

BOLLI Banner

A Brandeis University Program
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Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Brandeis

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WE FORGOT TO REST

by Sharon Sokoloff



We're all familiar with, and many practice, the concept of a weekly day of rest. While each faith practices the Sabbath its own way, in general it is a day to cease working and creating and to appreciate holiness in the world, our lives, our families, and our communities.

Analogous to the seventh day of rest, the Old Testament mentions a seventh year of rest, the Sabbatical Year. Old Testament law provides that one may cultivate his field and vineyard six years, but the seventh year shall be an agricultural Sabbath, during which one shall neither sow nor reap. According to the rabbinical view, all people of the community shall rest as well.

In this, BOLLI's seventh year, I have had a frequent and recurring thought -- *We forgot to rest!*

Far from being fallow, our community is sowing, reaping, growing by every measure. Member leaders are hard at work on a range of issues critical to the sustainability and well-being of our learning community. Some examples follow:

- We changed from a three-slot to a four-slot day to provide more courses and an increasing range of topics. The Curriculum Committee offered more courses, the Membership Committee did a systematic evaluation of the longer day, and more members stepped up to the plate as study group leaders.

- Our annual membership numbers reached 532 in the 2006–2007 academic year! The Membership Committee and the Council are working to develop an “admissions policy” as we are virtually at capacity.
- Both of our intracampus, intergenerational programs, International Friends and BOLLI Scholars, have grown numerically and qualitatively. Ron Levy, Council Chair, is working with University staff to create a “mentoring program”, long championed by George Berkowitz and Leona Curhan.
- In May 2006, the creation of the BOLLI Endowment Fund was announced. This year, a committee was formed to guide our work in this area, with assistance from the University.
- Members have initiated interest (affinity) groups which strengthen the bonds and enhance the vitality of our community. Currently, these are the New Yorker Fiction, the Adventurers, and the Yiddish groups. In addition, study group members have been inspired by their classes to continue meeting. Examples include the Shutterbugs, Short Story, Memoir Writing, and Play Reading groups.

All of this while the usual work of our seventeen committees continues and improves. Just to name one: the outstanding work of the BOLLI Banner Committee, which publishes eight excellent editions of this newsletter a year.

Please join us for a Sabbatical Year celebration on April 26th, in conjunction with the Endowment Fund. [See announcement on page 4.]

COUNCIL REPORT

by Carol Shedd

At the February meeting of the BOLLI Council, Nancy Rawson, Chair of the Membership Committee, presented options for an Admission Policy. The Council had asked the committee to look into this issue in anticipation of BOLLI's reaching the point where membership might exceed space limitations. The Committee recommended the following possible selection criteria, in no particular order, after accommodating continuing members:

- spouses or partners of present members
- Brandeis emeriti professors and staff
- Brandeis alumni
- applicants not admitted in the previous term.

The idea of qualifications or interviews, as practiced by other ILRs, was rejected as being perceived as elitist or unfair. The Membership Committee felt that a lottery was the simplest and fairest way to handle new admissions, if a selection were deemed necessary. They recommended either a simple random lottery of all new applicants or a lottery giving priority to the groups listed above.

After considerable discussion, the consensus of the Council was that it was premature to institute a policy at this time. Council Chair Ron Levy will bring up this issue at the Open Forum this spring.



Cartoon by Bob Russo

"I got into Harvard, MIT, Brown, and Stanford
—what is it with these BOLLI lotteries?"

A Record-Setting Semester!

Our membership this semester is our biggest ever. BOLLI has three types of membership. *Active* (taking classes), *Associate* (Lunch and Learn), and *Inactive* (holding a spot for the next semester). In the spring semester we have more inactive members, as many people travel in the winter/spring. This semester's membership numbers are:

Active	364
Associate	32
Inactive	73
Total	469

To put these numbers in context, last spring we had 374 total members, and last fall we had 450. We have 51 new members this semester. Way to grow!

- Carol Allman Morton

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

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HARD DRIVING MEN

by Joan Kleinman



Many of us have a love-hate relationship with our computers. We're happy when our emails mail, our Web links connect, and our printers print. But we're tremendously frustrated when something we try doesn't work and no resident genie immediately appears to answer our questions.

Len Heier and Sherm Okun designed their course *Explorations in Cyberspace* to help BOLLI members use their computers more effectively and with greater enjoyment. Originally Len and Sherm focused on using the Internet to obtain information. Gradually they added topics such as email, Quicken, Word, PowerPoint, and digital photography, reflecting the growing importance of the computer in our lives. For example, Sherm noted that over 96% of the current membership uses email, up from about 60% in 2004.



