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From the Dean's Desk
by Dr. Scott Silverman, Dean



Emeritus students,

We are actively building the Fall schedule as the Emeritus Voice goes to print.

Please know that I am scheduling a mix of in-person classes and Synchronous online classes for Fall and for the foreseeable future. I may not always assign your preferred course or instructor for the modality you want. However, please know that all of the faculty, staff and I are doing the best we can to make a schedule that works.

You may recall that we have been sending meal deliveries to Emeritus students who could not go out to go grocery shopping for much of the pandemic. That program will be ending in the near future, and we will direct students to Meals on Wheels and other food pantries, if needed.

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Carol V. Davis — Published Poet and Celebrated Professor — Has Won a Hat Trick of Fulbright Awards!

By Gayle Byock

Carol V. Davis, a member of the SMC English Department faculty and an instructor in Emeritus, is a three-time awardee of the prestigious and highly competitive Fulbright Scholar's Awards. The purpose of these awards is to strengthen cultural relationships by fostering an exchange of scholars, artists, and specialists between the United States and other countries. Getting an award is rare, but three? Carol said that most awardees are from Ivy League colleges, so awarding a community college faculty is even rarer.

Carol's first year as a Fulbright Scholar (1996-1997) was in Creative Writing although she ended up teaching Modern Jewish literature. She made a connection with a St. Petersburg Jewish University (SPJU) faculty member, when she attended a lecture, and SPJU offered to host her as a Fulbright Scholar. Carol's students were from 18 to 40 years old. The range was wide because, as Carol said, under Soviet law, there were no classes in Jewish studies, so one older student returned to



study what was not available during her college years. Carol returned many times to teach in St. Pete, as the city is called.

She returned to SPJU for her second Fulbright (2005) where she taught Contemporary American Literature. It was during this time that she completed her book, *Into the Arms of Pushkin: Poems of St Petersburg*, which recounts her ten years of travel between the US and Russia. Carol traveled around Russia—alone—to Moscow to lecture and give poetry readings. She worked with the Holocaust Centre there and went to Novgorod several times.

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Carol V. Davis — Published Poet and Celebrated Professor — Has Won a Hat Trick of Fulbright Awards!

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In January 2017 and 2018, Carol was invited to Ulan-Ude, Buryatia Republic, Siberia, the extreme eastern area of Russia with a significant Asian minority population. Here as in St. Pete, Carol was welcomed as an American, because she offered courses that were not otherwise available. There was no problem getting food, books, and supplies.

The third award as a Fulbright Specialist in humanities curriculum development was delayed due to COVID-19 and the current conflict in Ukraine. This Fulbright Specialist Grant will be in the Sakha Republic of Siberia and will focus on developing and enriching the humanities with her Russian colleagues. Carol notes that the liberal arts in Russia are facing the same decline as in the United States. She hopes to bring new ideas to Russian faculty in order to strengthen the place of humanities in their institutions.

Carol had an international upbringing. She was very young when her family began living abroad. Her father, an industrial engineer, worked for the United States-sponsored Marshall Plan, formally known as the European Recovery Program, after World War II, which used US resources to help rebuild a war-torn, economically challenged Europe. Her father's job took them all over Europe and England. No wonder that she chose Slavic Languages and Literature, specifically Russian, for her graduate degree from the University of Washington.

Carol was inspired to apply for her first Fulbright Award not only for

an opportunity to teach, write and research in Russia, but also for her three children to experience living in a different culture with a different spoken language, as she had done. There was also the personal transformation it offered: "You sort of recognize things about yourself, living in another culture," Carol said.

She connected most profoundly to Russia: "I keep saying I'm going to stop writing about Russia, and I keep writing about Russia." Russia has a place in Carol's heritage. She is the granddaughter of Russian Jewish immigrants. Her paternal grandfather, who fought in the Russo-Japanese war, immigrated to the US in 1912. He was from the Pale of Settlement, which is now Ukraine. Her grandmother's home city was St. Petersburg. This was unusual as there was a Jewish quota in that city. Carol's heritage, her poetry, her books, and her teaching all combined to bind her to Russia.

