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



Good afternoon Emeritus students, and Welcome to Fall 2021!

On behalf of Jessica, Vivian, Ashley and the entire Emeritus team of faculty, I hope you are all doing well.

SMC cares about your safety and the safety of others. Here are the safety protocols that are in place on campus before you return.

**Safety Videos:** Please watch these 4 important safety videos:

1. [Safety and Cleaning Controls](#)
2. [Classroom Safety Video](#)
3. [Campus Expectations Video](#)
4. [Faculty Safety Protocol Video](#)

**SMC Vaccination Programs**

**Requirement:** Vaccines are required if you are going to visit the campus. Emeritus is not yet

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**Michael Higgins:  
Son of Santa Monica**

**Profile of an Emeritus Student**

*By Teri Kinne*

*The Mystery*

I studied Michael Higgins from across the Emeritus classroom on my first day of Autobiography Writing and made assumptions. He sat just inside the door as if ready to bolt. This man was on the younger side of Emeritus-age, Caucasian, lean, slunk down in his seat, a scruffy baseball cap low on a handsome, sun-swept face. The backpack hanging from his chair bulged with contents. Piles of thick, hardcovered books accumulated on his desk and continued onto the floor around him like an academic cape. *What a snob I thought. Is he trying to prove how well-read he is?*

As the weeks passed, I took notice of the consistency of Michael's clothes—classic Santa Monica gear: quality sneakers for walking the uneven sidewalks (appropriately scuffed and worn—we beachy people don't like to look as if we've ever bought anything new), casual pants or sweats, and easily-removed layers for when the morning marine fog turns into a sunny, warm day. The clothes were mostly in dark tones; and always that massive backpack

lugged around like an old wooden cross.

*The Poet*

One week, we all opened our spiral lined notebooks, or opened our laptops to write. Michael pulled a crumpled paper from a side pocket of his backpack. As he flattened it out on his desk, I recognized the beige, recycled paper and green logo of a Starbucks napkin. Then he pulled out a nub of a pencil. *Hmph, I snubbed, he doesn't even care*



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## Michael Higgins: Son of Santa Monica

*continued from page 1*

about this class. After writing, we went around the room and read our responses aloud.

I shared about my cat who was approaching the end of her life and how hard that was on me. Other students shared quips about their grandchildren, memories of a first love, the challenges of swimsuits after sixty. Michael read his piece. His voice had the cadence of a poet, starting slow and soft, building, then falling, a sullen pause. It was not overly affected, saccharin nor theatrical. But careful. Like every word was important to him. It was brief and when he finished, we were silent. Struck dumb by the intensity of it.

In his simple reading Michael described a close relationship with a manic-depressive mother who often woke her son up in the night with a sudden urge to paint the walls of the living room...orange tonight! He described he and his mother dancing together in the freshly painted living room, the record player skipping when their feet pounded. I felt the bright color and the rhythm of the music. I felt the darkness of deep pain with the refrain he repeated: "she was aching to be seen." I felt the loss when his mother danced right out of her and his life, leaving the maniacal, emotional roller coaster. After Michael went quiet and the words sunk in, we all nodded. We weren't supposed to clap. One writer put her head on her arm, relating. Though my face was blank, I was beaming on the inside.

### *The Aha Moment*

Life got busy and my cat weakened. I still came to class and participated but felt like I was walking through Santa Monica fog. Then Michel

broke through it when he read a story about an incident that happened to him that week. I was only half listening when he began. He had been writing at what he called "his office," a Starbucks patio, when the cops came up to roust him. I sat up in my chair, brows furrowing. *Cops?* He had my attention.

He read on, "This oversized backpack, it is my Red Letter A, my Star of David."

He reported the cops approaching aggressively, hands on their equipment belts, and saying 'Evenin' sir. We'd like to ask you to move on.'

"It's how they know I don't live a traditional life. I don't live in a house with a picket fence. These streets of Santa Monica are my home. The park is my bedroom, the ducks my companions, the library my comfort, books my source of sanity." Michael, being used to this treatment, moved back to the park. But hearing this story, I felt indignant on his behalf.

Everything I didn't understand about Michael fell into place. The layers of dark clothes, the weathered complexion, worldly belongings carried in a backpack. The mistrust. My judgment fell away, and respect bloomed in its place. We had more in common than loving the beach. I too had lived on the streets for a short time in my life.