Sherm and Len met over 35 years ago as colleagues at a computer consulting company. Sherm, with an Engineering degree from the U.S. Naval Academy and an MBA from Harvard Business School, became a management consultant to technically-oriented organizations. Len, with degrees in Electrical Engineering from NYU and the University of California, also worked as a management consultant, where he met Sherm. Subsequently, Len started his own firm that developed computer software and offered PC network integration services.

After retiring, both men enrolled at the Institute for Learning in Retirement at Boston College (BCILR). Some years before, Sherm had studied in *Me'ah*, an intensive two-year adult Jewish learning program; and he had become firmly convinced of the

value of lifelong education. Len had already been bitten by the teaching bug when he and a partner had begun making presentations about computers to senior groups at various senior centers and local colleges.

When they first enrolled at BCILR, there were no offerings in science or technology, so Len and Sherm resolved to fill that void. Since purely "how to" courses were not allowed, they developed the course *Technology and Civilization*, where technology was defined, explained Sherm, as "things you don't find in nature."

Soon the pair brought their collaborative skills to BOLLI, introducing *Explorations in Cyberspace*. It ran first as a supplemental six-week winter course and then as a regularly scheduled class in fall 2004. Classes in 2004 were held in a computer lab far away on campus from Gosman, where all other BOLLI classes are held. To satisfy the need for a

longer class period, the course began an hour earlier but ended in time for attendees to walk to Gosman for their next class. When BOLLI was able to buy its own computers in the spring of 2005, the class moved to Gosman; and students were assigned individual laptop computers to be used for class meetings.

This semester, Len is fulfilling his dream of offering a course dedicated to digital photography, a hobby of strong personal interest. Meanwhile, the role of computer genie has passed to the study group leaders of *Basic Computers for the Fearful*, a direct offspring of Len Heier's and Sherm Okun's groundbreaking computer class.

CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS

SGL Deadline

Proposals for the Fall 2007 semester are due on April 5
Information can be found on www.brandeis.edu/bolli
or contact myrna.cohen@comcast.net

URTICARIA

by J. Lawrence Dohan, M.D.



An attack of raised, red, itchy welts which may include swollen eyelids or lips is called *urticaria* (hives). These spots will evolve and change over a period of hours. The culprit is histamine.

Certain cells, called mast cells, present throughout the body, release histamine

when stimulated in certain ways. When a food or medicine is mistakenly targeted by immune channels to release histamine from mast cells, abnormal immunity (allergy) may occur and result in hives. Toxins injected by bees or mosquitoes may directly stimulate mast cells. Direct stimulation without allergy is seen in some people who urticate from contact with a cold object. A few others will get hives from sweating with exercise. Pressure or stroking the skin causes “dermographism” (skin writing) on people with very sensitive mast cells. Frequent hives for six weeks or more is usually

chronic urticaria, which is related to autoimmunity instead of an external cause. Direct stimulation of mast cells is dose-related. On the other hand, violent reactions caused by allergy may involve large amounts of histamine after only tiny amounts of the offending substance. That is why a single bee sting causes only a local reaction in most of us, but a generalized life-threatening anaphylaxis in a few. Some fish such as tuna produce histamines as they decay, so consumption of spoiling fish can produce acute histamine toxicity

Whatever the trigger, since urticaria is largely related to histamines, successful therapy is a block of histamines. First generation antihistamines such as Benadryl act for four hours and are soporific. They are used as sleep aids (Sominex, Tylenol PM, etc.)

Second generation, non-sedating antihistamines last all day and are much more effective (Allegra, Claritin). Antihistamines are useful for a rash only if histamine is a prime factor. That is why

they are useless for eczemas or poison ivy reactions. For more information go to:

emedicine.com/emerg/topic628.htm

TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

BOLLI Cocktail Party A Celebration in Honor of BOLLI and the Endowment Fund

Thursday, April 26th, 5:00 to 7:00 P.M.
Brandeis Faculty Club

Meet & Greet Old & New Friends
Wine & Hors d'Oeuvres
Musical Accompaniment

Limited Space Available
Members and Guests \$25 per person

BOLLI Annual Meeting

May 14th, 1:00 to 3:00 P.M.

Formation of Yiddish Group



We will meet on Tuesdays at 3:00 P.M. in Nessel for conversation (as best we can) and some studying. We are using the book, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Learning Yiddish*. (The idea for this group came from Phyllis Markowitz, Annalee Saunders, and Harriet Kahn.) Everyone is welcome.

AN AFTERNOON AT THE OPERA

by Naomi Schmidt



Imagine attending a live performance of the Metropolitan Opera Company without needing to travel to New York City—and for only \$18 a ticket. Thanks to a new initiative undertaken by the Met, Saturday matinee performances of six operas are being broadcast live this season from the Met stage into select movie

theaters, in high definition and surround sound. Many of these broadcasts are also being repeated on subsequent dates.