Carol's published poetry books include *It's Time to Talk About* (Symposium, 1996), *Into the Arms of Pushkin: Poems of St. Petersburg*, which won the T. S. Eliot Prize for Poetry in 2007, *Between Storms* (Truman State Univ. Press (TSUP), 2012) and *Because I Cannot Leave This Body* (TSUP, 2016). She just got word that her latest book of poetry, *Below Zero*, will be published in 2023 by Stephen F. Austin University Press.

A poem from her last book is provided at the end of this article. Her books can be found on Amazon.

Her poetry has been read on National Public Radio, Radio Russia and at the US Library of Congress. In addition to the Fulbright awards, Carol has held two National Park Service Writer-in-Residence Fellowships (one in Nebraska and one on the Navajo Reservation), and the Barbara Deming Feminist Artist Grant (Berlin).

Carol has a rich history of being part of other global communities and has relished her roles as teacher and mentor. She never stops working on ways to engage others in the importance of the humanities. She is a risktaker and a very creative person, and those are two reasons she has been successful with Fulbright and as a volunteer reader of Fulbright applications. She maintains a connection to her family's history. Even her poem, "Animal Time," includes a reference to an event in her parent's lives and a reference to the lives of immigrants:

Animal Time

I do better in animal time,
a creeping dawn, slow ticking toward dusk.
In the middle of the day on the Nebraska prairie,
I'm unnerved by subdued sounds, as if listening
through water, even the high-pitched drone of the
cicadas faint; the blackbirds half-heartedly singing.
As newlyweds, my parents drove cross country to
Death Valley, last leg of their escape from New York,
the thick soups of their immigrant mothers, generations
of superstitions that squeezed them from all sides.
They camped under stars that meant no harm.
It was the silence that alerted them to danger.
They climbed back into their tiny new car, locked
its doors and blinked their eyes until daylight.

Motion is Lotion: Profile of an Emeritus Couple

By Darlene Gaston

Motion is Lotion. This is one of the life mottoes by which Freddie Braxton and Michael Washington, married SMC Emeritus students, live and which has served them well. They participate not only in senior track meets for 50+ athletes, but also in USA Master Track and Field events for age 30+ athletes. In their 70s no less! Freddie runs short distances of 100-to-800 meters, but her specialty is 5K distance runs, while Michael runs the hurdles and trains with high school students. They have travelled to meets across the country, and they even tried their hand in international competition when they competed in Torino, Italy. Whether they finish first, which is often the case, or last, they are having fun and are staying fit.

Frequently, Freddie hears “You’re running?” from fellow teen competitors, whom she encounters at the All-Comers meets.

“Yes.”

“I thought you were the coach.”

Already since December 2021, Michael has participated in six or seven track meets; Freddie, in three or four. Michael started at the Master’s Level at age 49 and, after two or three years, went on hiatus until the age of 58. Freddie started in 2007 at the age of 57.

She assessed, “Why should I stay at home waiting for him to return from track meets?”

Freddie and Michael also share a love of golf. At one point, Michael aspired to be a competitive skier, but now just skis for fun.

How did such an active couple meet? Not at a wedding or on an online dating site or some of the other usual spots. No ordinary place for these two. They met at a funeral. It wasn’t love at first sight, at least not for Freddie. Michael’s was a different story. He said, “She had my name written all over her.”

Freddie just wasn’t convinced and discouraged conversation. She only extended her hand to accept Michael’s business card but never bothered to make eye contact when he said goodbye and left the event.

Two weeks later Freddie called to apologize, because, in the interim, family and friends chided her over her insensitivity to Michael. That conversation led to many more.

Freddie and Michael realized that they had many things in common: both were committed to fitness and healthy eating. (However, healthy eating doesn’t extend to Freddie’s love of donuts. When it comes to donuts, she is somewhat of an aficionado. What is Freddie’s definition of a perfect donut? “A plain cake donut. Not gummy on the inside nor greasy on the outside. There should be a certain crispiness on the outside.” She labels donuts at Randy’s as “Pretty dang good.”) Both were the parents of adult sons — Freddie had two and Michael, three. One of Freddie’s sons had attended Hampton University, and Michael’s youngest son would soon be entering there.

After two months of phone conversations, as they contemplated their future together, Freddie’s Aunt Dorothy weighed in with her advice: “You two are too old to date. You should just get married.”



After meeting in July 2006, they eloped the following October. Freddie, at 56, left her beloved Seattle and made LA her new home with Michael, who was 58.

