Chapter 3

by Sharon Sokoloff

It’s an interesting time in BOLLI’s life. I think of it as the transition to Chapter Three.

Chapter One included the conception and planning of the program, plus the first couple of years of operations when we built the infrastructure of the program while several hundred members took classes, attended Lunch & Learn lectures, and began creating a community.

Chapter Two, the number of members, courses, committees, programs and activities, policies, structures, inter-campus relationships, staff, and dollars in the annual budget all increased. BALI became BOLLI, grew, matured, and took its place in an increasingly competitive marketplace of lifelong learning institutes in the Boston area.

So, what is Chapter Three and why now? There are five interrelated parts to this story as I conceive it.

Capacity Limitations
The number of people in our program is not going to grow. We have as much space at Gosman as we are going to have. Thus, our “core program,” the two ten-week semesters, give or take a few people and a few classes at other places on campus, is where it is going to stay.

Member Leadership
BOLLI began with 3 committees. We now have 17 committees. The model of member-leadership we’ve followed is not sustainable. The Council is exploring options that make sense for an organization in which members do much of the work.

Staff:
Carol, Mary Ann, and I have been examining our roles—past, present and future—with the aim of working smarter by creating the best fit between our relative strengths, talents, skills, knowledge, and the needs and demands of the program.

Finances
As you know, BOLLI is at a key juncture in its financial life. We’ve been managing this situation for the past few years to ensure: (1) we stay “in the black,” (2) fulfill our fiscal responsibilities, and (3) keep tuition and fees reasonable. Looking at our projected, preliminary budgets for the next two years, it appears we are achieving these goals.

Program Growth and Enhancement
Where do we go from here? How do we ensure our program remains a vital and meaningful learning community? This is the heart of Chapter Three. Our core program, the two semesters, represent 20 weeks of the year, plus two weeks during which we hold the Brandeis @ BOLLI Seminars. This leaves another 30 weeks of what I’ve begun to think of as “white space” or “unused capacity”. Stay posted as, together, we explore and develop new program options and Chapter Three of BOLLI unfolds.
The BOLLI Journal is a biennial collection of poetry, fiction, memoirs, and photographs that reflects the creativity and collective life experiences of BOLLI members.

The Journal Committee oversees the two-year publication cycle, which begins with a lengthy period when material is solicited and collected. Each submission is coded and then assessed anonymously by each committee member. A numerical scale quantifies this assessment; scores are based on questions relating to the quality and clarity of the piece and its appropriateness for the BOLLI readership.

While almost all contributions are evaluated highly, space and budgetary considerations mandate that only a subset of the material can actually be included. In addition, an effort is made to maintain a balance among the various written genres and to allow for a generous number of pictures. The 2008 Journal, for example, contains two-thirds of the items submitted and represents the work of 24 individuals, a few of whom have been published in all the previous volumes.

In the second phase of the cycle, material is edited and a layout is designed. Finally, the copy goes to the printer, proofs are corrected, and the Journal is published and presented to every BOLLI member.

Volume 4, scheduled to appear in late April, reflects the continued enhancement of the Journal’s scope and appearance. It debuted in 2002 as a 50-page, spiral-bound collection of text only. The second edition expanded to about 90 pages, including a few black-and-white pictures. The third and fourth volumes feature an improved binding, better quality paper, and more photography in full color.

As you read and appreciate the varied talents of your fellow BOLLI members, consider submitting a piece of your own, for on the day that the Journal is distributed, the publication cycle begins anew.

### See Yourself on the Wall

BOLLI will be mounting a series of members’ art shows:
- At the annual meeting in May
- A rotating display in the BOLLI offices
- A juried show in the Fall.

For more info, or to be included, contact Bud Elliott, 617-244-8920 or belliox319@rcn.com

### See Yourself at the Head of the Class

The Curriculum Committee welcomes your proposal submissions for the Winter and Spring semesters. We can assist you throughout the course proposal process. Currently, proposals are being accepted for the Fall and are due April 22.

