is sent to BOLLI members shortly before the event
- BOLLI Certificates are sent to speakers in addition to the thank-you letter
- The BALI mug is still given; however, several other items are being considered.

It is the goal of the Lunch & Learn Committee to augment the quality of the program by encouraging the full participation of all members.

Become an eBoard Aide

A pilot effort begins next term to assist Study Group Leaders with the eBoard, a private Website for class members to access course information and content such as reports, schedules, bibliographies, Internet links, and photographs. With 85% of our members online, a formal process is being developed. This pilot program links one volunteer eBoard Aide with any SGL who wants help.

Volunteer to be an eBoard Aide when you register for Fall classes by checking off the appropriate box on the Volunteer Sheet you will receive this summer. Training will be provided to both eBoard Aides and SGLs. Your talents will enhance the experience of each SGL and study group member. And, your help will ensure you a place in the study group.

A TIME TO CELEBRATE—BOLLI'S 5TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

by Naomi Schmidt



The pastel-colored balloons in Sherman Hall mirrored the blossoms on the trees on this beautiful Spring day, as over 200 BOLLI members gathered to celebrate the fifth birthday of what started as BALI and is now BOLLI. The organizing committee, chaired by Lenore Goldstein, offered not only lunch and birthday cake, but also a

moving and entertaining program that made us all proud of our thriving enterprise.

We were greeted by Provost Marty Krauss, who stressed the commitment of Brandeis to BOLLI and the links between the two communities. Sy Raboy, Chair of the BOLLI Council, introduced the newly elected Council members (Bill Rachlin, Renée Fine, Carol Shedd, and Joel Freedman) and thanked the outgoing members.

The story of BALI's birth was related by Betty Brudnick, who told of the germination of an idea between her late husband Irv and Bernie Reisman in 1999 for a lifelong learning program at Brandeis. An advisory council was formed and an invitation sent out to the broader community to meet in May, 2000. Much to the surprise of all, over 400 people showed up! BALI opened four months later, with Bernie as Director and Irv as Council President.

Continuing the reminiscences of BALI's early days, Bernie Reisman recalled his vision of a "community with a spirit of conviviality", where mature learners could not only stretch their minds and

indulge their intellectual curiosity, but also make friends and foster social interactions. Bernie received a standing ovation, and he was clearly touched by our recognition of what had grown out of his original idea.

We were treated to a musical interlude: selections from Bach's music for solo violin, performed by Brandeis student Graham Patten, followed by a chorus of *Happy Birthday* to Sharon Sokoloff, our wonderful Director. Sharon quoted from Stephen Covey's book *The 8th Habit* to describe BOLLI: Live/Love/Learn/Leave a Legacy; and she talked about how exciting it was for us to be part of the Osher nationwide network of programs.

The highlight of the afternoon was a slide show developed and produced by Len Heier with cartoons by Bob Russo and narrated by Charlie Raskin. From the opening of a BALI mug rotating to the strains of the *Star Wars* theme, to the many photos of events and individuals, to the finale of fireworks and champagne, this was truly an extravaganza. Thank you, Len, Charlie, and Bob.

The festive mood continued with the presentation of gifts to Carol Allman Morton, who is graduating from Newton-Andover [*see page 1*], and to Bob the van driver, who has chauffeured us to and from J-lot through all kinds of weather. An informative "special edition" commemorative newspaper, edited by Renée Fine, Carol Morton, and Paula Goldman was distributed to all attendees. After a Q&A at the Town Meeting, the afternoon concluded with a necessary part of every birthday celebration—a beautiful birthday cake. Happy Birthday, BOLLI!

Message from the Council Chair - Sy Raboy

BOLLI completed its most successful year yet—and capped it with a terrific Annual Meeting and Birthday Party. Special thanks for this event go to the planning team: Lenore Goldstein, Harriet Kahn, Elaine Reisman, Rhoda Sapers, and Renée Fine. I also want to thank those who are leaving the BOLLI Council as their terms expired: Richard Winer, Bob Palter, Gloria Oldsman, and Leona Curhan. Each of them ably served in the interest of all BOLLI members. Of course, special thanks to Sharon Sokoloff and Carol Allman Morton, whose dedication ensured our success. I look forward to seeing you all in September.

ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE

by Frank Benjamin

Many merchants offer discounts to senior citizens, but they do not advertise them—you have to ask.

For example, the popular Dunkin' Donuts chain discounts 10% for seniors. Just politely ask for the "senior discount" after you place your order. (Caution: only Dunkin' Donuts standalone stores offer the discount; embedded storefronts, like the ones in Stop-and-Shop, are not franchise operations; and they do not offer the discount.)

McDonald's also offers senior discounts. A small coffee sells for a dollar, but a "senior coffee" is only 49 cents.

Want upscale fare? Several casual dining chains such as TGI Friday's and Chili's Grill & Bar offer 10% discounts to seniors.

Automobile need repair? Both Midas and Jiffy Lube offer 10% senior discounts.

Some merchants have senior days, a particular day of the week that seniors can get discounts. Examples are Lexington Gardens (Wednesdays) and Kohl's (day varies by store).

Movies are the most generous to seniors:

- Capital Cinema in Arlington 25%
- Embassy Cinema in Waltham 32%
- West Newton Cinema (except Saturday) 28%
- Chestnut Hill Cinema in Chestnut Hill 40%

WEALTH WATCH

But the best bargain of all is the "T". With a Senior Citizen ID card, your subway fare is a mere 35¢. To get the card, mail 50¢, proof of age, and a 1" square photo of your face to the MBTA. Go to http://www.mbta.com/traveling_t/disability_seniors.asp for instructions, or call 617-222-5438.

Don't be shy—always ask the cashier for a senior discount. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Slurp



Steve Gendzier, Brandeis professor *emeritus* and wine expert, hosted a tasting of five fine French and American red wines, accompanied by a variety of delicious cheeses and crusty French bread. BOLLI participants agreed it was a wonderful, informative afternoon! [photo: Sandy Traiger and Sandy Grasfield]

Stretch



The early morning Yoga class performs the Triangle pose, under the direction of certified Viniyoga instructor Sandra Levy, a BOLLI member.