Lifelong learners, Freddie and Michael began attending classes at Emeritus about seven years ago. Before this, Freddie attended University of Washington, San Francisco State, University of Phoenix and Texas Southern University. Michael received his undergraduate and pharmacy degrees at USC, where his father, brother and sister-in-law had attended. At Emeritus, they have taken acting classes (both have acted and modeled in print and commercials), voice, and creative writing classes. Michael is working on his memoirs.

A self-described computer nerd, Freddie spent the majority of her career in IT (Information Technology), but she also trained and worked as a flight attendant at United Airlines. Michael was a lifelong pharmacist.

Why the passion for fitness? Michael sums it up this way, “Family is so important.” He watched his father, who died early because of an unhealthy lifestyle, miss out on so much—watching the grandkids grow up, attending weddings, family vacations and graduations. Michael doesn’t want to “check out” any earlier than necessary.

Motion is lotion.

Looking out for Depression in Seniors

By Sharon Valente, Ph.D.

Feeling blue or sad once in a while is normal, but when these feelings last for weeks or months, you may have depression. In speaking, people often use the word “depression” to refer to sad feelings. In mental health, depression or major depression is a treatable psychiatric mood disorder. Recognizing major depression in seniors is the first step to alleviating misery. Major depression is characterized by sad mood, diminished interest in nearly all activities, significant and unintentional weight loss or gain, and a slowing of thought and physical movement. These will occur most of the day every day. Anyone with such symptoms should pursue mental health or primary care treatment. Major depression can be precipitated by medical illness, medications, genetics, insomnia, social isolation or substance abuse. They sap energy and distress the mind, leaving a person without pleasure, peace or joy. Some theorists posit that depression emerges from negative thoughts (e.g., the future is bleak and hopeless; the depressed person feels inadequate and a failure). Among seniors, guilt, poor self-esteem, somatic complaints, pessimism and constipation may also create depression. Suicidal thoughts can be a serious consequence of depression and need evaluation. In 2020, men died by suicide 3.88 times more than women. Middle-aged or senior white men had the highest suicide rates (afsp.org).

Unfortunately clinicians overlook, misdiagnose or undertreat depression in seniors. Let’s look at what happened to my eighty-year-old mom, Maxine, a typically active, optimistic woman who was not depressed. After a stroke, she had insomnia, then a prolonged depressed mood, and no pleasure in anything. At home she just sat and stared. I asked her physician to evaluate her mood and suggest medications. As usual, Mom was a charmer. She batted her eyes at Dr. L, her dapper physician who wore a pin-striped suit and bow tie. He smiled at me, patted my leg, and said, “Oh no, honey, she isn’t depressed; she’s just OLD.” I bit my tongue but understood he lacked geriatric mental health training and missed the diagnosis. As a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, I gave him Mom’s screening test (a Zung Self-Rating Depression Scale, free from sciencedirect.com) highlighting her symptoms. I said, “Dr. L, I’d suggest treatment and replacing medications that have depressive side effects.” Research indicates over 200 drugs can have depressive side effects, including those for dementia, asthma, blood pressure, plus

heart medications, antacids, and painkillers. Many seniors take one or two of these drugs. As I hoped, Dr. L replaced Mom’s depression-prone antihypertensive and asthma meds with equivalent drugs and prescribed antidepressants for six months to a year for major depression. We monitored her response.

A psychiatrist, psychiatric nurse practitioner or psychologist can evaluate and treat major depression in the virtual or real world. Evaluation is essential to rule out similar diagnoses (e.g., dementia, bipolar, or substance abuse). Effective treatments that need to be individualized include antidepressants and psychotherapy with exercise, social interaction, and nutrition. A useful resource, David Burns book, *Feeling Good*, available online, describes how to evaluate and reduce depression.

If you want to know how Mom fared (although she proclaimed therapy foolish), antidepressants and psychotherapy along with better exercise and yoga treated her effectively. She complained bitterly that “this therapy and yoga meditation are just silly, but I feel better; my calm, pep, and sense of humor have returned.” If you or a friend are depressed, I hope you seek mental-health treatment from a competent licensed mental-health professional to reduce your misery, improve your quality of life and find joy again.

For more information on depression, consult apa.org/depression-guideline/treatments



Laura Goodfriend, *Spiritual Place*, Watercolor, 11" x 15", 2021. Artwork from the Emeritus Student Art Exhibition 2022.

