Letter from the President

Whenever we conduct a fund-raising effort, be it our annual campaign or when soliciting sponsorships, we are consistently asked what we need the money for. After all, we are an association of volunteers and our faculty is all volunteers, why do we need money? Our expenses are more or less obscure to our membership, but they are very real and must be addressed in a timely manner:

Salaries and Benefits: Salary for our two part-time office personnel constitutes our greatest expense. These two people offer an indispensable and reliable competency without which our office could not be staffed.

Rent: Although our spaces at SNHU are made available to us at a bargain rate, they are not free. Classroom sites off-campus are made available to us at no charge.

Insurance: We are obliged to insure the College and its directors against liability and personal injury claims.

Faculty: Although the faculty is all volunteers, we offer a small honorarium in the form of a gift certificate to a local merchant provided to us at a cost below value. Also, semi-annual faculty lunches are held before

The Rest of the Story: Last Winter’s el Nino in Maine

Bruce MacDougal

Many may remember the folksy news commentator, Paul Harvey, and his weekday radio show, The Rest of the Story. Every show he would select a topic or interesting person and present some local color or back-story. He always concluded by saying “…and now you know the rest of the story.” This article is the rest of the story of last winter’s el Nino in Maine.

Some think of el Nino is an event that happens around Christmas time off the coast of Peru. Warming ocean water reduces the fish catch of the Peruvians. The fishermen call it ‘the Christ Child’, el Nino. But this warming is just one part of a much larger pan Pacific cycle which does have world-wide effects and directly influenced last Christmas here in Maine. In fact el Nino influenced our whole fall and winter, from October on.

The cycle’s correct name is the el Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). Oscillation is a word climatologists use to describe weather fluctuations that occur regularly

News from the Board of Directors

The board is looking for more women to serve as Board members and as committee members. We are also considering various fund-raising strategies including seeking new grants and raising tuition.

The board is currently reviewing a new set of by-laws, intensifying our promotional activities at various community gatherings and investigating a partnership with People Plus, since both organizations cater to a similar population.

The board continues to emphasize and reinforce close ties with local retirement communities from whom we receive much needed support, especially for the Summer and Winter Wisdom lecture programs.

Try something new!

Half of you register for courses online now. We encourage the rest of you to do so. Registration is secure - it’s as safe as buying a book at Amazon and just as fast; it saves time and paper for us all.

You will receive your catalog in the mail and can see it online at midcoastseniorcollege.org after July 1. Online registration will be opened on July 11 and at the college volunteers will help you register online on July 11 and 12. Either way, you will receive a receipt of your payment and registration. Come have a cup of coffee and a cookie and meet your fellow students while you register.
The Midcoast Inquirer is the newsletter of Midcoast Senior College
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Board of Directors.

Officers
President: Tony Belmont
Immediate Past President: Richard Neiman
Vice President: James Wilkes
Treasurer: Sandra Neiman
Secretary: Ian MacKinnon

Other Board Members and Committees
Doug Bates Finance
Bianca Chambers Public Relations
Clare Durst Technology
Reg Elwell Finance
David Fluharty Administration
Ron Golz Development
William Mason Public Relations
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Linton Studdiford Curriculum
Kelly Watt Special Events
Bob Williams Administration

Sub-Committees
Strategic Planning: Doug Bates
Winter Wisdom: Stuart Gillespie
Summer Wisdom: Richard Neiman
Volunteers: Dorothy Bell
Newsletter: Bob Williams; Burr Taylor
Website: Jack Henderson
Current Events Forum: Richard Neiman
Office Administration: Donna Marshall
Special Events: Kelly Watt

Continued from Page 1: President
each semester at which time those teaching during the semester get to familiarize themselves with each other and with their rooms and equipment.

Books: Although these are provided to enrollees at no cost, books are not free. We help control costs by central purchasing and obtaining a volume discount, but the expense is real. We specifically solicit several sponsors to help defray the cost of books.

Printing, mailing and office equipment: These costs are self-explanatory, but it should be noted that we are trying to control them through use of electronic communication.

