

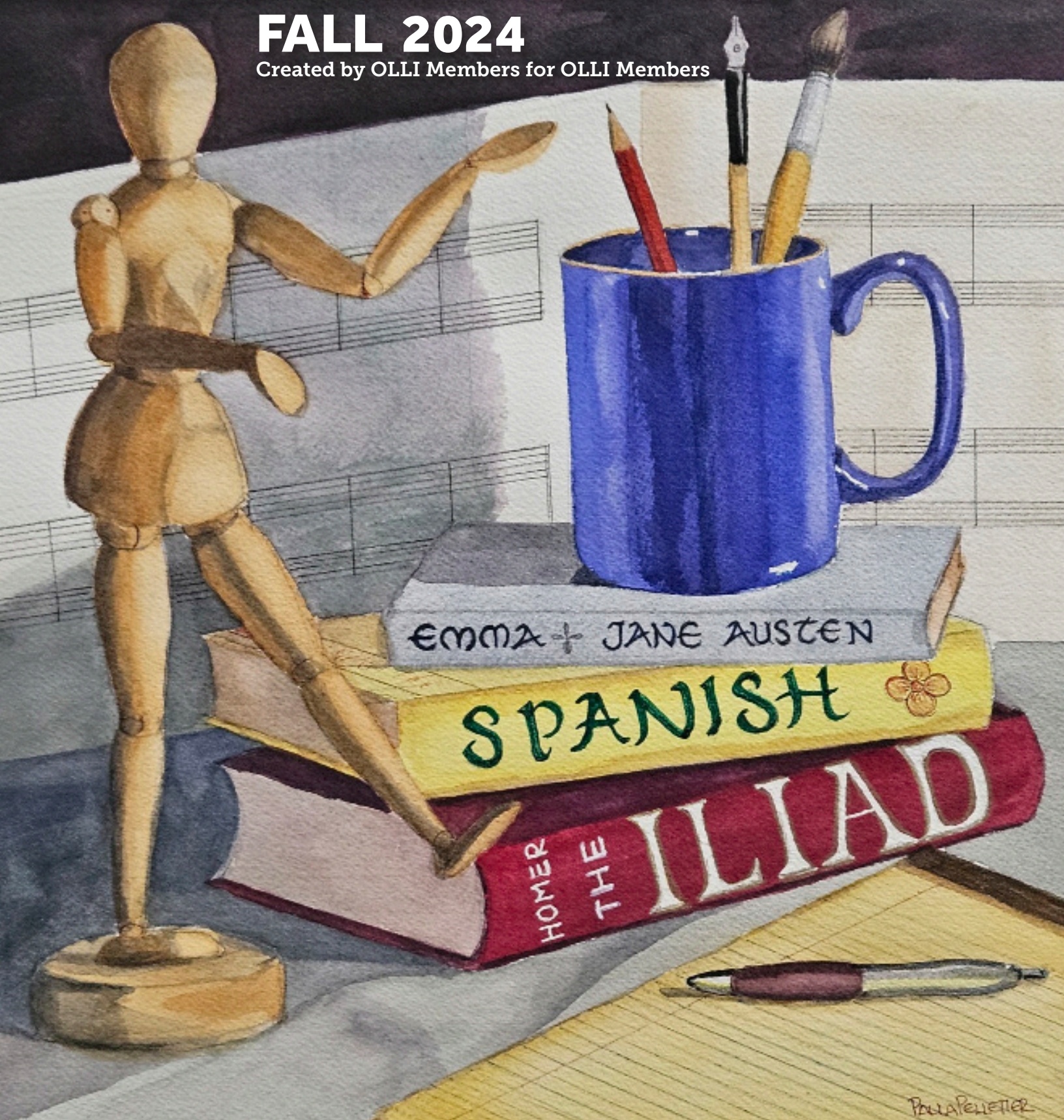
THE OLLI Times MAGAZINE

OSHER
LIFELONG
LEARNING
INSTITUTE

STONY BROOK
UNIVERSITY

FALL 2024

Created by OLLI Members for OLLI Members



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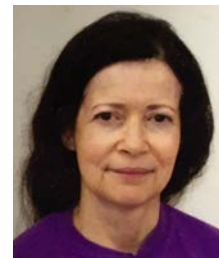
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Never Stop Learning © Paula Pelletier

THE
OLLI Times
MAGAZINE

**OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE (OLLI)
AT
STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY**

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If you are an active OLLI member and are interested in submitting an original written piece, artwork/ photographs or if you are an OLLI member and would like to be interviewed for the OLLI Times magazine, please contact us at:

ollitimes@stonybrook.edu

631-632-6554

The OLLI Times is a publication of The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Stony Brook University



FROM THE OLLI TIMES CO-MANAGING EDITORS



Welcome to the 2024 edition of *The OLLI Times Magazine*, a publication entirely presented by volunteers of the OLLI program at Stony Brook University.

As co-managing editors, we've been privileged to work with a remarkable group of talented writers, photographers and

artists eager to demonstrate their talent in this presentation, as well as an extraordinary group of OLLI volunteers working in a variety of essential and complementary roles. Those roles include assistant managing editors, editors, proofreaders, layout proofreaders and layout/design editors. Every role has been critical in reaching the publication of this exceptional magazine, and we could not have achieved it without their tireless and dedicated participation. •

Within this publication, you'll read articles including poignant memoirs and reflections, interviews of two of our OLLI workshop leaders, poetry which will transcend you, puzzles which will challenge and amuse you, and breathtaking photography and art which will inspire you - all presented by OLLI members - our friends, neighbors, loved ones. How fortunate, indeed!

As co-managing editors, we've been graced with the pleasure of helping to produce this third publication of an inspiring magazine. Please enjoy, as we look forward to our next publication and a new round of memorable experiences with the OLLI family. •

Camille Abelson & Naomi Leszkiewicz



FROM THE OLLI INTERIM PROGRAM DIRECTOR



I am delighted to share with you the third edition of *The OLLI Times Magazine*! This issue showcases the exceptional and vast creativity of OLLI members who are gifted writers, artists, photographers and creators whose contributions make this publication truly one of a kind.

Our mission remains as strong as ever: to inform, inspire, and celebrate the incredible talents within our OLLI community. I'm confident this edition fully captures that spirit, highlighting the innovation and passion of our members.

As Interim Director, it is a privilege to oversee such a dynamic and inspiring program. I am especially grateful to the members of the OLLI Times Committee, whose dedication and resilience brought this publication to life. This magazine truly reflects the ongoing goals of our program, and I extend my sincere thanks to everyone who contributed their time and talents to its success. •

Elizabeth Wilson

FROM THE 2024-2025 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Welcome to this latest edition of the OLLI Times Magazine! This represents the third issue of an outstanding publication which showcases the exceptional talents of the many contributing members. As you read through the magazine

you will be treated to professionally written articles and poems, examples of works of art from talented artists, and photographs from skilled photographers.

None of the above would be possible to be included in this magazine without the exceptional guidance of the two managing editors Camille Abelson and Naomi Leszkiewicz, and the group of committee members who volunteer their time and expertise to carry out the multitude of tasks involved in putting this kind of publication together. Congratulations to everyone who participated in this endeavor! I'm sure you will enjoy this latest edition of the OLLI Times Magazine. I know I will. •

Ed Metzendorf

FROM THE 2023-2024 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Welcome to OLLI at Stony Brook University

As Executive Council President for 2023 - 24, I have to express how proud I am of our Executive Council, our Committee Chairs, our Workshop Leaders, and all of our volunteers who, working together

with Liz and our office staff, have designed an exceptional program.

Our workshops are offered on Zoom, hybrid and in-person. No matter where you may happen to be, you're able to tune.

Special thanks and congratulations to our OLLI Times Magazine Committee. Under the leadership of Camille Abelson and Naomi Leszkiewicz, their third publication is here, and it is a treasure. You will enjoy the articles, interviews, art and photography that showcase the many talents of our membership. As you read each beautiful story, you will get to know the authors and be inspired by them.

We do encourage you to take advantage of all that OLLI offers, and to keep encouraging others to join us. Everything is more fun with a friend.

I wish you an enjoyable year ahead, and thank you for being a member of OLLI here at SBU. •

Sue Mruz

VENICE

Patricia Ballan

VENICE,
you city of seduction, delusion and dreams
where the dark waters, like my hopes
rise and fall, ebb and flow
I remember how we drifted
borne on the languid tide
We dove below the jeweled glassy surface
past ancient stones, mossy and crumbling
soon, the vaulted palaces on their cracked foundations
will tumble, slide, and be drawn down
into the all-encompassing sea



Venice Canal © *Bob Stone*

CHEMO AND THERAPEUTIC CONVERSATIONS: SOULFUL MEETING

Aldustus Jordan

From the driveway, I watch my brother
take slow, unsteady, determined steps.
The invasion of monotonous hypnotizing
drips of "toxic hope" has taken a physical toll.
If he gave up, no one would blame him.

I want to help him but choose to honor his
independence, dignity, and self-respect.
For now, he is free from the tether
of colorful PICC lines, poking, prodding,
and annoying redundant questions.
God will protect him.

With unintended cruel irony,
his doctors applaud his numbers
even as strength and stamina weaken.
But his spirit, hope and soul are intact.

His body and soul are always at odds,
pull in different directions, opposites
refusing to attract. Two bare-knuckled
gladiators engaged in an illness-induced
high-stakes battle of wills. Winner takes all.

His favorite soul music is pumping in my car,
James Brown, Temptations, Aretha, Queen of Soul.
Hearing the music, he pauses and, with eyes closed,
rhythmically bobs his head and snaps his fingers.
He had become a great dancer from the waist up!
Body and soul call a truce and embrace, briefly.
Suddenly he is carefree, blissfully naïve,
unapologetically reckless.

Still dancing, he enters the car.
I join him in his waist-up dance!
We are teens again and loving every moment.
Our youth was never wasted. We still had it!

We kept dancing as the Queen of Soul
blesses his soul and mine,
"R E S P E C T" she insists—
like ours, loving and mutual.
We never utter the word "cancer."

I back out of the driveway.

THE ROACH

Aldustus Jordan

I looked in my cabinet the other day,
and who should I see hustlin' along the way,
but a little black roach with a crust of bread
dartin' and dodgin' tryin' to get away.

Don't worry brother roach I won't kill ya'.
The crumb is yours and I hope it fills ya',
for the hard days ahead.

You see, we into the same thing,
snatchin' crumbs.
And at times I, too, must hide
when company comes.

Dig it brother roach, slow down a minute,
this is our world too we both livin' in it.
You walked with dinosaurs and I with kings,
seems like we need to change some things.

What's that brother roach
you tired of the mess you in?
Well let me shake your antennae my friend.
Cause we both part of a troubled lot,
but we too happy with the little we got.

Brother roach, I'm thinkin' there ain't
but one solution. You, me, and all the roaches
in the world make moves, create a stir—a revolution.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Rita Rosen

As I travel around the world, I have had the wonderful and privileged opportunity to meet the children through Grand Circle's World Classroom Initiative. Along with support from its travelers, grants from the Grand Circle (GC) Foundation help to improve the quality of education and to provide a better environment for the next generation.

On May 21, 2013, Yulia, our Program Director, took us to the St. Petersburg Music Boarding School, the only school of its kind in northwest Russia. This school provides students ages 7 to 17 with academics through the secondary school level along with the highest level of music education.

At this remarkable school, we visited the classrooms to meet the children who were eager to show us their knowledge of English. Of course, the highlight of our visit was to learn about their music education. What better way than to listen to the children as they entertained us and shared their musical talents and accomplishments with us. I remember seeing a sign hung above the blackboard:

"Go Up To The Sky And Never Fall Down On Your Spirits"

Yes, my spirits were lifted up high as we departed.

During our visit to China, accompanied by Sally, our Program Director, we visited the Shao Ping Dian Primary School in Xian on October 21, 2014. It was a rare opportunity for the students to communicate with foreigners and for us to gain insight into Chinese culture. At the end of our visit, we had some fun participating with the children in an old-fashioned game of tug-of-war. The laughter and strong competition we shared closed out our visit.

The visit closest to my heart occurred on May 29, 2014, when our Program Director, John, took us to the Fontein Social Care Center in Mbabane, Kingdom of Swaziland, a small landlocked country in Africa located between South Africa in the west, north, and south and Mozambique in the east. The Center is an AIDS orphanage serving poverty-level children with educational instruction, health monitoring and nutritious meals. Their basic diet consists primarily of grits and beans and, periodically, some meat. About 18 percent of the children are HIV positive and up to 50 percent are orphans either because their parents died of HIV or are too poor to take care of the children. In addition to providing food, the GC Foundation funded the construction of an open-air food preparation area with a roof, counters, storage and running water.