Kudos: Emeritus Professor Robert Stern Receives Prestigious Award

by Linda J. Hernandez

April 7, 2022 is a Red Letter Day for Emeritus Current Events Professor Robert Stern. At the 50th Anniversary of Common Cause, he received its “Democracy Hero Award.” Common Cause is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. In their letter, informing him of the award, they wrote: “We intend to honor you as a preeminent leader, scholar, and expert on California Common Cause’s priority issues for the last many decades, and as the godfather of the Political Reform Act and the FPPC (Fair Political Practices Commission). We could not do the work we do without you lighting the way years before.”

Professor Stern, or Common Cause Bob, as he prefers to be called, was a principle co-author of the Political Reform Act of 1974 (Proposition 9), passed by 70 percent of California voters and called by the 2015 book *Game Changers*, one of the twelve most important election results in California history. He was the first general counsel of the California Fair Political Practices Commission, the agency in charge of administering California’s campaign disclosure, ethics and lobbying laws. He also was Elections Counsel for the California Secretary of State’s office, when Jerry Brown was the Secretary of State. In addition, he was a principal drafter of the City of Los Angeles Ethics and Public Campaign Financing Law, passed by Los Angeles voters in 1990. He was President of the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws, an organization consisting of federal, state, and local agencies that regulate election, campaign finance, ethics and lobbying laws. It’s easy to see why he is so deserving of the Common Cause honor.

A graduate of Pomona College and Stanford Law School, he has taught “Current Events” at SMC Emeritus Summer and Winter sessions since 2017. Bob credits his beloved, late wife of nearly fifty years, Joan, for bringing him to Emeritus. Due to his many, long-standing contacts in and out of government in each class, Stern is able to provide a speaker of note to address the class on current issues and answer questions from students. He is particularly pleased that nearly half the speakers for his class are women. Some of the luminaries who have visited the class are former Congressional Correspondent for CBS News Linda Douglass, Superior Court Judge Helen Bendix, former



Moscow Correspondent for CBS News Marvin Kalb, and former Congressman Henry Waxman.

No stranger to awards, in 2006 Stern was given the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles Education Fund Voter Participation Leadership Award. In 2010, he was also honored by Pomona College as a Distinguished Alumnus of the Year.

Among his many accolades, the magazine *Washington Monthly* described Bob as a “campaign finance guru” and *The Sacramento Bee* called him “the godfather of modern political reform in California.”

In the words of fellow appreciative student Gordon Blitz, “Bob is a political junkie and he tracks the entire spectrum of politics from the extreme right to the extreme left. He tells his classes that it’s important to watch both MSNBC and also Fox News to be well-informed and to understand what ‘the other side’ is thinking.”

We are indeed fortunate to have Professor Robert Stern on our Emeritus Staff.

Kudos: Beth Rubin: Successful Crossword Constructor!

By Gayle Byock

“Words are like libraries. They belong to all of us.”

– Beth Rubin

After just over a year into constructing crosswords, a new passion for SMC Emeritus student Beth Rubin, she had a puzzle published by *The New York Times* on Monday, January 3, 2022. Congratulations, Beth! Beth’s other puzzles have appeared in *The Los Angeles Times*, *Universal Crossword*, *Crosswords Club*, and *Spyscape*.

Beth Rubin, a student in Monona Wali’s autobiography class, has loved puzzles since childhood. She is always finding ways to learn new things; most recently she began constructing crosswords. During her career as a librarian, she sleuthed the Los Angeles Public Library for answers to patrons’ questions, and she is her family’s genealogist. Beth noted, “Solving and constructing puzzles is a bit like working at the reference desk: you’re challenged to find answers to a variety of questions.”

Beth’s parents encouraged her creativity. Her mom was an avid crossword puzzle solver and would be overjoyed, if she were living, to know about *The New York Times* publication. Beth says she feels her mom helps her as she creates crosswords. Beth’s wife, Imani Tolliver, also a lover of words, is an award-winning poet and author of *Runaway: A Memoir in Verse*.

Just as Beth enjoys the library community, she is also grateful to have found the *Crossword Puzzle Collaboration Directory* on Facebook, a resource “to rectify that inequity for women, people of color, and folks



from other groups underrepresented in crossword puzzle” [construction]. These include LGBTQIA+ and disabled people. The directory offers a matching form to connect members of these groups with mentors.