Productions that have been shown so far are Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Bellini's *I Puritani*, the new Tan Dun opera *The First Emperor*, and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. Still to be performed are Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* in March and Puccini's *Il Trittico* in April. Local theaters that are participating are the Framingham 15 on Flutie Pass off Route 9 and the Stadium 15 in Marlborough.

My husband Peter and I attended a broadcast of *The First Emperor* earlier this season; and I can report that the experience, although somewhat different from sitting in the Lincoln Center theater, was an exciting one.

We were lucky enough to come early while the theater was checking out the sound system by showing portions of a previous broadcast of *The Magic Flute*, and so got to sample some of that wonderful production as well. About thirty minutes before curtain time we were transported to the Met in New York, where we heard and saw the orchestra tuning up and patrons entering the theater and browsing through their programs. Finally, the orchestra began the overture; and we were right in the orchestra pit, watching the conductor (in this case the composer Tan Dun) and the musicians from a vantage point

never possible from the pricey seats in the opera house itself.

Once the curtain had gone up and the action of the opera had started, we continued to enjoy close-ups of the singers and orchestral musicians, some playing fascinating Chinese instruments, seamlessly alternating with full-stage views as selected by the video director. All the operas are subtitled, even the ones sung in English.

An added bonus for those of us in the cinema audience was a double intermission feature. First, we enjoyed a short documentary on the making and staging of this opera, with a camera following the composer/conductor, instrumentalists, and singers around as they prepared this new production. This was then followed by a live interview by Beverly Sills of Placido Domingo, who sang the title role.

It's best to order tickets in advance and pick them up at the box office, as these performances have been very popular and tend to be sold out quickly. To order over the Internet, go to www.metoperafamily.org/metopera/broadcast/hd_events.aspx and at the left side of the screen under LOCATIONS AND TICKETS, click on United States. Selecting the opera that you are interested in and entering your zip code will bring you to the spot where you can actually place your order.

LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL

I must admit that one thing that was lacking was the elegance of being in the New York theater itself. Exiting the cinema to the aroma of popcorn and the sound of video game machines is not quite the same as mingling with well-dressed operagoers at Lincoln Center. On the other hand, the price, convenience, and overall experience make us look forward to going back to another broadcast performance in the future.



IS YOUR BANK HOLDING YOU UP?

by Frank Benjamin

How much does your bank charge you for checks: \$18 a box for standard safety paper checks printed with your name and address?

Most of these firms throw in a fourth box of checks for free with an order for three boxes.

You do not have to buy checks from the bank where you have your checking account. As long as you supply the correct routing number and account number, you can order checks from any printer; and you might save 50% to 65%. Before you discard those Sunday newspaper advertising inserts, look for special offers from Artistic Checks, Classic Checks, or Designer Checks.

MONEY TALK

In fact, Designer Checks is owned by Deluxe, the firm that probably prints the checks you buy from the bank. Furthermore, if you want your checks printed with a fancy background of clouds, swirls, flowers, animals, birds, or fish, the third-party check firms offer hundreds of selections (at a premium price, of course).

Check it out.

REACHING INTO THE COMMUNITY

by Bob Pill

Lifetime Learning goes beyond the classroom and into the community...through SOAR.

Education is a wonderful way to enrich one's life—another is to participate in your community as a volunteer. The rewards can be enormous and the experience equally as educational.

Through SOAR (Service Opportunities After 55), part of a national network of volunteer agencies that help meet community needs through the volunteer services of older adults, you can make a difference to others. The benefits to you are remarkable. You can learn a new skill, make “purposeful” connections and make changes that feel great, all at the same time.

SOAR will help you find the opportunity that is right for you, taking into consideration your skills, interests and schedule. The following are a few of the many ways you can help:

Nonprofit Management Consulting Group

Join a team of high-level professionals who are trained to offer management assistance to small nonprofit programs and agencies.

Mentoring

Work with children, with teens, or with inmates who are participating in Boston University's College Behind Bars program.

Tutoring

Teach English as a Second Language, GED (high school equivalency), adult literacy, reading, or math to elementary school children.

LOCATION!

LOCATION!

LOCATION!

All it takes is a few hours a week and the desire to make a contribution that could be one of the best “learning” experiences of your life. Training and support are provided for all programs.

Go to their Web site at www.soar-ma.org for a more complete listing of opportunities.

BOLLI GUIDELINES REVISED

by Ron Levy and Robert Cohen

The BOLLI Council in January approved a significantly revised update of the 2003 Guidelines, the body of statutes that govern the way we operate. This resulted from over a year of effort, initially through the valuable work of Dick Winer's Long-Range Planning Committee, and most recently by a task force made up of Len Aberbach, Arnold Messing, Lenore Goldstein, Joel Freedman, Sharon Sokoloff, Robert Cohen, and Ron Levy.



