



# OSHER@Dartmouth

Discovering the new. The provocative. The timeless.



Photo by Susan Apel

## Winter 2017 Newsletter

### Study Leader Profile: Joe Medicott

When you talk with Joe Medicott about his life you soon realize that you are talking to a genuinely happy person. "I had the most wonderful parents!" he offers. "My dad marveled that as a boy he heard the 'putt, putt, putt' of the first automobile in Longmeadow, MA and yet lived to see men land on the moon. Couldn't have had a better family..." he says with a satisfied smile, "although two of my ancestors were hanged as witches in Salem, MA."



memorable experiences, one that comes to mind is the first time he jumped out of a plane at 900 feet. He wasn't doing it for fun. He wasn't a tourist and he didn't land at an airport. At seventeen and a half years of age he joined the Army, which led to volunteering for the 82nd Airborne Division and his first view of Europe from a plane. It was something that he and millions of others of his generation did because it needed to be done, and, once done, returned home to resume a life interrupted by war. If there was an upside

it was the G.I. Bill, which allowed him to attend Dartmouth College (class of '50) and begin a life exploring the world of literature for himself and others.

His first job took him to Springfield, MA as a reporter for the *Springfield Union & Republican* newspaper, working the city desk at night. It was there that he made the acquaintance of Tom Wolfe who, prior to authoring *The Right Stuff* and *Bonfire of the Vanities*, worked as a features writer. They've remained friends ever since. Joe's has been a life of cherished relationships.

Much as he enjoyed his life as a reporter, he knew that he wanted

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If you ask him about his most



### President's Corner

OSHER@Dartmouth has just officially become a "Friend of Allen House," one of the six new House Communities on the Dartmouth campus.

House Communities are the cornerstone of the "Moving Dartmouth Forward" plan designed to transform undergraduate living, bring more continuity to students' on-campus living experiences, and present greater opportunity for interaction beyond the classroom. Beginning fall term 2016, all undergraduate students will be members of one of six Houses. Each House includes a cluster of student residences and designated social spaces. The dorms included in the Allen House community include Gile, Streeter, and Lord. The social house is located behind Parkhurst and the office of Alumni relations.

Allen House is led by Thayer associate professor of engineering Jane Hill, who lives in the Allen House residence on Allen Street. She responded to a letter from us sent with our fall catalog in which we expressed an

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## Winter Classes January 9 - March 3

## Notes From the Finance Committee

In this edition of “Notes” I would like to provide members of OSHER@Dartmouth with a summary of our financial performance for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2016. Members seeking more information should contact the Osher office.

Revenue from general operations (excluding income from the Osher Endowment) finished the year strongly at \$404,211, ahead of expenses of \$377,245. The excess of revenue is attributed largely to pre-payment in FY2016 of two sources of FY2017 revenue: a substantial number of members renewed or took out new memberships for FY2017 in the last three months of FY2016; and the majority of payments from corporate sponsors for the Summer Lecture Series held in July-August 2016 were received in FY2016.

For Summer Lecture Series FY2016 ticket sales were down on the previous year. This was offset by an increase in corporate underwriting and by reduced expenses, which came in under budget. Revenues from classes - our traditional three term curriculum plus the summer and technology courses – together with expenses performed in line with budget as member participation remained strong. In response to declining revenue from Special Lectures, we plan to offer them in a new financial format in FY2017. The positive balance from general operations at year-end was transferred to the Operating Reserve which, together with interest earned, closed the year with a balance of \$156,953. Our Operating Reserve provides a cushion against unanticipated emergencies.

The Osher Endowment is



managed by the College’s Office of Endowment Administration. Income received from investments is available for use by OSHER@Dartmouth. Investment markets declined in early 2016 and the market value of the endowment declined below its original book value, that is, it was ‘underwater’. Following Dartmouth policy for an ‘underwater’ endowment fund, income distribution was halted until the market value rose to or above the original book value. By year-end the market value of the Osher Endowment was back in positive territory. The decline in income was offset by the carry forward of unspent income from FY2015.

