From the President
“What’s in a name?” (Apologies to William Shakespeare)
By Julian Eligator

While Juliet was talking about roses, I’m talking about Osher. Thanks to the generosity and good judgment of Mr. Osher, we have been awarded an endowment of $1,050,000. While this may be old news by the time this newsletter is distributed, I am writing this column the day after we learned of our gift with much excitement.

The $50,000 portion is designated as a “bridge” grant to provide revenue during the first year of the endowment prior to realizing revenue from the endowment earnings. Carnegie Mellon will administer the endowment. Annually, we will be able to use from three to five percent based on the interest earned.

Continued on page 10

Prestigious Award for Gloriana St. Clair

Congratulations to our secretary, Gloriana St. Clair, dean of university libraries, for being named the 2009 ACRL Academic/Research Librarian of the Year. According to ACRL Update, the publication of the Association of College & Research Libraries, “the award, sponsored by YBP Library Services, recognizes an outstanding member of the library profession who has made a significant national or international contribution to academic/research librarianship and library development. St. Clair will receive a $5,000 award on Thursday, March 12, 2009, at the . . . ACRL 14th National Conference in Seattle.

‘Gloriana St. Clair . . . epitomizes the Librarian-Leader-Scholar model through her long and notable career as an academic librarian, her contributions to ACRL and other professional organizations and in particular her record of scholarship and scholarly contributions with both national and international influence and impact,’ said award committee chair Robin Wagner.

‘In academia, the most prestigious awards are those that our peers accord us. I was blown away when I found out that I had received this incredible recognition, and I thought it was an early April Fool joke,’ St. Clair said. ‘Having my accomplishments, which were all achieved through working closely with others, recognized is deeply humbling and satisfying.’ ”

An accomplishment especially highlighted is her directing “the Universal Digital Library Project since 1999. A broad coalition of libraries and computer scientists in the United States, India and China . . . aims to digitize one million scholarly volumes and make them freely available online.”
The Great Battlefield: A Fantastic October Journey
By Gloria Kleiman

As we watched the sun sinking in the west in a crystal-clear sky, a full moon was rising over our shoulders in the east. We stood on Cemetery Hill, the site of the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg. This is where on July 3, 1863, Confederate forces advanced across open fields toward the center of the Federal Army. The attack failed; Lee lost 5,000 soldiers in one hour, and the battle of Gettysburg was over. On July 4 Lee’s army began retreating.

Our beloved study leader, Alex Kramer, guided us throughout the journey and vividly narrated the events that occurred at the various locations of that historic battlefield.

On arrival at Gettysburg, our first stop was the new Visitor Center and Museum. There we viewed a cyclo-rama program depicting the battle in a sound and light show. This provided an exciting orientation for the rest of the day’s battlefield adventure.

Although the battlefield is the main attraction, there are many other exciting places to visit in Gettysburg.

To begin the second morning, we toured Eisenhower’s farm and weekend retreat. Next was a visit to the American Civil War Museum, complete with life-sized dioramas of slaves using the Underground Railroad and Lincoln sitting in his booth at the Ford Theater on that fateful day.

Luncheon at the Historic Gettysburg Hotel was a special treat. After enjoying a great meal, we were entertained by Abe Lincoln (a tall, dark, slender man in costume). “Abe” spoke in such a natural and realistic way that it was easy to sit back and imagine he was the real thing.

We visited other interesting places on our tour, but what made our trip so special was the expertise Alex added to our adventure. Before our final departure on the third day, Alex recited the Gettysburg Address on the spot where the Cemetery was dedicated. With an aura of wonderment and a lot of teary eyes, we boarded the bus to return home.

RoseMarie DeRiso, as always, managed the trip with great care, and we all felt extraordinarily lucky to be on this fantastic journey.

Thank You Osher Members: Fifteenth Annual Food Drive
By Joe Scorpion

The fifteenth annual Carnegie Mellon University Food Drive conducted in November 2008 was again a most successful undertaking, with 6,227 pounds of food items and $1,456.50 in cash contributed to the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank. This exceeds the November 2007 effort when 5,676 pounds of food items and $844.51 were collected.

This is one of the largest private food drives in the area. For the past several years our Osher program has participated in this event with our members donating nonperishable food items, paper products, toiletries, etc. Many thanks to all those Osher members who again so generously contributed food items and $141 in cash.
Out of the Mouths of Study Leaders . . .

By Sally Cohen, Curriculum Chair

I frequently talk about the talents and enthusiasm that our study leaders bring to each class. I also mention the wonderful compliments they give to our “students,” whom they find highly motivated and very interested in course content.

I’d like to share some of these comments with you. Their words are heartwarming. I hope that while reading them you will get a sense of the stature of these individuals who include Osher at CMU in their busy schedules and enjoy doing so.

Some of the words were spoken spontaneously in class; others came to us in thank-you notes for bookstore gift cards study leaders received as tokens of our appreciation for the hours that they gave voluntarily to our program. And so we begin . . .

Some messages addressed to the Osher program in general:

* “My work with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at CMU is such a joy for me. I love it! My time in Pittsburgh is enhanced by these classes.”

