Weathering theStorm—Part II
by Len Aberbach and Sharon Sokoloff

The financial crisis that is affecting all of us personally is also impacting the organizations and institutions that we love and support. The ever-changing realities associated with this severe problem require constant reassessment and possible modification of plans and strategies that we were following before all of these financial problems occurred. This is clearly the case with our new recommendations regarding your potential financial contributions to BOLLI.

For the past two years, our fund-raising focus has been on soliciting gifts of any size that one deems suitable to the BOLLI Endowment Fund. The logic of this was impeccable in that building the endowment fund would ensure a steady and ever-growing revenue stream for annual BOLLI operational usage. However, as of December 2008, our Endowment Fund was deemed to be “under water,” defined, by Massachusetts General Laws as being below the principal in the fund; i.e., the current value is less than the sum of all contributions at their original face value. For BOLLI, this original value was approximately $1.2 million.

Therefore, because no money from the BOLLI Endowment Fund will be available for BOLLI’s operational needs until the value of $1.2 million is restored, there is a loss of at least $50,000 of revenue in our annual budget. The Endowment Fund must achieve renewed growth by investment gain and major gifts totaling roughly $300,000, the amount lost in the economic downfall. This will not happen quickly, perhaps taking two to four years or more.

Hence, it is our short-term plan to encourage members to make their annual gifts to the BOLLI Bernie Reisman Operational Fund (BROF). Bernie Reisman, a Brandeis emeritus professor who founded the Hornstein Program for Jewish Communal Studies at Brandeis, was BOLLI’s Founding Director. Bernie directed BOLLI (originally BALI) through the planning year and first four operational years. Had it not been for Bernie’s leadership, the BOLLI we know would not exist today. This fund was created in his honor when he stepped down as director. [For additional background on Bernie, see the August 2008 issue of the Banner, available at brandeis.edu/bolli/banner/index.html and also in the Banner archive notebook at the BOLLI desk adjacent to the Gathering Place in Gosman – ed.]

The monies in the BROF are more readily available to BOLLI at a time when financial resources are tight and incremental dollars are extraordinarily valuable. The Endowment Fund Committee is still operating and focusing its effort on soliciting gifts of $1,000 or more from those with the interest and capability to donate at this level.
Who is the nice man who drives us from J-lot to Gosman and back, again and again? Who is the gracious man who patiently waits for tardy drivers to lock up their cars and then helps them climb into the van with a steadying hand or an affectionate pat?

We call him Philip, but his real name is Philips Ng. We might think he hails from the Chinese mainland; but he was born in Macau, moved to Hong Kong, and then emigrated to the States.

When Phil came to Massachusetts in January twenty-six years ago, he wanted to turn around and go back. He had never seen snow before. While the heat and humidity of Hong Kong were oppressive, the Boston cold was intolerable. But his sponsor, his uncle, urged him to stay.

Phil's first job in Boston was as a waiter in a Chinese restaurant. It was there he learned the importance of being nice to the customer. His attentiveness earned him the admiration of two American families. They took him under their wings, encouraging him to learn English, and in his words, “taught me a lot.” These were the first Jews he had ever met, and to this day he remembers them fondly.

Every few years, Phil returns to Hong Kong to see his mother. During one of those visits, he was introduced to a young woman who was to become his bride. It was love at first sight. Once back in Boston, he telephoned her every day. This being the pre-Skype era, his monthly telephone bills ran to $700 and up.

Phil became a citizen in 1990, has two children (13 and 15 years of age), votes in every election, and loves soccer. His favorite food is not General Gau's Chicken but lobster and sirloin steak.

He loves driving the BOLLI van because the members are so nice to him. And his graciousness endears him to us as well.
BOLLI MEMBER RECEIVES U.N. AWARD

by Barbara Shapiro

I first met Ahmet Can Celtikci from Istanbul at the International Friends reception for incoming SID students. He said I reminded him of his grandmother, who died two days before he left Turkey. We bonded quickly. Ahmet is a bright, intelligent, delightful, young man. He brought as much, if not more, to our relationship than he received. He, along with our Ugandan friend, Judith, and other SID students, enriched the lives of my family and me for the two years they were SID students. We have maintained our relationships over time.

Ahmet was integrated into our family as a good and caring son. He fixed leaky faucets, repaired windows, and did other chores around the house. Better yet, according to Ahmet, he prays for us. He told me, “The day I met you, my whole life changed. You and all the Shapiros are my American family.”

Ahmet returned to Turkey after graduating in May 2008. Less than six months later, I was invited to come to Turkey to receive an award from the United Nations Children’s Rights Summit Organization of Turkey. While the award was to be given on November 19, 2008, I was formally invited less than two weeks prior to that date. It was a total surprise. Ahmet sent both a formal invitation from the organization (in Turkish) and an email explanation of why it was important I come to Turkey.

In Istanbul, I received the Children’s Friend Award at an impressive ceremony. Many awards were presented that day. Seven of us received the Children’s Friend Award; six were government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations or foundations, all from Turkey. I was the seventh, Barbara Shapiro, volunteer, activist, Brandeis.