Winter and Summer Wisdom: These events are provided to the general public at no charge; we share costs with the Curtis Library for their production. Speakers are provided with a small honorarium.

Annual Members Luncheon and Meeting: We are obligated to conduct an annual meeting of members, and the annual luncheon satisfies this requirement. Attendance at this luncheon is a benefit of membership, but the cost of the luncheon represents a significant expense to our overall budget.

Certainly there are other occasional expenses, but I have listed the major ones here. Anyone is welcome to review our budget and offer suggestions, but be assured that your Board of Directors makes every effort to justify our fund-raising efforts.

Tony Belmont
President

Volunteer Recognition and Thanks!!

BRAVO! COURSE LIAISONS, NON-BORDER COMMITTEE MEMBERS, BULK MAILING HELPERS
Astrid Apse, Joan Atwood, Nancy Barber, Joyce Bessen, Nora Bishop, Angela Bournakel, Sally Broderick, Harry Hopcroft, Catherine Buotte, Tom Burrage, Ingrid Chalafour, Bianca Chambers, Miriam Charette, Deborah Cravey, Madison Cravey, Mary Cuthbertson, Leona Dufour, Joyce Devito, Eunice Fraser, Patricia Galbreath, Marnie Hackenberg, Bill Hammond, Devereau Hillard, Prisca Kenison, Martha Lentz, Joseph Lisi, Phyllis Lisi, David McKeith, Jackie Melissas, Sharon Melinier, Susan Mikesell, Jim Millinger, Gerry Orem, Skip Orem, Esther Palmer, Evie Papacosma, Jean Pope, Mary Jane Rosenfield, Judy Rouillard, Janet Blair Stenberg, Romain Savoie, Kelly Watt, Phyllis Wolfe.

Going On Line. Midcoast Senior College has launched two new paperless online platforms: a Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/midcoastseniorcollege/) that anyone can "friend," and a new online MSC Gazette (http://midcoastseniorcollege.org/msc-online-gazette) where you can find old newsletters, selected articles, book reviews, poetry and letters to the editor. Check out our Website.
over large areas, swinging back and forth like a pendulum. Their cycle may last just a few months or up to 3 or 4 decades. ENSO usually has a 5 – 7 year cycle but it may be shorter. Oscillations are a normal part of global weather patterns.

ENSO is an oscillation of heat accumulation in the upper part of the tropical Pacific Ocean and then its discharge and transportation to the colder climates. Technically ENSO involves both the sea surface temperature or heat content (the el Nino part) and the overlying atmospheric pressure and weather (the Southern Oscillation part). ENSO occurs over a huge amount of ocean: from Indonesia to Peru, a distance roughly three times greater than that from here to Los Angeles. The changes of the atmosphere and the ocean are interrelated in a complicated dance, each influencing and responding to its partner.

Usually the tropical trade winds blowing from the east push the Pacific's surface waters into a gigantic hot pile off Indonesia and Australia that is much higher than the seal level off Peru. When the heat level gets too high the hot water sloshes back to the central and eastern Pacific as a large wave and the winds change: an el Nino event. This heats the eastern Pacific as far north as the Californian coast. Water evaporates from these new hot areas and releases its energy by cloud formation and raining. The new wind currents bring more rain and colder temperatures than usual from California through the sun belt all the way to the southeast coast. A good series of videos starts at the web site https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEZgJtaT3gw.

Our fall and winter was warm and dry as most Maine el Ninos typically are. The Pacific's released energy traveled around the globe and specifically here to Maine. The winds traveling north strengthened and straightened the jet stream, 'corralling' many of the cold polar winds to the north, as one would a herd of unruly horses. By March the el Nino had weakened with much of its heat dissipated, one of the reasons our stormy weather returned.