* “Being a study leader has allowed me to share in the energy and enthusiasm of the Osher community and to appreciate the efforts of all the hard-working, insightful committee members who keep it running so successfully.”

* “The Osher staff are wonderful to work with. Thanks to all of you who give your time and thoughtfulness to all the rest of us. I’m aware that you, too, put in long, voluntary hours of your time.”

* “I appreciate the work done by the Curriculum Committee and the many volunteers which keeps the wheels of Osher turning.”

* “Osher is the best bargain in town and a great source for enriching our lives. The Curriculum Committee is to be commended for the diversity of courses and the excellent study leaders.”

* “A.L.L. and now Osher are the activities of which I am proudest. It gives me great pleasure to see the continued success under the skilled leadership of the Boards. And the Curriculum Committee is the prime factor in our development into what is probably the best lifelong learning group in the country. Congratulations!”

Compliments to our students:

* “Teaching my group is a gift, as they are all such nice people and so enthusiastic.”

* “This class has kept me working. You have excited me!”

* “I’m glad to see there’s a community of people who are involved in lifelong learning.”

* “I feel the class is working together and not just taking.”

* “You people have a lifetime of experience. The class was amazing! Their backgrounds are fascinating.”

* “We have bright, attentive students who make it all worthwhile.”

* “It is always a pleasure to share ideas with people who are passionate about learning.”

From those who are still working and volunteering:

* “Thanks for the opportunity to teach in the Osher program. It was the most enjoyable teaching experience I have had. The class was truly interested in the topic, and—no exams to grade!”

* “I really like the questions. You have to be on top of your game (to answer them).”

* “Interacting with A.L.L./Osher students is a reward in itself.”

* “I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my favorite topic with warm, kind students. The entire class was attentive and so enthusiastic! Every student was responsive. I could look at every face and see their reactions. No one looked bored or restless! The applause after every class made me very happy. I hope to come back.”

* “I return the appreciation (you expressed) of the wonderful participants in the course. They also prepared carefully and brought many fine insights to our discussions. I think all of us had a very good time.”

And more expressions of enjoyment:

* “Your expression of gratitude for my participation in your very worthwhile program is much appreciated.”

* “Thank you so much for the Continued on page 14
Journey of a Lifetime:
Israel, Jordan, Egypt
By Martha Raak

Our Air France flight landed at the ultra-modern Tel Aviv Airport. I called Gemma DeLucca, a friend and Sister of Charity, who has worked at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial, for 25 years. She encourages Catholic/Jewish relations. We had tea at her place with another nun. The Israeli-initiated attacks on the Gaza strip were devastating the Gaza. Both of the nuns felt the attacks were justified. Their reasoning was that Hamas has been launching rockets obtained through tunnels to Iran against the people in the south of Israel, and that Hamas refuses to recognize the State of Israel and are terrorists. Meanwhile, many Palestinian civilians have been killed. Very sad.

Jerusalem is religious history embedded in a modern limestone city climbing up and down the hillsides. Most of the houses have solar panels on the roof. They heat a nearby hot water heater. There is lots of traffic. Orthodox Jews and Muslim women are seen everywhere interspersed with those in modern dress.

The Mount of Olives provides a breathtaking view of the old city. Visited the Dome of the Rock mosque, where Mohammed is said to have ascended to heaven. Non-believers are not allowed to enter.

The plaza and gold-leaf-covered dome are very beautiful. Visited the nearby holy place, the Western Wall, and tucked our prayers into a cranny with hundreds of other prayers. I loved the church built next to the Garden of Gethsemane and enjoyed a few moments of peace next to the garden.

Walking through the souks (markets), narrow alleys, and byways really provided a feel for the centuries-old city. We spent a good bit of time at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (pictured above), where Christ’s body was embalmed and where the rock covered his tomb. This is said to be the holiest place for Christendom. Many church denominations share the space, but the Greek Orthodox (Byzantine) seem to have the greatest amount of interior space roped off. Much glitter and icons. Nearby is the Via Dolorosa, where Christ walked before his crucifixion.

Yad Vashem, the modern, moving and impressive museum, dedicated to the memory and history of the Holocaust, is an amazing place. One visits this place and wonders when man’s inhumanity to man will stop.

Continued on page 12

Pittsburgh Roots
Enrich Travel in Eastern Europe
By Filomena Conti

Upon my return last September from my trip to Europe I learned that the first novel to be read in my Great Novels class at Osher was Thomas Bell’s Out of This Furnace. This is the story of the trials and tribulations of the Slovakian steelworkers in Western Pennsylvania’s mill towns starting in the 1880s. With the sights I had just enjoyed on my trip—Prague, Budapest, Vienna, Krakow, and Bratislava—still fresh in my mind, I couldn’t have been more pleased to read this book. Two-thirds of my 18-day trip were spent touring a number of towns and villages in Slovakia.

I wanted to do this trip because a good deal of the heritage of Western Pennsylvania is from this part of Europe. Of the 16 persons in our group, two-and-a-half were not of Slovakian origin (one man had a Slovakian mother). Added interest in the trip was the familiarity the “Slovak-Americans” in our group had with their “roots.”

