



Osher Lifelong Learning Institute  
at Dartmouth

# WINTER 2024 NEWSLETTER

## THE PLAY'S THE THING: A PROFILE OF STUDY LEADER DAVID HENDERSON

by

RALPH HAMMOCK

When David Henderson (pictured at right) moved to Kendal in 2015, he knew he wanted to share some unique teaching methods with Osher. A recently retired chemistry professor at Trinity College in Hartford, CT, Henderson was deeply involved in developing role-playing games for the Reacting Consortium at Barnard College in New York City. "Around 2002 or 2003, I was invited to play some of their reacting games. Not long afterwards, I received some funding to develop a new game."

The first game David developed was "Kansas 1999: Evolution or

Creationism," which deals with the role of religion in American society versus the nature of science. Over the next few years, he wrote another nine or ten games, of which five have been published. "It has really taken over my retirement," he notes.

When asked if students learn more content from role playing versus traditional lecturing, Henderson said it's hard to say. "There are tradeoffs. If you're role playing, you may not be able to cover as much as a regular class. "But the most profound change," he observed, "is that when students roleplay for several weeks, they internalize some of it. They look at the world with a different set of eyes. As one gets into it," he adds, "they dig deeper and learn more about the person and the time that person lived. It really does impact people's lives."



During the fall term, Henderson taught "When Jesus Became God: Constantine and the Council of Nicaea" (catalog image at left), where some two dozen students assumed the roles of the bishops who attended the council and had to develop a creed for the early Christian church.

"If there's enough interest," he concluded, "I'm hoping to offer The Trial of Anne Hutchinson next fall. That trial is described as one of the most tumultuous and significant episodes in early American history—the struggle between the followers and allies of John Winthrop, the Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and those of Anne Hutchinson, a strong-willed and brilliant religious dissenter.



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Updates and requests are the themes of this letter to the members.

This past October, Lisa King and I attended the Osher Lifelong Institutes National Conference held in San Diego, CA. Some take-aways from that conference follow:

- Osher at Dartmouth (O@D) is fortunate to have a seasoned, knowledgeable, and highly regarded Director in Lisa King. Her 29 years of dedicated service to O@D stands in contrast to 65 of the 125 Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLIs) that have had new directors since March 2020, including one OLLI that has had three directors since then.
- While each OLLI continues to work out the kinks, the general belief is that Zoom and HyFlex are here to stay.
- All OLLIs agree that membership during the next 20 years will be somewhat manic as new retirees have been immersed in remote meeting technology for years, while older members struggle to catch up to their grandchildren.
- Hosts of Osher institutes (mainly colleges and universities) vary widely in their support of fundraising activities. In general, public institution hosts are more supportive, while private institution hosts are less active and possibly a bit more



restrictive, in supporting their OLLIs' fundraising activities. However, fundraising is an important source of funding for all OLLIs.

- No two OLLIs solve their governance issues in the same way. Composition, recruitment, and number of members on leadership groups; composition and number of standing committees; terms of office; voting rights; chartering and by-laws; meeting cycles; etc., are unique to each OLLI. In my opinion, a student writing a thesis on non-profit governance would find the 125 OLLIs to be a treasure trove of comparative information.
- Trips have come roaring back since their demise in March 2020, especially in the past year. Day trips, overnight trips, foreign trips, course related trips—you name it—all OLLIs are offering trips for their members.
- COVID-19 had immensely different impacts on OLLIs.

Some OLLIs, like O@D, survived by immediately adopting Zoom and then introducing HyFlex. Some OLLIs, also like O@D, suffered only modest membership losses, with a few OLLIs today having more members than in March 2020. However, there were some disasters where membership dropped 50-80% in one year, and one OLLI actually closed for a period of time due to a university-wide reduction in force at the host institution that terminated the entire OLLI staff. Members should congratulate Bill Sullivan and Steve Tofel (presidents during the COVID-19 pandemic), the Study Leaders, the committees, the staff, the Provost's Office, and the members themselves for effectively navigating this challenging time.

Suite 210 should come on-line during the winter of 2024. This space will house a social space with audio-visual, library and kitchen facilities, and another classroom.

A few requests:

- In addition to courses, don't forget the upcoming Special Lectures, educational events, Hot Plates/Hot Topics lunches, trips, the Spring Fling, the Annual Meeting, and the 2024 Summer Lecture Series.
- Osher at Dartmouth will host a "Town Meeting" on Friday,

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## MEET OSHER RECORD HOLDERS, KARL AND SANDY SCHMID

Osher at Dartmouth is devoted to the concept of Lifelong Learning and is very fortunate to have members dedicated to helping the organization thrive and grow. Among the most involved are Karl and Sandy Schmid of New London, who have the unique distinction of having taken the most courses over the years; from 2006 to the present Karl and Sandy have taken 156 courses!

Karl and Sandy don't have time to let any grass grow under their feet; aside from being active in Osher as well their New London community, they play tennis, ski, and Sandy is involved in the local Garden Club. In their 'free time' they enjoy traveling with their trailer in tow. This past September they put on 7,000 miles during a trip out west.