The FY2016 expense budget for income from the Osher Endowment was structured to be consistent with the underlying intent of the endowment, that is, to enhance the membership experience. We used the funds to experiment with a number of new offerings to members. In addition, we chose to use some of the income from the endowment to offset the additional expense of renting the office space at 7 Lebanon St. Our expenses were \$68,916. The balance of unspent funds have been applied to FY2017.

The Friends of Osher fund is the vehicle by which we receive donations from members. The fund is used to support capital projects with goals that are both short- and long-term,

such as replacement and upgrade of office and classroom equipment and systems. The Friends fund ended the year with a balance of \$36,239.

The Memorial Gifts fund uses gifts for the purpose(s) stated in the bequest or for projects that are consistent with the concept of memorializing the individual(s) in whose name the gift is made. Our Memorial Gifts Fund began the year with a balance of \$3,855. The fund received \$7,330 in new donations; there were no expenditures.

- Iain Sim,  
Treasurer and Chairman,  
Finance Committee

### Osher at the Movies

Nugget Theaters, Hanover, NH  
All shows start at 10:00 am  
Admission is free for members

**Tuesday, November 22**

**Grumpy Old Men**

(1993) Walter Matthau, Jack Lemmon

**Tuesday, December 20**

**It's a Wonderful Life**

(1946) James Stewart, Henry Travers

**Wednesday, January 18**

**Ocean's 11**

(1960) Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin

**Tuesday, February 21**

**All About Eve**

(1950) Bette Davis, Anne Baxter

**Wednesday, March 8**

**The Quiet Man**

(1952) John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara

## Osher at Dartmouth Study Leaders - Their Experiences

We recently asked several Osher Study Leaders questions about their experiences at Osher. We received so many informative and entertaining responses that there are too many to include in this newsletter. Here are just a few of the responses we received:

### What does being an Osher Study Leader mean to you?

**Vic Henningsen:** It's a great way to break into teaching...Participants are interested in the topic, they do the reading, they come to meetings eager for discussion, they bring fascinating life experiences that lend useful and often unexpected perspectives on what we're doing; and there's no grading - what's not to like?

**Peter Concilio:** It is refreshing to be in class with colleagues who love

to learn, who are themselves learned, and who challenge themselves to learn more - they are gift and a treasure.

**Ellen Frost:** I'd like to think that by sharing knowledge, I'm improving the world in a small way. Being a Study Leader makes me feel that I can light a spark of interest in others, broadening their world view.

### What is your most memorable moment as an Osher Study Leader?

**Patti Warren:** I am most pleased that the students in my class are engaged and feel comfortable enough to make suggestions and requests regarding content and technique. It often feels like we are a team collaborating on improving our vision and skills.

**Dwight Wilder:** [Mine] came during a presentation in which I portrayed Theodore Roosevelt, telling his life story "in person." Afterward, a young girl came up to me and shyly asked, "Were you really born in 1858?" I knelt down to her level, and responded, "What do you think?" She whispered back, "I think you're doing make-believe!" - to which my reply was, "You're right - but don't tell the grown-ups!"

**Patricia Norton:** I taught a course on Japanese Death Poetry, and at one point a class member shared the last moments of her husband's life in response to the words of an 18th century Japanese Zen monk. The loving silence in the classroom seemed to hold centuries of death and life in the

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## A Viennese Holiday Evening

### The Johann Strauss Family: History and Music

Through personal and political chaos, the Strauss family composed hundreds of waltzes and polkas that remain favorites to this day. Dr. David Bisno and a small chamber orchestra led by Daniel Weiser, the artistic director of Classicopia, will weave the story into a dynamic narrative featuring little-known history and sumptuous music.

Before the show, start the evening with a special Viennese dinner at The Canoe Club, Market Table, Molly's or PINE Restaurant in Hanover; or Carpenter & Main in Norwich. (Contact restaurants for pricing; reservations recommended.)