From Pittsburgh we flew to Prague, Czech Republic, where we spent several days seeing the sights of this

Continued on page 6
We are continually attempting to reduce our paper output to members. Our newest experiment is attaching lecture and some trip fliers to our “broadcast emails” as PDF files. Some have found it relatively easy to open the files; others have struggled. Internet service providers such as AOL, Comcast, Verizon, Yahoo, etc., have different systems for locating and downloading attachments. Just like car manufacturers, bank ATM designers, digital camera makers, etc., the pros cannot seem to standardize the process to make it easier for their customers. You may need to contact your Internet service provider to determine how to download files. If you are lucky and have grandchildren or young neighbors living nearby, they can always figure these things out for you in less than two minutes. For those of you with Mac computers . . . I won’t even go there. Please do not give up. Once you learn the process, it will become rote. To stay current in a technologically driven world, we all have to go through this sometimes frustrating learning curve.

Osher is a volunteer-driven organization. Since 1992, lifelong learning at Carnegie Mellon has been synonymous with volunteer legwork, and volunteers have acted as instructors (study leaders), committee members, office workers, receptionists, etc. This is the primary reason the group has been so successful: members have a vested interest in its continuance and betterment.

Many of our original members continue to be active volunteers, and we thank them for their generosity with their free time. For those who are new members, we are calling you to step forward as you benefit from the labors of many talented, dedicated people. We need new members who are as equally engaged as our current volunteers. WE NEED YOU—even if you only have a few hours a week or a month, we can find a place for your time and talents. Here is a poem that I read recently on the Internet—author unknown.

Volunteers
Many will be shocked to find,
When the Day of Judgment nears,
That there’s a special place in Heaven
Set aside for volunteers.
Furnished with big recliners,
Satin couches and footstools,
Where there are no committee chairmen,
Nor yard sale or rest area coffee to serve.
No library duty or bulletin assembly,
There will be nothing to print and staple.
Not one thing to fold and mail,
Telephone lists will be outlawed.
But a finger snap will bring Cool drinks and a gourmet dinner
And rare treats fit for a king.
You ask,
“Who’ll serve these privileged few,
And work for all they’re worth?”
Why, all those who reaped the benefits,
And not once Volunteered on Earth.

Thank You—Osher Members Who Helped at Carnegie Mellon Homecoming
by Joe Scorpion
Many thanks to the Osher volunteers who worked at Carnegie Mellon’s Homecoming weekend last October, where they served as greeters in the Alumni Hospitality Suite. These included Filomena Conti, John Frank, Bea Jones, Millie Lynch, Silbert Moritz, Grace Moritz, Sylvia Rutledge, Sam Scuro, Joe Scorpion, Teresa Siwicki, Shirley Tucker, and Rita Zecher. We again look forward to their participation in 2009 when Homecoming will be held October 29-31.

Musicians Wanted
Osher is calling musicians among our members to form a music group or band. If you’d like to become a member of a musical interest group, please send the office or email the following information: your name, telephone number, email address, instrument played, and skill level. Tell us whether you currently play with a group, what type of music interests you (big band, swing, Dixieland, jazz, classical, chamber music, etc.). After we hear from those interested, we’ll schedule a meeting.
beautiful city—the town square and the Prague Castle, to mention a few. We then flew to Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic, where we visited Devin Castle, St. Martin’s Cathedral, and Old Town. Many of the buildings—castles and churches—date back to the eleventh century. (Meanwhile Pittsburgh was celebrating its 250th anniversary.)

While based in Bratislava we spent a day in Vienna, Austria, where we visited the Schoenbrunn Palace. We ended up in the best gift shop of the entire trip. I bought several cookbooks—if you need a recipe for boar roast, I can give you one. Another day we visited Budapest, Hungary. The Danube River separates Buda and Pest and we visited both sides.

We were ready now to do some serious traveling through Slovakia with a stopover in Krakow, Poland, but just as were about to depart we were led to the American Embassy and were greeted by the recently appointed ambassador from the United States to the Slovak Republic.

Now that I’ve read Out of This Furnace, I have a sense of the triumph of the many Slovak people who emigrated to Western Pennsylvania in the 1880s and left their imprint on our country. Those early steelworkers worked 12-hour shifts and every other week worked 24 hours when shifts changed—at unbelievably small wages. In addition to raising their families, the men and women strived to save money for a nest egg but often had to use this when the men faced layoffs. But they survived and succeeded. They have also retained many of their traditions—for example, in our area, they meet annually at the University of Pittsburgh to celebrate their customs, music, and food.

In Poland, on a somber rainy day we traveled to Auschwitz, the largest Nazi concentration camp of World War II. Words fail me—it would take a Dante to describe it adequately.

We then left for Krakow, the birthplace in 1920 of Karol Wojtyla, the late Pope John Paul II. We saw many of his artifacts—he was a man for all seasons—he swam, he fished, he skied, he wrote poetry, he even acted. It’s amazing he found time to be a priest and eventually Pope. As Pope, I recall he continued his love of travel.