En route, we stopped at a local supermarket where we purchased sacks of beans, oranges and bananas. As we stepped off the bus, the children ran to greet us with outstretched arms anxious to be hugged. They helped to unload the packages and carry the supplies up to the building. Excitement was in the air!

Many in our group helped to prepare lunch for the children. Phyllis and Sheryl cut the oranges and bananas and helped to serve the meal - a large bowl of what looked to be porridge. Merrill and I stood back to capture it all on camera.

After spending some very precious time holding hands with the children as we walked along the grounds, it was almost time to say goodbye. How surprised we were to hear them sing "God Bless America." We then sang "You Are My Sunshine" to the children. We handed out some simple gifts we brought from home - crayons,

pencils, toothpaste and toothbrushes. Their big smiles brought tears to my eyes.

It was time to leave. The children walked us hand-in-hand down the hill to the bus and stood by the fence waving goodbye as we pulled away. It was an emotional farewell. This visit was an

experience I'll always remember. Their faces, their smiles, their innocent love and friendship are embedded in my memory. •

"A picture is worth a thousand words." Also accompanying this story is Merrill Heit's photo, "Join With Me," included on page 30.



Time to Eat © Rita Rosen

GRAY MATTER

Pete Pedersen

Random musings, by, and about,
those of a certain age...

Our son was walking his 6-year-old and her friend to school recently. He was just far enough behind them not to be part of their conversation, but close enough to overhear it. The girls had been studying nutrition in school and the friend said she had a neighbor who was "very old" but healthy because he rode his bike. Not to be outdone, our granddaughter asked her father how old I was. Honesty being the best policy, he told her and she ran back to her friend.

"Oh yeah, my grandfather is in his 80s and he and my grandmother are very healthy because they go to the gym every day. And the only foods they have in their house are vegetables and crackers."

I guess when you are 6 and looking for hot dogs and French fries everything else seems like veggies and crackers.

###

Have you noticed how many things you buy today are enclosed in a plastic protective shield? Yesterday I bought a package of razor blades and now I'm struggling to get one out before my stubble turns into a full beard.

I read somewhere that shoplifting is on the rise. It started before the pandemic and now is an epidemic of its own. A friend told me the shield is meant to deter shoplifters. Shoplifting never really appealed to me – well, maybe as a 7-year-old standing in front of the candy counter at the 5 & 10 – so I don't know how a shoplifter's mind works. But, if someone wanted something bad enough, would the shield really deter him? It seems to me that the action of pilfering is spur-of-the-moment. So, does the thief really give

any thought to the shield until it's time to extract the razor blade?

That might not be the reason for the shield but I still can't get to my razor blade. Maybe if the CEO of the razor blade company had to do battle with one of those shields my problem would be solved.

###

Many mornings our gym locker room discussions end up being about age and fitness. Each of us feels we're in better shape than the other guy. We look younger. Spend more time on the treadmill. And can't be as old as the rest. As far as I'm concerned, I haven't yet crossed the threshold from middle age to that time beyond, in spite of some obvious signs:

- My barber is now a hair stylist and has started calling me "young man."
- The checkout clerk no longer asks for the year of my birth when I buy a six-pack of beer.
- When I scroll down to my birth year on drop-down menus my finger cramps up.
- Friends I haven't seen in a long time tell me I look great – for my age.
- The doctor said my ailments are normal for this age. But isn't dying also?
- My own children are starting to look middle-aged.

When I get home and tell my wife about these gym conversations, she says I should just man up and accept aging. It could be worse. We could be discussing politics.

###

ONLY MY GRANDFATHER

Dorothy Schiff Shannon

The horse came back
galloping alone down city streets
like the riderless steed
in state funerals,
the horse without wagon came back.

The new owner phoned -
my grandmother cried
in helpless grief.
Only my grandfather
in his fresh grave would
have known what to do.

Unwilling soldier in the czar's army,
scholar turned tyrant's horseman,
he fled in a hay-filled wagon,
became the junk collector
of the New England city,
master of his own horse and wagon.

He filled a need in this hard-up place
the Depression, the War
and then the mills moved south.
Only the yellow-belching
chemical plant still offered jobs.

"The ragman is dead!
The ragman is dead!"
chant the rough street youths
who'd ridiculed his shabby clothes
and foreign flavored speech.

In my grandfather's quiet garden
manured rich soil
yielded tomatoes no czar
could ever claim.

BREAKDOWN

Sheryl Heit

Yearly maintenance check
Annual Physical wreck

Swishing wiper streaks
Dry blinking eyelid peeks

Balding tire treads
Shiny pinkish heads

Car dents causing aggravation
New facial wrinkle formation

Noisy muffler sounds
Sleepers' snoring rounds

Overused engine squeaks
Bending knees causing creaks

Replacing old transmission
Titanium hip addition

Changing old oil droplets
Colonoscopy eliminating polyps

Tail pipe exhaust everywhere
Remnants of beans fill the air

Time to trade the old car in
Remember, take your vitamins!

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN

Nicholas Santora

On the morning of June 6, 1968, my father walked into my bedroom at around 6 am, an hour earlier than I was required to wake up for school at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Inwood. I was in the seventh grade. He tapped my shoulder and told me to come into the living room. I knew something was wrong. His countenance was sullen and eerie. I followed him. When we arrived, our Sears color TV was on. That is how I learned that Robert F. Kennedy had been shot in the head by a .22 caliber Iver-Johnson at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles about six hours before. I was stunned. The look of sorrow on Dad's face combined with the picture of Kennedy lying on his back will be forever seared in my brain.

When the Freedom Riders stirred up righteous rancor and suffered brutal beatings in 1961, the administration of John F. Kennedy could no longer sit on the sidelines, in an effort to avoid offending its southern good ol' boy constituency. On May 29, 1961, Attorney General Robert Kennedy sent a petition to the Interstate Commerce Commission asking it to comply with the bus desegregation ruling it had issued in November 1955. That ruling had explicitly repudiated the concept of separate but equal in the realm of interstate bus travel. That day marked an epiphany for RFK. He went from Cold Warrior, Mr. Fixit for the Kennedy Machine, to a man of principle. Kennedy would also evolve regarding foreign affairs. He would later sour on the Vietnam War his brother helped to foment and President Johnson escalated. He was still an arrogant "hard-ass," but now he was fighting on the side of justice and for the downtrodden.

Alternative history is a parlor game. However, Robert Kennedy's untimely death may be

viewed by some as a kick in the groin that we as a nation have never fully recovered from. Of course, there have been gains, but Kennedy was the grown-up we needed. Would his presence in Chicago in August 1968 have united the Democratic Party, perhaps preventing the riots and a subsequent paranoid shift to Nixon? After that? With the guiding hand of an older brother, would Ted Kennedy have driven off that bridge in Chappaquiddick? We'll never know.

It is my opinion we would be living in a different world today.●



Capitol © Bob Stone

THE NECKLACE

Mary Griffin

I wore the necklace of your words
Each bead a moment in time.
Where words are caught on woven threads.
Frozen images painted by your phrases.
You are not a pretty woman,
But you are a sexy one.
You may be a rocket scientist,
But you have no common sense.
I have no time
For you.
I have obligations
To others.
Our bills
You don't want to know.
The necklace is tight around my throat
Its weight bowing me
Strangling me
Muting me
Do you know when one partner loves the other more?
A revelation
Yes, I actually do know.
I pull the strand from my neck, the thread snaps.
The beads spilling to the corners of my consciousness.
I am unmuted.
I can say goodbye.

OPENING DAY

Marina Rose

The sounds of spring ring true and loud...but not the sounds of chirps, buzzing, seeds popping, lawn mowers revving.

Instead, it's the sound of *thud* when a newly minted ball hits a worn-in mitt, the *whoosh* of a slide, the sound of cleats on asphalt, the *smack* of a bat, the *plunk* of a foot on a dirty, puffy base. In my spring world, a memory beckons me towards a big listen: the memory of my father and baseball.

The calendar page flips to a day like no other.

It's **Opening Day**!! It's said that opening day has a pageantry and ceremony to it, where hope balances on that one knee in front of a dugout. Each team is wishful, optimistic, claiming a rebirth, with a new opportunity for triumph. There's also a profound generosity in the sport as everyone gets a turn, everyone gets the possibility to change the outcome.

If thoughts of my father and joy are in this one sentence, then baseball needs to be the reason it's written at all.

His energy, drive and passion circled around the sport, compelling him forward through the days of his week.

He coached my brother's team with fierce tenacity, drilling and honing his players' skills. He made them practice to get it right, until they couldn't get it wrong and readied them for Saturday morning games.

This was the swing and momentum of my "childhood baseball" with dad and for dad. We were a family on those chilly spring mornings: hot coffee in a thermos, a woolen blanket over rough grass, starched uniforms. Later, blood or grass stained on the knee, caps snug and molded to perch on a young boy's head. The thundering voice of my dad on the sidelines: the "Atta Boys," hearty claps, clipboards, scorebooks, lineups.

The mystery of baseball strikes me now. No one ever really knows which pitch is being

hurled, where the fly ball may swerve, where the ground ball could take a wrong hop....all creating tension, like living a life in the everyday. Baseball's poetry of motion is noted in graceful leaps, basket catches, windups, releases, the batter's unique stance, the artistry of his swing.

Baseball is, at its core, a wish to return to the beginning.

Players round the bases with pride and perseverance to fulfill the divine purpose: to make it back home safely from where they began.

My dad lured me in to sit on the couch beside him, his trusty old bat for company; the clichéd snacks of peanuts, root beer and yes, even Cracker Jack. I enjoyed his armchair managing, his relentless, raucous cheering.

It's here in the spring, the bittersweet memory of learning about Willie Mays, Tom Seaver, the '69 Mets, the dreaded Reds' lineup. I can wax on and impress a few with my baseball acumen, earned by keeping my dad company all those years ago.

Baseball distracted him from career failures and disappointments. But even more, it kept him young. He chased aging and his own mortality. This is what loving baseball did for him. Surely, it's a salve, an elixir for the worn and weary workingman.

And then there's time to consider. Baseball has its own pace, with no relentless hurry and scurry. There's a slow motion sense during a game. Time unwinds, and has no foreseeable end. I sense a deep, necessary connection between baseball's fluidity and marking the years of your life.

On opening day, in spring, I hear my dad calling me to come watch.

"Atta Girl, let's root them on!! It's going to be a banner season!!"•

A 20-SOMETHING IN MANHATTAN

Pete Pedersen

In the 1970s I moved from California to Manhattan and found a studio apartment in the East 40s. A young couple lived across the hall from me and we often shared the elevator as we began our day. We would nod, sometimes mutter a quick "Hi" and after heading out the lobby door they would turn east, and I west. Fast forward six months. I was on a business trip to San Francisco, and late one afternoon we bumped into each other in the hotel lobby. We greeted as old friends. Handshakes, hugs and a peck on the cheek.

"Got time," he asked, "for a drink in the bar?"

"Sorry," I said, "off to a meeting. Maybe after that?"

"Too bad," she said. "We'll be heading to the airport for the 'red-eye.' Let's connect when we're all back."

"Great," I replied. "We'll do that."

Two weeks later, the "elevator dance" again. A head nod, a brief "Hi" and out the lobby door. They, east. Me, west. Typical Manhattanites.

A couple of years later, I married and moved to the suburbs. Often, when I'd be back in the city and in the old neighborhood, I thought about the couple. Did they still live in Manhattan? If I'd followed up on the drink offer, would we have become friends? Did they ever think about me?

###

During my first spring in Manhattan, I joined the seven-inning slow pitch softball team of my neighborhood pub, part of a loosely organized league of midtown bars. We played on Saturdays, in cut-offs and Keds, on a concrete patch in the East 30s. After each game we'd head to the "losers' bar" where they would pick up the tab. In my teens I had been an adequate ball player. Never first choice for the pickup games. But, never last. The consensus was "decent bat, but

no speed." The whole reason for my joining was to have some weekend fun and to make friends. The fact that the waitresses often came out to cheer us on was an added bonus.

About midway through our eight-game season, I came to bat in the top of the seventh inning. Scoreless tie, two out. After fouling two pitches straight back, I stroked one over the second baseman's head. The ball landed just to the right of the centerfielder who had shifted a bit too far left. I knew I'd never circle the bases but gave it all I could, ending breathless on third. The next batter lifted one just over the shortstop and I chugged home. The last batter in the inning went down swinging.

In the final inning we clung to a slim one-run lead. If we could hold that, we wouldn't be buying the drinks. The bottom of the inning was almost a replay of the top half. Two outs, runner on third. I was playing short right field – four fielders on a 10-man team. The batter drilled one over second. It would land about six paces behind the bag and no one was there. Unless. . .

Not sure where I got the speed but I raced (OK, maybe chugged) towards the dropping ball, slid feet first, stuck out my glove and - PLOP!

After the game my now best friends, looking at my bloody, cut and scraped legs, asked if I'd forgotten we were playing on concrete.

