I am the bionic man. The result of modern medical practice, I am sure. So long as I take the pills I am doing all right. I’m lucky. I’ve got good health insurance coverage. But there is both the bane and boon of the problem. Because insurance covers much of the cost of the prescriptions, we don’t pay much attention to it — until the price goes out of sight!

Grant Burningham writes in a Time/online article about the rising price of insulin and a possible alternative to fix it. The fix is years away, but the reason for the price rise is current and deplorable.

"Currently three companies — Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk, and Sanofi — control most of the world’s $27 billion insulin market, using a complicated web of regulations and patents to keep a hold on it... Over the past 60 years, the list price of a vial of insulin has gone from about $0.75 to $250 – an increase nearly 43 times the rate of the US Consumer Price Index inflation. High drug costs exist throughout the system, but insulin is the poster child of this broken marketplace," says Representative Tom Reed (R. NY.)

"Predatory pricing in the US isn’t unique to insulin. A study of the world’s top 20 medications found that Americans pay an average of three times as much as patients in the United Kingdom do for a given drug. The science behind making insulin is old, which makes it a good first target for the disruptive pharmaceutical industry."

Anthony DiFranco, one of the cofounders of this alternate insulin project says, "The current system was built to exploit people with diseases. Historians will look back and say, "How could they have done such a terrible job?"

Insulin is needed by patients with severe diabetes. Without it, over days, you slowly – and painfully – die.

"This fact, coupled with the inefficiencies of the American health system, as well as a manipulable patent framework, has enabled pharmaceutical companies to steadily increase the price of the life-saving drug, even as it become easier and less costly to produce. Generally speaking, drugs are cheap to make. The costs are mostly to pay for the research and development required to discover them....Much of the industrialized world has some form of single-payer health insurance and strict price controls on drugs, usually determined by a board of doctors and experts. In the US, the pull of the free market was supposed to keep prices down, but instead has led to a complex system of profit-driven corporations, from manufacturers to insurance companies, who add cost at every juncture."

It should not be this way, especially with insulin. The discoverers, who won the Nobel Prize in 1923, believed that it was unethical to profit off medicine and transferred their patents to the University of Toronto for one dollar each. Pharmaceutical Corporation Eli Lilly and Company of Indianapolis offered to help the University develop the medication, and the school eventually agreed to license the technology. Records from the 1960s show vials of insulin available for $0.84 US, and then came the real break-through. In 1982, Eli Lilly introduced a new insulin which was less likely to cause allergies and that could be grown in vats. Novo Nordisk started making its own bio-engineered insulin in 1991, and it looked like the drug was about to get really affordable, thanks to the competitive marketplace. Instead, prices went up. A congressional report written in 2018 found the list price of competing insulin formulations "appeared to rise in tandem," doubling from 2012 to 2018. "According to the report, that was most likely due to limited market competition, and to the fact that each part of the insulin delivery chain is controlled by a small number of entities. The marketplace never became competitive. In theory, the US patent system, which gives manufacturers sole rights to a drug formulation for 20 years, should eventually enable other drug producers to bring cheaper versions of the same medication the market. But as Congressman Read and others note, companies skirt this by ‘ever greening’ their drugs – tweaking drug formulas slightly, often making incremental improvements, to renew the patent and prevent generics from ever entering the market."

There’s enough data to show that insulin doesn’t need to be as expensive as it is in the US. For one thing, just across the border in Canada, a vial of insulin costs $30. It’s an old drug, OLLI members. It’s not hard to produce. It should not be more expensive than aspirin. But it is – why?

RJG
REIKI CLUB
AT OLLI

Have you ever wondered about Reiki and how it works?

Reiki energy is transferred through the hands of the practitioner to remove blocks and increase the flow of energy through the body. Reiki is non-invasive and non-manipulative.

Reiki is like breathing. Once activated, it is always with you.

Reiki is safe to use. It facilitates a higher and more perfect state of being. It can never cause harm and is always helpful.

Reiki is a technique for activating, restoring and balancing the energy centers of our bodies. It is used to promote healing of physical problems, lessen depression and anxiety, and restore peace of mind.

Want to learn more and experience the healing power of Reiki? Join us for a complimentary Reiki session during Reiki Club, which meets on the first Monday of every month from 1 – 2:30 PM. All are welcome, and we hope to see you there!

JUST FOR LAUGHS

Two boys were arguing when the teacher entered the classroom. The teacher said, "What are you two arguing about?"