Find information on the BOLLI Web site or contact myrna.cohen@comcast.net

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

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Three New Member SGLs

article by Naomi Schmidt
photos by Richard Glantz

OLLI’s fine reputation as a program and a community has brought us a bonus in the form of three new study groups this semester, led by three new BOLLI members. Having heard from friends about our enthusiastic membership and fine organization, Fara Faramazpour, Arthur Finstein, and Alorie Parkhill each contacted our Curriculum Committee and proposed what promises to be a group of popular and exciting courses.

Fara is teaching Story of Science from Antiquity to the Present, in which each class session is a self-contained story on a particular topic, in the style of NOVA or the Discovery Channel. It deals mainly with the physical sciences and highlights how scientists think, with connections to the arts, religion, and philosophy. He is celebrating the 50th anniversary of his arrival from Iran, coming here for undergraduate study at B.U. followed by a Masters program in planetary sciences at M.I.T. After working at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, he spent the major part of his career at the Polaroid Corporation in research and development. The history of science has been a passion of his since discovering the Milky Way as a child, and he has taken classes in the subject at Harvard.

Fara appreciates the warm welcome from BOLLI staff and members and says that the organization already feels “like a family.”

Arthur is teaching Why Sing Plays?—an Exploration of the Craft of Musical Theater, a course that has emerged out of programs developed for high schools and workshops that he has run for Music and Theater educators. He has both B.A. and M.F.A. degrees in Music from Brandeis and has music-directed more than 170 productions in the Boston area. He hopes others become as excited about his subject as he is.

Arthur states that he is very impressed with the quality of our program and especially with his introduction to it as a new SGL. As he sees it, the BOLLI staff and the people on the Curriculum and Resource committees have put together a very thoughtful, high-powered, organized, welcoming program. Everyone he has met has been open, supportive, and energetic; and the people in his class impress him as committed and enthusiastic. Arthur is even thinking about a new course for a future semester.

Alorie is teaching Comparative Ancient Mythology, a subject that she feels it is important for everyone to understand, for it contains essential truths common to all current religions. Myths have much to teach us about the past, present, and future. This is not just a course in Greek myths, but starts out far earlier in history, circa 20,000 B.C.E. She has a B.A. from Case-Western Reserve University in English and Drama and an M.A. from Simmons College in Liberal Studies, and has taught classes ranging from high school English to mythology and creative drama, as well as a variety of courses in literature and creative writing. She is also teaching a similar course at the Sudbury Senior Center.

Alorie is impressed with the degree of enthusiasm and organization in our program. She finds that the people are very bright, willing to express ideas, and to argue, which she encourages in her class.

We wish our new member/SGLs a rewarding classroom experience and look forward to their continued participation in BOLLI. We encourage our members to continue to spread the word about BOLLI to colleagues who may be interested in proposing a course and enriching our curriculum offerings.
**Benefits of BOLLI Blue**

*by Ron Levy*

During the February school vacation week, we took our 7-year-old granddaughter to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. I pulled out my blue BOLLI membership card and the three of us got in for $10.

Most of us join BOLLI for the excellent curriculum and Lunch and Learn programs, as well as for the sense of community and new friendships BOLLI offers. On their own, the core BOLLI programs offer great value for the money. But remember: a BOLLI student is a Brandeis student! Sandi and I have found so many additional ways to enjoy that affiliation, both on- and off-campus. The previous Banner listed some of the BOLLI affinity groups, but let me relate some of the non-BOLLI activities open to members, free or at a substantial cost saving.