We then returned to Slovakia for the remainder of the trip. We visited Modra, where pottery has been made since the 1730s. In Poprad we stopped at a crystal factory and shop. The countryside is tranquil, and the High Tatras Mountains are spectacular—the highest mountain range in Europe northwards or eastwards from the Alps. We traveled through many towns and villages across Slovakia. One day we traveled on a river on a primitive raft where on one side of the river we could see Poland, and on the other, Slovakia (I have the picture to prove it). We reached Kosice, our departure city, a rather cosmopolitan city along with its old town and cathedral and modern shops. I thought it was interesting that when shopping there is no sales pressure to buy; I was told this is a holdover from the communist regime—there seems to be no incentive to make a sale. The other interesting sight I saw in Kosice was a huge sign on a large building stating “United States Steel Corporation”—In Slovakia. But I’ve been told the output is for in-country consumption only.

I came away from this journey, along with reading Out of This Furnace, impressed with the tremendous journey that many people from these countries made in the 1880s that helped make America what it is today.
Osher Travelers:
An Eye-Opening Trip to Africa
By Carol Snodgrass

On a five-week commercial tour from Cape Town to Cairo last fall, Carol Snodgrass spent three days in Zimbabwe, giving her a chance to see this troubled country first-hand. It was especially interesting to Carol because on a private tour she had visited the same country in 1976, when it was known as Rhodesia and not yet a fully independent nation. In 1976 people talked politics. Carol sensed the tension of a revolutionary period, with various groups vying for leadership in opposition to the regime. Fearing terrorists, a leader of girl scouts could not take her girls camping. Carol saw evidence of poverty and lack of education, but Rhodesia was economically stable, the land green and productive, and food plentiful. She saw a very different place last fall.

While ambling along on the back of an elephant, or gazing at the majesty of Victoria Falls, or floating among the hippos on the Zambezi River, it’s easy to get lost in the exotic beauty of Zimbabwe. This country used to be considered the breadbasket of southern Africa, but Mugabe’s reign has turned Zimbabwe into a barren landscape with a barely functioning economy and literally no food or fuel for its citizens. The farming sector has all but collapsed, and the country now has to import even the most basic foodstuffs.

Food is not reliably available because very little is grown within Zimbabwe. Tourist resorts are supplied with food flown in weekly from South Africa. In a village near Victoria Falls, we went to a supermarket, intending to go in to view the scarcity and sparse displays of food on the shelves. When we got there, the store was closed—no food to be bought—and discouraged shoppers were waiting in the parking lot looking thin and hungry. Later, we were a bit nervous when a policeman stopped our van and talked with our driver as we were about to cross the border into Botswana. It turned out that he was giving our driver money to buy food in Botswana and bring it back to Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean landscape we saw looked dry, the farmlands neglected. As soon as we crossed the border, the landscape was green, and there was food to buy.

Gas stations sell gas only for government vehicles and tourist vans; others are turned away because there is no gas to be bought. The roads are in disrepair, and it is rare to see a vehicle of any kind. Walking is the main mode of transportation. The economy is in a dramatic decline, and the inflation rate is over 1000%. Although almost half of earned income goes to pay taxes, education is not free. Lacking public education, many children are unable to attend school, literacy rates are low, and the cycle of poverty continues. Jobs are scarce, and unemployment is high. Despite the hunger, disease, and despair of the failing economy, there is a general spirit of survival, resilience, and adaptability. People are willing to work hard to assure their families’ well-being.

The hope for the future of Zimbabwe is seen in the example of Stephen, our elephant guide at Victoria Falls. He was the only Zimbabwean who talked with us about the living conditions. Stephen endures great hardship in order to ensure that his daughter receives an education. An educated man who speaks several languages, he works in the elephant refuge far from his family home and can see his wife and child only two or three times a year because transportation is limited and too costly for him to be with them more often. Yet working with tourists is a “good job,” and he regularly sends his earnings back home for food and school. The resourcefulness and perseverance of people like Stephen hold promise for the future of Zimbabwe.

From left, Stephen, Nancy Murray, and Carol Snodgrass
There were three big news stories mid-January to early February: the Inauguration, the Super Bowl, and, at least in Pennsylvania, the weather prediction of Punxsutawney Phil. So many of our Osher members are actively involved in community affairs, we decided to check around to see if we could get some on-the-spot reports from witnesses of these events.

Surprisingly, a low-key investigation (actually just a few phone calls) did not turn up any trippers to the Super Bowl among our avid Steeler fans. As one season-ticket holder explained, if you were “lucky,” you could buy two tickets for $1,600. Instead, he stayed home and saved the 1,600 bucks.

Well, what about the many snowbirds in our group? Surely they would be in the stadium. But neither Osher member and study leader JoAnn Spiegel nor her sports-loving husband, Ron, whose winter home is an hour’s drive away, were at the game. “My husband really tried until the game day itself,” said JoAnn. “We’ve been Steeler season-ticket holders for years. My husband signed up for the lottery, but he didn’t win the tickets. He tried every way he could to get tickets here, even thought about driving to Tampa on game day but decided not to. The only tickets he was offered were a pair for $2,500. Instead, we decided to accept an invitation to a friend’s Super Bowl party.” And they had a blast! Mother-wise decision that came with maturity.