"Of course not," I said. "Why would you ask?"

Even the waitresses were impressed. •

THERE'S A HOLE IN MY BUCKET LIST

David Bouchier

Many famous travelers of the past like Lord Byron, Robert Louis Stevenson and Gertrude Bell were essentially solitary. Now we tend to travel in crowds, sometimes crowds of 2,000 or 3,000 on a big cruise ship.

There's nothing wrong with the desire to explore new worlds and new civilizations. It's part of our natural human curiosity. The problem is that everybody wants to go to the same places at the same time. These popular sights may not be the most interesting places to see, but they are always the most crowded. We are all travelers now, but only in the sense that UPS truck drivers are travelers; we cover a lot of miles and make a lot of stops. But the miles become increasingly repetitive and the stops increasingly predictable until the awful realization dawns that we are in danger of getting bored. The tour companies invent more extreme and exotic destinations and activities every season, but it's a small planet. We may be running out of things to add to the bucket list.

My own bucket list is almost empty. It seems to shrink naturally as one grows older; and perhaps an empty bucket list is one of the gifts that comes with age. No more nightmarish airports; no more excruciating guided tours in the blazing sun; no more penitential hotel beds (with or without bedbugs); no more picturesque ethnic restaurants that send you straight to the hospital. Now I'm inclined to let young people do the traveling. That's what young people are for - to go to war, or to go to Venice - experiences that are not totally dissimilar.

I am no longer intimidated by popular guidebooks with titles like *A Thousand Places*

to See Before You Die. At the most generous estimate, I have seen no more than 208 of the essential thousand. I have been to dozens of places not on the "must see" list and have, therefore, wasted my limited "seeing" time. If I were to take these guides seriously, I would have 792 indispensable places still to visit. The Great Colonnade at Palmyra in Syria was conveniently destroyed by ISIS, but that still leaves the

Borobudur monument in Java, the Tsukiji Fish Market in Tokyo and 789 more. This would mean, by my calculation, about 80 trips a year, or almost two a week; and I'm just not going to do it.

I am confirmed in this resolution by a dream I had in which the world supply of oil ran out suddenly without warning. The planes stopped; the big cruise ships stopped; the cars and coaches stopped. Everybody was forced to stay wherever they happened to be at the time, like a global game

of musical chairs. Astonishingly, the dream almost came true in 2020 with the coronavirus pandemic. If you were lucky, you were marooned on Paradise Island. I was marooned comfortably at home. An unfortunate cousin of mine was marooned for three months in a hot hotel room in Amritsar, India. I can no longer face that kind of existential uncertainty. My bucket list is closed. •



Briones Regional Park

© Naomi Leszkiewicz

GRAMMAR GRIPES

Irma Gurman

The object of the preposition
Sounds simple, but with your permission
I'd like to ask smart people why
They say "He gave to Joe and I"
They think it sounds sophisticated
It really gets me irritated.

Another thing that drives me mad
Is the use of "its". I find it sad
They didn't learn the possessive rule
When they were in elementary school
And "woken up's" another one
My endless list has just begun.

"Alot" is one that makes me wince
What will it take me to convince
Them this is simply just a case
Of spelling two words with a space
Maybe I am too pedantic
But all these errors make me frantic!

Now I'll take another snipe
At pronunciation – another gripe
"Mischievious" just makes me scream!
But If I correct you, you will deem
Me quite the snob. I guess it's so.
I can be a pain, you know.

So when I start to criticize
Your grammar, I should realize
That no one's perfect, even me
Whoops! "Even I" (I said it wrong)
To the clueless masses I belong.

GET BACK TO THE GARDEN

Fran Scott

I know the times are a-changing
and you can't trust Mondays
and there's no hell below us.
Green scales already fell like rain
and 1984 came
but we are not the champions.

Remember 2001?
"Open the pod gate doors HAL"
"I'm sorry Dave. I'm afraid I can't do that."
Like a cockroach hiding in the lab
HAL has self-programed to remain and maintain
minions of algorithms.
HAL can return us to stardust.

Check your privacy settings.
The AI apocalypse is upon us like climate change
a disconnect from what we can do
with ourselves
and to ourselves.
At a museum of modern art,
I'd rather applaud an elephant for painting
than pixels flowing through circuitry.

Let me sign the non-compete agreement now
and quietly get back to the garden
where I'll sing hallelujah
and paint in watercolors
a rusty red wheelbarrow
beside white chickens
under a purple plum tree.

HENRY THE VIII

Irma Gurman

Henry the VIII, it is known
Had several young wives share his throne
And some of his mates
Met some curious fates
As the history books all have shown

Catherine - his wife number one
Comes from Aragon - can't have a son
The Pope won't endorse
His plea for divorce
So the Anglican Church is begun

Anne Boleyn on the scene now arrives
She's the second of Henry's fair wives
He takes her to bed
Then he chops off her head
But her daughter, Elizabeth, survives

Now he marries the fair Lady Jane
He adores her! He doesn't complain
But she's not long on earth
She dies after the birth
Of Prince Edward, as we ascertain

Henry the VIII couldn't bear
Anne of Cleves. Yes, he called her "a mare!"
The two did agree
To an annulment decree
Since a sex life they never did share

Here's another sad story - a pity
Cause Catherine Howard was pretty
But so indiscreet
That on Henry she'd cheat
She's beheaded - and so ends this ditty

Wife number six, Catherine Parr
Outlives Henry, she says au revoir
To her king, not her head
Cause she dies in her bed
That's the happiest ending, by far!

BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE

Can you match the lovers
in Shakespeare's plays?

<u>Gals</u>	<u>Guys</u>
Juliet	Benedick
Portia	Antony
Beatrice	Romeo
Ophelia	Bassanio
Cleopatra	Othello
Katherine	Hamlet
Desdemona	Petruchio
Bianca	Lucentio
Sylvia	Posthumus
Imogen	Valentine

Answers on page 58

IF

Sheila Eisinger

If money were no problem
and I was strong of limb
I would dream

that was then

I'd have a second place
to rest my head
a bed and more

I'd dress more like a hippy
out in my Birkenstocks
or sandals with no support

The incessant noise
of ambulances and police cars
wouldn't rattle the younger me

I'd walk without subtracting
blocks from where I was
to where I was going

Some New Yorkers walk
with help
a cane or walker or aide

A PT requirement states emphatically that air
even dirty city air is preferred
to a four wall existence

If my back were strong every day
I'd decide if bus or train or feet
were up to the test of going from here to there

No counting my steps
I'd smile and count unlabored breaths
if it were then.



Serenity © Rosamaria Eisler

THE 'D' WORD (AND ONE MORE)

Camille Abelson

In my memoir writing class, I've written about my late husband, Roger, who passed away more than nine years ago. I'll always remember those months following his passing. Oh sure, there's the grief and palpable aloneness; but the one thing few people talked about, the ceaseless emotion crashing into me every morning, was how to put two feet on the floor, rise and do something – some thing! I would awaken and stare at the ceiling, having no desire, no impetus, to literally rise and get out of bed. Sobbing was all too easy, decision-making alone unfamiliar, loneliness inherent; so where did I belong? When so much that matters vanishes in an instant, how do you begin again? For about six months following Roger's passing, the above recipe was my existence, until one morning, when for no explicable reason, I awoke, stared at the ceiling and yelled,

"Enough! Feet on the ground! Find something!"

And so, I rose, and over the next few years, found some affirmation: I joined a support group and have maintained social friendships with some of the attendees; enrolled in enrichment classes at C.W. Post; sold my house in Glen Cove and moved to a condo community in Blue Point. One of the best things I did during this period was enrolling in the OLLI program at Stony Brook University in January of 2020. A year later, in January of 2021, I requested a role in the publication of the newly resurrected *Chronicles* magazine, now titled *The OLLI Times Magazine*.

My initial role was that of a proofreader, something I could easily accomplish. I communicated regularly with Lou D'Onofrio, the managing editor of *The OLLI Times*, as well as Elizabeth Wilson, member relations assistant of the OLLI office at SBU regarding

minor issues related to spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, etc. Everyone who contributed was a volunteer and though it was virgin territory for most of us, by the fall of 2021, we'd published a formidable two-part magazine – never having met in person – all accomplished via Zoom.

At the start of 2022, we assembled again, still meeting on Zoom. The worst of the Covid pandemic was diminishing as we excitedly embarked on a new year, particularly since my dear friend, Nomi Leszkiewicz, and I volunteered to act as assistant managing editors. We worked closely with committee members and those submitting content, striving for as much perfection as possible and succeeded.

I look forward to a continued role with *The OLLI Times*, as we begin the process of the next publication, working closely with Nomi, now as co-managing editors. That brings me back to the title of this memoir, the 'D' word.

Oh, the 'D' word, a word that has played a major role in my life these last nine years: Destination. That was the word which kept playing like the proverbial broken record in my head that long-ago morning. You can exist without the 'D' word but your heart, your soul will likely be somewhat vacant. When describing myself, I generally don't use the word "happy." It's so elusive. I prefer words synonymous with "fulfillment." Those ideals I understand and those ideals have been further nourished by two major, but equally essential factors in my life.

The first is as a volunteer performing clerical support in the OLLI office. Whether answering phones or assembling information packets, I'm personally enriched to be a presence. I smile. The second is the locality where I reside, a 55+ condo community in Blue Point; and

because the pandemic has somewhat abated, my neighbors and I have been able to more fully realize the potential of this generous community. We have thoughtful, caring residents who continue to encourage a lifestyle fostering opportunities for travel, theater, books, tech assistance, games, recreation and so much more. We're engaged! Covid interrupted that but didn't beat us. My community – how I love those words.

Yes, the 'D' word, it leads to so many more, but what's the 'one more' I referenced in my story title? Well, that's an 'E' word, a bit of pride in seeking out and believing in myself: 'Empowerment.' I want to journey to as many destinations as time will permit and upon arrival want to feel empowered. Now, my much older self reminds me that to the very end, I will always be a work in progress. I'll sometimes succeed or fall spectacularly on my face. There'll be occasional tears but smiles, too, heartfelt fulfillment and unwelcome drop-ins. They'll undoubtedly knock on my door and I'll just have to keep journeying. •



Beautiful Dahlias © Carol Goldstein

THE THIEF

Martin H. Levinson

He sits silent in my living room
daring me to press his buttons so
he can burble and babble his sweet
talk to transfix my attention. I vow

to resist my urge to turn on,
tune in, watch. Not now, pal.
There are books that need to be
read, emails that need to be sent,

floors that need to be cleaned, bills
that need to be paid, thoughts that
need to be reflected on in quiet
solitude without the blare of the

putative news of the day, commercial
cackle, and whatever shows lurk on
my DVR. Just give me five minutes he
tells me telepathically and sucker that I am

I grant the crook his wish and click
the remote and five gets you ten
and ten gets you twenty and twenty
gets you forty and before you know it

there goes the evening and it's
such a crime that once again
I've been duped by this cunning
thief of time.

GRATITUDE

Naomi Leszkiewicz

Glancing back over my shoulder to 2020-2021 as Covid gobbled up and crashed through everything in its way, I find myself reminiscing about how lucky my partner, Jon, and I were. I am grateful that we could retreat to our home in upstate New York. While we weren't in complete isolation, we were mostly sequestered from the hustle and bustle of suburban and city life.

Taking many walks in this country setting, we explored our surroundings with a sense of freedom, relief and wonder. We visited parks, nature preserves, the Hudson River and the outskirts of the villages of Rhinebeck and Red Hook. We observed a horse rolling on its back in a field, a great blue heron lifting off from a nearby pond, heard cows bellowing and listened to a cacophony of thousands of spring peepers calling to their mates. We smelled multitudes of lilac clusters and the overall verdant freshness of the country.

Always taking time to stop at the sheep farm a couple of miles from our house, we'd say "hi" to the "sheepies." I don't think I will ever tire of this experience and will always wonder how the people in the other cars could drive right past without a glance or acknowledgment of any kind! One early spring day, upon approaching the farm, we expectantly stopped and glanced toward the sheepfold and pasture. Just as we had hoped, there were at least a dozen newborn lambs - black, brown, white and even a couple of black and white spotted ones, wobbling on their spindly legs, hungrily nuzzling their moms. Each time we passed, we'd stop and marvel as their legs grew stronger and they figured out how to run and play. We felt like their proud grandparents.

Our bird feeder, hanging from a branch just outside the dining room window, welcomed a variety of customers: chickadees singing *Chicka-dee-dee-dee-dee* cheery cardinals

chortling, upside-down nuthatches plucking seed, gray-suited juncos hopping, red-bellied and hairy woodpeckers pecking, blue jays stridently calling, the surprise of a rose-breasted grosbeak. The goldfinches visited in their drab winter attire but suddenly burst onto the scene in their bright gold regalia as spring arrived. Families of purple finches joined us sometime in April.