The week my cat died, Michael offered to buy me a cup of coffee. We walked on the Third Street promenade, cupping our paper coffee cups, and talked. We recited song titles from the 80's. He quoted Ayn Rand. He shared historical facts about Santa Monica like a black beach known as The Inkwell or 960s, the gay beach near Pacific Palisades. After that we often walked after class, sharing philosophies and music.

### *The Man*

Michael Higgins grew up in a craftsman's bungalow off Bundy, went to Santa Monica High, then to Santa Monica College. He transferred to the University of California, Northridge while maintaining a job at a grocery store. Then his mom died, unexpectedly and too early. It triggered a turning point. He quit his job, dropped out of college, threw a sleeping bag in his VW bug, and headed up Highway One. He's been free-spirited ever since. He's had apartments for periods of time and tells me he would like a place of his own now, but the amount needed for a deposit makes this unattainable. When the pandemic hit, Michael's friend offered his garage for shelter. Since then, Michael sleeps there at night and during the day settles in at the coffee houses, the benches atop the bluffs, certain nooks where he can watch the sea stir and settle. He is not completely off the grid. He connects to WIFI outside the library, and uses an exterior electrical socket to charge his devices. He takes odd jobs in restaurant kitchens, gets bored or frustrated, and moves on. He pays taxes when he works.

Michael knows how to stay healthy, fit and fed on about six dollars a day. Every day he gets up early, runs five miles up the coast, showers at the gym, then heads to the library or work. Almost every Sunday he meets a retired UCLA professor friend for coffee in Brentwood. They talk politics, writing, history.

Michael is a true son of Santa Monica, an Emeritus student, and my friend. My first impression of him was both spot on and way off. He is a beach bum like me. He is intellectually snobby, but has a right to be. He is not trying to impress us with his books; he's a rapacious reader, and a lifelong student of the arts. Like many of us, he's aching to live a full and deep existence.

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# Dr. Susan Aminoff: Trustee at An Outpost of Democracy

By Gayle Byock

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A catalytic event in Dr. Susan Aminoff's life was attending nursery school in the lower Eastside of New York City in the 1950s. The Henry Street Settlement was an organization built by Lillian Wald. A lifelong humanitarian, Wald wanted to give newly arrived immigrant families a chance for success in America. As Susan said, "They took the babushka off my head, taught me to speak English, and taught me how to hold my fork and spoon." She is quick to point out that the early 1950s was a time to encourage assimilation, whereas today we have a more culturally embracing view of helping immigrants to maintain a connection with the old world while participating in the new one.

Susan said, "For me, this experience set me on a journey to think about my place in society. My parents were working class and uneducated but committed to the education of my brother and me." Susan attended public schools and the State University of New York at Stony Brook where she met Howard Aminoff, her husband of 52 years. She remains a devoted supporter of public education.

When Susan completed her PhD at USC studying the sociology of aging and became Dr. Aminoff, she chose to teach and develop curricula at Los Angeles community colleges rather than follow her professors' goal that she join a university faculty. A life-changing event occurred in 2004, when Susan was asked by a member of the Santa Monica College (SMC) faculty if she would consider running for the SMC Board of Trustees. The rest is history.

As Susan stated, "Community colleges and public libraries are outposts of democracy, and I wanted to spend my career there. I believe that community colleges are centers of innovation for everyone and strive to meet the social, psychological, and employment needs of students and community members." As a board member, she combines practical experience with solid research from her teaching of history in sociology and the process of aging.

Susan discussed the role of SMC's Board of Trustees: "Board members are responsible for the hiring and evaluation of the college's CEO. They also work on budget and planning with an eye toward keeping SMC among the top community colleges in the state and nation. They listen to the community's and college's needs and push their goals for the college."

She is especially proud that SMC addresses lifespan education from young children to seniors. The Early Childhood Lab School is now open at the Civic Center, giving students seeking a career in teaching young children a place to observe and learn from a live pre-K program. SMC has also supported the growth of SMC Emeritus into a thriving center for seniors. Susan points out, "These centers, plus the other campus sites, including the Performing Arts Campus (Broad Stage) and the Center for Media and Design (KCRW), make resources available within and for the community." She advocates for the entire college but has a special place in her heart for SMC Emeritus. Before joining SMC, she established



Emeritus-type programs at LA Pierce College and taught classes at USC's Emeriti Center.

