**No Rest for the Weary**

*by Phyllis Pressman Cohen*

My recent interview with Michaele Whelan, Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, left no doubt about Brandeis’ commitment to ensuring the success of the BOLLI program.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Brandeis falls under the Rabb School of Continuing Studies. As head of the Rabb School, Dr. Whelan is BOLLI’s liaison to the University. It is one of the three divisions she oversees, the others being Graduate Professional Studies and the Brandeis Summer School. She is also an Associate Dean of Academic Planning and Innovation, and she teaches one seminar on English and American Literature. She has a very large portfolio of responsibilities with many different people reporting to her.

Michaele Whelan came to Brandeis from Tufts University in 2001. She was quoted at that time as saying it was a time of change and opportunity for her. Her impressive academic credentials include an undergraduate degree from Cornell and a Masters and Ph.D. from Harvard.

In addition to her regular duties, last summer she escorted a group of Brandeis students to Istanbul to study with students from the Palestinian University in East Jerusalem, Al Quds. She was there to oversee the academic component of integrated seminars that Brandeis students had with the Palestinian students. Part of the goal was to ensure common experiences that would enable the participants to engage on a peer level.

In discussing her role as liaison for BOLLI she said that she functioned more as an advisor giving guidance and direction to ensure the quality and integrity of our policies. Being financially responsible for all the Rabb programs, she works with Sharon Sokoloff on the budget. She emphasized that BOLLI endowments need to increase in order to ensure its strength into the future. Though she and President Reinhart champion our cause, endowments will ensure prosperity and continuity. The program was not designed to make money but it would be helpful if it had funds to underwrite high-quality and innovative programming.

Michaele says that BOLLI uses the same peer-learning model as Harvard yet is more integrated into the Brandeis family. One of the notable aspects of our program is the willingness of our members to become Study Group Leaders and develop new courses. Our diverse, experienced, and learned membership allows a wide variety of interests and ideas to be explored. Having space to fit all the courses that could be offered is a major issue, but one of the benefits of the relationship with the Rabb School is space-sharing. Admittedly, there is still never enough to satisfy the need. Creative utilization of other space will continue to be explored.
Community and Communication

by Sharon Sokoloff

I started to think about this after a talk with a long-time BOLLI member who stressed the importance of communication in BOLLI. BOLLI has progressed in this area and yet we need to strive to do better. What follows is information and observations about how we communicate and how we can improve.

The BOLLI Banner, our excellent newsletter, published seven times a year, is one vehicle for Council, committees, staff, and individual members to share information. Please take a moment now to note the members of the Banner Committee at the bottom of this page. Thanks to each of you.

The BOLLI Web site, www.brandeis.edu/bolli, is another communication tool. If you don’t know the username and password to get into the “Members Only” section, ask us. This site holds an enormous amount of information. Thanks to Len Heier and Carol Allman Morton, co-webmasters.

Email is used to share quickly and efficiently information related to BOLLI and to our community. (Many say too much!) Moreover, you can be in touch with us anytime you want. I assure you the staff receives hundreds of emails every week on every imaginable topic.

The Open Forum is an innovation introduced by former Council Chair, Ron Levy. These forums, one or two per semester, at the Lunch & Learn hour, provide an opportunity for members to share concerns and raise questions as well as for the leaders to update the community about important topics.

Green Name Tags are worn by BOLLI Council members and Standing Committee Chairs so everyone can identify them. One of their roles is “communication and representation” by listening to your ideas and answering your questions. Council members are there to serve you by bringing your ideas to the Council and staff, as needed, and to bring information from the leadership to you. Carol, Mary Ann and I are always available as well.

In closing, good communication is your responsibility too. Here are two ways you can contribute to our community’s well-being:

• Share your ideas, concerns, and complaints directly with a program leader or staff member. In most cases, this will correct a situation or get an idea onto the official program agenda.
• Do your best to get your facts right before you disseminate information. It may take some time to do the research, but it takes more time (and is often impossible) to correct misinformation.

Community is a hallmark of our program. Improving our communication is on my list of goals for the new year.

The BOLLI Banner is published by the Banner Editorial Committee:

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Banner archive: www.brandeis.edu/bolli/banner/index.html
How did someone who grew up in Mississippi come to be teaching Hebrew Bible at BOLLI? The answer is via a circuitous route that took Rabbi David Kline on a journey through Waltham, Cincinnati, Jerusalem, New York City, Philadelphia, Colorado, Louisiana, and finally back to the Boston area. He came to Brandeis as an undergraduate (Class of ’57), majoring in Hebrew Literature, after which he received his ordination as a Reform Rabbi from Hebrew Union College. His passion was, and has remained, Bible, which he was determined to study in the original Hebrew, without recourse to any translation. He spent time studying in Israel, and even attended an Orthodox Yeshiva for a few months, but found that the narrow focus in that environment was not what interested him.