Let’s start with on-campus benefits where Sandi and I have saved money. We were notified of many of these activities by reading the BOLLI Banner or by reading email sent by the BOLLI listserv:

- Membership in the Gosman athletic facility for $100/year, allowing us to use the weight room, aerobic equipment, tennis courts, and swimming pool
- Subscription to the Brandeis Theater, where we enjoyed an exceptional series of plays this season for $8/ticket
- Admission, free or at a discounted price, to a variety of other events, such as the annual Brandeis Jewish Film Festival
- Free campus lectures, such as the excellent *Meet the Author* and *Global Affairs* series (e.g., Robert Reich, Anita Hill, John Dean, and Tom Freedman in the past 18 months)
- Admission, free or at a discounted price to exhibits at the Rose Art Museum
- Admission, free or at a discounted price to concerts at the Slosberg Music Center
- Free talks and lectures sponsored by the Crown Center and other Brandeis institutes (including a special appearance by Bill Clinton)
- Table service at The Stein in Hassenfeld or at The Faculty Club. While not receiving a discount, the menus were reasonably priced and we paid no sales tax
- Student discount when we bought a computer (at the Library & Technology Services site on the Brandeis Web page).

The Arts@Brandeis E-list informed us about off-campus opportunities available to Brandeis students. We obtained free or deeply discounted tickets to the Huntington, A.R.T., and Wimberly Theaters, as well as to other cultural events in the Boston area. (We signed up for this list by going to [www.brandeis.edu/arts](http://www.brandeis.edu/arts) and entering “arts@brandeis” in the search box.) We had to act fast to take advantage of these offers, as they are usually announced at short notice.

I am told that the card will get you a discount at the Frick Collection in New York City, and probably at other similar venues.

Despite my obviously advanced age, I will never be shy to ask for a student (or senior) discount and compare it with BOLLI Blue. I am sure that I more than compensate for the semester course fees by taking advantage of my BOLLI Blue card.
Parents Forever

Just as one keeps in touch with one’s own children after they leave the nest, so BOLLI’s International Friends remain in touch with their SID students after they graduate. Here are three representative stories:

Richard Glantz and Judy Palmer

From the beginning we knew our student, Hammad, from Pakistan, was someone special. Hammad never walked alone through the halls of the Heller School—he wore a retinue of admiring friends like a cloak. When we invited him to attend a Jewish service at our temple, he showed up with two carloads of Muslim and Hindu students.

After receiving his Brandeis degree last May, Hammad took a job with UNICEF in Cairo. Although we no longer have an official tie with him, we still refer to Hammad as “our Pakistani son” and he refers to us as “my American parents.” He telephones us every three weeks, and we talk for an hour (he must have a great cell phone plan!).

Responding to his invitation, in February we flew to Egypt for an 18-day adventure with Hammad. He insisted we stay in his flat, and he graciously offered us his bedroom. He hired a cook to prepare native lunches and dinners for us. This was no Grand Circle tour: we had two days of no-hot-water and one day of hot-water-but-no-cold-water. Every morning at 5:15 we were awakened by the Arabic call to prayer from the neighborhood mosque.

Hammad has retained the magnetic force he displayed at Brandeis and is loved and respected now by his colleagues at work. He threw a special party for us, making sure we had the opportunity to meet his many new friends: the ambassador from Sri Lanka, the deputy ambassadors from Pakistan and New Zealand, and several ranking members of UN agencies in Cairo. The culture calls for immediate repayment of social obligations, so we spent subsequent evenings as dinner guests at various homes.

We are so proud of Hammad. He is such a special young man with graciousness and sensitivity beyond his years. It was a joy to see how well he has mastered a new and difficult environment, a new language, and a demanding job—all with grace and maturity.

Bob Russo

Christmas eve is a tradition in our household when we invite seventy of our close friends to spend the evening with us. Our first SID student, from Swaziland, joined by two Kenyans, celebrated the holiday with us this way; and each Christmas since we continue to open our home to our SID students.

But it was Abla, from Ghana, who especially captured our hearts. It was like having another daughter. From the start she seemed at home with us, cuddling up with our puppy, going shopping with my wife, and offering a blessing for all of us before each meal. We were particularly struck by her sense of appreciation, her outstanding manners, and her thoughtfulness.

Since leaving Brandeis, Abla calls about once a week from Ghana. Sometimes her mother gets on the line to say hello. This is overwhelming. I believe this experience is as rewarding for us as it is for the students.