Susan illustrates her commitment to lifelong learning in another way. For ten years she and a fellow USC graduate student have designed and offered autobiographical writing workshops. Their goal is to enable adults to revisit and reflect on their life journeys, their decisions, and their experiences. They revised the idea of guided autobiography into what they call thematic autobiography. An example is a semester focused on the meta-theme of seasons with sessions to reflect on spring (childhood and adolescence), summer (adults aged 20–50), fall (middle age, pre-social security), and winter (ages 65 and older). These autobiography classes become communities, much like the autobiography class at Emeritus, where students take and retake the class, building trust and friendship as they write about their life experiences.

Susan has effectively combined her education, her role at SMC, and her autobiography workshops to focus on enhancing community experience and addressing the aging process in Santa Monica. She emphasizes, "I believe that functionality—how one functions in society—is more important than one's chronological age." She is a citizen of SMC, Santa Monica and the world. All three entities are better off with her consideration of and care for her fellow human beings.

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# Little Free Libraries

by Tracy Katz

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I received my first book at age eight, a beautiful hardcover copy of “Charlotte’s Web” from my mother. She inscribed: “You will never be alone with the wonderful treasures inside these pages.” She was right! Thus began my lifelong love of books and libraries.

When the pandemic hit in 2020, our public libraries closed and rentals were limited to some curbside pickups and online eBooks. The silver lining during this time was my discovery of Little Free Libraries. These simple weather resistant boxes with shelving are filled with books for you to browse, take, read and/or pass along.

Some of my recent finds have been “Where the Path Begins, a Memoir” by Amy Tan, a signed hardcover of “Like Water for Chocolate” by Laura Esquivel, some exotic cookbooks, blank journals, a local self-published hiking guide and a vintage Mark Twain to name a few. Take One, Leave One is the general rule. Recently I donated “The Library Book” by Susan Orlean, “Big Magic” by Elizabeth Gilbert and “The Tiny Journalist” by Naomi Shihab Nye.

Some libraries have a notebook or bulletin board to leave a message or a quote, or perhaps there will be a small bench on which to chat with a fellow walker or simply pause and rest. A natural camaraderie is developed through small interactions, building a sense of community through stories. This creates its own goodwill cycle of giving and receiving.

You can also start your own Little Free Library. On website

[littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org) you’ll find suggestions on how to create one. You can create a design you like and find someone locally to build it for you; or purchase a bookshelf through the Little Free Libraries library-to-the-world map and have it mailed to you. To find the locations of Little Free Libraries in your neighborhood simply go to the website and type in your city and zip code.

May you enjoy your neighborhood journeying and the discovery of books in little libraries and “never be alone with the wonderful treasures inside these pages.”



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## Zooming into Emeritus

By Linda J. Hernandez

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When my brother, who is a longtime Santa Monica resident and Emeritus student, told me about the wonderful writing classes he was attending in-person, I longed to join him. However, living in Cerritos in Southeast L.A. County precluded me from such a venture. Being one of the few native Californians who doesn’t drive on freeways, I really couldn’t see dedicating hours by driving surface streets for the round trips that would be required several times a week. Then came COVID-19, and one of its few silver linings was the advent of Zoom classes. Thrilled at the ability to attend from the comfort of my living room with my trusty iPad, I have enjoyed *Creative Writing and Autobiography* with Ana Reyes, *Readers’ Theatre* with Tony Abatamarco, *Current Affairs* with Brandon Millan and Bob Stern and now, *Writing for Publication* with Monona Wali.

I have bonded with many classmates, even though we have never met in person, and feel as close to them as I do to many longtime friends. Now that classes

are starting to return to in-person options, my sincere hope is that our Emeritus classes will remain on Zoom. An informal survey of my classmates has shown me that most of them feel the same way... even those who live close to SMC. Some typical comments from my fellow students are:

“I can see everyone’s face at the same time when they have their video on, and they can see mine.”

“We can each turn our video/microphone off when we don’t want anyone to see/hear us.”

“I don’t have to drive, so I am saving time, gas and helping the environment all at the same time.”

“I have to wear a reasonable top, but otherwise don’t have to get out of my jammies.”

“I am still leery of gathering indoors in groups with others who may or may not be fully vaccinated against this ongoing pandemic.”

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# Linda Jackson: A Dynamic Force of Nature

## Profile of an Emeritus Professor

*By Merry Greene Rose*

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Linda Jackson is passionate about sharing her love of music with her Opera Appreciation Class as well as her Voice Training Class. Her background is extensive and varied and all of it comes into play as she shares her expertise in expanding students' knowledge of opera and ability to use their voices. She brings with her a long and varied history of formal education and real-world experience.