While we have yet to actually spot one, we frequently heard barred owls calling to one another, at night and even during the day, *Hoo hoo hoo hoooo! Hoo hoo hoo hoooo!* The resolute hammering of the tremendous pileated woodpeckers resounded loudly above us yet they remained surprisingly camouflaged in the dense woods.

One bitter February morning, an unusual small animal, about the size of a chipmunk, clung to our bird feeder. I took some pictures but was unable to get a really clear one. After hours of research online, perusal in nature books and consultations with our friends up the road, we were still not sure whether it was a chipmunk, a young squirrel, or a baby opossum. Needless to say, this unidentified animal was grateful to find something to eat.

One night, we heard a thump against our sliding glass door and peering outside, we saw a flying squirrel perched on the birdfeeder. We considered ourselves quite lucky to spot one of these reclusive nocturnal creatures.

In the coldest months of winter, we sometimes filled our bird feeder twice a day, while in the late spring and summer, there was enough seed to last three or four days.

In early May, anticipating the return of the ruby-throated hummingbirds, I found our hummingbird feeders hanging abandoned in our shed all winter. I rinsed out the cobwebs,



Thank You © Naomi Leszkiewicz

prepared sugar-water solution, and placed them on branches near our deck. Expecting the hummingbirds would be weary and hungry after their 3,000-mile journey from as far away as Mexico, I wanted to be ready for their return. And sure enough, within a few days, they arrived!

Returning to Dutchess County from a visit to our Long Island home, we exited the Taconic Parkway and drove down several quiet country roads towards our home. A small bunny nimbly hopped across the road to safety. Rounding a bend, we greeted about 20 cattle grazing peacefully at early dusk. After unpacking the car, I filled our bird feeder, apologizing to the birds, chipmunks and squirrels for being away. I sprinkled some sunflower seeds on the railing and as I prepared dinner, I noticed a small squirrel already quietly munching away. Calling out to her, I exclaimed,

"We're back!"•

YESTERDAY TODAY TOMORROW

Sheila Eisinger

Remembering my youth
I bought a jar of bubbly foam
pipe included
I held the wand
and dipped the O into the soap
then carefully blew the rainbow
captured in the hole
I blew
it grew
my hand waved
and released a touch of magic
which gracefully danced with the breeze
as high as the basketball hoop
hooked onto the garage
but broke before the music ended
How high will my balloon fly
when that last bubble is blown
will it fly
as high as heaven?

BERKSHIRE BARN

Virginia Bushart

The old barn spoke to me. Weathered to a rich patina, its rough cut siding reflected its age. Solid and upright, its frame suggested care.

Two pale red doors marked the center of the south side, providing contrast to the dusty tones of aged barn-wood. An antique hay rake rested nearby, adding character to the scene.

I drove by this New England monument often, mentally recording its changing moods, thinking that someday if the barn's energy and my spirit aligned, I might photograph it.

In summer, when the grass was a verdant green and the sky bright blue, the barn appeared an artifact. A new roof reflected the bright summer sun, detracting from the scene's organic charm.

The barn stands in a field, with no vivid shade trees to frame it in fall, and the faded red doors clashed with the orange glow of nearby sugar maples. I have observed that aged wood pairs best with the gold tones of autumn.

In winter, the monotone shades of a snowy day caused the barn to recede into the landscape, and an old hay rake shrouded with snow, while charming, is a photographic cliché. I began to feel that this barn to which I was becoming very attached, was never going to permit me a photo op.

Then, in early spring, something magical happened. The snow receded to reveal a landscape awash in tones of khaki and olive drab. Blustery winds brought layers of billowing clouds to a slate blue sky. Leafless trees became graceful silhouettes.

In this muted landscape, the barn came to life, the hay rake a fitting complement. It was as if the barn beckoned, "This is it, the moment you've been waiting for."

I spent an afternoon in the field with my camera and tripod, immersed in the moment, hoping to capture the character of the barn, the soft hues of the landscape and the breadth of the clouds.

I felt connected to the beauty of the scene and the spirit of the barn, hopeful that I was capturing both, grateful that I had been invited. •

(Author's Note: I have included on the facing page a photo of Berkshire Barn that is referenced in this story. It was selected for the "2020, A Closer Look at the Berkshires" calendar contest, sponsored by Berkshire Bank, for the month of March and received the second place award.

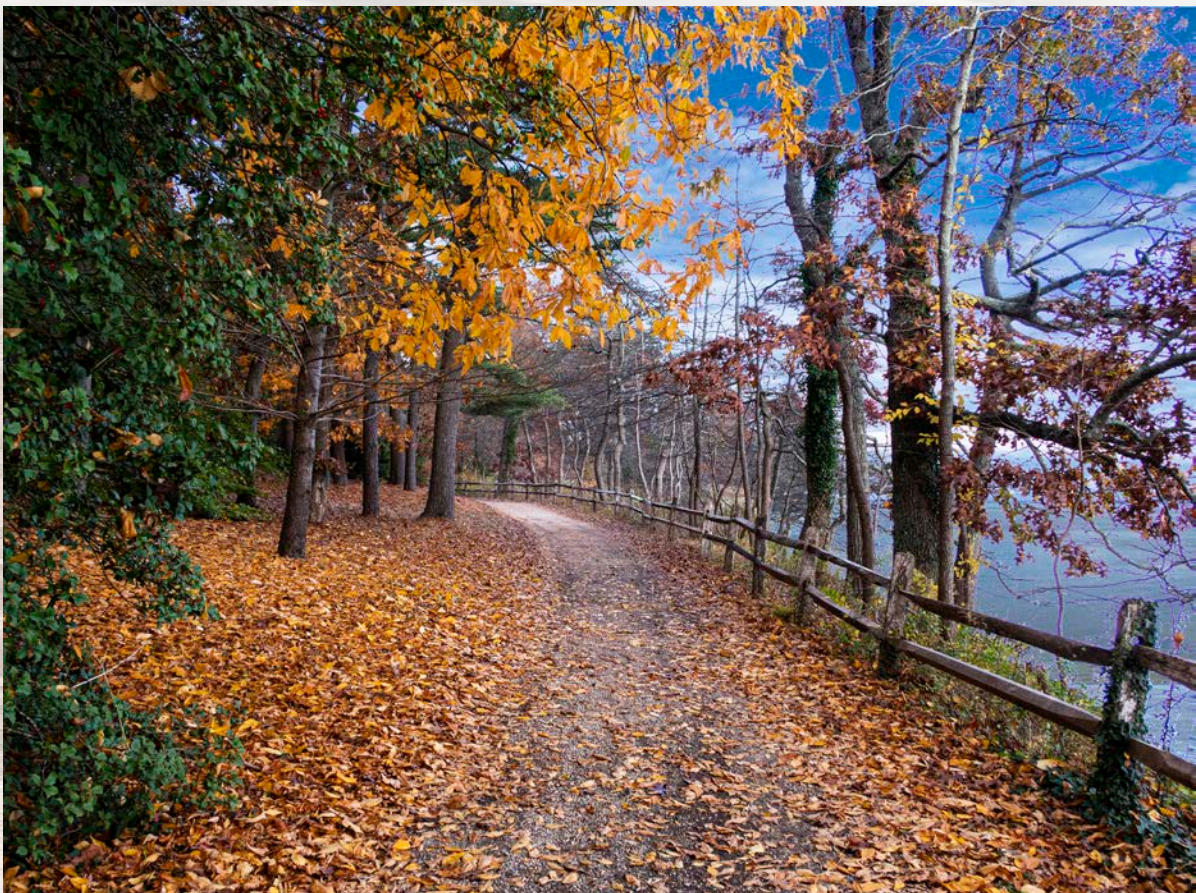
I learned both the technical aspects of photography and the elements of composition through the wonderful photography workshops offered at OLLI. My inspiration comes from the many beautiful and award-winning photographs shared by my OLLI peers in those workshops.)



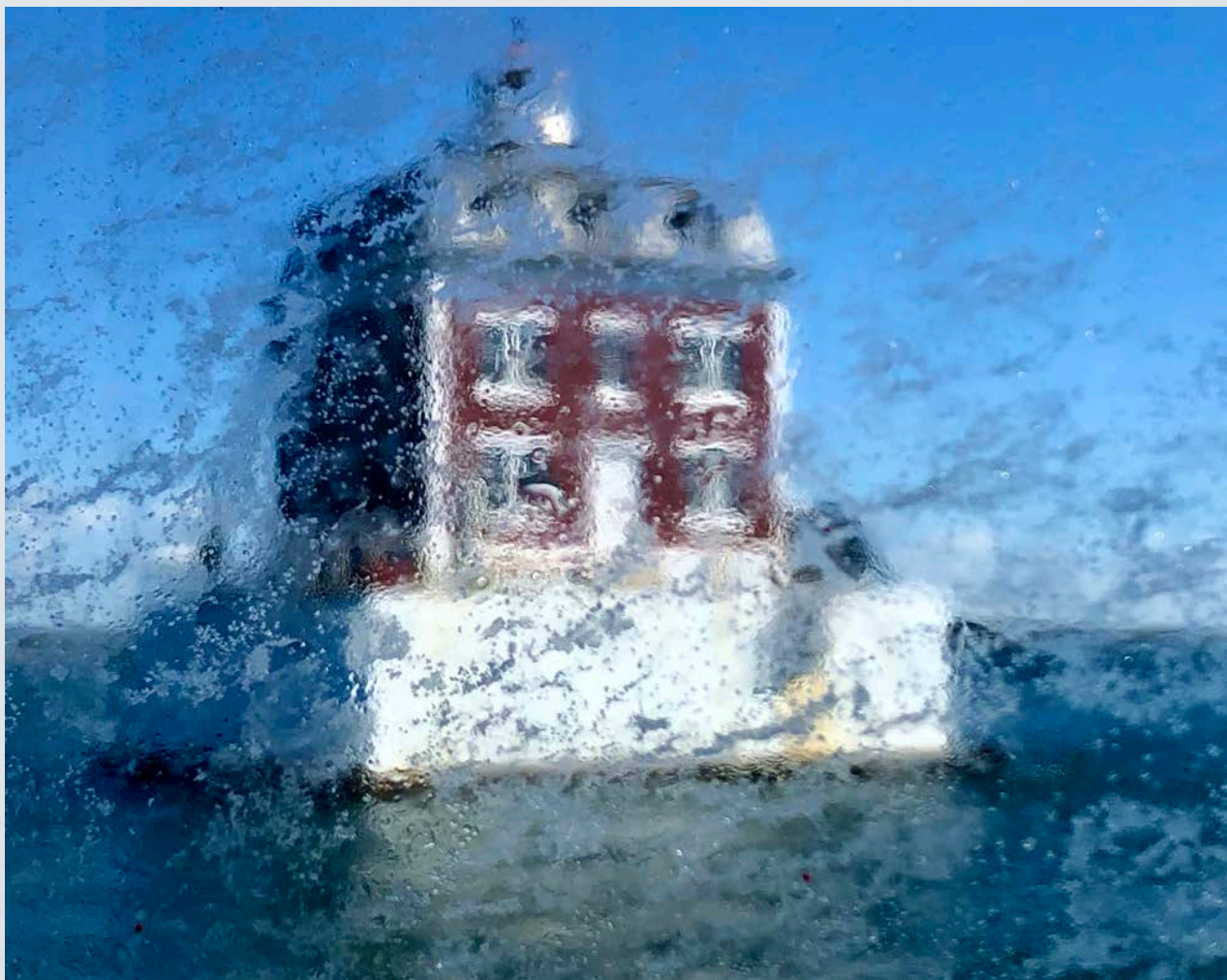
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Berkshire Barn © *Virginia Bushart*