Following his fascination with the ancient Near East, he next enrolled in Graduate School at Columbia University, studying the Akkadian language and art history of that ancient period. The anti-war culture of the 1960s, however, convinced him that he was more interested in being involved in the 20th century, and led to his decision to leave school and pursue the life of a pulpit Rabbi. His various congregations were located on the East Coast, in Colorado Springs, and for fifteen years in Monroe, Louisiana.

It was in Monroe where he had his most intense taste of teaching Bible, as adjunct faculty at the branch of the state university in that city. Imagine a Reform Rabbi teaching about the Hebrew Bible to a class of Creationists! He was delighted to challenge their belief in the text as related in Genesis by asking, “Which creation story do you believe in, the one about the Garden of Eden or the one about the six days of creation?”

Here at BOLLI, David is still challenging students to look deeply at the text and ask, “What’s going on here?” In addition to discussing how the Bible came into being and what was happening in ancient Israel at the time the various sections were written, he suggests looking at it as creative fiction; to inquire about the character and motive of each depicted individual, as one would when reading any modern work of literature. He uses the “critical approach” to biblical analysis, where the reader is encouraged to ask questions and to not assume anything. Although the midrashic approach, which concentrates on the commentaries of the rabbis of the Middle Ages, is interesting for studying the development of Judaism, that is not the path that interests him. Concentrating on the commentaries is a misreading and an injustice to the text itself, according to Kline. The Bible is our early literature, and his goal is to urge students to appreciate that literature for its own strength, with its tremendous literary values, including character development, irony, and subtlety.

No article about David Kline would be complete without mention of his wife Barbara, a retired dancer, who was a guest presenter in my own study group, Invitation to the Dance. They combined their interests when Barbara choreographed a Shabbat service for the congregation in Monroe, with David interpreting the liturgical prayers just as he encourages his BOLLI students to interpret the literature of the Hebrew Bible.
We all know that our planet is facing serious problems from global warming, pollution, and diminishing natural resources. Although our personal options may be limited, instead of feeling helpless in the face of impending disaster we all can—and should—do our share to protect and preserve our resources.

Here’s a checklist of simple steps we can take as individuals to be part of the solution instead of part of the problem.

- Take reusable bags to the supermarket
- Replace incandescent lamps with compact fluorescent lamps
- Don’t buy bottled water. Buy a water filter and a few reusable water bottles
- Bring a mug for coffee to BOLLI (and wherever else it’s possible to do so.). Or buy a collapsible cup for hot or cold liquids at [www.uncommongoods.com](http://www.uncommongoods.com)
- Turn your thermostat up a degree or two for air-conditioning and down a degree or two for heating
- Slow down to 55 or 60 on the highway and carpool when possible. Every 5 mph over 60 decreases your fuel efficiency by 5%
- Check tires to be sure they are not under-inflated and add 2 pounds to recommended inflation amount to improve gas mileage
- Lower temperature of water heater to 120° and lower water pressure in your shower
- Use cold water in your washing machine
- Run your washing machine and dishwasher with full loads. (Note: a dishwasher uses less water than washing by hand if you don’t rinse dishes first)
- Stop unwanted catalogs being mailed to you by visiting [www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org)
- Remove your name from junk mailing lists by visiting [www.dmachoice.org](http://www.dmachoice.org) (Direct Marketing Association)
- Return metal hangers to your dry cleaners so they can be reused
- Avoid using plastic silverware, paper plates, and paper napkins whenever possible
- Buy goods made from recycled materials
- Learn about a home energy audit from National Grid by going to [www.thinksmartthinkgreen.com](http://www.thinksmartthinkgreen.com) or get an online energy analyzer from NSTAR at [www.nstaronline.com](http://www.nstaronline.com)
- Read the energy saver’s guide developed by the U.S. Department of Energy which offers tips on saving energy and money at home. Visit [www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/about.html](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/about.html)
- Read many interesting articles and information on “going green” by visiting [www.boston.com/lifestyle/green](http://www.boston.com/lifestyle/green)
- Buy used items instead of new ones
- Repurpose: donate or sell items you no longer want or put them to another use

[Readers with additional energy or resource saving tips may send them to tamarachernow@comcast.net]
UPDATE ON THE ENDOWMENT FUND CAMPAIGN

by Ron Levy, Endowment Committee Chair

As previously announced, the Endowment Fund Committee was very pleased to receive a generous gift from Renée Rapaporte to endow the Rapa-porte Seminars: Brandeis@BOLLI, our highly popular series of one-week seminars that take place every January and June. We are very grateful to Renée for helping us sustain BOLLI and for recognizing the important link between Brandeis faculty and our membership that the seminars represent.