One boy answered, "We found a $10 bill and decided whoever tells the biggest lie gets to keep it."

"You two should be ashamed of yourselves," said the teacher. "When I was your age, I didn’t even know what a lie was."

The boys looked at each other and handed the $10 to the teacher.

TECHNOLOGY CLINIC
with UNDERGRAD STUDENTS!
9/13, 9/27, 10/11, 10/25, & 11/8
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm, FREE!

Hamish Lutris: Connecticut and the Reaction to the Civil War

This presentation will focus on the reaction of Connecticut residents, government, and the media to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. The overwhelming outpouring of Union patriotism was both stimulating and dangerous, causing a massive wave of enlistments (for both sides!), as well as riots and a sudden and irreversible stepping up of the economic life in Connecticut. This presentation will discuss the reaction all over Connecticut, but will concentrate on the events, personages, and reactions of people local to the Fairfield County area. Lutris is an Associate Professor of History and Political Science. He has worked in some of America’s premier natural and historical sites where he has lead hiking and historical programs. He has also lectured extensively in the United States, Europe, and Canada, presenting programs on wide-ranging historical topics, including Native American history, the Civil War, scientific history, social and cultural history, World War I, World War II, and the American West.

Coming Up Next: November 8th, 2019
Adulthood and Aging with Dr. Laura Donorfio & her students
Augustus Saint Gaudens, who is sometimes referred to as “the American Rodin,” was born in Dublin in 1848 (just eight years after Rodin.) While his mother was Irish, and his father, a shoemaker, was French. To escape the Great Famine, the family immigrated to the United States. They settled in Lower Manhattan and Augustus (Gus) grew up as a New Yorker. At age 13, Gus began his apprenticeship as a cameo cutter in New York. He also attended classes at the National Academy of Design and the Cooper Union.

At age 18, he embarked on his first transatlantic trip. He gained admission at the prestigious Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. His three-year sojourn in Paris was followed by two years in Rome. Back to New York in 1872, he returned to Rome with his brother in 1873 and came back in 1875. He married Augusta Homer on June 4 1877; they left for Paris two days later. They stayed in Paris for three years, during which Saint Gaudens created his first major piece: a statue of Admiral Farragut. In his book “The Greater Journey – Americans in Paris,” David McCullough explains that: “Paris was essential to the work....not only because the ‘art current’ ran stronger there, but because sculpture as an art form was taken more seriously than at home, and experienced craftsmen – plaster molders, foundry men, and the like – were plentiful.”

His rendition of Farragut received much praise and launched his career in America, but after years of hard work in New York City, the pollution and noise were getting to be too much for Gus. He decided to move his family to a house he purchased in Cornish, New Hampshire, where he also attracted several other artists.

However, France beckoned again and he returned once more to the French capital in October 1887. Augustus’ son, Homer, wrote that the sculptor felt that “in Paris alone he [Saint Gaudens] could measure himself with his contemporaries, [and] place his work before the world’s most critical audience....” In the City of Light, he created his last major sculpture, that of General Sherman. He returned precipitously to the States to have surgery after he was diagnosed with cancer. He died at age 59 at his residence in Cornish.

It is quite a coincidence that Saint Gaudens’ first and last major works were produced in Paris and both ended up in New York (the Farragut on Madison Square and the Sherman on Grand Army Plaza.)

The Saint Gaudens’ residence in Cornish is now a National Park which my wife and I visited in early October. I certainly encourage all who read this article to make the trip (even though it is 166 miles from the Waterbury campus of UCONN.) As you enter the park, you are will face a larger than life bronze statue of Lincoln who seems to have just gotten up from the eagle-emblazoned chair behind him. It is a very different rendition of the President from Daniel Chester French’s Washington Lincoln Memorial.

The latter is carved in marble and the Great Emancipator is seated, looking down as if he were God, while the former shows a reflective President, with his head bowed as he prepares to deliver a public address. When they wanted to erect a statue of Abraham Lincoln on Parliament Square in London, the British ordered a replica of Saint Gaudens’ masterpiece. There are replicas of several other major works of Saint Gaudens. Also on display are multiple portrait reliefs. The artist was also commissioned by the U.S. Mint to design the famous double eagle gold coin which bears his name. In addition to a sampling of his works, visitors to the National Park get to see the inside of his house and his studio and from both buildings they can enjoy splendid views of Vermont’s most famous volcano, Mount Ascutney, across the Connecticut River.