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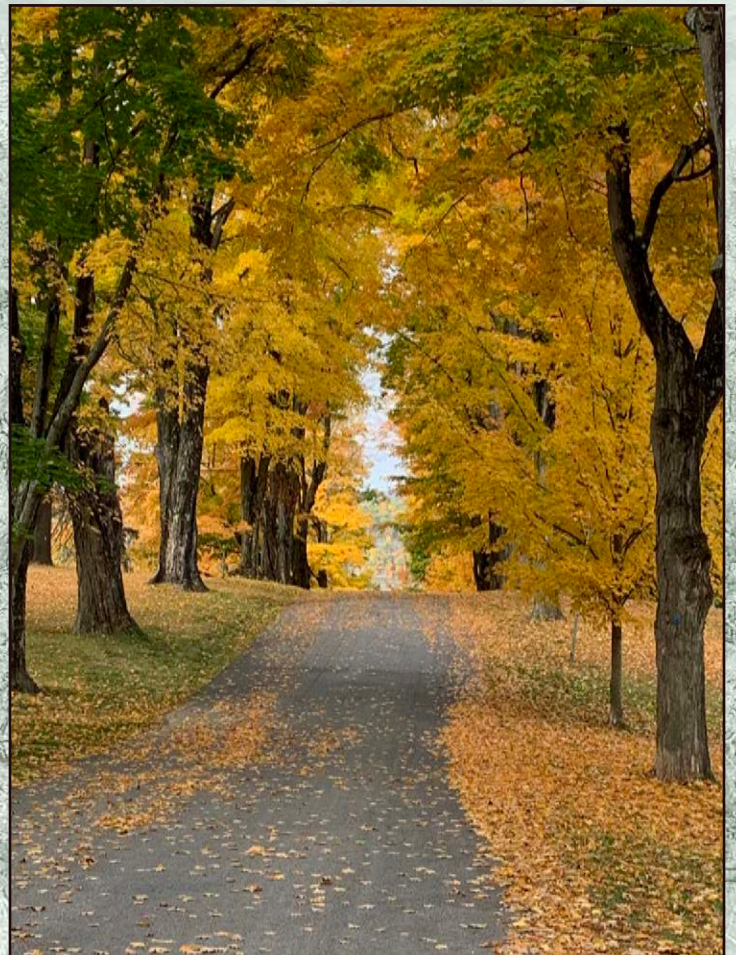
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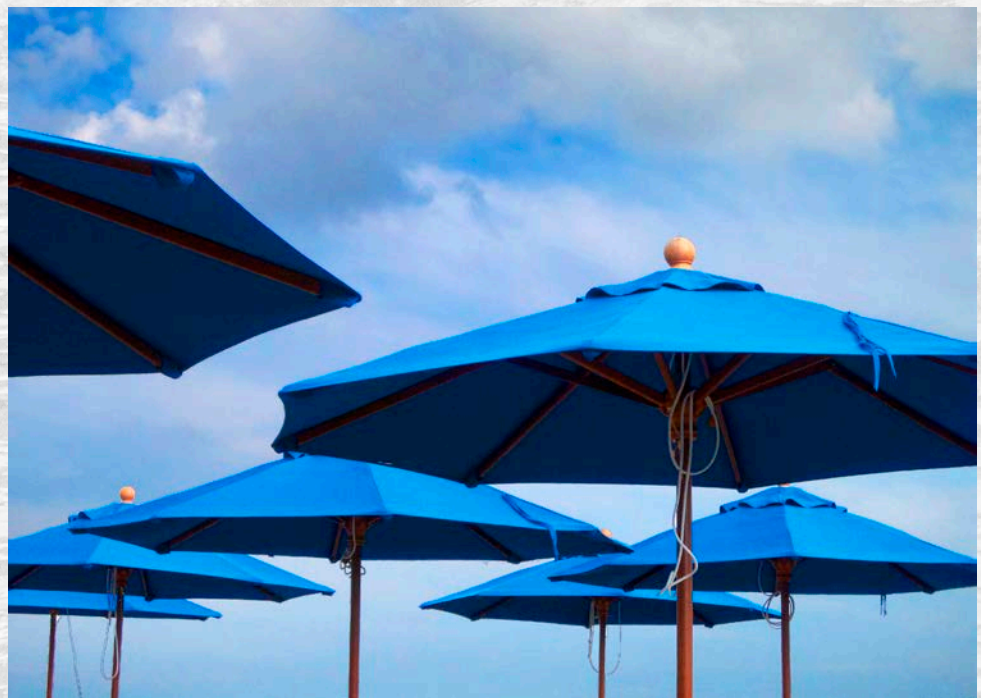
Hiding in the Leaves © Naomi Leszkiewicz



Angelika and Lillies © Lily Klima



One World Trade Center © Lily Klima



Blue Umbrellas © Frank De Rubeis

THE DECISION

Patricia Ballan

Old man March stood at the corner looking up at one of his favorite sights: the way the setting sun refracted prisms from the glass windows of the tall building above.

The vision made him forget his doctor's dire diagnosis for a few moments.

"We're able to delay the inevitable with new treatments now," the young doctor said.

March, irritated, had walked out of the office in a temper. Why would he want to live longer? For whom?

He adjusted his eyes to the scene around him and began to guess the occupations of the people he saw. It was a pastime he enjoyed, and he would often while away the time speculating about the job a passerby might have.

A bespectacled man with a briefcase hurried by. *An accountant*, March thought. Then three men, neat and natty in well-fitted suits, caused March to conjecture, *Ad men*, I suppose, because after all, they were strolling on Madison Avenue.

Just in front of him, a couple stood facing each other. Though they were close enough to embrace, there seemed to be an electrical charge between them which held them apart. They didn't move.

The girl was not conventionally beautiful, but there was an aura about her which spoke of ancient times, of oracles coming true. She was simply and perfectly dressed; her eyes large, her mouth small and sweet. Her left hand was innocent of any ring.

Her companion was nondescript and exactly deserved the name Mister Brown. His face was lean, his cheeks hollow, his ascetic appearance unprepossessing.

March thought that a wonderful creature like this girl deserved better. He heard the man say,

"Please don't be upset, my darling. We'll meet again someday."

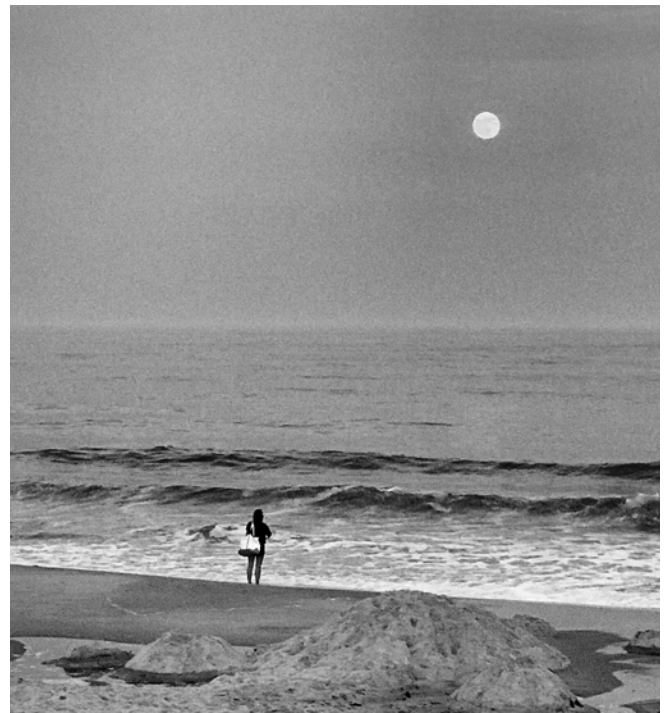
She and March knew they would not - ever. She blanched and looked faint.

Suddenly, the man's whole aspect changed. His features seemed to rearrange themselves. He grew powerful and in charge, grasping the girl's arm in a grip so strong that his fingers left welts when he finally let her go.

Their goodbyes floated in the air and echoed as they parted.

"Goodbye, goodbye..."

March looked up again at the windows, now cold and gray since the sun went down, and reflected that a physical death was not the only death. Drawing his cape around him, March stomped back to the waiting doctor. •



Peaceful ©Rosamaria Eisler

AMONG THE MENTORS

Fran Scott

When I write a poem
my veins do not bleed prose onto the page
or compose couplets drip by drip
My hemoglobin stumbles and bumbles
until . . .

"Veni, vidi, vici"

Caesar leads me back to my mountain of blank paper
and I produce a meandering draft of drivel.
No genius courses through my veins
but my stacking of thoughts appears
and I am exceedingly proud.

"Cogito, ergo sum"

I write because I can
with the same joy as la-de-la-ing "Nessun Dorma" with Pavarotti

Literary luminaries reside on my bookshelves
Born with words in their blood and vision beyond the normal spectrum
they wrestle meaning from universal chaos
then string untangled thoughts into song
Their rhetoric should ignite the paper that carries it
instead it settles as brick pathways through the canon
Oh, the places I can go reading them
To Russia with Tolstoy, down the Mississippi with Twain
Most have surnames likely copyrighted for eternity
Dante who traveled through Hell to Paradise
and Milton who lost it
Shakespeare who made the world a stage
for Melville to claim the sea
and Kafka the mind
Even if their styles sound stuffy to my ears
these guys pretty much keep their crowns
because something in their words sticks to our ribs.
Dickens' best and worst, wisdom and foolishness, belief and incredulity
remain to diagnose our 21st century

I open a notebook and hope a passing muse will notice me
I mumble like Ruth, "Wither thou goest, I will go"
Actually, the ladies are easier to access

They may have had someone like me in mind
 knowing a woman's voice
 fills gaps in the human story
Their battles rage through chambers of my heart
They're protective like I feel about Anne and her diary

Already we go by first names
 Zora, Toni, Alice, Louisa, Flannery
 (Sylvia still scares me)
 Charlotte, Jane, Emily, Lillian, Virginia
 Like suffragettes, they peeled back convention to its marrow
I definitely hear them whisper
 "Your voice is important, your day will come."

Like yin chasing yang, I spin
 and anguish
 until Alice and Toni's dark sides of the soul
 find Emily's celestial lightness
Then I scamper like a cockroach
 searching for metaphors and meaning
 in my room until
 thoughts from my blood finally adorn the page

Ah

No one will ask to read my poem
 It's OK

My poems remain private
 like wearing lacy underwear
 or none at all



Rare Books at the Morgan Library © Naomi Leszkiewicz

WOO-WOO

Virginia Tanner

"Dad, Gin, I want to get a motorcycle. I have enough saved up."

"NO! Todd, you know your father's friend got killed on one going over the George Washington Bridge!"

"I'll NEVER be going over that bridge!"

"Doesn't matter. End of discussion!"

I was still navigating my way as a new bride and stepmother to four kids, two at home. My husband, Ernie, was on the downside of worrying about teenagers. Todd was his fourth, my first. I was the "newbie-zealot."

"Todd, your father and I have decided that you can get your permit and sign up for Driver's Ed. Driving the car is safer than driving a motorcycle."

"Gin, would you take me driving?"

"Of course, did you ask your father?"

"Yes. He said you have more patience."

"OK."

"Todd, let's go to the elementary school parking lot so you can learn about the car."

"My driving teacher said that's a bad idea."

"We're doing it anyway. Change places with me."

"Ok, Todd, start the car. Observe. Go forward about 20 feet. Stop. Observe. Turn right. OBSERVE! STOP!!"

"Can we drive on the streets now?"

"Todd, we usually stay on the inside of the double yellow line."

"Gin, take your feet off the dashboard. I've got this."

"Son of a ...! You cut off my son!"

"Gin, Dad is going to be mad that I taught you to curse!"

"OK, Todd. You passed your test. This is my car for work. No speeding, be careful! No going down the Port Jeff hill with the windows open, music blaring and going *Woo-woo!*"

"*Woo-woo?* Seriously! Well, then you can't sing or dance in front of my friends."

Decades pass, Todd is 59. We lost Ernie in 1994 and circled into a smaller, more tightly knit family. Todd, his siblings, his wife and kids welcomed Bob as family in 2003. Then the teasing extended to Grandpa Bob.

Todd still brags that he taught me to curse. From California, he regularly teases about *Woo woo* and singing in front of his friends. In 2010, I joined the church choir. With 3,000 miles between us, I baited Todd.

"Every Sunday I sing in front of your friends!"

Heckle, heckle, josh, josh. Even his kids join me in the teasing.

2022. My dear Bob passed away. I inherited his 2010 Sebring hardtop convertible. I had to care for it but couldn't drive it. Probate! The towing company dropped it at my house. Driving it around in circles on the top of my driveway just to keep the battery going and the tires moving was not fun! It took 15 months!

September 23, 2023. I registered the car, put my new plates on and took it for a 50-mile shakedown drive.

"Todd, here's a picture of me in the convertible," I texted. "Yes, I did drive it down the PJ hill, the radio was blaring. I was singing!"

I definitely heard someone go "*Woo-woo!*"•

A MEMORABLE CAREER

Sheryl Heit

I loved teaching and always said, "I am off to school," never "to work!" Teaching was always a hobby of mine more than a job.

My husband Merrill and I lived in New Orleans for a time and while he was taking courses for his PhD at Tulane, I had several teaching experiences. My first was at the Magnolia School located in a plantation house along The River Road. It was a 12-month residential school where the children lived with counselors when they were not in class. My students were ages 7-15, all with special needs.

Not all parents came to visit their children or take them home to spend holidays together. One Thanksgiving, Merrill and I took Maryann and Douglas to our apartment and cooked Thanksgiving dinner for them. That was a very special day for all of us. On some Saturdays, we took a few boys in my class out to go fishing with us. We fished along the levee and they used cane poles to catch small fish.

Some of the children had serious behavioral challenges. Brent often talked to inanimate objects. Douglas had aphasia and often could not remember words and substituted many wrong ones. David had no control of his temper. One day when I was out of class, he had a temper tantrum and squashed and killed our two pet mice in his hands.