All gifts to our Endowment Fund are for the exclusive benefit of BOLLI. Our fund is managed professionally by the University as part of a portfolio of endowments and other investments it oversees. Depending on market performance, about 5 points of the 3-year average return on the investment is credited to the BOLLI Operating Fund each year to relieve our program expenses. This is the university’s typical spending rate from the interest earned on its endowment funds. The remainder of the annual return is plowed back into the BOLLI Endowment Fund and increases our invested balance.

We offer many ways of donating as a way of sustaining our learning community. As a result of the Rapaporte gift, a large second gift, and the generosity of those who have recently attended a number of parlor meetings, the total funds we have raised from our membership more than doubled in the month of June! By now, you will have noticed a banner in the Gorman lobby that exhibits our status at the end of last fiscal year. Great progress to date, but some way to go to achieve our ultimate goal!

Please call me if you want to discuss various giving opportunities tailored to suit your objectives.

SUMMERTIME, AND THE PARKING IS EASY

by Charles Raskin

While formal BOLLI classes are not held over the summer, several BOLLI affinity groups continued to meet. The summer meetings of both the New Yorker Fiction and the Current Events discussion groups were held on Wednesdays during July and August. Meeting in the Heller Building allowed us to view the magnificent campus from treetop level and the terrace served as a cool and sunny picnic area for lunch.

The morning New Yorker group was chaired by Sandy Traiger and Phyllis Pressman Cohen, who encouraged volunteer leaders to help guide a group of 25 to 30 members through an hour and a half of discussion on the weekly fiction story in the magazine. Like the old rollers on top of the washing machine, the group managed to squeeze out every last detail that resonated on the page.

Following the brief lunch, some members met again to discuss current events led by Barry David and Ed Caldwell. As in the New Yorker group, members volunteered to take responsibility for specific topics each week. They were allotted approximately 30 minutes of the hour and a half to discuss subjects that included generational issues, taxes, and politics. The remaining time dealt with questions offered to the group by Ed and Barry concerning events that were at the forefront of the weekly news. Opinions offered by the group were, of course, both diverse and passionate.

BOLLI members who remained at home for most of the summer had a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the intellectual and social stimulation offered by these two groups.
At our annual meeting in May, an added feature was an exhibition in the meeting hall of the art and craft work of almost 40 of our members. On display were oil paintings, watercolors, prints, photographs, jewelry, ceramics, fiber arts, sculpture, and more.

It was quite remarkable to see the range and excellence of the talent previously hidden among our members. During the meeting we discovered that even more members have artistic talents, so a decision was made to pursue this practice in the future, possibly in other ways.

Under consideration is the use of bare walls in the BOLLI office building. A committee is being formed to plan possible shows, displays and events there. Of course, logistical problems must be solved; but with the BOLLI talent available, it surely will be done.

If you are interested in this project and think you might want to participate on the committee, email Bud Elliott at belliox319@rcn.com.

Presidential Election Discussion Group

Harriet Starrett, who has been an SGL over the past three years and has a background in history and business, is leading this group. With a sense of humor and a sense of purpose, the group is discussing major issues, “belief” and “promise” statements, and campaign strategies.

The group meets Tuesdays at 3 P.M. in the Gathering Place. The final meeting on Election Tuesday may be held in Harriet’s home, where the group can count votes, cheer, and jeer.
Morning Has Broken; Blackbird Has Spoken

by Sandi Levy

If you are willing to be an early riser and rush hour motorist, a special treat awaits you Wednesday mornings. In Gosman’s lowest level, BOLLI members gather in the darkened ballet studio to practice the gentle, calming art of Viniyoga. I have been teaching yoga for five years.

A magic bullet, yoga doesn’t stave off aging; but it allows one to age with grace.

Yoga started 5000 years ago in India, and it was introduced here at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair. Yoga follows an ancient oral tradition containing teachings relevant for modern times. It was developed into an eight-branched system of principles that lead people on a logical step-by-step approach to a higher consciousness. The first two branches address moral codes and personal disciplines. The third branch is one of the Hatha practices (Astanga, Power, Hot, Bikram, Kripalu, Viniyoga, Iyengar, White, Kali-Ray, Vinyasa, to name a few), which works on mastering the body. The fourth branch focuses on regulated breathing techniques. These first four branches are to prepare the body for the next four steps, which end in meditation.