They first learned of Osher from friends when they were living in the Mt. Lakes District of Haverhill, NH. They thought the one-hour commute to Hanover was well worth the effort. The first course they attended in 2006, titled "The 2% Solution," was held at Kendal.

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Since then they have taken a plethora of courses in all categories—Geology, Geography, Chemistry, Mathematics, Music Appreciation, Poetry, Religion, Current Affairs, History, Self-

improvement, and Anthropology to name a few. While Karl and Sandy prefer to take in-person courses, they found that HyFlex and Zoom options added in recent years have made it possible to expand their participation. Sandy can now play tennis in the mornings, and still be able to participate in a 9:30 course without having to be concerned about the commute. This winter she's already signed up for four courses!

She and Karl usually take separate courses according to their individual interests, as well as who will be conducting them, but also frequently attend classes together.

As Sandy stated, "the people who sign up for classes are so smart, interesting, and varied. I definitely enjoy being a part of this."

Karl and Sandy will be on the lookout for the Spring catalogue coming next March in anticipation of choosing the courses in which they will enroll!

**Ellen Terie,  
Membership Committee**



*Sandy and Karl pose with their puppy Buddy during a recent trip to Banff, Canada.*



# CRAFTING FOR CHARITY

The Crafting for Charity SIG hosted a table at the Osher at Dartmouth Fall Kick-Off in September. The event was nice, and we talked to a number of people. We're looking forward



to seeing who signs up and joins us this term. I finished the scarf in the image shown here while enjoying the Kick-Off event. My cat Marcus finds it comfortable. Thanks to Karen Lord for the pattern. It's a 62" x 6" scarf, and I didn't sew the ends together like the pattern suggested.

Please bring any hats, scarves, or other items for the Osher box, which we will pass along to The Haven. Our mitten box still has room; we've collected ~20 pairs of mittens so far.

Gail Fancher,  
SIG Coordinator,  
Crafting for Charity

President's Corner, cont. from page 2

January 19, 2024, from 1:00—3:00PM. Members will be able to attend in-person (Classroom 3A) or via Zoom.

- All committees at O@D and the cadre of Study Leaders could use additional volunteers. Please contact Lisa King and she will forward your indication of interest to the proper contact person.
- Sponsors are important to O@D. If you have a contact at a business that could be a sponsor, please contact Lisa King.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you. We could not be Osher at Dartmouth without the curious, knowledgeable, involved members that we are.

Peter Paquette,  
President

## SNAPSHOTS FROM FALL 2023



**Hot Plates, Hot Topics speaker Marta Hulievska addresses the topic "Ukraine: Why Should We Care?"**

*Photo courtesy of Charlie Buell*



**Meeting of Osher at Dartmouth Past Presidents**

*Pictured, left to right: Bill Sullivan, John Sanders, Sylvia Sands Paxton, Diane Crowley, Peter Paquette, Susan McCaslin (representing the Governance Committee), Iain Sim (representing the Governance Committee, facing away from camera)*

*Joining via Zoom: Pete Bleyler and Steve Tofel*

# OSHER VOLUNTEERS, OUR SECRET SAUCE

One of the reasons Osher at Dartmouth works so well is the time and talents of our volunteer force. Did you know over 10% of our members offer their time and talents to help us keep improving? We think it's safe to say there's work to be done to suit any interest.

Why do so many volunteer their time for Osher? Here's what some members had to say:

**"It's fun to work with my friends. Osher volunteers have become my friends."**

**"I can see that my work makes a difference here."**

**"It's a good reason for me to explore new interests and keep learning."**

**"It's easy to get involved and I enjoy it immensely."**

**"It's a great way to meet people that I wouldn't ordinarily come in contact."**

**"It's a great way to keep using the talents I've developed over the years."**

**"It's fun."**

Here's a partial list of the work to be done:

- Develop and teach courses on the topic of your choice
- Assist others in improving their courses, or provide support as a Class Representative or Class Monitor
- Scout out instructors for new courses
- Plan and host events (and prepare food!)
- Work on communication materials, such as newsletters and other items
- Be an Osher ambassador where you live and helping residents learn about our programs
- Provide support in the office (staff appreciates even a couple of hours here and there!)
- Help us keep our financial house in order

If you'd like to be among the one in ten members who help Osher improve every day, email staff member Diane Doe, our volunteer coordinator, at [diane.m.doe@dartmouth.edu](mailto:diane.m.doe@dartmouth.edu), or call her at (603) 646-0154 and we'll help you find a project that suits you.

**Jaci Allen,**  
**Chair, Membership Committee**

*(with additional comments from the Osher staff)*



# WELCOME OLIVIA THOMAS, NEW MEMBER FROM ARKANSAS

Olivia Thomas moved to Hanover in June 2023 to be with her daughter and grandchildren. Coming here from Arkansas, where she had taken OLLI courses, she was glad to learn about the OLLI affiliate—Osher at Dartmouth—when she searched online.