We reached one attendee at the Inauguration and one very prominent guest at Phil’s big do in Punxsutawney. Betsy Reiling, an Osher study leader, was the person we asked about the Inauguration. It was a very quick conversation since we caught her as she was about to leave town again, but it was obvious she was much moved by the experience. The view of those “millions of people crammed together on the Mall so orderly and joyful was an unbelievable sight,” she said. “Everyone was so friendly and helpful and patient during the long wait. A big linebacker of a man caught me as I was about to trip and set me back on my feet and walked off smiling. It was inspiring—the best of humanity.”

Elaine Light’s many friends at Osher know her as a longtime member and a frequent study leader. She has often talked about her life in Punxsutawney, where her late husband, Sam Light, was much involved in the founding and promotion of the Punxsutawney Phil phenomenon. This year, Elaine was guest of honor at Phil’s annual banquet. Fifty years after she was named “Woman of the Year” for all she had done for the town, she was again being recognized for such accomplishments as publishing two highly successful Groundhog cookbooks, for bringing Indiana University of Pennsylvania to Punxsy to establish its now-noted culinary arts school, and for overseeing the construction of the town’s complex and Groundhog Zoo. For all those accomplishments Elaine deserves a salute.

Continued on the next page
Ad Lib

Continued from previous page

Often an Osher member’s name appears in a local newspaper or other publication, and eagle-eyed Millie Lynch, our administrative coordinator, clips the article and turns it over to Ad Lib. Here are some she saw since the last newsletter issue:

Curriculum Committee Chair Sally Cohen was featured in a recent story in the January Pittsburgh Senior News. She was justly praised for the outstanding work she has done with the ever-expanding number of excellent classes provided for Osher members. Sally was quick to share that success with her co-chair, Bea Jones, and 23 committee members. The photograph below, which accompanied the article, showed a happy, smiling Sally.

[Image of Sally Cohen]

Osher member Patricia Ulbrich was featured in a January 9 article in the Tribune-Review describing her work as director of an oral history project called “In Sisterhood: The Women’s Movement in Pittsburgh.” Dr. Ulbrich is a progressive social scientist and a visiting scholar in women’s studies at the University of Pittsburgh. “In Sisterhood” was awarded $45,000 from the Pittsburgh 250 Regional Community Connections program. (The Curriculum Committee take note.)

A November 23 article in the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review on the stained glass artist Charles J. Connick refers to the guidebook on Heinz Chapel written by Joan Gaul, a member and study leader. Joan discussed the windows Connick created at Pitt’s Heinz Chapel.

Member Ronna J. Edelstein described in the December 3 Post-Gazette going with her father to Mannsman’s Department Store in East Liberty to buy a gift for her mother’s birthday. This childhood memory was told charmingly and won a spot on page two.

Also in the Post Gazette, a letter by Errol Miller on gun control, and on December 13 Jacquelin Wechsler’s letter about Ruth Ann Dailey’s column on the election caught Millie’s eye. And also in the PG on January 12, member Joan Morse Gordon commented on a C-Span segment about the Army honoring President Bush, which raised her ire. Karen Yee, an Osher study leader, was referred to in a food story on Chinese cooking January 22, again in the Post-Gazette. Jack and Posy Brill, members, wrote a thank-you letter in a January 29 issue of the PG about a kind young couple who helped them when their flight was canceled and they were stuck at the airport. A poem by Esther Jacobson Tucker called “Estate Sale” was featured as the Saturday Poem in the PG on January 10, a real coup for a poet.

Sadly, lengthy obituaries appeared recently in the Post-Gazette for pillars of our organization. Richard Rosenzweig, revered member, study leader, and board member, was remembered in the Post-Gazette of December 29. On February 23 the Post-Gazette noted the death of Clarke Thomas, a senior editor and retired editorial writer for the newspaper who was a founding member of Osher (then A.L.L.) and taught, coordinated, and attended many courses since the founding. We will miss these leaders very much.

Millie did catch the January 12 Pittsburgh Tribune Review, which had a great story on the “Jersey Boys” opening at the Benedum. Among the Osher folks listed in attendance were Sydelle Kessler, Dr. Bernard and Stephanie Mallinger, and Sue and Sid Neff.

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Photo Courtesy of Charles LeClaire/Pittsburgh Senior News

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It’s All Talk

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9
From the President
Continued from page 1

Immediately, much of the $50,000 will be used to upgrade our audio-visual equipment in the Wean classrooms. Starting in 4707, the construction will soon be underway. The AV console will be similar to the AV equipment being implemented in all lecture rooms throughout the university. In contrast to the present AV equipment, this new console will be user-friendly. We will upgrade 4708 once we are satisfied with the new AV equipment in 4707.

Our enrollment has had the usual attrition in the past six months, and that will give us a chance to reduce our waiting list, which is still over 600. Our commitment is to expand to a membership of 1,800. This will require additional costs, and we will add classrooms not available on campus.

We also have hired a new employee, Phyllis Davidson, part-time to relieve the treasurer of time-intensive tasks in the office that should not be expected of a volunteer.