Key changes in the Guidelines address the make-up of the Council, the Standing Committees and their leadership, the election process, quorums, and the filling of vacancies:

Council Size and Length of Term

The elected membership of the Council will be reduced over three years to 9 from the current 12. This means that henceforth we will elect 3 new members each year for three-year terms. In addition, the Chairs of the four Standing Committees (Curriculum, Membership, Resource, and Lunch & Learn) will be non-voting members of the body.

Council Chair and Vice-Chair Election

Newly elected Council members may be elected Chair or Vice-Chair of the Council if the outgoing and incoming Councils in joint meeting are unable to elect a new Chair or Vice-Chair from among the continuing Council members. Further, a person who has completed three years of Council membership may be elected as Chair and be granted a fourth year of membership.

Council Vacancy

The Chair may appoint someone to fill a vacancy on the Council, subject to confirmation by the Council. Such an appointee will complete the remaining term of the vacancy, and may then stand for election so long as that remaining term is less than one year.

Council Quorum

Six elected members of the Council shall constitute a quorum. In the presence of a quorum, a measure may be passed by a majority of elected members voting. The passing of an amendment to the Guidelines, however, requires a two-thirds majority of the Council members present and voting, but not less than six votes.

Standing Committee Size and Length of Term

Eight is the recommended size of a Standing Committee. No person shall serve more than five years on a Standing Committee, or more than three years as a Chair of such committee. No person may serve concurrently on more than one Standing Committee.

Many other edits and corrections were made to align all clauses in the document. If you are interested in reading the full and authoritative Guidelines and the attached Rules and Regulations that elaborate procedurally on some of its clauses, (or are considering a new career as a parliamentarian!), you may find it on the BOLLI member Web page www.brandeis.edu/programs/bali/ under "Governance and Committees".

The BOLLI Tea Party at the Danforth Museum

It was cold outside but warm and welcoming inside on a sunny, February day when BOLLI members and Study Group Leader Cynthia Maurice met at the Danforth Museum of Art in Framingham. We were members of Cynthia's fall study group, *Impressionism to Postmodernism*. Therefore, it was a particular treat to view and discuss the paintings of abstract-expressionist artist Hyman Bloom. Lively conversation continued after our docent-led tour over a sumptuous tea prepared by Cynthia.

- Rhoda Neidorf

CALENDAR OF CAMPUS EVENTS

compiled by Charles Raskin

SLOSBERG MUSIC CENTER

Apr. 15 (3 P.M.)

Early Music Ensemble

Roy Sansom, guest conductor
Program of music from the Renaissance, early Baroque, and Medieval periods with texts from the Old Testament

Apr. 22 (7 P.M.)

Improv Ensemble

Tom Hall, director
Relax and enjoy a concert of jazz improvisations

Apr. 30 (7 P.M.)

Mus116

Judith Eissenberg, director
Students perform chamber music

Apr. 29 (3 P.M.)

Jazz Ensemble

Bob Nieske, director
Only the coolest jazz. (Program to be announced)
\$5 for BOLLI members with i.d.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN FESTIVAL OF THE CREATIVE ARTS

Apr. 25-29

Check with the box office (781-736-3400, option 5) for tickets
Remember, BOLLI members receive a substantial discount

The Festival of the Creative Arts at Brandeis was founded in 1952 by the legendary American composer and Brandeis faculty member Leonard Bernstein. It is dedicated to the belief that “the art of an era is a reflection of the society in which it is produced, and through creative endeavors the thoughts and expression which characterize each generation are revealed and transformed.”

The five-day festival will feature exhibitions and performances by international, national, and regional artists, actors, and musicians, as well as by Brandeis students and faculty. For details, go to www.brandeis.edu/arts/festival/

SPINGOLD THEATER

781-736-3400, option 5

The Dream Project

Apr. 19-21, 26-28 (8 P.M.) and Apr. 28-29 (2 P.M.)

Using his technique of “dream enactment,” Director Jon Lipsky will spend a year working with the actors using their dreams as the source of dramatic material. Dreams will provide an opportunity to work with imagery, narrative, spatial relations, connection to audience, and ensemble techniques. Lipsky is professor of acting and playwriting at Boston University. Admission: \$8-\$10 for BOLLI members with i.d.

ROSE ART MUSEUM

Apr. 25 - Jul. 29 (12 - 5 P.M., Tue. - Sun.)

Everything is Not Enough

Swiss artist John Armleder is acclaimed for reinventing methods of visual language, taking everyday items and turning them into displays that thematically defy definitions or categories. BOLLI members: free.

USDAN STUDENT CENTER

Apr. 28 (8 P.M.)

Brandeis-Wellesley Symphony Orchestra

Neil Hampton, conductor
Brahms *German Requiem*
Admission: \$5 for BOLLI members with i.d.
(Box office: 781-736-3400, option 5)