For mature learners who desire the full classroom experience, Boise State University offers a much-reduced rate for its academic courses. Idaho residents who are at least 60 years old pay just $5 per credit hour, a $20 registration fee per semester and any special fees, such as for private music lessons, workshops or lab costs. Interested seniors must apply for admission (the one-time fee for non-degree seeking students is $50) to Boise State and then request the Idaho Senior Citizen’s Fee Reduction Form from the Payment and Disbursement Center, Administration Building, Room 211. For more information, visit http://admissions.boisestate.edu or call (208) 426-1156 or 1-800-824-7017.

Back to School for Seniors
By Sherry Squires
Boise State University Communications and Marketing

Back to school isn’t just for kids. Thanks to programs like the Osher Institute at Boise State University, hundreds of adult learners also will be tackling new subjects this fall.

That’s just what former Boise mayor Carolyn Terteling was hoping for when she signed up for the four-part “Black and White in America” series.

“I’m hooked,” she said. “I really like to do things that continue to keep my mind alert and teach me things I didn’t know. Lifelong learning is one of the best things we can do for ourselves, and Osher is providing that.”

The Osher Institute is 600 members strong and growing. A wide range of offerings fit the interests of a diverse membership, said director Ellie McKinnon.

“The Osher Institute is a learning community composed of an eclectic mix of intellectually curious adults,” she said, “Most are over 50, many are retired, most are well-read, and none want to stop learning — ever.”

The Osher Institute offered its first full summer session last year with 13 classes, five lectures, a five-part series on Lewis and Clark, and even a field trip to Yellowstone. The fall season begins in September.

“We have reached into the far sectors of outer space and focused on the humble mushroom; confronted the heath care system and considered the sacred texts of Hindu and Buddhist traditions; delved into the complexities of modern Islam and reflected on the state of the American Constitution,” McKinnon said.

In addition to great diversity in subject matter, Osher activities also are offered at various times of the day and evenings in different locations around Boise, and in partnership with community organizations like the Discovery Center of Idaho and the Idaho Botanical
Gardens. That allows Boise State faculty members to share their expertise and interact with Osher members in less formal settings than traditional classrooms.

“It has the absolute right formula,” Terteling said. “It can be an interchange if you wish to participate, but otherwise it’s just a true learning experience and absolutely without pressure.”

Membership in the Institute is open to all adult learners for a fee of $35 for a single season or $55 for the year. The events are made possible due to the generous support of the Bernard Osher Foundation. For more details, visit the website at www.boisestate.edu/osher or call (208) 426-2027.