Spaulding Auditorium, Hanover, NH  
Friday, December 2, 2016  
Event begins at 7:30 PM

#### Tickets:

Osher Members: \$20

General Admission: \$25

To purchase Osher member tickets, visit  
[osher.dartmouth.edu](http://osher.dartmouth.edu)

To purchase General Admission tickets, visit  
[www.classicopia.org](http://www.classicopia.org)



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Presented by OSHER@Dartmouth and Classicopia

Study Leader Profile (cont.)

to teach, so he went back to school and got his PhD in English and American literature from the University of Washington and then taught American literature at the University of Connecticut for many years before moving to teach - with an endowed chair - at the Deerfield Academy.

Retirement meant living, on a permanent basis, in the vacation home he'd worked on during summers in Piermont, NH. But it didn't mean an end to teaching. It just meant he wasn't going to be paid to teach. He joined ILEAD, the predecessor

of OSHER@Dartmouth, in its second year and has taught more than 60 courses in the ensuing 24 years, all of them revolving around literature and writing. Many of his courses focus on a single author, but often there's a topic with the syllabus built around the works of several writers. Obviously it's a formula that works because his courses never have an open seat. Especially popular is an annual spring course on memoir writing where his students study the art of telling their own stories. Every paper is edited, or "strafed", as Joe calls

it, but in a friendly way that's always helpful. The only book he assigns for this course is his late friend William Zinsser's book, *On Writing Well*, one of the definitive works on memoir writing. Many students take the course repeatedly polishing their own life's story.

Joe wears a coat and tie to every class he teaches because of his love for his lifelong profession and respect for his students. He is one class act!

- Steve Tofel

The Grid with Meredith Angwin - Fall 2016

One of the many reasons for our enthusiasm about Osher at Dartmouth is the great variety of its study groups. In our first three years, we participated in study groups ranging from Ernest Hemingway to short stories in Spanish to a look inside Northern Stage. Meredith Angwin's study group this fall on the electrical grid was our first venture into science and technology. As interested lay people, we had a steep learning curve about this important topic. Between Meredith and the other experts she brought to the group, we got a crash course in the technology, economics, and policy of the grid. Our field trip to TransCanada's Wilder Hydroelectric Project was a perfect capstone to the study group.

After a briefing about hydro power on the Connecticut River, we visited the control room with the Wilder's operations manager. A facilities manager then took us up, down, and around the entire guts of the dam and the generating station. As we saw the machines that make this old but durable technology work, we also learned about how Wilder fits into the complex management system of ISO New England. We'll remember the study group and the field trip whenever we flip a switch - or look at our electric bill.

- Ted and Betsy Eismeier

Pictured below are members of Meredith Angwin's fall 2016 course during their recent field trip to the Wilder Hydroelectric Project.



Study Leaders - Their Points of View (cont.)

past, present, and future. I swear the room vibrated.

What would you say to encourage someone to become an Osher Study Leader?

**Ted Eismeier:** Leading Osher study groups has all the best parts of being a college professor—getting to know thoughtful, engaged young at heart students—and none of the bad parts like grading and department meetings. Teaching and taking Osher courses is an important part of the attraction the Upper Valley.

**Stephanie Reininger:** Share your passion; have confidence that your zeal will make teaching a pleasure.

Did You Know...?

Under extreme high pressure, diamonds can be made from peanut butter. (Source: [qi.com/feed](http://qi.com/feed))



## Letters to the Editor

### Q: Why are we asked to take attendance in class?

A: Attendance serves multiple purposes. First, it's a checks and balances system. Because so many members add, drop, and transfer classes (sometimes minutes before their first class), we need to make sure both the office and the class rep have the same roster on hand. If people are present in class but do not appear on the roster, or if a person listed on the roster isn't present in class, the class rep is asked to follow up with those individuals and to contact the office. Staff members check with non-attending participants to make sure everything is okay and find out if they've changed their mind about taking part. Staff members also follow up with anyone attending class who does not appear on the roster in case their registration is not complete. Second, attendance helps with our overall statistics and records. Attendance trends help our staff and several of our committees determine what is working for our program in terms of locations, daily schedules, and seasonal fluctuations. Knowing how our members most like to engage in our courses

helps us to plan for the future. Attendance is truly a simple and vital tool for both our staff and our program in general.