Beth’s first puzzle publication was in October 2020. Currently she has nine puzzles published of twelve accepted—some were written solo and others completed with collaborators. Beth said, “My ideas for puzzles might come from a book that I am reading, a conversation, or a phrase I hear that has an element of wordplay that I want to pursue.” Constructing a puzzle requires deciding whether the puzzle has a theme or is themeless. A themed puzzle, as Beth says, “requires brainstorming a set of theme entries, designing a grid (including size), filling the rest of the grid, and writing clues.

Statistics of the percentage of puzzles accepted from freelance constructors are not published, but a veteran constructor states that only 4 to 7 percent of freelance submissions are accepted. Once a puzzle is accepted, it belongs to the publisher.

Ladies Photo Club

by Linda Rosman

It was a perfect day at the Getty for our Ladies Photo Club field trip. As we wandered through the buildings and gardens, with a clear view of downtown LA in the distance, I thought about how wonderful it was to see each other in person. It’s been such an isolating time during the pandemic, so this trip was so good for our human connection.

The six of us met in the photography class at SMC Emeritus and had formed a great connection. Regina was inspired by her father’s photo club and had always wanted to be part of a photography club. When the pandemic started, and we were all feeling so isolated, she suggested that we start meeting on Zoom, and thus began our ladies photo club.

We are all retired, coming from different backgrounds, and yet photography is our common denominator. Regina is a

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Beth’s interest in crosswords came as a surprise to her: “I had no idea how taken I would be, but it’s become a passion - something that I love doing every day. I so enjoy the back and forth of sharing ideas and creating a puzzle with others; especially wonderful to connect with others during the pandemic.”

For subscribers of the *New York Times*, here’s a link to Beth’s crossword.

[nytimes.com/crosswords/game/daily/2022/01/03](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/daily/2022/01/03)

And here is a link for a fun article about the puzzle—WARNING—it contains the solved puzzle.

crosswordfiend.com/2022/01/02/monday-january-3-2022/

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psychiatrist; Karen is a physician; Dorli is a clinical psychologist; Marilyn is a banker; Wendy is an accountant; and I come from film postproduction.

Over the two years we've been meeting, I've seen such growth in each woman in our group:

Dorli looks for beauty in the details of urban environments not usually considered worth our attention. "The process of looking for beauty in the ordinary requires stillness and reflectiveness. I find unexpected beauty by looking from different perspectives and without preconceptions."

Regina takes photos to see and feel more engaged in life. She's lately had a project to shoot mostly with a fixed, 50mm lens, honoring her father's legacy.

Wendy loves the outdoors and hiking in the mountains. She has always loved art: "Photography has allowed me to tap into my creative side. What attracts me to a subject is

how unusual it is. I'm attracted to shapes, color and patterns in nature and the environment."

Karen has been involved in photography since her college days, when she was drawn to photos of social activists like Dorothea Lange. She has always had photography in her life, but after she retired from medicine, she turned to photography to recover from the stress of being a physician: "I find it both exciting and relaxing to use my creative vision to expand my world."

Marilyn took the photo class to learn more about her new DSLR camera. Since retirement, she travels, capturing what she sees to convey the excitement of place. She is drawn to color and texture and looks for dimension in her photos: "I'm exploring black and white to explore changing the mood of a photo. I started in college with a manual film camera, shooting black and white, but now I've transitioned to shooting digital. I'm drawn to the light and shadows in my environment and I look for the gesture in the moment."

Editing down our images is always a challenge and we've helped each other choose the images to submit to the SMC Emeritus Photo Show, currently up on the Emeritus Website (smc.edu/emergitusgallery). Every month we've been meeting on Zoom to look at each other's photos and discuss them. We critique the work and offer suggestions to each other. And we inspire each other to experiment and see the world from a different perspective. After our field trip to the Getty, we met to look at our images and offer each other suggestions. It was fun to see what diverse photos we all shot from the same location.

Emeritus has given us so much more than a photography class. We've built a strong, supportive, creative group. Even during the pandemic, Emeritus has kept us all connected, even on Zoom. I look forward to many years of our Ladies Photo Club. I imagine that we are not the only ones who have created smaller communities within the larger gift that is SMC Emeritus.