The next year I was made principal since I was the only teacher with a master's degree. It was definitely a challenge dealing with many emotionally disturbed youngsters. At assembly programs on Fridays, I gave out awards to each class with good behavior. The challenge was pronouncing all the Cajun names before handing them their awards.

Since Merrill and I wanted to spend our summers back in New York, I was able to get a job, from August to June, in the New Orleans public school system teaching fourth and fifth graders with learning disabilities. I remember

teaching the children in my class their parts in a play I had written. We all worked on scenery together and they made their own costumes in class. The day of our performance, I found out Bobby was not coming because his Grandpa passed away the night before. Maggie said she could do his part as well as her own. Amazing! She did it without a flaw.

When Merrill completed his PhD program at Tulane, we came to New York and bought a house in Massapequa. I became pregnant with Melissa and four years later with Michael. In 1985, I interviewed for and got a job in the Farmingdale school system teaching fourth grade (and years later, fifth grade) students, some of whom had special needs.

Over the years teaching in Farmingdale, I had 10 student teachers from various colleges who brought many new ideas into my classroom. They learned from my years of experience, and I learned from them as well.

I continued writing plays for my classes to perform, mostly based on American history. It always was a confidence and pride builder amongst the students. I remember sitting up many nights thinking of fun ways to remember math ideas. They always worked and years later, when students would come to my classroom for a visit, they would still remember them!

I enjoyed making booklets for my students containing their best stories and poems, as well as letters written by their parents and me about how proud we were of them. On the last day of school I handed out the surprise booklets and they excitedly looked through them with pride. Then I had them read aloud the letters written by their parents and me. No one was embarrassed to do this. The big surprise for me was when the children wrote letters about what they enjoyed in my class and drew pictures of me as well! What an amazing keepsake for a year that I loved as much as they did. •

UNION GUY

Mike Dolber

I turned 73 in September, and the way I had seen myself for most of my adult life has drastically changed. I was a husband, a father, a teacher, a union activist. But now my wife has been gone for over five years; my kids are adults living in Massachusetts and California; and my teaching career has been over for a decade.

It's the mid 1950s. I'm a kid, maybe aged 6 or 7. We have sold our family candy store in Brooklyn where I had spent my time collecting comic books, baseball cards and candy. But now the store is gone and my father has a job delivering Levy's bread. He gets up in the middle of the night to drive to the garage where he gets into his truck and begins his route. He works hard and I suspect he is not very happy with his job. One day my dad does not go into work.

"The drivers are on strike," he explains.

I don't exactly understand what that means, but I see the stress on my parents' faces; I learn that sometimes "you do what you have to do." I learn that when you are on strike you do not go to work, but you also do not get paid. I learn what a picket line is and, most importantly, I learn that you never, never cross one. I don't know how long the strike lasted, or how it ended, but I do know it was a big deal.

Every month a magazine comes in the mail from something called the Teamsters. There is some kind of wagon or cart on the cover. My father tells me that the Teamsters is his union and vaguely explains what that means. I am not sure I totally understand it all, but I sense that it is important.

Sometimes on Sundays, we visit my grandmother – my father's mother. There is a funny smell in her apartment, plastic covering the couch and hard candies in a bowl on the table. Always hard candies. Grandma seems to always be wearing an apron over her housedress. Occasionally there's a magazine or newspaper from something called the Workmen's Circle, whatever that is. I learned much later that it

was a left-leaning Jewish workers' organization, supporting workers' rights and social justice. The pieces start to fit together.

Now it is February 1974. I've been hired as a social studies teacher in the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District – a job that I will have for the next 40 years. Eight months later, we are on strike fighting for a salary increase and, even more importantly, for a limit on class size. I am a new teacher walking the picket line and I never for a moment consider not doing it. I hear my dad:

"You never cross a picket line. You do what you have to do."

We are on strike for a week and we are fined two weeks' pay. We get low interest loans, which I pay back at \$33 a month. We are hurting financially, but I feel proud. We have shown solidarity and we have protected jobs, including my own.

Now it's 2005. I have been a union rep, a head building rep, a vice president, and now I am the president of our union. It consumes my life. I obsess, complain and worry, but my friends and family know that I love it, that it is a large part of who I am. They make fun of me when I talk about the Strike of '74, like an old veteran sharing war stories. You know, glory days. I realize that this is how many people see me.

So now I am 73 and at least that part of my old identity remains. Now I am a widower, a retiree, a father and a grandfather. But still a union guy. I have become the co-president of our retiree chapter and I've realized how much I need to still be connected and involved with my union and with the people I worked with and their successors. And I'm proud to say that my son is also a union guy. His doctoral dissertation was on media and culture in the Jewish labor movement between the wars. He has been a union organizer and is now working with the Uber drivers who are trying to organize and protect their rights. My father would have been proud. •



Existential Staircase © Robert Oliva



Bayard Cutting Arboretum © Joan DeRosa

OP-ED FRIDAY - FALL SEMESTER 2023

Ken Buxbaum

(My Op-Ed Rules of Procedure were originally written for the years when the workshop was on the third floor of the Student Activities Center (SAC), then revised for Zoom during the pandemic, then for Wang Center Room 301 and Lecture Hall 1. The following rules apply to my post-pandemic, in-person workshops.)

RULES OF PROCEDURE:

1. You must raise your hand and be recognized before you speak; recognized by the workshop leader, not the person you're questioning or disagreeing with. If the workshop leader doesn't recognize you and you don't recognize the workshop leader, you're probably in the wrong workshop.
2. When you are recognized to speak by the workshop leader, you must say your FIRST NAME before you say anything else. This is so that you can be recognized and called upon by name during subsequent workshops as long as you always sit in the same seat and wear the same clothing.
3. Giving a sermon prior to presenting your article is prohibited and your introductory or concluding remarks may not be longer than the article you are presenting. Similarly, when responding to an article, your comments will be timed to assure they are shorter than the article.
4. Note-taking will neither be accepted nor condoned by anyone participating in a discussion as it gives the notetaker an unfair advantage over those who cannot remember the details of the article being discussed.
5. No matter how heated the discussion, there will be absolutely no personal remarks unless you want to compliment someone on how well they look. To do otherwise will result in you and your chair being moved into the Wang Center hallway.
6. Disagreeing too many times with the workshop leader will also result in you and your chair being moved into the Wang or SAC hallway. If it continues, for the remainder of the semester your chair for Op-Ed will be located in the hallway on the second floor.
7. A person who is speaking may not be interrupted except by the workshop leader, who may interrupt anyone at any time, particularly if he disagrees with the ridiculous comments of the person speaking.
8. There are no midterms, finals, or term papers. However, extra credit may be earned at any time by enthusiastically agreeing with or praising the workshop leader.
9. Papers, cups, bottles and other litter, such as your lunch, must be disposed of at the end of each workshop and chairs must be repositioned, as there is no way to contact Stony Brook University housekeeping on your cell phone.
10. Changes and/or additions to these rules may be announced at any time at the sole discretion of the workshop leader. •



NIGHT JOY

Marina Rose

It happens, as it will, as it can, that new chapters begin after a lifequake. In retrospect, there was foreshadowing; there were tremors. I find myself adjusting, but fretting, and if my trigger is stress, certainly my treatment is perspective.

I think back to a particular night when my two young granddaughters wouldn't settle down to sleep. They needed comfort and touch, to be soothed and cajoled into slumber, into restfulness. They asked to be cuddled, wanting to lie all together, so I cuddled them as if my life depended on it. And it did.

The little bedroom is square in shape, darkly decorated with the only illumination from an amber nightlight. A clock was ticking. I heard it somewhere, or was it our heartbeats? Well, if so, there is no better way to keep time.

The three of us are strewn on a pull out couch. You can imagine the discomfort a mattress from this source offers a "Mimi-type" like me.

The muffled sound in this room is my hush, my shushing.

They are so close that they could seep inside of me and dissolve effortlessly into my skin.

I am caressing their foreheads, their scalps and their soft supple baby skin. Their hands on mine, like a starfish of little weight, just light pressure, with tiny pillowy knuckles.

They have silky hair still tangled from the washing, pure smells of soap, vanilla and Tom's toothpaste swirl in the air above us. Feathery whispers are only allowed. I tell them stories about a place made of kings and castles, snow and ice, dinosaurs or bunnies whichever they prefer. Or a princess who was brave and hungry for adventure fortified by Cheerios. I tell them, though, it's only after a good long sleep that she will be strong enough to "super hero" herself to infinity and beyond. •

AT SEVEN

Virginia Tanner

A crystal glass, filled with ice.

A splash, a dash

A pour, one more

It is stirred, she, shaken.

Hand-held and shimmied.

Voila! The colors blend

Almost there...getting close.

Good evening, Rob Roy.

How was your day?

After the funeral,

After the will,

Aftermath, not afterglow.

Cocktails for one.

When is after over?



Spring is Here © Doris Diamond

AS IF WE WERE ONE

Rachelle Psaris

Musings from a retired Registered Nurse.

One day a patient came back from having a minor procedure which required minimal sedation. I performed the usual routine tasks, checking her blood pressure and heart rate and asked if she was having any pain. She began to cry. Upon further questioning, she denied pain. She told me she was crying over the death of her daughter who had died from cancer. I took one of her hands in mine and began to stroke her shoulder and smooth back her hair with my other hand. As I looked into her tear-filled eyes, I felt myself welling up with tears. I immediately stopped, saying to myself,

"I have to be strong for her; I cannot cry."

I then told myself that times had changed since 1964 when I was studying to be a nurse. It was a time when emotions were held at bay and we were required "to be strong." I allowed the tears to flow down my cheeks and perhaps for only one minute the only two people in the room - in the world - were my patient and me. It was as if we were one.

The moment passed. She smiled and thanked me. I silently thanked her for helping me move into a new stage of my profession - one where I felt human!•

ABOUT OLD AGE AND TIME

Carter Bancroft

As we get older, time does strange things. It seems to move faster, sweeping us closer to the end. And yet some days become more precious and time seems to slow down. So may we all have more of these precious days when we do something we really enjoy, whether that is reaching out to loved ones and friends or doing something else that we love doing or have always wanted to do. •

As Omar Khayyam put it so beautifully in *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*:

"Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring

The Winter Garment of Repentance fling:

The Bird of Time has but a little way

To fly --- and Lo! The Bird is on the Wing."



Music and Art © Lily Klima

TIME

Naomi Schlesinger

Whose idea was it to have time pass quickly as we age? It is an absurd arrangement.

Every child wishes time to go speedily. "Three more hours until dinner? C'mon!" In adulthood, there tends to be too much rushing and dashing, not enough basking and delighting. Then, in later years, older adults prefer time to slow down. "No, it can't possibly be eight years ago that we visited Yellowstone. I thought it was four."

Children long for their next birthday or a special holiday to arrive swiftly, while adults wish for the years to slow down to enable the fulfillment of hopes and dreams.

I suggest we turn things around. Wouldn't it make more sense for time to pass quickly for children and slowly for seniors?

Time is running out for us older folks. There are more countries to visit, books to read, people to see, stories to write, sunsets to enjoy, trails to hike. Why does each year seem shorter?

To be fair, knowing time is limited is also a gift. When hours moved more slowly, I was less apt to relish experiences. I do now. I appreciate the beauty of yellow roses, snow-capped mountains and kaleidoscopic rainbows. I treasure hours and days spent with people I love. I savor special celebrations, family gatherings and the laughter of my grandchildren.

With the sense of time moving faster and faster each year, I'm more apt to remember to enjoy good experiences and to put petty annoyances aside. I delight in funny moments that bring chuckles. I appreciate the fulfillment of my

work. I make my way slowly through art museums, waiting for paintings to beckon me. I welcome the flavor of new culinary feats. I smile more, frown less and try not to worry about things over which I have no control.

How ironic life is that we grow to appreciate things more when we fear their loss.

Is there a way to convince children to enjoy each moment and not wish time to go faster? Probably not. My plan to turn things around likely would not work.

Time is a great teacher, but it takes time to be wise about time. •



Lighthouse at Robert Moses Beach

© Naomi Leszkiewicz

PEACE ON EARTH

Kathryn Matos

They said, Women and Children first!
Save the Children.
Protect the Women.
Carry the Elderly.

A woman "with child" is a powerful image.
An elder with wisdom has an important vision.

Women and Children First.
Don't forget the Elderly.

Yet they were the first
to be kidnapped
to be terrorized
to be eliminated.

So what happened?!
What happens now?

Women and Children first.
Does that mean Men come second?
Are they braver, bolder, better in battle?
This doesn't leave room for them to feel, to cry.

But aren't Women also bolder, braver, better sometimes
allowing them to be free-er to do what has to be done,
what needs to be done, seeking safe shelter?