“So, you want to lead a band?” (Apologies to Sammy Kaye). Calling all musicians. Do you play an instrument? Do you want to have some fun? Why don’t we have an OLLI band—big band, swing, jazz, classical, strings—whatever? See Millie’s article on page 5.

Last, we are always looking for new ideas for courses as well as for study leaders. Call Millie at 412-268-2131 with your ideas.

Six Multi-Day Tours Planned for 2009

OLLI travelers will be welcomed aboard motor coaches heading for a half-dozen interesting destinations selected by tour director RoseMarie DeRiso. Members who have traveled with RoseMarie report enthusiastically about these tours to intriguing and historical locations (for example, last year’s trip to Gettysburg—see page 2). See you on the bus!

- April 28-30
  Charlottesville, Virginia
  $449 (Double)
  $549 (Single)
  Deposits were due February 2.

- May 29-31
  Washington, D.C., with Alex Kramer
  $419 (Double)
  $525 (Single)
  Deposits due March 15.

- July 21-24
  Shaw Festival, Ontario Canada
  $1,120 (Double)
  $1,314 (Single)
  Deposit of $300 due March 15.

- August 24-28
  Chautauqua Institute
  $1,190 (Double)
  $1,380 (Single)
  Deposit of $300 due May 1.

- Greenbriar Resort
  October 14-16
  $796 (Double)
  $950 (Single)
  Deposit of $300 due June 15.

- October 26-30
  Hudson Valley, New York
  $699 (Double)
  $855 (Single)
  Deposit of $200 due August 1


WQED’s Chris Fennimore Visits OLLI Cooking Class

By Sue Neff

WQED’s Program Director, Chris Fennimore, is also the host of the Saturday program “QED Cooks.” I contacted Chris as I organized a series of cooking classes held this fall in the kitchen classroom of Rodef Shalom temple in Oakland. Chris was enthusiastic about visiting the class and shared wonderful recipes for using leftover turkey and for easy-to-make corn cakes.

Chris arrived with all the ingredients and proceeded to delight students with his cooking adventures and information tidbits. He told fascinating stories about how he came to Pittsburgh and happened to “fall-into” on-air cooking demonstrations. The number of QED cookbooks Chris has edited and authored is testimony to how the Pittsburgh audience contributed to and supported his efforts. The OLLI students asked many questions and told Chris they really appreciated his contribution of time and expertise to our program.

The following were “presenters” for the classes:

**Soups: A Comfort Food**
- Rosemary Traill: Summer Corn Chowder
- Carole Wolsh (OLLI member): Chicken Stock & Variations
- Betty Elias: French Onion Soup
- Angela Pasquale: Lentil Pork Soup
- Karla Contreras (Giant Eagle Marketplace): Clear Fish Soup, Cioppino

**Muffins & Quick Breads**
- Fred Marks (OLLI member): No-Knead Bread (N.Y. Times)
- David Green (Sweetie Sweetie Bakery): Low-Fat Muffins
- Chris Fennimore (WQED Cooks): Arepas (Corn Cakes), Turkey Chili
- Jody Freyvogel (Baked For You Bakery): Christmas Morning Cranberry Muffins
- Helen Orr Quinn (Whole Foods Market): Vegan Banana Flax Muffin
- Chris Farber (East End Food Co-op): Wheat-Free Muffins

**Chris Fennimore’s recipe for Arepas Con Queso (Corn Cakes)**

1 Cup of Milk 1 Tsp Salt
1 Cup of Water 1 Tsp Sugar
2 TB Butter
1 Cup Shredded cheese: ricotta salada, queso blanco or mozzarella.
2 Cups Masarepa (fine yellow cornmeal; Goya product available at Giant Eagle)
Oil to grease the griddle or pan

Heat the milk and water to boiling. Stir in the butter to dissolve. Mix the masarepas in a large bowl with the salt, sugar and cheese. Stir in the milk mixture with a spoon until a sticky dough forms. Cover and let sit until cool enough to handle. Heat the oil on medium heat either on a griddle or nonstick pan. Form the dough into balls and press into disks about ¼ to ½ inch thick. Fry until crispy and light brown on one side, and then turn over. Cook on the second side until golden but not browned. Drain on paper towels and place on a cookie sheet to stay warm in a low oven. Serve as a snack or side dish topped with additional shredded cheese.
Enroute to exploring Israel’s Roman heritage, we notice orange and banana plantations. The greening of this dry land is a modern miracle. King Herod’s name is heard along this Mediterranean coastline. We visited a spectacular hippodrome and amphitheatre at Caesarea. Our bus passed through the exciting and modern city of Haifa. It seems to have everything—great beaches, universities, high-tech businesses and nice housing. Visited Akko, a world heritage site for its amazing citadel and Crusader history.

At Capernaum, located on the north shore of the Galilee, archeologists have uncovered large remnants of an old synagogue and believe this to be the home of the Apostle Peter. A fabulous Franciscan contemporary church has been established here over the site where Peter lived. We were surrounded by mountains and water. In the afternoon we had a most interesting lecture and tour of the original Kibbutz Degania. The story of the kibbutz movement started at the beginning of the last century when three Jewish women and seven men came from Russia with Zionist zeal and idealistic goals to help establish a Jewish state.