Last year's ENSO was one of the strongest and longest in recorded history, probably in large part because the global temperature is rapidly rising. First 2014 and then 2015 was the hottest year ever recorded. 2016 may be even hotter. The world's oceans store over 90% of the heat energy currently being added to the earth! The increased energy stored in the Pacific ocean and its periodic release into the atmosphere, ENSO, is part of the normal ocean – atmosphere equilibration. Although an el Nino event increases average global temperature, it doesn’t change global heat content.

The time between el Nino events is determined by how long it takes the upper parts of the Pacific to recharge. Often an el Nino is followed by a la Nina, a beginning of the heat re-accumulation that starts further west in the Pacific and brings colder than average water temperatures in the eastern Pacific. For Maine a la Nina event means a colder, wetter (snowier) winter.

And next winter? Because we can accurately measure the upper ocean's heat content ENSO is one of the most predictable of the weather cycles. Late this summer or fall we should have a good idea of what's coming.

So what's the rest of this story? Was last winter the harbinger of el Ninos to come? Many think so. Future el Ninos may be more intense and last longer but not be more frequent. Winters in-between may be more like those of 2012 – 2014. Nobody really knows. All we know is that the planet is warming quickly. Mankind is on a journey to a new and different earth.

**Where in the Midcoast?**

Do you recognize this place?

An occasional feature of the Inquirer will be a picture from somewhere in our area of a place you might like to to visit, if you haven't already. The answer is elsewhere in this newsletter.

**Midcoast Senior College** is one of seventeen Senior Colleges in the State of Maine. We serve the area from Freeport to Waldoboro and inland up to Augusta. Most of our classes are held at 10 Tibbetts Drive, Brunswick, Maine. Class schedules and The Midcoast Inquirer are available on our web site for each semester. Students may register on line at midcoastseniorcollege.org.
Between the Covers:
Books on Lee Harvey Oswald

Robert C. Williams

On Halloween 1959, a scruffy-looking young ex-Marine named Lee Harvey Oswald appeared at the U.S. embassy in Moscow demanding that he be allowed to defect to the Soviet Union. Ned Keenan, a Russian history exchange student in town from Leningrad to address a visa issue, sat on the waiting room couch with the angry visitor and wondered who he was.

Two months later, in mid-November, a free-lance journalist and former staffer for Senator John F. Kennedy, Priscilla Johnson, interviewed Oswald in his hotel room at the Metropole for four hours. A year later Joseph Norbury, a U.S. consul at the Moscow embassy, corresponded frequently with Oswald in Minsk about visas and helping him return to the U.S. with his wife, Marina, and their first child.

I knew personally Keenan, Johnson and Norbury as fellow scholars at Harvard University’s Russian Research Center in Cambridge. Of course nobody mentioned the generally unknown Oswald. Then on November 22, 1963 I met my office mate Priscilla Johnson returning from lunch. I told her that President Kennedy had been shot and that the suspect was named Lee Harvey Oswald. “Oh my God!,” she responded, “I know that boy.”

More than a half a century after the tragic day in Dallas, the Kennedy assassination remains a mystery cloaked in a fog of documents, books and recollections. The records of the Warren Commission (1964) and the House Select Committee on Assassinations (1977) are now available online. Yet the supposedly closed case on the Kennedy assassination remains open. Three books on Oswald try to get at the context around the shooter.

Oswald tried unsuccessfully to defect to the Soviet Union and to become a Soviet citizen in 1959, lived there for more than two years and married a Soviet citizen, reactivated his U.S. passport to return home in 1962, and then tried to get visas for travel to Cuba and the Soviet Union in 1963. He was therefore probably the best-known presidential assassin in history before he ever pulled the trigger. (Booth was a famous actor.) References to Oswald before November 22, 1963 litter the files of the State Department, the CIA, the FBI, Naval Intelligence and the offices of all these agencies in New York, New Orleans, Mexico City and Dallas. For a man few Americans had ever heard of, Oswald left a massive paper trail throughout the files of the U.S. government from the time he left the Marines to the moment he shot the president.