Augustus Saint Gaudens, the Cosmopolitan Sculptor and the National Park that Memorializes Him

by Dr. Roger Levy

Upcoming OLLI Travel

FALL 2020

10/22/2019: Murder on the Bellevue Express, Newport/RI – member cost $116

SPRING 2020

4/22/2020: Harlem, NYC – member cost $109
5/5-7/2020: Atlantic City/Cape May, NJ – member cost $359 pp double/triple, $455 pp single
6/5/2020: NYC Philharmonic (Copland & Nico Muhly conducted by Jaap VanZweden- member cost $122 pp

Flyers available at the OLLI Information Table. All prices are member prices. Non-members are charged a slight surcharge that is listed on all flyers. Call Friendship Tours for information and reservations (1-800-243-1630). Mention OLLI Travel. (Please do not call the OLLI Office.)

Please Note – All OLLI Trips will depart from and return to the Chase Parkway DOT Commuter Lot, Waterbury. Maps of this Departure Area are available on the OLLI Information Table.
OLLI Book Club
The Book Club meets the third Monday of every month in Room 102 @ 1:00pm. Come by!

Nov. 18: Bel Canto by Ann Patchett

Contact: nvia@sbcglobal.net

OLLI Genealogy Club
The Genealogy Club meets the third Thursday of the month. Last meeting this semester will take place on November 21st, 10:00 - 11:30 am in Room 317 (computer lab on third floor of main building)

Contact: dianeciba@gmail.com

OLLI Film Club
The Film Club meets meets on three Wednesdays in the Fall and Spring semesters. The third and final film club meeting will be on Wed, November 6th at 12:00 - 3:00pm for a showing of 9 to 5 (1980). Room 402 in the Rectory building! Free popcorn!

OLLI Photography Club
The Photography Club meets the last Friday of each month at 3:30pm in Room 102.

Contact: (t.padgett@hotmail.com).

OLLI Reiki Club
Meetings are the first Monday of each month at 1:00pm in Room 102.

Contact: barbara.schafer@comcast.net

OLLI LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
Council Members
OLLI officers are part of the Leadership Council, which is the principal representative body of the OLLI membership.

President: Ira Mickenberg
Vice President: Mila Limson
Secretary: Mary Peitler
Asst. Secretary: Joyce Conlan

PARKING INFORMATION
OLLI members with University-issued parking decals may park in the following locations on the following days:

Fridays, any time: UConn's attached ramp garage (entrance on North Elm St.) or Scovill Street Garage (33 Scovill Street)
Monday - Thursday, morning - 5:00pm: Scovill Street Garage
Monday - Thursday, 5:00pm or later: UConn's attached ramp garage or Scovill Street Garage

If you would like to utilize OLLI at UConn's parking options, you must submit an application for a parking permit at: park.uconn.edu/olli-parking-permit-application/

If you do not want to purchase a permit, find other local parking areas here: http://www.waterburyparking.com/pricing/

Course Proposal Deadlines
Spring 2020 session (2/21 - 5/1): November 15th, 2019
Submit online: https://olli.uconn.edu/course-proposal-form/
I know it seems very early to be telling you about the Metropolitan Opera’s production of Porgy and Bess next January, but we won’t be back to the OLLI Newsletter until late February 2020. Wow, 2020, it seems weird to see that year in print! Let’s make it a wonderful one in terms of personal growth, fulfillment, happiness, giving, and, of course, enjoyment of the arts! And I think there could be no better way to get through a cold, wintry, and dark January than by enjoying a classic opera, whether live “in person” or live “streaming.”

The Metropolitan Opera will again be performing the beloved American opera Porgy and Bess, from in January 2020. Whether you choose to see it in person, or view through live streaming at a movie theater in Connecticut, you are sure to enjoy a very special operatic treat. The story is especially relevant today, 84 years after it was first performed in 1935 at the Colonial Theater in Boston, due to its themes of racism, misogyny, class oppression, drug addiction and poverty. George and Ira Gershwin collaborated with Dorothy and DuBose Heyward on the script and score. It tells the story of Porgy, a crippled black man living on Catfish Row in Charleston, South Carolina in the 1930’s and his love for Bess, who is torn between her feelings for him, and the realities of her life with her cruel lover Crown, and her drug dealer Sportin’ Life. Many of us remember Sammy Davis Jr. in the Broadway production as Sportin’ Life. This opera has all of the main human themes and pathos of any of the great European works.