Visited Beth Shean, another Roman ruin with an extraordinary bath house (first century BCE). Crossed the border to Jordan. Our buses had a driver, our guide Zuhair, and an armed tourist guard! Our guide mentioned that his generation is limiting family size. He explained that the tribe system here is very strong. Each tribe takes care of its own; thus there is no homelessness, etc.

Square blocky houses cover the hillsides. Many are “unfinished” because once they are finished, taxes need to be paid. Not sure how they obtain water, sewage, and electricity, which are granted as taxes are paid. Visited the ancient city of Jarash, said to be the Pompeii of the Middle East. We walked on 2,000-year-old colonnaded streets and climbed the Temple to Artemis, featuring a great view of the city and environs.

The visit to Petra was a longtime travel dream come true. We awoke in the morning, opened our drapes and were staring out at mountains of sandstone rock. The site itself is said to be 250 million years old, but the Nabataean civilization is probably about 3,000 years old. They carved amazing buildings into the mountains—the most famous is called the Treasury. Many were done around the time of the Greeks, so they emulated the columns, etc., that they admired. At one time, Petra was a focal point of trade. Thus they came in contact with many other cultures. The innovative water troughs are remarkable. Donkeys still carry people, as do horses, to visit the canyons and buildings. We walked.

Flew to Cairo. There are many armed policemen here in Egypt. We again had an armed policeman on our bus, and possibly a car trailing us. Crazy world. Our guide in Jordan had thanked us for coming at this difficult time and asked us to be ambassadors to our friends and neighbors.

Visited the Pyramids and the Sphinx at Giza and then Sikhora. Also stopped at Memphis, one of the first capitals of Egypt, where we visited a wonderful outdoor museum of sculptures. Cairo is dry, sandy, and smoggy, with all the trappings of a modern city, including terrible air. Twenty-seven million of seventy-eight million Egyptians live here. The city is expanding uncontrollably, with people even setting up housekeeping in cemeteries. Our guide, Mohammed, said they have a façade of democracy, that Mubarak is now preparing his son to be the next president. There is over 30% illiteracy. Few people vote. There is free speech, but the TV and newspapers are government controlled.

Stopped at the huge Aswan Dam built by Nasser with Russian help at the height of the Cold War. It

Continued on the next page
“controls” the Nile River, but the fertile silt that came in the needed annual flood is held back by the dam so that chemical fertilizers are now needed for agriculture. However, Egypt now has more electrification and two crops per year. The good and the bad.

Visited a quarry where an unfinished obelisk lay on its side. Most of the stones for the temples were from this quarry. Thus we have an inkling as to how the stone-masons cut, and with help of thousands, raised on rollers and shuttled down the Nile the amazing obelisks and sculptures to Karnak and the Valley of the Kings.

Muhammed took us through the shopping streets of Aswan. The patter was funny: “Welcome to Alaska, Obama! Have a look, no hassle shopping.” We sniffed many spices displayed in open sacks and looked at “handmade” articles. The riverside promenade is gorgeous.

Visited the Temple of Kom Ombo, good and evil as personified by the god Horus and the crocodile. Only the king and the high priest were allowed in a temple. There are three rooms leading to the Holy of Holies in each temple. Other monuments, like the Valley of the Kings, are burial sites. The pharaohs, kings, lived in the villages, but no palaces have been found. Erfu is another amazing temple with pylons, carvings, statuary, and hieroglyphs everywhere. It was found in this century after being buried in the sand for centuries. Actually there are discoveries daily.

Left at 6:45 a.m. for the Valley of the Kings. Visited three of the 64 tombs! I loved the one that had vivid painted hieroglyphs in seven descending rooms, each of which tells a story that has been interpreted. We are now able to discern a number of hieroglyphs but are a far cry from Egyptologists. The Queen Hatchepsut temple has three levels and many columns and is built into a mountain.

Sailed to our final stop at Luxor. This temple has many attractive sphinxes and other statuary. The avenue of human-headed sphinxes leads to Karnak. It was used by the ancients for an annual celebration.

The Egyptian Museum at Cairo is justifiably famous. Of course, the Tutankhamen tomb treasures which were found sealed and intact were unbelievably gorgeous. The gold face mask, jewelry, and golden royal chair are remarkable.

Visited three religious sites in Old Cairo: a synagogue, a mosque, and a church. Because the artists were of the same period, there is a sameness about their interior ornamentation. Enjoyed a pleasant lunch overlooking a lake. Noticed many families sitting on the grass. There seem to be few parks and green spaces in the city. The huge Citadel and Mohammed Ali Mosque overlook this part of Cairo.

Returning home: Cairo to Paris, Paris to JFK, JFK to Pittsburgh. All went well. I am very glad to be home even though it is cold. The air is much cleaner and we have lots of trees.
Food for Thought
By Marilyn McDevitt Rubin

So that’s why I’m up half the night reading! I like dark chocolate after dinner instead of after lunch, which would be better. Charles Chocolates, my favorite brand, available at Giant Eagle and Whole Foods, is 65% bittersweet mixed with mocha java pieces. The New York Times reports that the National Sleep Foundation recommends avoiding dark chocolates in the evening. There is a substitute: wimpy white chocolate contains no theobromine (increases heart rate) and very little, if any caffeine.