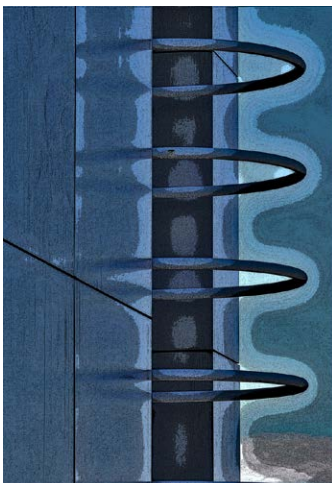
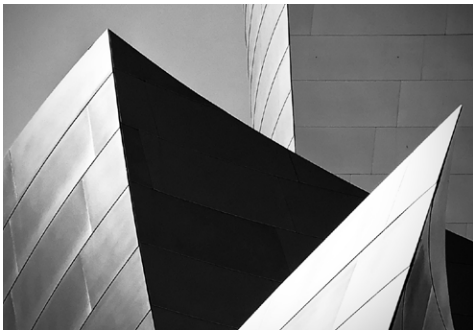


Photo by: Marilyn Kabakov, Dorli Burge, Regina Pally, Wendy Miller, Linda Rosman, Karen Sandler (Left to right, top to bottom)

Are You Ready to Move On?

By Darlene Gaston

Now that the mask mandates have been lifted and most Californians are boosted, how much have you been venturing out?

In the fall, I started to venture out to places that checked vaccination cards prior to entry, and which of course complied with mask mandates, for example, the Pantages, Disney Concert Hall and the Dolby. I visited restaurants with outside eating areas. I also attended USC football games: vaccination cards were checked, fans entered with masks and then promptly removed them; there was no enforcement after that, but there were public service announcements. I also attended in-person church.

Although I am boosted and always masked, I still yet have not been on a plane or been to the movie theater, compared to pre-COVID when I went several times a month. I am not participating in all of my activities. I have greatly enjoyed online classes at SMC Emeritus and online meetings for other organizations. Zoom classes have offered me more flexibility and options.

I decided to ask the Emeritus community: how much of your pre-COVID life have you resumed?

Darryl said: "Restaurants and travel are definitely a go. Just started back to in-person church and it was great being present with others.

Elaine said: "I have actually been going to restaurants outdoors during Covid but now I'm going to restaurants indoors. Friday night I was happy to go to a service inside a temple where they checked our vaccination cards. Life as we knew it before Covid seems to be resuming."

Sharon is almost 100% back to pre-COVID activities, "Actually, I've pretty much gotten back to all activities except my Friday Happy Hour."

Cheryl is in the opposite camp: "Not too much as yet. But slowly increasing. I like Zoom :) I'm an introvert!"

Nonagenarian Len said, "I shop once a week. I go to the doctor and I walk every day. When my son and his family come up from Long Beach we eat out. Nothing else."

Jackie said: "I haven't gone to a movie in a movie theatre yet, having

gotten somewhat accustomed to Prime Video and Netflix- but I do miss the theatre atmosphere and the popcorn as well as the size of the screen compared to my TV."

Freddie said, "Resumed golf, movie theaters (before noon during the week), pedicures, restaurants, some traveling and wandering thru malls. I have not resumed volunteering with kids ministry or attending church, not back to the high school mentoring program I used to do weekly. I have not resumed the Vocal class or the Gospel Community Chorus at Emeritus. I still do not visit my friends or go inside their homes and I do not have friends over. If we don't meet outside, it doesn't happen."

And finally, Rick said, "All and all pretty close to pre-covid activities -though I keep looking over my shoulder in case for that dreaded monster."

It's nice to know that just as the economy is cautiously opening again, Emeritus students are guardedly resuming their previous activities. Most of us are happy for online classes that kept us connected and that allow us to continue our studies. Who knows how long it will take to return to life as we knew it? Will we ever stop looking over our shoulders? For now, it's a vigilant go.

Brain Teasers and Trivia

- 1) What word looks the same in capital letters forward, backward and upside down?
- 2) Ice cream was invented in what country?
- 3) What is more useful when it is broken?
- 4) What is the loudest animal?
- 5) What becomes bigger the more you take away?