The paper trail feeds conspiracy theories. In Oswald and the CIA (2008), former CIA agent John Newman analyzes the huge trove of records forced into the public eye by the 1992 JFK Records Act. These records include the CIA’s Soviet Russia Division, Special Affairs Staff (anti-Cuban operations), and the Counter-Intelligence Staff of James Jesus Angleton, the paranoid mole-hunter once deceived by British double agent Kim Philby. The latter defected to Moscow in 1963.

Newman demonstrates convincingly that U.S. government records contain numerous references to Oswald before November 1963 based on his attempts to defect to the Soviet Union, return to the U.S. and defect again via Cuba. His book is primarily an examination of records of agencies, including files that are closed, opened or re-opened, missing documents, and files removed by Angleton.

While the CIA may well have manipulated its files after the assassination to cover up prior knowledge of Oswald, agents and mistakes, Newman can only speculate that Oswald may have worked for the CIA. More likely the agency was keeping an eye on an angry ex-Marine defector returned to the U.S. They certainly knew who he was and what he was doing. But they hardly controlled him. No one could.

Ion Pacepa, once the head of Romanian intelligence, makes the case in Programmed to Kill (2008) that Oswald may have been a KGB-run Manchurian candidate sent to the U.S. by Khrushchev to kill Kennedy. Pacepa’s evidence is largely circumstantial, based on his insider knowledge of how the Soviet Union assassinated foreign leaders abroad during the post-Stalin era. The KGB was certainly in the business of recruiting American soldiers and travelers after the Korean War. Finding new agents a job and a Russian wife was a common tactic. So was the production of false “histories” and “autobiographies” like Oswald’s that enabled agents to remember their legend when necessary.

Continued on Page 5: Oswald
Pacepa believes Oswald may well have been a programmed assassin until after he shot at General Edwin Walker (and missed) in April 1963. The CIA knew that Oswald met in October in Mexico City with a KGB officer specializing in assassinations, but never told the FBI, which had been monitoring Oswald out of the Dallas office for more than a year. When the Soviets called Oswald off, he went rogue and became the angry lone gunman of established history, concludes Pacepa.

Journalist Peter Savodnik has examined Oswald's Soviet years in detail and interviewed many of his friends and contacts in Minsk, where he worked in a radio/television factory and started a family. In The Interloper (2013), Savodnik sees Oswald as a much traveled and angry father-less misfit who wanted to find a home for himself. Savodnik went to Minsk and interviewed many of Oswald's friends and co-workers. He concludes that any notion of a plot to control the volatile Oswald for espionage is simply “absurd.”

The KGB watched Oswald extensively while he was in Minsk. Their “dome” or cover (kolpak) around his life involved peepholes, listening devices, wiretaps, informers and spies. The KGB probably helped Oswald find a job and a wife. But the fact of KGB surveillance of the angry American does not imply Oswald's recruitment as a KGB agent.

All three books deepen our understanding of the Kennedy assassination. They lack hard evidence for any conspiracy or plot beyond the wandering, homeless Oswald. But they show just how much both Soviet and American intelligence knew in advance about the ex-Marine defector who lived in Belarus and returned to find himself in the Texas Book Depository with a mail-order Italian rifle on November 22, 1963.

Many people had glimpses of Oswald long before he became a household word. He was a rebel without a cause, an alienated nomad in a world he longed to impress. He had no real home. In the end, the American anti-hero killed the American hero in an act of murder-suicide. Oswald’s life seemed not worth living.

Bob Williams is a retired Russian historian who edits this newsletter and serves on the Midcoast Senior College board. He was a graduate student at the Harvard Russian Research Center from 1960 to 1965.

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**New Faculty for the Fall 2016 Semester**

We will be welcoming two new instructors in the fall 2016 semester to the ever expanding Midcoast Senior College faculty. We are always looking for new instructors and rely on the MSC community to help us in that endeavor. If you know of someone who might like to teach at MSC please call or email the office or contact the chair of the Curriculum Committee, Linton Studdiford at lintonstuddiford@gmail.com

**David Ruffner**, MD is a graduate of West Virginia University, the West Virginia School of Medicine and Duke University where he completed a residency in psychiatry. His interest in moral decision-making and the neurobiological underpinning of cognition has grown organically from his 36 years of psychiatric practice. He lives in Yarmouth and has taught a number of courses at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. In the fall he will be teaching The Mechanisms Behind our Moral Decisions. The course will investigate new scientific studies about our ethical nature, our cognitive processes and how culture and biology interact to shape the evolution of our species.