Rochelle Gordon

I signed on in 2005 to be the BOLLI Friend to Paul, from Kenya. I invited him to our home for Jewish holidays, Thanksgiving, Shabbat dinner, and many other brunches and dinners. My children and grandchildren became fascinated with him and his background. In fact, my nine-year old granddaughter invited him to her school to speak about Kenya.

It was very special to me and my husband to see Paul graduate and to celebrate his achievement with him. Paul is a pleasant, warm, and inviting human being. Since graduating in 2007, he has been working for the Johns Hopkins Center for Global Health, an organization concerned with global health policy.

Every few months I talk with Paul to catch up on what each of us is doing. He has become more mature, self-confident, and goal-oriented. He is the son that I lost so many, many years ago.
A few years ago, George Berkowitz encouraged BOLLI to leverage the extensive work experience of its members and to offer career mentoring to Brandeis undergraduates. It took a while to take the first step on this wonderful idea, but the program is now underway.

Following a series of meetings over the past 12 months with the acting and permanent directors of the Hiatt Career Center, we emailed a Web-based survey of our membership in December. More than 100 members showed an interest in participating in this program, and we built an impressive database of their skills and interests.

Joe DuPont, director of the career center, decided that the initial focus of this activity should be on careers in the medical fields. We developed a short list of BOLLI members experienced in that area who had expressed a willingness to mentor undergrads. Mentoring may be provided through small panels or one-on-one discussions. We expect that this process will commence shortly and be followed by a second area of focus, perhaps the business world.

BOLLI’s involvement is led by Judy Cohen, University Relations Chair, and Len Heier, Technology Chair. Sharon Sokoloff is lending advice and other support.

## Council Elections

There are 6 candidates for 3 seats:
- Beth Davis
- Neil Bernstein
- Susan Posner
- Robert Pill
- Chuck Bluestein
- Stephen Baran

Ballots will include candidates’ statements and photographs.

Ballots will be available on the desk at Gosman on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, April 8, 9, 15, and 16. They will be numbered and placed in individual envelopes addressed to each member.

The last day for voting will be April 23. The box for completed ballots will be on the same desk at Gosman.

## Jewish Film Festival at Brandeis

The 11th annual Festival began last month, but you can still screen these films:

- **Settlement** (Apr. 8, 8 P.M.)
  
  Ten years after his landmark film *Shetl*, Emmy-winning director Marian Marzynski returns to the subject of the Holocaust with this autobiographical film.

- **Children of the Sun** (Apr. 12, 8:30 P.M.)

  Winner of the Best Documentary award at the Jerusalem Film Festival, this portrait of the Kibbutz movement has taken Israel by storm.

- **The Last Jews of Libya** (Apr. 13, 2 P.M.)

  Traces one family from their life under Ottoman rule to their dispersal under Arab nationalism.

- **The Champagne Spy** (Apr. 13, 4:15 P.M.)

  True story of a Mossad agent who infiltrates Egypt’s weapons program by posing as a former-Nazi rich playboy.

- **Noodle** (Apr. 13, 7 P.M.)

  El Al stewardess risks her job and her loneliness to reunite her deported Chinese housekeeper with the 6-yr. old son she left behind.

Ticket prices for BOLLI members are a reduced $8. Telephone 781-736-8600.
THE MOVIE CLUB

by Katherine Raskin

Do you remember when we spent a Saturday or Sunday enjoying a double-feature along with coming attractions, cartoons, and Pathe News of the world? We could walk into the theater in the middle of a movie and leave anytime we wanted. These movies were often in black and white. Only occasionally were there foreign films with subtitles. After the showing we rarely discussed a movie in depth, critiquing the storyline, the acting, the dialogue, the photography, the music. Most of us were going to the movies simply to be entertained!