I was excited, I was happy — and I was humbled. This was an experience of a lifetime. In my acceptance speech, which I gave in English and Ahmet translated into Turkish, I described BOLLI. Afterwards, I felt a bit like the Pied Piper when mothers approached me to ask whether I’d be their sons’ “friend” in America if they sent them there. One eleven-year old panelist stood in line with his six-year old brother to shake my hand and request my address and phone number so that they could contact me when they came to the United States to study.

My family and I remained in Istanbul for a week after the ceremony to explore the city. In a role reversal, our hosts escorted our family. They were sincere and warm, opening their home to us, sharing recipes and considering our dietary needs and traditions. Ahmet’s father had been a chief architect for the renovations on some of the palaces we visited. His mother appeared on television to publicize the organization and the award. We were honored with private tours, where one phone call opened locked gates for us. The organization created our sightseeing agenda for the week. We were treated royally.

For this most exciting experience, I thank: Brandeis for the quality people they accept as students into the SID program; BOLLI for the community which facilitates these relationships; Lyn Weiner, BOLLI member, who conceived and developed this extraordinary program (who happens to be my sister). Finally, I thank the United Nations Children’s Rights Organization of Turkey for the great respect and appreciation they showed me, my family, and our program.
Louis Dembitz Brandeis
Gift of Lawrence A. Wien
Dedicated by the Hon. Earl Warren,
Chief Justice of the United States

Jacob Wrestling with the Angel
Gift of Leah Bennett Cline
In memory of her husband, Harry Cline

Inspiration
Gift of the artist
In memory of her mother, Dorothy Sofnas Copaken, who devoted her life to the establishment of Israel as a national Jewish homeland

Ruach Yisrael: The Spirit of Israel
Gift of the children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren of Joseph and Ida Pucker
With love and respect

Monumental Campus
text and photos by Len Heier
Media Master

by Phyllis Pressman Cohen

Her title is Senior Vice President for Communications, and she does communicate well. I spent a delightful morning with Lorna Miles learning about her office and her role at Brandeis. She views the communications office as “the crossroads of the university,” a place through which all information about Brandeis must pass before it is disseminated to the public.

Now in its 61st year, Brandeis is very young when compared to other excellent colleges and universities, yet it was ranked 31 in the U.S. News assessment of National Universities Tier 1 group, which includes such illustrious names as Harvard, Yale, M.I.T., and Stanford. This is due in no small part to the amazing collection of prize-winning publications which Lorna Miles oversees. The walls leading to her office are lined with awards from peer groups extolling the excellence of Brandeis’s publications. Two outstanding examples are State of the Arts, a twice-yearly periodical detailing Brandeis activities in the world of theater, art, music, and dance, and Catalyst, a research magazine which chronicles events in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Both are slick, glossy magazines filled with interesting articles which entertain and inform. Since research is one of the measures used by U.S. News in its rankings, the importance of Catalyst to the image of the University cannot be overstated.

Maintaining a steady stream of positive information is a never-ending task. Lorna’s office is always pitching stories to the Boston Globe, WGBH, NPR, and other local and national print and broadcast media. She has access to senior administration to ensure stories are clear and accurate.

An equally important component of her job is overseeing the many and varied programs that Brandeis offers to its students, alumni, BOLLI, and when space permits, the public. The Spotlight Forum is an hour-long, early morning lecture series held at the Old State House in Boston every two months, featuring a wide variety of speakers, most of whom are Brandeis faculty. They offer concentrated information to professionals in law, finance, business, and government. Quite often forums are repeated on campus to reach a wider audience. BOLLI members are welcome to attend either session.

The Meet the Author series was started by Lorna and has met with great success. Held on campus, authors discuss their newest publications and then do a Q&A with the audience. Our own Sophie Freud was one of last year’s featured speakers. The audience consisted of students, faculty, BOLLI members, and campus employees; and a lively inter-generational discussion ensued. Lorna feels this series is so important and BOLLI participation is so valued that whenever possible she tries to coordinate the series schedule with the BOLLI schedule.

If you are interested in learning more about events on campus, Lorna encourages you to visit the Brandeis NOW Web site: brandeis.edu/now/

“Meet the Author” Talk

Jane Kamensky and Jill Lepore, authors of Blindspot, a novel, will speak in Rapaporte Treasure Hall, April 22, 4-5:30 P.M. Book will be available for purchasing and signing.
When we entered Gosman for the Intercollegiate Fencing Association championships, we had fantasized we might see Errol Flynn hanging from the rafters, swinging his saber to fend off aggressors.

Instead, we found hordes of college students from Brandeis, M.I.T., Princeton, Vassar, Columbia, UPenn, and elsewhere jousting in “pool play” to establish which fencers would qualify for the final championship round.

While Errol Flynn wore fancy costumes, these jousters resembled austere space astronauts: white head-and-throat head guards with black beehive face masks, white puncture-resistant close-fitting jackets covered by electrically conductive vests, white knickers with white knee-high socks, white shoes, and an umbilical cord linked to a scoring machine. Only the socks sported a spot of color to denote the college team. Weapons were the flexible foil, the heavier épée, or the flat saber.