**Bruce Hauptli** earned a BA in mathematics from Lawrence University in Wisconsin and a MA and PhD in philosophy from Washington University in St. Louis. He is an Emeritus Professor of philosophy at Florida International University in Miami where he taught for 39 years. Bruce retired to Bath in 2015. This fall semester he will teach a course titled Introduction to Philosophy: Three of Plato's Early Dialogues. Bruce believes that Plato's early dialogues provide an excellent introduction to philosophy. During the course students will read and discuss Plato's Euthyphro, Apology and Crito, in order to demonstrate Socratic activity and its importance according to Plato.

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For the Latest Information

Go to Our Website:

midcoastseniorcollege.org
Healthy Aging

Dr. Anthony Belmont

There is no denying that as we age the incidence of health-related problems increases. There are several well-recognized steps that each of us can take to remain productive and active well into very old age. Here is some advice that my career as a physician has taught me.

**Don’t Smoke!** Probably the most important and most effective action that one can take to avoid premature health problems is to avoid smoking. Smoking is associated with the increased incidence of many diseases and conditions, the most common being pulmonary and cardio-vascular diseases. There’s a reason that life insurance companies charge extra premiums to smokers. Don’t let that lesson go unheeded.

**Get A Good Primary Care Physician (PCP)!** Find a doctor that you like and whose judgment you respect. It’s very important that you have a good relationship with your PCP, and that you listen to his advice. Recognize that your PCP is expert in a discipline where your knowledge is limited and that you are seeking advice because a doctor is a professional. There’s no reason to visit your doctor if you’re not going to listen to his advice.

**Control Cholesterol!** Everyone should be aware of his or her cholesterol number and take steps to control it. Certainly, diet and exercise are the mainstays of cholesterol control, but the advent of the statin family of drugs has given physicians a powerful tool with which to work. Use of these drugs has been associated with significant decrease in the incidence of cardio-vascular disease and a reduction in mortality.

**Control Your Weight!** Most Americans are overweight, but that doesn’t give you an excuse. There is a direct statistical correlation between overweight and all-cause mortality, and you can minimize this correlation. There are multiple diet and exercise plans available and they are all good if you stick to them.

**Exercise.** Regular aerobic exercise is important, with the emphasis on REGULAR. It is not so important how much exercise you can do, but that you do it regularly.

**Control Your Blood Pressure!** The most common causes of high blood pressure, known as hypertension, result from either overweight or excessive alcohol use. Certainly there are other causes, but these two are the most common contributors. Your PCP can add anti-hypertensive drugs as needed, but blood pressure control is very important. If drug therapy for hypertension is prescribed, it must be taken faithfully and daily. Do this, because it works!!

**Cancer Screening!** Although many cancers seem to appear randomly in an aging population, some cancers may be aborted if detected early. Effective screening such as mammography and colonoscopy should be conducted periodically, arranged and managed by your PCP. A little discomfort is a small price to pay for the benefits that these procedures may provide. Remember, there’s only one thing worse than finding out that you’ve got cancer, and that’s not finding out that you’ve got cancer.

**Immunizations!** Your childhood immunizations are likely to require a booster shot once you reach your 60’s. Polio, tetanus, and diphtheria are conditions that can threaten older people. Booster shots are an easy way to avoid them. In addition, there are several newer immunizations specifically tailored and appropriate for the aging adult that should be considered, specifically the pneumonia and shingles vaccines. Lastly, by all means get an annual flu shot. These work!