Members of the Key Sunday Cinema Club, established in nine cities across the United States, have a very different experience. Purchase of a membership allows you to see seven independent and foreign films. The movies are kept secret until the day of the screening; they are shown before they are released to the Boston viewing public, letting the club’s audience respond to the film with true surprise and spontaneity. The Fall and Spring series are held at the West Newton Cinema every other Sunday morning. These films often have well known actors, directors, writers, etc. A handout gives you relevant information on the cast, crew and storyline. The film is then introduced by one of two moderators who have usually previewed it. After the viewing, one of the moderators, Linda Dittmar, a University of Massachusetts English professor, or Brittain Smith, a freelance writer and former German film educator at Boston University, gives us background information about the film and the persons involved in its making. Occasionally the writer or director will attend and speak about his/her work. We are often provided with insights that help us better understand the film. An audience ‘question and comment’ period follows. Since many of the members are longtime movie buffs, their comments can be very insightful and occasionally provocative. Many BOLLI members have joined, and it’s fun sharing our experiences. The audience fills out cards rating the film; these responses are tallied and the aggregated percentages are reported at the next meeting. When the film is distributed we can see how our opinions compare with those of newspaper, magazine, and television critics. It’s especially exciting to see a favorite nominated for an Oscar.

Membership is limited in accordance with the seating capacity of the theater. If there is room for guests at a showing, extra tickets can be purchased. More information can be found at keysundaycinemaclub.com.

BOLLI RECEIVES AWARD

by Sharon Sokoloff

At the conclusion of a spirited competition on campus, Daniel Terris, associate vice president of the Brandeis Office of Global Affairs, announced that BOLLI and the SID program at the Heller School are recipients of an achievement award. The award comes with a grant of $2500, which BOLLI will share with Heller.

The collaboration between BOLLI and SID was the original idea of Lyn Weiner, Chair of the International Friends Committee. All of the participating BOLLI Friends know how much this program has been a life-changing experience. {Editor’s note: see related article on page 5 of this issue.}
Brandeis will celebrate the creativity of our students, faculty, alumni, and professional guest artists through concerts, plays, and art exhibitions across campus. All events are free and open to the public.

The Festival of the Creative Arts was founded in 1952 by legendary American composer and Brandeis faculty member Leonard Bernstein. It is dedicated to his 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 annual five-day festival features more than 100 exhibitions and performances by international, national, and regional artists, actors, and musicians, as well as by Brandeis students and faculty.

The Festival has too many events to list here. Please check the Web site: http://www.brandeis.edu/arts/festival/attendees/schedule.html

Festival Highlights

**Culture X**
A dynamic celebration of the multicultural Brandeis community through diverse and dramatic performances including dance, rap, music, and poetry

**Brandeis University Chorus and Chamber Choir**
Concert highlights from Kurt Weill’s *Lost in the Stars*

**Student Exhibitions**
The innovative artwork created for the Festival of the Creative Arts reflects what is on students' minds this year: portraiture, community, science, and culture, among other topics, in media ranging from acrylics to sugar cookies, inspired by literature, science, and the Internet

**Brandeis-Wellesley Orchestra**
One of New England’s finest university orchestras performs Dvorak’s *Symphony No. 6 in A major* and Tchaikovsky’s *Concerto for Violin*

**Symposium on Creativity**
Artist-scholars from the Women’s Studies Research Center share their sources of inspiration

**A Cappella Fest**
Brandeis’ lively vocal groups unite for one glorious benefit concert. Admission: $5

**Sketch Comedy**
The outrageous student troupe Boris’ Kitchen satirizes pop culture and campus life in a full-length show

**BEAMS Half-Marathon**
Graduate composers from the Brandeis Electro-Acoustic Music Studio premiere new work

**Children’s Theater, Art, and Music Activities**
Fairy kings and queens, paint and clay workshops, story-telling, games, fascinating music instruments, and lively sing-alongs.

Performing Arts Festival
Sunday, April 13, noon-5 P.M.

Throughout the afternoon, more than 200 actors, singers, dancers, and musicians perform in locations across the Brandeis campus, with free art-making activities for the whole family. Last year’s event drew an estimated 3,000 people! Experience the power of art as transformation at this great Brandeis tradition. Featured performers: Shakespeare Now! Theater Company's *Midsummer Night’s Dream* and Sol y Canto’s *Afro-Latin Songs and Rhythms*.

Complementary coffee, tea, and pastries in the Shapiro Campus Center from 11 A.M. to noon.