Most current-day practices address only the third and fourth branches:
- Breathing exercises, to improve capacity and control
- Flexibility, to extend the range of motion
- Strength, to improve muscle tone
- Balance, to enhance stability
- Focus, by concentrating on the postures and being aware of the mind-body connection.

No matter which Hatha practice you choose, all do essentially the same things, some more than others. At BOLLI, we focus on Viniyoga, but modified to accommodate everyone of different ages and abilities. It’s a great way to start a morning, so think about joining us next semester.

Adventurers
October 23rd, Thursday
RISD Museum + Dale Chihuly glass exhibit

New Yorker Fiction

This discussion group meets on Wednesdays at 3 P.M. in the Gathering Place

Become a Study Group Leader

A strong curriculum is the hallmark of a successful adult learning program. Please think about becoming a study group leader and submitting a course proposal. The Curriculum Committee will be happy to assist you throughout the entire Course Proposal process. BOLLI offers two semesters annually, one in the fall and one in the spring. We welcome your proposal submissions for any semester.

Currently, proposals are being accepted for the Spring ’09 semester and are due December 3, 2008. Information can be found on our website, www.brandeis.edu/bolli or contact myrna.cohen@comcast.net.
SLOSBERG MUSIC CENTER
(brandeis Tickets: 781-736-3400)

Oct. 18  (8 P.M.)
Indian Classical Music
Shubha Mudgal, vocalist
Anees Pradham, tabla
Sudhir Nayan, harmonium
Murad Ali, sarangi
From a tradition extending back thousands of years, Shubha Mudgal’s richly textured voice takes the listener on a musical journey that draws inspiration from medieval Sufi poetry, romantic love, and the paradoxes of modern life. Mudgal’s music explores the hidden passageways of the soul, balancing extraordinary discipline and breathtaking virtuosity with the improvisation of the imagination.
Pre-concert talk at 7 P.M. in the Rose Art Museum by George Ruckert, musicologist.
$10 for BOLLI members with i.d., in advance
$15, at the door

Oct. 24  (8 P.M.)
Northern Lights
A blend of traditional bluegrass and “newgrass”, with touches of jazz, blues, rock, gospel, classical, and Western swing
$10 for BOLLI members with i.d., in advance
$15, at the door

Oct. 26  (2 P.M., panel discussion; 4 P.M., concert)
Edwin Geist
German soprano Verena Rein joins the Irving Fine Society singers to present the seldom-heard music of Edwin Geist (1902-1944). Geist was a teacher, journalist, composer, and conductor in Germany before being killed by the Nazis in Lithuania. The haunting story of his life and music will be presented in a panel discussion prior to the concert, featuring Geist biographer Reinhard Kaiser, Dr. Klaus Harer, of the German Cultural Forum for Eastern Europe in Berlin, Dr. Bret Werb, musicologist at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and Geist's niece, Rosian Zerner. Free and open to the public; reserved seating

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

Saturday Night
Oct. 16-18, 23-25  (8 P.M.) and Oct. 25-26  (2 P.M.)

In 1954, 23-year-old Stephen Sondheim penned his first musical based on the play Front Porch in Flatbush by Julius and Philip Epstein (Boston Red Sox GM Theo Epstein’s grandfather and great-uncle!). But this lost musical was never publicly performed until 1997 and received its New York premiere in 2000. In this light-hearted musical comedy, occurring over three successive Saturday nights in 1929 in Brooklyn, an ambitious group of young men find themselves restless and worse, date-less. Gene, a Wall Street runner in the market frenzy before the crash, has dreams that reach far beyond Brooklyn and drive him into deceiving Helen, who has secrets of her own, into thinking he is someone he will never be and luring his friends into the financial foolishness of the time, coming close to paying the consequences of his deceit. Youthful innocence and a simpler time make Sondheim’s first musical a delight for all and a must-see for the Sondheim aficionado.

ROSE ART MUSEUM
Oct. 8  (noon)
Music at Noon: Lydian String Quartet
Wednesdays never sounded so sweet! Put the day on pause and enjoy a noontime concert. Free and open to the public

RAPAPORTE TREASURE HALL
Oct. 29  (noon)
Music at Noon: Brandeis Vocal Instructors
Pamela Dellai, mezzo-soprano
Pamela Wolfe, soprano
Jason McStoots
Free and open to the public