**Travel Considerations!** Many Americans don’t realize that Medicare does not apply outside the country. Even if you travel to Canada or Mexico, you’re on your own for health insurance. Be aware of public health recommendations for any overseas countries and, if anti-malarial prophylaxis is recommended, by all means use it! I’ve heard all the stories about side effects, but believe me, malaria is worse. I always advise travelers to carry Pepto-Bismol – this old remedy is highly effective for most GI upsets.

**Moderate Alcohol Use!** The dangers of overt intoxication are blatant, but the damaging effects of chronic overuse of alcohol can be even more pernicious. Remember, nobody sets out to become an alcoholic, but many people wind up there.

**Wear Your Seat Belt!** This is obvious, but undeniably true and effective. The life you save may be your own.

Anthony Belmont MD is a retired physician who served for a year as White House physician under Presidents Ford and Carter. He is currently chair of the board of MSC.
Historical Nuggets from the Midcoast Past

Did you know that in 1865 the University of Maine almost ended up in Topsham, rather than Orono? Topsham residents even offered free land for the buildings of the new university. One vote by a subcommittee determined an outcome so controversial that the new board of trustees dissolved itself. The Brunswick Record of February 22, 1940 recalled the event:

The story of how the Town of Topsham, by the narrow margin of one vote, missed being the location of the University of Maine, was brought to light this week, as the University prepared to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding.

Disabilities

Midcoast Senior College welcomes students with disabilities. Some students attend our classes with challenges that can affect their class work, notably visual and hearing impairment, and limited mobility. MSC is committed to accommodate such students within the limits of our resources.

For the visually impaired, audio books may replace traditional printed textbooks. A student enrolled in a course should ask the instructor if an audio version of the text is available. If a student purchases such an audio text, they may apply for reimbursement from MSC. (This does not apply to copies or reproductions handed out in class.)

Hearing impaired students normally sit at the front of the class. We currently lack the ability to amplify sound from the rest of the room.

Likewise, students with limited mobility can use the elevators at our SNHU campus building, which generally meets standards for handicapped access. Classes held at other venues are also accessible, although we do not provide transportation.

MSC welcomes your suggestions for improving access for students with disabilities. Please don’t hesitate to contact MSC staff or instructors if you wish to suggest additional accommodations.

Churchill’s Wisdom

In October 1950, Winston S. Churchill received an honorary degree from the University of Copenhagen and made the following remarks:

“As life unfolds I have been astonished to find How many more degrees I have received Than I have passed examinations I was never very good at those. But now I am treated as if I were Quite a learned man. This is a good argument for not being discouraged by the failures Or shortcomings of youth, But to persevere And go on trying to learn all your life.”

Where in the Midcoast?

The Swinging Bridge: Walking Across the Androscoggin
Text by Candace Kanes

Known as the Swinging Bridge, the Swing Bridge, and Le Petit Pont, the suspension bridge also draws sightseers and amateur photographers seeking to get a closer look at the Androscoggin River.

The bridge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004.

Renovated and repaired in 2006, the bridge is ready to serve many more generations of Brunswick and Topsham residents seeking a quick and scenic route across the river.

Images from Pejepscot Historical Society and Maine Historical Society

Mark Your Calendar!

June 14 ...................... Fall course list available
July 11 ...................... On-line registration begins for Fall semester.
August 16 ................. Summer Excursion (Portland Harbor)
August 23 ................. Faculty luncheon
September 12 .......... Fall classes begin

When the Topsham Land Company decided to develop housing in Topsham Heights along the Androscoggin River, it decided a pedestrian bridge would help entice workers at the Cabot Mill in Brunswick to move across the river.

The result was a suspension bridge that has become an integral part of both communities since the structure was completed in 1892.

Children walking to public and parochial schools have used the bridge. Adults visiting family on either side of the river have pushed baby carriages across it. People of all ages going to work in the mills or in the many businesses in the two towns rely on the bridge.

Runners go across the slightly swaying structure as part of their practice loop. Children and adults on bicycles cross the river on the bridge. Lore has it that cars have driven -- or attempted to drive -- across the bridge. Motorcycles and horses also have been seen on it.

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