### Q: At the coffee "bars" at the DOC House and Black Sr. Center there are donation jars with a suggested amount. Why are we asked to pay for coffee?

A: The Osher staff has always tried to make our members feel welcome by offering coffee and other beverages to class participants at the DOC House. Over time, this extended to the classes we offer at the Black Senior Center. Coffee and other beverages are not part of our general operating budget - it's an extra effort that the staff makes for our members. The office asks for donations to help defray the cost of the coffee, water, and the condiments and supplies that are involved when offering coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and water. Your donations allow us to continue to offer beverages throughout the year to our members.



*If you have a question or comment you'd like to see in our next Letters to the Editor, please send it to the office via one of the methods listed below. We will post your submission anonymously unless you direct us to include your name.*

### Mail your Letters to the Editor to this address:

Osher at Dartmouth  
7 Lebanon Street, Suite 107  
Hanover, NH 03755

### E-mail your Letters to the Editor to this address:

[osher@dartmouth.edu](mailto:osher@dartmouth.edu)

*(Please include "Letters to the Editor" in the subject line of your message.)*



### President's Corner (cont.)

interest in becoming involved with students by leading or joining discussions on topics of interest to them, becoming mentors and friends who would welcome students into our lives.

We are developing a dossier of talented members who are interested in meeting with students. Some members who have already indicated a desire to participate are Jim

Heffernan talking about James Joyce, Tom Blinkhorn sharing experiences working at the World Bank, and Roland Kuchel discussing the Foreign Service. If you are interested please call the office and give them your contact information and the areas of interest you would be willing to share.

We will begin meetings in the winter or spring at tea time or in the

evenings. We envision some of our members developing social relationships with students, inviting them into their homes and sharing activities or becoming mentors. If you are interested in becoming involved please call the office and let them know.

- Sylvia Sands Paxton, President



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## Osher Office Art Gallery

Stop by our 7 Lebanon Street offices to enjoy a new exhibit every two months. Here's what's coming up:

### October/November/December *Photographic Journeys*

Featuring work by Anne Baird, Janice Fischel, Nora Gould, John Lehet, Li Shen, and Tom Urgo.

The gallery is free to view during regular office hours:

**Mon-Thurs 8:30a to 4:30p**  
**Fri 8:30a to 1:00p**

### Holiday Closings

The Osher office will be closed on  
November 24 and 25, 2016  
AND  
from December 23, 2016  
through January 2, 2017

## Lisa's Corner



I hope everyone has enjoyed their fall courses. By the time this newsletter arrives in your hands, we will have begun registration for winter 2017 courses.

To keep our program moving forward, volunteerism is vital. I encourage you to consider joining one of our many committees. I'm focusing this month on our Curriculum Committee, which is the heartbeat of Osher. The members of this committee are responsible for recruiting instructors, supporting study leaders as they prepare their courses, and offer encouragement and general support to our study leaders. Curriculum is a major factor in developing the courses you enjoy each term. Committee work is very rewarding; as a committee member, you share your input on the courses we offer and you play a part in recruiting study leaders. All it takes is a willingness to talk, make phone calls, and enjoy a level of comfort with email. Every committee member, as well as myself and the Osher staff, are available to help along the way. If you are interested in joining the Curriculum Committee, please email [osher@dartmouth.edu](mailto:osher@dartmouth.edu) with the subject: Curriculum Committee.

I hope to see you at the DOC House this winter while taking an Osher class, or feel free to stop by my office at 7 Lebanon Street. I appreciate hearing from our members.