As a history fan, Olivia signed up for the Cemetery Tour and found it to be very interesting. She enrolled in Vic Henningsen's class "In the Devil's Snare?—Witchcraft in Salem, 1692." Her OLLI experiences in Arkansas had been more lecture format, so she really enjoyed Vic's animated and interactive

teaching style. Starting with the Osher Welcome letter and attachments, Olivia appreciated the list of questions Vic sent weekly to help course participants prepare for each upcoming session. She found Vic's open Q&A style of teaching with occasional small group discussions very helpful, both for learning and getting to know some of other members.

For winter term, Olivia was considering John Peterman's course on Barbara Stanwyck's early movies and Vic Henningsen's course on "Three Letters by Thomas Jefferson." She plans to share her fall



term experience with a new friend and encourage her to consider joining Osher as well.

**Jim Lynch,**  
Membership Committee

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 8 - March 29

**Winter Term 2024**

Wednesday, February 7

**Robots Under Water and Rubble**

**Speaker: Robin Murphy**

7:30 PM

Zoom

Friday, February 9

**Boston Symphony**

**Orchestra**

(day trip)

Thursday, February 15

**Tech Café**

9:30 AM

1 Court Street

Wednesday, February 21

**Robots Under Water and Rubble**

**Speaker: John Broadwater**

7:30 PM

Zoom

Monday, February 26

**Osher at the Movies:**

**Stand By Me**

10:00 AM

1 Court St

Tuesday, February 27

**Tech Café**

9:30 AM

1 Court Street

Tuesday, March 5

**Info session: Collette Tour**

**to Machu Picchu**

**& the Galapagos**

4:15 PM

1 Court Street and Zoom

March 17 - 25

**Costa Rica**

(multi-day, international travel)

Monday, March 18

**Osher at the Movies:**

**Good Will Hunting**

10:00 AM

1 Court Street

April 8 - June 14

**Spring Term 2024**

July 8 - August 23

**Summer Term 2024**

July 10 - August 14

**Summer Lecture Series**

**2024**

August 22 - 28

**Spotlight on London**

(multi-day, international travel)

August 26 - December 6

**Fall Term 2024**

October 20 - 29

**Rome & the Amalfi Coast**

(multi-day, international travel)

*Visit [osher.dartmouth.edu](https://osher.dartmouth.edu) for more information about these events!*

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

**Dear Osher Members & Friends:**  
I hope your holiday celebrations were filled with joy!

I wanted to share a review of this past year and provide a snapshot for 2024.

Osher at Dartmouth had a busy 2023. We have been going strong in our home at 1 Court Street in Lebanon, offering our members in-person, Zoom, and HyFlex courses. We brought back day trips, overnight trips, and extended travel, which have all proven a great success. Osher at Dartmouth makes all the arrangements, providing hassle-free travel and a great way to spend time outside of the classroom. Travel is a wonderful chance to explore and learn while enjoying the company of friends and family. In 2024, we are offering three extended travel adventures through Collette Tours: Costa Rica in March, London in August, and Rome and the Amalfi Coast in October. Please join us!

All of our courses, events, and travel opportunities can be found on our website under the "Programming" menu item near the top of the page.

I am excited about the expansion of our space at 1 Court Street! Suite 210 will provide members with a place to sit and enjoy a book from our library, play a board game, or put a puzzle together, visit with a friend, or just enjoy space to relax. The suite will provide additional classroom and social space.

This past October, I attended the Osher Lifelong Learning National Conference in San Diego. I had the pleasure to chat with Bernard Osher and take a photo with him.

Our program is one of 125 Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes receiving the support of Bernard Osher. I may be a bit biased, but I believe our program stands out as one of the best in the country. What makes us so extraordinary is the commitment and dedication of our volunteers, including Study Leaders, committee members, class representatives, class monitors, and YOU, our members.

I want to provide a shout-out to my amazing team: Sarah, Diane, and Joan. I have the pleasure of working with them every day. Our team



will welcome a new member this January: Nichole Marcy will join us as a new Program Assistant!

I can absolutely say I love what I do. I have been a part of this program since 1995, and what an amazing transformation this program has taken since my first day on the job, January 30, 1995.

Thank you all for your support and involvement with Osher at Dartmouth.

I wish you a happy and healthy New Year!

**Lisa King,**  
**Program Director**



*Lisa takes a photo opportunity with Beth Leconte, Director of OLLI at the University of Rhode Island, and Bernard Osher.*



*Lisa (back row, left) joins her fellow New England OLLI directors around the fire pit.*





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## **WINTER COURSES ARE AVAILABLE!**

Visit  
**[osher.dartmouth.edu](http://osher.dartmouth.edu)**  
for more information.

## **ATTENTION STUDY LEADERS !**

We are now accepting course proposals for our 2024 Summer and Fall Terms! Summer proposals are due March 15. Fall proposals are due May 5.

Check our website for more details!

We would like to thank our program sponsor:

**JACK & DOROTHY BYRNE**  
FOUNDATION