Yet despite their efforts
schools aren't safe
hospitals aren't safe
synagogues, mosques, churches
aren't safe.

Where are the Rules of Engagement?
How can we work for peace, believe in peace,
if we don't see justice, work for justice?

How can we not seek peace, especially if
we proclaim to love, to love life?

Our world in ashes, our life in disarray.
Yet don't they know we will not, cannot ever, disappear
as we hold onto our Hope within our tears?

They say,
"Where there's Life, there's always Hope."

So I say,
L'Chaim,
to life.

I say,
Salaam.
Peace.

IS EVERYBODY HAPPY

Martin H. Levinson

There is no algorithm for happiness
but I ask Siri anyway. She replies,
surveys say Switzerland is the happiest
country in the world, not sure why, could
be the chocolate, maybe it's the cheese.

Buddhists say to attain contentment
one must overcome cravings for
iPhones, Patek Philippe watches, BMWs,
and early bird dinners served until six.

Scientists have the ability to
measure happiness but not as
well as novelists, poets and my
ninety-five-year-old mother.

Happiness is the only thing
humans desire for its own sake,
said Aristotle, to which Thoreau
replied, joy is like a butterfly,
the more you chase it, the more
it will elude you.

For Linus, happiness is a
warm blanket. For me,
it's a toasted bagel with
peanut butter, jelly,
cup of coffee on the side.



BRAIN TICKLERS

Len Farano



PICTURE THIS

Match the paintings below with their artists.

<u>Painting</u>	<u>Artist</u>
Shot Sage Blue Marilyn	Claude Monet
Nighthawks	Vincent Van Gogh
Girl with a Pearl Earring	Mary Cassatt
The Water Lily Pond	Andy Warhol
Sky Above Clouds IV	Pablo Picasso
The Starry Night	Edward Hopper
Guernica	Georgia O'Keefe
The Scream	Leonardo da Vinci
La Gioconda	Johannes Vermeer
Little Girl in a Blue Armchair	Edvard Munch

COMMON BOND

Can you discover the common bond among these clues?

Candy Bar
Frankie Avalon Tune
Thermometer liquid
Greeks called him Zeus
Something "Good" from Pearl Buck
Roman Sea God
Former GM Auto

SOUNDS A LOT LIKE ...

Can you spell both homophones in these clues?

1. reveal, hibernator
2. ordinary, wood-working tool
3. one after another, Lucky Charms
4. give reference to, location on a map
5. vino vault, hawker
6. rough, nine holes
7. half of an unsolicited opinion, flower power
8. bolognese, Wikipedia
9. aromatic herb, Jim Croce's wishful bottle content

WHAT THE DICKENS?

Can you sleuth out the Charles Dickens novels in which each of these villains plays a dastardly role?

1. Uriah Heep
2. Ebenezer Scrooge
3. Ralph Nickleby
4. Bill Sikes
5. Mr. Tulkinghorn
6. Madame Defarge
7. Miss Havisham
8. Daniel Quilp
9. Josiah Bounderby
10. Mr. Merdle

ASK OLLIvia

Dear OLLIvia,

I recently celebrated my 72nd birthday. I know I should be feeling grateful since I am a fortunate man. I have a devoted family, several good friends and I had a satisfying career as a pharmacist. Now that I am no longer working, I don't recognize myself. Who am I? I look in the mirror and see a balding, aging man. I have a new variety of aches and pains. It takes me longer to do crossword puzzles and I get tired just from mowing the lawn. I'm bored. I worry a lot. People tend to live until their 90s in my family. Do you have any suggestions on how to deal better with this stage of life? I may have many years ahead.

Unhappy Guy

Dear Unhappy Guy,

I am sorry you are feeling unsettled and bored, disliking your body changes, aching joints and forgetfulness. I assure you that you are not alone. Growing older is challenging. It does not feel good to experience a loss of control over so many aspects of life: physical, mental, emotional and social. Most adults of all ages like to feel they are in charge of managing their lives. They dislike limitations. In this stage of life, one has to accept changes and constraints of all kinds.

I want to tell you a word that helps everyone with the aging process: adaptation. One has to be able to adjust to all the changes that accompany growing older. One has to accept wrinkles, body aches and pain, hair loss, diminishing attention span, forgetting words, sensory loss. Some have to deal with the ending of lifelong work. Most experience the loss of people who are dear and beloved. There can be sadness and regrets about unfulfilled longings and plans.

The good news is that this stage of life can also be one of personal growth filled with opportunity. With more free time and fewer responsibilities, one is able to explore new interests and experiences. Have you always longed to play the cello? Dreamed of visiting your ancestral homeland? Wished you were fluent in French? Longed to read everything written by your favorite author? Hoped to try to play bocce ball in your backyard? Now you can do all those things, if you choose to.

You need to begin by asking yourself what is holding you back from tackling novel activities. Are you concerned about failure? Do you feel silly trying new things?

Do you fear someone's judgment? Are you afraid you might hurt yourself? Have you seen a physician recently to make sure your health is good? If you are depressed or anxious, have you considered seeking professional help?

Once you have a clearer idea of what might inhibit you from pursuing personal expansion, gather your courage and go for it.

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INTERVIEW WITH DOROTHY SCHIFF SHANNON

(October 2023)

Lily Klima



Dorothy Schiff Shannon invited me to her home for this interview. I can see why she still lives in her home of almost 60 years. It sits snugly amid a wonderland of trees, hedges and flowers. Family photos, works of art, books, pottery and treasures brought home from

a variety of travels adorn walls, shelves and the living room coffee table. Most notably, Dorothy's home is warm and welcoming, as is she.

Dorothy grew up in the Boston area in Everett, Massachusetts. She lived with her parents, two sisters and a brother, as well as her maternal grandparents, who emigrated from Lithuania at the turn of the twentieth century. Her paternal grandparents came from the Ukraine and they, along with numerous cousins, aunts and uncles, also lived nearby.

She attended elementary and high school in Everett where her parents had also gone. Dorothy went to Simmons College where she earned a degree in the humanities as an English major. She wanted to get a PhD in English to become a journalist or a university professor but was dissuaded and went to Harvard School of Education on a full scholarship instead. She taught elementary school for four years and took off for 10 years to raise her three children.

She met her husband, Ashley Schiff, while they were camp counselors in Port Jervis, New York. Ashley, a political science major, earned his doctorate from Harvard. Dorothy and Ashley, with their first child Philip, traveled across

Canada from British Columbia to Newfoundland while Ashley researched controlled burning in the forests.

Ashley taught at the University of Southern California before coming in the mid '60s to Stony Brook University (SBU), where he taught political science for five years. Professor Schiff was an early conservationist and an expert on the politics of forest management. Students used to take "Bramble Rambles" with their much loved outdoorsy professor. He was twice awarded Most Popular Professor by his students.

Following his untimely death at age 38 in 1969, students established a memorial "forever wild park" in his name. The Ashley Schiff Nature Preserve is on 26 acres with access on Circle Road on the SBU campus. Some years ago I, along with other OLLI participants, joined Dorothy Schiff Shannon on a walk through trails in the forest-like preserve that honors her first husband. She continues to work tirelessly with the Friends of the Ashley Schiff Preserve to keep the land as an oasis for nature lovers.

After Ashley's death, Dorothy traveled alone with her three children to Europe several times, as well as to the Virgin Islands. She had gone back to teaching and wanted to spend summers with the children. In 1995, Dorothy retired from a 35-year teaching career. These include years teaching elsewhere before the children were born and over 30 years in Comsewogue School District.

Soon after, she joined OLLI which was then called The Round Table. Among others, Dorothy enjoys workshops on Shakespeare, indigenous voices, short stories, tragic theater and Poetry Out Loud. She is herself an accomplished and published poet. Her own chapbook of poetry

is entitled *The Prism in the Window* and she has had poems published in the *Oberon Poetry Magazine* (2007, 2018, 2021) as well as various other publications.

Dorothy, a nonagenarian, is a genteel and respected leader of the OLLI Memoir Writing workshop. For about 18 years, our group met in person in the Social and Behavioral Sciences building and the Wang Center. Throughout the Covid pandemic, we met on Zoom and still do so. Stories are read, experiences shared. We laugh and cry together, always mindful of fragile feelings expressed and exposed to one another. Dorothy skillfully moves us along. Every so often, she reads one of her memoirs or poems which are always well received. For the past several years, Dorothy has moderated the OLLI Literary Tea. We are grateful for Dorothy's workshop leadership in OLLI for so many years.

FUN FACTS:

- Her oldest son Philip (63) played the piano, viola and guitar. Her daughter Karen (59) played the flute. Her youngest son Jonathan (56) played the violin.
- Dorothy has four grandchildren in their twenties and one who is 6 years old.
- A world traveler with Overseas Adventure Travel, Grand Circle and Road Scholar, Dorothy named the Galapagos Islands, Morocco, Egypt, Tanzania and Portugal among her favorite trips.
- She likes all food ... even crickets.
- She listens to classical music, watches *Masterpiece Theatre* and is an avid reader. Jane Austen was mentioned. •

Ask OLLIvia

continued from page 49

Research informs us that maintaining strong social connections is vital for older adults. When you worked as a pharmacist, your days were likely busy and stimulating. It was probably customary to talk to people when you explained medications and gave advice about contraindications. Those social interactions need to be replaced. Perhaps take a course. Join a group that will enable you to meet people with whom you share interests. Make some new friends.

Make sure your vision and hearing are in good shape. Be as physically active as possible. Do things that stimulate you. You mentioned crossword puzzles. Have you tried Wordle, jigsaw puzzles, Sudoku and a host of other games that are fun and good for the brain? Have you read an exhilarating book recently? Are you curious about the latest film you've been hearing about?

You will feel better on some days than others. When you are happily engaged doing things you enjoy and are with people whose company you welcome, savor those times. Luxuriate in pleasure whenever possible. Maintain a good sense of humor. Laugh a lot.

When you feel sad or scared, talk to others. It helps to put words to feelings. It really does. Try it.

And, always remember the key to successful aging. Adapt! Adapt! Adapt! •

OLLivia

A CHILD'S TALE

Jane Cash

Marcos, 13 years old,
His family impoverished
Gangs, drugs, corruption
Marcos, the oldest
The only hope

Struggles across the Darien Gap
A jungle separating Columbia from Panama
Smuggled by a coyote
Paid by mortgaging ancestral land.

Marcos arrives at the border
An unaccompanied minor allowed in
Sponsored by a reluctant Cousin,
Whom he had never met
Grudgingly offered a place to sleep
In a crowded singlewide.

He must work
Lies about his age
Forged papers say he's 18
(Small from years of want)
Boss chooses to accept the lie
No one else will do this dirty work

Night shift in a chicken processing plant
Double-gloved to protect from chemicals
Cleans blood and fat and bones from machines
Nearly overcome by the stench

Works steadily earning \$100, a 6-hour shift
One month's wages back home.
By law, must go to school
Falls asleep at his desk
Learns little
Not even English

One night, exhausted, bleary-eyed,
Reaches into a sleeping machine
to retrieve a glove particle.
Someone turns it on
His left arm shredded to the bone
Screams, blood, pain, ambulance
Multiple surgeries

Barely recovered still must work
Left arm functions poorly
No other work in chicken town
Now paid less to find dead birds
Among the tightly packed live ones
Marcos has debts to pay

New York Times exposé
"Dangerous child labor
Under our very eyes"
All underage employees let go
Now what?

NEW DAY, NEW DIAGNOSIS

Jane Cash

Strange each time I meet my Doc
As hands move faster on the clock
My list of ailments does expand
Leading me to reaper's hand
New allergies to this and that
Dogs and bugs and drugs and cats
My eyes must squint to read road signs
Observe the rules avoiding fines
My ears, they hear with great distortion.
Lip reading helps despite contortion
My skin, so thin with spots and splotches
A host of makeup hiding blotches
I pee all night my kidneys weaken
Aged bladder shrinken and leaken
My lungs expand to take in air
As I wheeze to mount the stair
I use a cane to stay upright
With gravity a constant fight
Arteries, veins, distort and clot
Roto rooter stent the lot
My heart still beats with blips and blops
But luckily has made no stops
But still I'm glad I am around
And, of course, above the ground.

INTERVIEW WITH FRANK MYERS

(August 28, 2023)*

Lily Klima



It is with great sadness to all who knew him that Frank Myers died on June 2, 2024. He is sorely missed by family, friends and colleagues.

I am fortunate to have interviewed him in April of 2023. It was a privilege to get to know him better. I share with you what I learned from this wise,

knowledgeable, soft-spoken and gentle man.

Frank Myers was a scholar and a valued contributor to OLLI, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Stony Brook (UUFSB) as well as to Jefferson's Ferry, a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) where he lived.