The basketball court in Gosman was covered with a dozen or so jousting mats, and spectators were free to wander among them.

Fencing is a disciplined sport. Fencers move like ballerinas, holding their bodies in classic “en garde” form and performing prescribed moves like chess pieces. For foil and saber, the bout begins with an offensive movement. If the action fails to score because of a miss or the opponent's “parry,” then the opponent may reply with a “riposte.” A score is by a touch to the opponent's torso, thrusting with the foil or slicing with the saber. For the épée, there is no stylized thrust and parry; and the target area is not limited to the torso. There is no cheering, no applause, and no Errol Flynn exclamations, “I'm undone!” Gosman was deadly quiet, except for the electronic squeal of the scoring machines.

A good fencer requires the reflexes of a boxer, the legs of a high jumper, and the concentration of a chess player. This martial sport is known for its speed; indeed, more than once we realized the bout was over only when the fencers straightened up and removed their face guards.

Led by coach Bill Shipman, the Brandeis Judges performed ably, coming in sixth in the combined men's and women's three-weapon team standings.
How much do you know about the Brandeis Libraries, one of the richest resources on the Brandeis campus? Did you know that many of their services are available to BOLLI members? This is an often-unexplored “added value” for us.

The main library, Goldfarb, is in a large building up the hill in the center of the campus. Gertsenzang, the Science Library, is located in the Science complex. Your blue plastic BOLLI ID card will allow you to take books out of either library. Both libraries have open stacks where you can browse. Most books go out for one month, popular books for two weeks, and DVDs for one week. The on-line library catalog, known as LOUIS, contains the holdings of both libraries. Most of the materials for the special graduate schools on the campus, such as the Heller School and the International Business School, are also part of the main library collection and listed in LOUIS, as are the many special collections such as the Spanish Civil War archives, the Yiddish collection, and the University Archives.

You can access LOUIS from home and find out whether the library has a book or periodical you want and whether it is in. You cannot reserve or renew a book from your home computer.

The most direct on-line route to library resources is via http://lts.brandeis.edu. This page lists a vast array of possible sources of information, including LOUIS. Try Ask a Librarian (under Library Research) and Policies (under About LTS). The rules for BOLLI members may be found on: lts.brandeis.edu/research/borrowing/howto.html

The library also has hundreds of scholarly journals, many available full text, on-line. Due to complicated usage and copyright regulations, most of these electronic resources are not available to BOLLI members from home. However, if you go into the library and use one of their computers on the main floor of Goldfarb, you can access and use all these electronic resources. The exceptions to the restrictive rule are some of the government-supplied databases such as Medline (the medical database) and ERIC (the educational database), which are available from home.

The libraries are open seven days a week, but hours change during holidays and vacation weeks. If you do go to the library, you need to stop at the campus entrance booth, where you will be given a parking permit for Tower Lot at the top of the hill. I recommend doing this either first thing in the morning or after 3 P.M. in order to find a space. There is also handicapped parking available.

This semester we are privileged to have one of the Brandeis librarians, Judy Pinnolis, as a study group leader. She has offered to answer questions you may have about library resources. I urge you to take time to visit the Brandeis libraries and discover their wonderful collections. They are sources of both the mundane and the exotic and well worth the time and effort it takes to explore them.

Survey Reminder
Please take the on-line Banner survey, at http://tinyurl.com/a7rr5s and voice your opinion.
### SLOSBERG MUSIC CENTER

**Brilliant Variations on Sentimental Songs:**

**Slipping Piano Virtuosity into the Antebellum Drawing Room**

Vivian Montgomery, speaker

This recital/talk describes a special avenue through which young lady amateur pianists developed their talent. Through mastery of piano variations on appealing popular songs, these “domestic” pianists in mid-19th-century American households showcased their technical accomplishment.

**Free**

**Brandeis University Chorus**

Sarah Mead, guest conductor

* Cantiones et Profana*

Songs and motets in Latin, from the Middle Ages to the present

$10 for BOLLI members with i.d.

**Brandeis University Wind Ensemble**

Thomas Souza, director

Works by Bernstein, Tull, and Grainger

$10 for BOLLI members with i.d.

### SPINGOLD THEATER

For tickets, click on go.brandeis.edu/BrandeisTickets or call (781-736-3400, option 5)

Save $2 handling fee by buying tickets directly at the box office

In addition, BOLLI members receive a $5 discount

#### Hecuba

- **Apr. 2, 3, 4 (8 P.M.) and Apr. 4, 5 (2 P.M.)**

  • Featuring Janet Morrison as Hecuba
  • Adapted by Eric Hill and Eirene Visvardi

Euripides’s compelling story of one woman’s devotion and revenge gets a new translation in this production. At the end of the Trojan War, the Greeks are unable to return home until the ghost of Achilles receives the sacrifice he demands: the death of Polyxena, daughter of the now-enslaved former queen of Troy, Hecuba. Hecuba grieves the loss of her daughter and vows revenge for the death of her son Polydorus at the hands of the King of Thrace, Polymestor. Hecuba and her women plot their retaliation for her loss since justice is no longer an option in their conquered, weakened state.

Evening, $20; matinée, $18