Answers: 1) NOON 2) CHINA 3) AN EGG 4) THE SPERM WHALE 5) A HOLE

Beware of Romance Scammers

Rozelle Teplitsky

Internet scammers are expected to steal over \$3 billion in 2022. The largest group of victims are seniors over 60 years of age. Contrary to popular belief, senior men can be victims as well as women.

There are scammers who impersonate celebrities and famous artists to try and get money from unsuspecting fans. Many are labeled romance scammers. I know because I almost fell prey to such scammers. In September, 2021, while recovering from side effects from a medical treatment, as I was looking for musical arrangements on You Tube for my SMC Emeritus voice class, renowned cellist Stjepan Hauser's videos kept popping up on my computer. So I started watching a wide variety of his music from classical to movie themes to his version of pop songs from artists like Bon Jovi, the Beatles, and Elvis.

Shortly thereafter I joined Instagram and started following him, liking and commenting on his musical posts. After doing so, I received many requests from impostors posing as Hauser, asking to follow me on both social media sites. Unbeknownst to me, these requests did not come from Hauser because he does not reach out to his fans from his official sites. He only posts his musical photos and videos there. Little did I know that these impostors reached out to me to scam me for money, gift cards or Google Play cards and to pressure me into investing in one of his favorite charities, an orphanage in Croatia.

All of these "romance scammers" professed their love for me within days and even proposed marriage, writing me poetry and love notes. Because I had researched Hauser's background and listened to any interviews I could find, I knew when these men were lying. They were charming and used the illusion of romance to try to manipulate me to invest in what they were offering. Some even gave me advice not to comment on Hauser's videos or chat with other impostors.

Once you receive a request from a celebrity imposter to follow you on Instagram or Facebook, he will usually ask that you text or communicate privately through online chat applications like What's App, Signal, Google Chats or Hangouts, none of which can be traced for content. If you suspect someone with whom you are chatting to be a fraud, you can research the celebrity's name on Google and add "scam" to see if their image has been stolen. You can also block and report scammers on these chat sites if you suspect or discover them to be impostors.

Like Hauser impostors, these scammers all have a similar script and are experts at their craft. An American living in Italy actually said he fell in love with me and then revealed that he was an impostor. He also gave me his real name and email. But when I saw his profile and photo, I was thoroughly repulsed and felt ashamed because the whole correspondence was grotesque and based on lies. Although I blocked him many times on Google's Hangouts, he would email me for forgiveness and confess his love for me. It took me awhile to get to the real truth and cut him off.

Seniors, be leery if an individual who contacts you on social media quickly asks you to leave that site for a private chat site. Also, if the person promises to meet you in person, then comes up with an excuse why he or she cannot do so for whatever reason, he or she is an impostor and never meant to meet you in the first place.

Fraudulent activity online can be reported to the Federal Trade Commission at reportfraud.ftc.gov (877-382-4357) or the FBI. These agencies are on the lookout to protect people from being scammed. You can also report fraudulent activity on Facebook and Instagram.

NEVER SEND MONEY TO ANYONE WITH WHOM YOU HAVE ONLY COMMUNICATED ONLINE OR BY PHONE BUT HAVE NOT MET IN PERSON.

The Bargain Hunter: “What Did You Say?”

By Gordon Blitz

When I bought my first hearing aid in 1995, it changed my life, despite the outrageous price of \$5,000 for a standard pair without any bells and whistles. In 2022 you might be able to acquire digital state-of-the-art aids for \$1,399 at Costco, where you get the best bang for your buck. An additional Costco advantage is that they provide free batteries, hearing tests and cleanings.

The almost invisible aids that are lodged in your ear canal (\$2,800 at Costco) are pricier than the behind-the-ear devices; but if you are like my husband, it's easier to lose the behind-the-ear-model that can get dislodged from your ear when pulling off tee-shirts and enter the “black hole” of lost hearing aids. Thankfully most hearing aid manufacturers have warranties for the first two years.

If you don't have a Costco membership, check your medical insurance now that hearing aids have started becoming a covered item (United Health Care AARP). You can also try Lively—which is FDA-registered. It's the top choice for inexpensive but high-performing hearing aids. You can procure them for about \$1,600.

The choice of aids can be overwhelming. Consulting with an ear-nose-and-throat doctor along with an audiologist should be your first agenda item to determine what type of aid will suit your needs. You may find that the over-the-counter-brands that are sound amplifiers will be sufficient; PSAP or Audien is available on Amazon and costs between \$50 and \$300.