New research shows that there has not been the exponential rise in fatalities among drivers over 70 years old as the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety had expected. It’s not only a radical decline in accidents that’s responsible but also that compared to 10 to 20 years ago, today’s seniors are now in better physical shape to survive accidents. Studies also show that more seniors with declining vision are acting responsibly and taking themselves off the road.

Almost all of us consume more than twice the salt we need, says Thomas R. Frieden, New York City health commissioner. Many publications are encouraging salt reduction, which results in a decrease in blood pressure, making strokes and heart attacks less likely and said to save thousands of lives a year. According to the good doctor, with the exception of tobacco control, there are few other health directives offering the degree of advantages that comes from reducing salt.

Some good advice appeared on my computer recently under the heading Feng Shui. It resembles a round-robin letter and comes from the Anthony Robbins organization, about which I know nothing. Here are my favorites from the offerings:
- Marry a man/woman you love to talk to. As you get older, their conversational skills will be as important as any other.
- Don’t believe all you hear, don’t spend all you have, and don’t sleep all you want.
- When someone asks you a question you don’t want to answer, smile and ask “Why do you want to know?”
- Say “Bless you” when someone sneezes.
- Smile when you pick up the phone. The caller will hear it.
- Spend time alone.

Gettysburg has a new museum. When Abraham Lincoln came to Gettysburg in 1863 to help dedicate the Soldiers National Cemetery, he stayed in lawyer David Wills’s house, where the museum is now located. The bed he slept in is on view. It was in this house, according to historians, where Lincoln put the finishing touches to the Gettysburg Address, which, along with his second inaugural, are thought to be his greatest speeches. The New York Times reports that the National Park Service has spent $7.2 million restoring the 191-year old Gettysburg house.

Out of the Mouths of Study Leaders
Continued from page 3
gift card. It’s an excessive reward for doing something that I very much enjoy. I look forward to teaching again.”
- “What a lovely thought—and execution—a gift card for volunteers! I very much appreciate it. I have to think of something in books to fit something so special. Members of the Curriculum Committee merit the most praise for what you have done on curriculum, ultimately the key to A.L.L./Osher’s success. This is overdue praise from me for what you have accomplished.”
- “I thoroughly enjoy conducting the class and I’m sure, like all study leaders, hope to continue as a volunteer.”

This unexpected feedback has been enlightening and gratifying. It is most rewarding to have interacted with study leaders who have quality credentials and sincere respect for those of us who pursue lifelong learning. We are dedicated to every one.
Artistic Luxury and Comic Books!
By Bob Dickman

What a contrast, you’re thinking. But those were the subjects of our November 15 day trip to the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage.

At CMA, we had a brief overview lecturette with slides introducing the three artists and their contributions to the world of art. Tiffany, Faberge, and Lalique were designers of some of the world’s most beautiful knock-your-socks-off jewelry ever assembled in one exhibition. Touring the exhibit with audio guides cemented what we were told, saw, and heard.

On the bus at each one’s seat was a very ample box lunch from Corky and Lenny’s. Most people found their sandwiches too generous and took half home for dinner.

At the Maltz, a knowledgeable docent explained how the comic book creators and publishers produced a new genre of heroes. Their characters became symbols of human potential and the triumph of good over evil that endures today. The exhibit was great fun, and even included the phone booth where Clark Kent turns himself into Superman.

With wine and cheese on the way home, we had 48 (plus one five-month-old infant) happy people, many who were first-time trippers.

In Memoriam

Our sincere thanks to the following people who made memorial contributions to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Carnegie Mellon:

In Memory of Richard Rosenzweig

Alan and Barbara Ackerman
Joan Adibi
Louis Anstandig
Fred and Marcia Ciaramaglia
Barbara Comess
Bob and Gene Dickman
Arthur and Barbara Grossman
Alan and Nancy Gandelman
Nancy Golding and Robert Hartheimer
Gail Guggenheim
Sean and Carol Hughes
Frances and Frank Knoerdel
Corinne and Seymour Krause
Claire and Lawrence Levine

In Memory of Arthur Damick
Bob and Gene Dickman

In Memory of Clarke Thomas
Filomena Conti
Evening Program to Feature Thai Dancing and Delicacies

Learn about Thai culture, watch a cooking demonstration, enjoy the excitement of a Thai dance performance, and sample Thai delicacies.

March 26, 7:30 p.m. in Rangos Rooms 1 and 2 in the University Center

A $3.00 charge will be collected at the door.

Reservations due March 16.

Do You Want to Keep Your Mind Sharp?

Join us for the Mind Muscle Study!

Carnegie Mellon is conducting a research study on the impact of games designed to improve brain health. Participants will take two neurological function tests and play computer games designed to maintain cognitive function.

Participants will receive $50 and three free months of game use.

Help contribute to this exciting new area of study!

If interested, call 1-866 495-4693 or email mindmuscle2008@gmail.com

Contributions are welcome for Signatures, our publication featuring writing and photography by members of Osher at Carnegie Mellon. Please send your material to the Osher office.