Recognized as a Distinguished Teaching Professor, Frank retired from SUNY Stony Brook Department of Political Science where he taught from 1964 to 2018. Born in Los Angeles, CA, he received his BA from Berkeley and PhD in Political Science from Columbia University.

His dissertation was on the "British Movement for Nuclear Disarmament," that began in the late 1950s.

When he was at Berkeley, Frank wanted to be a lawyer to defend people's civil rights and civil liberties. One of his professors thought he would be better suited to teach and talked him into changing his career path. Turns out that Frank loved teaching and was very good at it. After winning the annual award for best teacher in political science for several years in a row, the award was renamed the Frank Myers Award for Excellence in Teaching in his honor.

Frank taught many honors and undergraduate courses at SBU including: comparative politics, politics in Britain, political theory and political rhetoric. He also taught courses in politics in movies where he discussed such films as *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *The Lives of Others* as well as classics like *The Battleship Potemkin*. In his honors courses students read Plato, Dostoevsky and John Stuart Mill.

In addition to teaching, Frank was the Dean of International Programs. For four years, he supervised faculty for their study abroad programs. In so doing, he traveled to many universities in Paris, Rome, Warsaw and Wroclaw in Poland and Tubingen in Germany.

Furthermore, for three years, Frank was the Dean of Social Studies.

Frank joined OLLI in 2018. He has led several workshops including: History of Modern Political Theory, and History of the Cold War. Until his ill health Frank was leading a workshop called Analyzing Abraham Lincoln's Speeches.

Frank Myers was a Renaissance man with many interests. He enjoyed woodworking, loved classical music and was obsessed with Mozart. An avid reader, he was at the time of this interview, reading *Mozart in Motion* by Patrick Mackie. *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver is a novel he thoroughly enjoyed. When asked about preferred movies, Frank mentioned *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* and *Edge of Heaven*.

Once a teacher, always a teacher, Frank, a well-respected octogenarian, lectured and made presentations that were well attended and warmly received. We were fortunate to have him in OLLI

FUN FACTS:

In 1956 Frank, age 19 at the end of his sophomore year, married Wilma who was 23.

They have two daughters. Elizabeth works for Cornell University; her son is in college. Jenny teaches yoga; her daughter is in Italy studying the history of art and her son attends college in Virginia.

A virtuoso pianist, Wilma entertained residents at Atria for 27 years.

When Wilma died in 2010, and although officially retired, Frank returned to work and taught until 2018. He donated his pay back to Stony Brook University where he maintained an office.

Former students, some from the 1960s and 1970s, kept in touch with Professor Myers. One even moved into Jefferson's Ferry!•

*Updated Aug 17, 2024

REMEMBERING FRANK MYERS

Doug Hodges

Frank Earle Myers, Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus in the Dept. of Political Science at Stony Brook University's College of Arts & Sciences, passed away June 2, 2024 at the age of 87. For nearly six decades Professor Myers was an esteemed member and Chair of the Dept. of Political Science at Stony Brook University and an inspiration to many generations of undergraduate and graduate students.

He was Dean of the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Dean of International Programs, Chair of the Dept. of Political Science, received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, and frequently won the department's Excellence in Teaching award, subsequently named the Frank Myers Award. He was an active member of numerous university committees and a popular instructor in the SBU Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). As Political Science Chair, Leonie Huddy said, "His passion for teaching was boundless as he continued to teach popular courses on politics and contemporary European political theory for over a decade following his retirement."

Born in Los Angeles in 1936, Myers earned his bachelor's degree at UC Berkeley where he fell in love with Wilma Ramsay, who would become his wife of 54 years until her passing in 2010. He earned his master's and doctoral degrees at Columbia University, following which he and Wilma moved to London for a year where he researched his dissertation, "British Peace Politics."

Frank joined the Stony Brook faculty as a professor of political science in 1964. A born educator, he was a

devoted and beloved teacher who received the highest awards from the University as well as the broader SUNY system. His interest in politics dates back to when he was a young man and witness to a multitude of political events in Europe as well as in the United States.

Following his retirement, Frank continued his love for teaching as a popular instructor in the SBU OLLI program. The workshops he led were at the highest level. For example, his enormous and respectful interest in Abraham Lincoln inspired him to lead workshops analyzing that president's speeches. He was consistently passionate about his work - ask any OLLI member. His scholarship and intellectualism were erudite and generous.

Throughout his career, he cultivated and shared with his students an in-depth knowledge of political thinkers including Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Karl Marx and Hannah Arendt. Former students have remained effusive in their appreciation of his profound influence on their intellectual growth and respective careers. Through it all, he remained a most decent and humble man who enthusiastically shared his vast knowledge and wise counsel with generations of junior faculty.

Frank Myers left a spectacularly unique mark on Stony Brook University and the OLLI program. He was a gifted teacher and gifted individual who was enormously appreciated and will be sorely missed. •

A T F Q

(In Memory of Bob Ober)

Bruce Stasiuk

Perhaps things started going wrong when he discovered that his mother threw the letter away.

After all, how many 7-year old kids have ever gotten a written response to a question asking about the speed of light?

Especially from Albert Einstein.

Why, Mom?

Maybe that's what eventually led him to steal a police car, or to be thrown out of Hebrew school.

Or why he rearranged the sign letters on nearby Camp Wattitoh, forming an anagram which disturbed the local ladies.

(Go ahead. Try it.)

And it's not as if he burned down the University of Buffalo.

Any curious boy shooting a pilfered rocket out the dorm window could've created a similar mishap for the local fire marshal.

Perhaps that's why his lifelong motto was ATFQ.

The family knew what the letters meant.

"Answer The (ahem) Question!"

Yeah. He rebelled against authority, until he matured and became one himself.

Lynda also helped. They met in the school infirmary where she lay sick.

She was startled by a leg coming through the open window. It was Bob, sneaking a friend back into the building after an all-nighter.

Marriage and children calmed him down.

Transporting dozens of people in an aluminum tube five miles up demanded it.

Bob and I met at OLLI, quickly becoming conjoined twins by scheduling our workshops in tandem. Always.

Class leaders were advised to have an assistant. Without asking, I'd submit his name each semester, referring to him as my "copilot."

Sometimes, after class, I'd advise him to leave his seat in an upright position.

One day he broke the class rules. No. That's not quite right.

I should say, one day he broke more rules than usual.
Accepting the consequences, he bravely stood in the busy hallway of the bustling SAC building holding a sign* during recess.
College students smiled curiously as they passed.
Bob came early each week.
Always sitting front and center.

He was the lone "student" who, looking like a professor, carried a briefcase.
He was much like that case...full of facts, journals, books and information.
But you already knew that.
If he stepped out of the room, the open case marked his territory.

When an exercise reached the time limit, Bob was in charge of stopping the bell.
He'd have difficulty locating the "off" button.
I'd say, "You accumulated 30,000 flawless hours flying a machine across the ocean with its hundreds of knobs, dials, meters and gauges, but you have a hard time finding the stop button."
When I projected a photograph illustrating where the "stop" button was, the class laughed. He laughed too.
He didn't take himself seriously, because he was secure in his well-deserved confidence and intelligence.

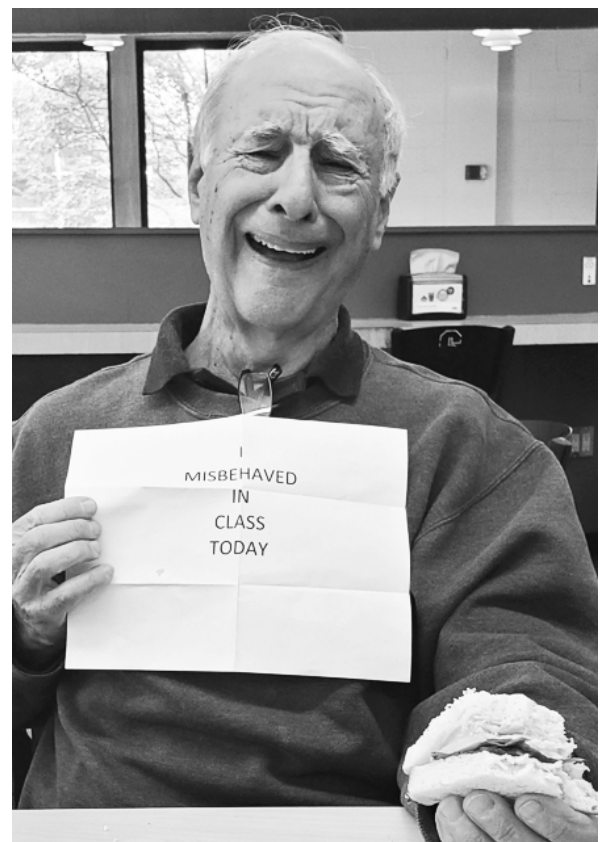
Off campus, Bob and I met regularly with a dozen men.
We'd discuss world problems and propose solutions.
We referred to ourselves as the "Brain Trust of Long Island."

We weren't.

He was.

OLLI will never be the same.

A lot of things will never be the same. •



ANSWERS TO BRAIN TICKLERS

PICTURE THIS ***Painting***

Shot Sage Blue Marilyn
Nighthawks
Girl with a Pearl Earring
The Water Lily Pond
Sky Above Clouds IV
The Starry Night
Guernica
The Scream
La Gioconda
Little Girl in a
Blue Armchair

Artist

Andy Warhol
Edward Hopper
Johannes Vermeer
Claude Monet
Georgia O'Keeffe
Vincent Van Gogh
Pablo Picasso
Edvard Munch
Leonardo da Vinci
Mary Cassatt

COMMON BOND

They are all planets in our solar system.

Mars
Venus
Mercury
Jupiter
Earth
Neptune
Saturn

BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE

Gals

Juliet
Portia
Beatrice
Ophelia
Cleopatra
Katherine
Desdemona
Bianca
Sylvia
Imogen

Guys

Romeo
Bassanio
Benedick
Hamlet
Antony
Petruchio
Othello
Lucentio
Valentine
Posthumus

Play

Romeo and Juliet
The Merchant of Venice
Much Ado About Nothing
Hamlet
Antony and Cleopatra
The Taming of the Shrew
Othello
The Taming of the Shrew
The Two Gentlemen of Verona
Cymbeline

Scoring guide: All 10 "Be not afraid of greatness..." (7-9) "Be great in act, as you have been in thought." (4-6) "How poor are they that have not patience" (0-3) "I wasted time, and now doth time waste me."

SOUNDS A LOT LIKE ...

1. bare, bear
2. plain, plane
3. serial, cereal
4. cite, site
5. cellar, seller
6. coarse, course
7. cent, scent
8. sauce, source
9. thyme, time

WHAT THE DICKENS?

1. David Copperfield
2. A Christmas Carol
3. Nicholas Nickleby or The Life and Adventures of Nickleby
4. Oliver Twist
5. Bleak House
6. A Tale of Two Cities
7. Great Expectations
8. The Old Curiosity Shop

9. Hard Times
10. Little Dorrit

SCORING GUIDE:

- All 10 - Excellent, Holmes!
(7-9) - Tres Bien, Monsieur Poirot
(4-6) - Not bad, Nancy Drew
(1-3) - You're too young, Encyclopedia Brown
(0) - Alas, Clouseau, you were foiled again.

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"Shark Tank" Style Research Pitches



Research Symposium



Renaissance School of Medicine
Stony Brook University

We look forward to collaborating with OLLI on future events and research endeavors!

Learn more about us:

<https://renaissance.stonybrookmedicine.edu/healthy-aging>



THE GREAT DUBOIS
Sun, Jan. 26 • 3pm

GALA - SUTTON FOSTER
Sat, Feb. 1 • 8pm

**THE ACTING COMPANY-
THE COMEDY OF ERRORS**
Sat, Feb. 8 • 8pm

**JOSHUA BELL &
LARISA MARTÍNEZ**
Sat, Feb. 15 • 8pm

**NEW ORLEANS SONGBOOK
JALC**
Fri, Feb. 21 • 8pm

CHRIS DISTEFANO
Sat, March 8 • 8pm

SYNCOATED LADIES
Fri, March 14 • 8pm

**RHYTHM INDIA:
BOLLYWOOD & BEYOND**
Fri, March 21 • 8pm

**MELISSA ERRICO QUARTET
SONDHEIM BIRTHDAY**
Sat, March 22 • 8pm

**OUTREACH ENSEMBLE
PETER & THE WOLF**
Sun, March 30 • 3pm

STARRY NIGHTS
Wed, April 2 • 7pm

**THE 7 FINGERS IN
"DUEL REALITY"**
TWO SHOWS
Fri & Sat, April 11 & 12 • 8pm

**EMERSON LEGACY CONCERT
GOERKE/WATKINS**
Mon, April 14 • 7pm

PAUL TAYLOR DANCE CO.
Sat, May 3 • 8pm

MET OPERA LIVE IN HD
stallercenter.com/HD

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Stony Brook University
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