One of the perks of having a hearing aid is the accessibility of blue tooth technology. iPhone calls go directly to your hearing aids. Additionally, you can listen to podcasts and music transmitted from your iPhone to your hearing aids. And you'll save money because you won't need to purchase those white ear pods that dangle from the ears of the rest of the unimpaired hearing population.

I wished I'd known that hearing aids would eliminate the mysterious crackling sound I heard in my ears 20 years ago. When I swallowed, there was a popping sound that reminded me of the days of vinyl records. I was relieved when an audiologist told me, “Well, you have moderate to severe hearing loss. You keep trying to open your ears to better grasp sounds. Your repeated action of swallowing accentuated the scrunching.” The hearing aids stopped the crackling.

Unfortunately, hearing aids can only salvage your remaining hearing level. Sounds are amplified but clarity can be compromised. You'll probably need closed captioning for entertainment viewing along with the ability to lip-read.

Being hearing impaired can have benefits. Remember, you have the power to remove your devices and block out the sounds you don't want to hear, like snoring, noisy elevators at hotels and jets overhead.

I promise you that any type of hearing aid will improve your mental health by helping your brain process words without having to strain and feel isolated in social situations that have ambient noise like restaurants with high ceilings and loud music. You can stop using the phrase-“What did you say?”

From the Dean's Desk

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Over the course of summer and Fall, I will schedule several Open House style events, live and on Zoom, for students to ask questions as we return to a larger on-ground presence.

Please remember that before attending an on-ground class, you will need to submit your proof of COVID vaccination and booster, online at smc.edu/Emeritus and click on “Submit Proof of Vaccination”. This requirement is not likely to go away, so if you ever intend to enroll in an on-ground (aka in-person) class in the future, please get your documentation in.

I hope all of you are doing well, and that we can see you in-person, or online!

WHAT'S HAPPENING:

Spring Emeritus Events

Emeritus Players Acting Showcase

Conversations: Scenes from Film and Theatre

Mark your calendar for our performance showcase featuring silly, serious, and quirky scenes that inspire, entertain, and — hopefully! — give you something to think about. For more information, please call 310-434-4306.

Sat, July 16 | 1 p.m. | Free | Online

See event date at smc.edu/calendar for details

EMERITUS ART GALLERY OPENINGS AND SHOWS

Annual SMC Emeritus Student Art Exhibition 2022 – Part 1

Don't miss the first part of our popular annual group exhibition of creative works by students in SMC's Emeritus program. Exhibition opens online at 5 p.m. Thursday, April 21, with a Zoom reception event from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. featuring selected artists speaking about their work and hosted by Dean of Noncredit and External Programs Dr. Scott Silverman and Emeritus Gallery Curator Jesse Benson.

Thu, April 21 | 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. | Free | Online

Annual SMC Emeritus Student Art Exhibition 2022 – Part 2

Join us for Part 2 of our popular annual group exhibition of creative works by students in SMC's Emeritus program. Exhibition opens online at 5 p.m. Thursday, May 26, with a Zoom reception event from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. featuring a number of student artists speaking about their work and hosted by Dean of Noncredit and External Programs Dr. Scott Silverman and Emeritus Gallery Curator Jesse Benson.

Thu, May 26 | 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. | Free | Online

All exhibitions are currently online. Visit smc.edu/emergitusgallery for more information.



**1227 2nd Street
Santa Monica, CA 90401**

Business Hours:

Mon. – Fri., 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Telephone: 310-434-4306

Email: emeritus@smc.edu

Website: smc.edu/emergitus

SMC Emeritus is committed to life-long learning for older adults. From art and literature to health and safety, personal finance, and digital technologies, SMC Emeritus students connect, discover, renew, and reinvent. Classes are held at the SMC Emeritus headquarters at 1227 Second Street, Santa Monica, as well as at community sites located throughout the cities of Santa Monica and Malibu.

Got Suggestions?

You can give Emeritus your feedback in several ways: by emailing emeritus@smc.edu; calling 310-434-4306; through the suggestion boxes located on the 1st, 2nd, and 4th floors of Emeritus; and in-person on the 1st floor Enrollment Services or 4th floor Administrative office.



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This edition of the *Emeritus Voice* was written and produced by students in the “Writing For Publication” (E34) class taught by Monona Wali.