I asked Richard Albro, OLLI Leadership Council member, opera buff and aficionado, to share his insights about this work. He said, “I am looking forward to seeing the new production that opened at the Met this year. As a loyal operagoer, I recognize Porgy and Bess as a first and a little different from the Met’s normal presentations. The singers are always my starting point when looking toward an up and coming production. So! Eric Owens has earned the right to be cast as the lead, with his fine bass-baritone voice. Angel Blue is new to me, but exciting. At the top of the opera world for years, Denyce Graves’ presence has to add great strength to the production. Ryan Speedo Green has a huge voice and a biography to go along with it. The cast is large, and they have hired a special chorus which looks to be up to Met standards. It is a very American story...”

This opera promises to be very popular, so plan accordingly to get your tickets, even in local theaters. If you want to go to New York, it might be a good idea to make it a special winter treat with a hotel stay the night of the event. I am hoping to attend the live performance in New York, but am grateful for the local live streaming. Each has its benefits - the excitement of live theater, or the comfort and greatly reduced expense of a local house! Either way, you will be transported to Catfish Row, and the pathos, sorrow, hope and triumph of Porgy and Bess!

When I started genealogical research on my family, I was very surprised to learn that I had ancestors from Charleston. I grew up thinking that I was a 100% descendant of Irish famine immigrants to New York City. I have since learned about a family from Scotland, and others from France and the Netherlands, who had settled in Charleston circa 1700. Maybe that’s why I have always felt a connection with Porgy and Bess. Wherever your roots are, I know you will enjoy this great American work, a tribute to a significant chapter in our historical saga.
Meet Your Instructors: Barbara Schafer

When Barbara Schafer decided on a career in nursing, following in her mother’s footsteps, it was a decision of economics – nursing school was affordable, and nursing careers provided a stable income. It wasn’t until a friend encouraged her to try Reiki that she realized the power in a holistic approach to healing. Trained as an APRN and psychiatric nurse, Barbara initially dealt with patients using traditional therapeutic modalities. One she trained in Reiki and acquired Levels I and II proficiency, she saw that “things started happening,” and her clients healed faster. She started a private practice called Personal Growth Unlimited where she pioneered the integration of Reiki, Therapeutic Touch, and spirituality as well as traditional psychotherapy techniques, and her clients experienced deep healing more rapidly than with traditional psychotherapy. Barbara went on to become a Reiki Master teacher in 1996, and developed her own intensive thirty-hour Reiki Master training program, graduating twenty-nine Reiki masters.

In addition to integrative healing, Barbara has been active in the Unity Church since 1988. The Unity Church focuses on positive thinking and a belief that everyone has the Divine within them, and offers a Christian perspective. Barbara graduated from the Unity School of Christianity, and became a Licensed Unity Teacher. She has taught at the Unity of Bridgeport Church, the Unity of Greater Hartford Church and the currently at Unity in the Foothills Church in Torrington, CT where she has led book study groups, taught Unity Basics, New Member Orientation, and Faith in Action classes.

She has been actively teaching at OLLI for 11 years. Barbara says, “I love learning and teaching here. It is gratifying to hear that the practical application of Reiki has been used by my students to reduce pain and promote healing. It brings me joy and helps others tremendously.” Barbara hopes to offer Reiki II in the spring, as a follow up to the Reiki I she is currently teaching. She also created a Reiki Club this year, which meets on the first Monday of the month from 1 to 2:30 PM. (See accompanying information on page ). Barbara lives in Naugatuck. She is blessed to have a daughter and son and three beautiful grandchildren: “OLLI is such a wonderful place because we get to gab, make new friends and learn at the same time.”

- Wendy Mauro

"OLLI ALL-STAR" BOARD Reminder

The OLLI Team will soon be introducing an “OLLI All-Star” Board in Room 102. This board will serve as a monthly appreciation and recognition of our OLLI members who make an impact here at OLLI and/or the community at large. Starting October 18th, 2019 you may nominate OLLI members who you believe should be showcased on the board.

Just submit a name and a short description as to why you believe the individual should be recognized. You can turn in your nomination to the main OLLI office (Room 103) or place it in any of the suggestion boxes on the Info table or table outside the main OLLI office. Thank you for being awesome!