Linda was raised in a multi-generational family during an era when segregation was the norm limiting certain opportunities for early educational growth. However, she found ways to educate and express herself, claiming her place in the world. One of her cousins was fortunate enough to be able to take piano lessons and Linda also wanted to learn piano but didn't have access to lessons. She would "borrow" her cousin's piano instruction book and teach herself the exercises, notations, and theories she found in the book. She discovered along with others in her family and neighborhood that she had a good singing voice. She was able to continue her music education by learning and playing violin for four years from the time she was seven until she was eleven.

After graduating from high school, she attended Pitzer College for four years majoring in Psychology. She got married in her senior year and moved to Seattle where her son was born. Eventually, she moved back to the Los Angeles area, starting a new life with her son and now a daughter. During this time, she was working as a waitperson at the Great American Food and Beverage Company where she saw other waitpersons getting up on stage and singing. She decided she wanted to do that too. She started singing and performing with bands in the L.A. area as well as doing some studio backup singing all in pursuit of a record deal. However, at this point she was in her late 20's to early 30's, and the powers-that-be at record companies only wanted to sign singers who were in their late teens or early 20's. So, she completed and received her master's degree in Music at UCLA.

Linda makes opera make sense. In her Opera Appreciation class, she goes into depth with each opera, stressing what was happening historically during the period of time each composer was living in; how that influenced the composer's writing; what kinds of social movements were happening; how men and women related to one another, and how the heritage and the essence of the individual composer influenced what was written. This, in addition to the story form, character development and how each scene and aria move the story along to its conclusion engages the student in history as well as music. She makes opera accessible so her students can truly appreciate and enjoy this incredible form of musical and theatrical composition.

Her approach to vocal coaching is equally holistic. In her classes, she draws on her own study and real-world professional experience. Like any muscle, in order to sing, certain elements must be in place. Many students are not in touch with how to use their voices. It's not unusual for some students to overcome insecurity and shyness by allowing themselves to open up and really feel the power their voices can express. Proper breath support, open throat, even tongue placement are all things that need to be learned and practiced in order to sing. Although singing is an extension of speaking, there are usually ingrained habits that need to be brought to front-of-mind when using your voice for expression. Linda teaches all the basics of breath control and tongue positioning, placement of vocal cords and how to project the voice into the air, much like a musician would learn how to play an instrument. It's a lot of trial and error, and finally—success. After the basics are established, and if the student is interested, she will go on to interpretation.

Many students want to know how to "ad lib" meaning how to make up all those little runs and added vocal gems that almost all singers use that are not a part of the actual song melody. Linda taught herself how to ad lib by listening to Chaka Kahn, working on a few "riffs" and memorizing them, so she can throw them into any song she sings, as appropriate. Then, she made up her own. That's how she teaches the creative part of being a singer. Learning to use your voice is like learning to play an instrument. How to use your voice is the most fundamental lesson to learn, and with Linda's years of experience, her students are in good hands.

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# Kudos: Jerry Schneir: Retired, But Still Here!

## Profile of a Faculty Member

By Linda Rosman

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When I first signed up for the Digital Photo class at SMC Emeritus, I wanted to learn how to use my new mirrorless camera. I ended up spending the next five years taking the class because of Jerry Schneir and the wonderful supportive community he created.

Jerry had a wonderful structure to his class that kept many students like myself returning every semester. We would bring our photos on a flash drive and Jerry would load them into his computer and project them for the class to see. He encouraged us to comment to our fellow classmates as well as making his own comments. The focus was on how to take good photos and on composition. All criticism was supportive especially since the students were coming from various levels of experience with different kinds of camera equipment. Jerry always had great articles to share on topics that included artistic vision as well as technical information, including cell phone cameras. At the end of each semester, Jerry would bring his famous homemade cookies to class. Often after class Jerry would go out to lunch with his students and his wife Rita would join us. Jerry and Rita met in 1950 at Santa Monica Beach, married in 1952 and they now live 9 blocks from where they first met.

Jerry Schneir had an early love of photography starting in his early teens. In college, Jerry was an accounting major at UCLA and then eventually went to pharmacy school at USC. Through all this time though, his passion for photography continued. On a trip up to Seattle, Jerry and Rita stopped in an antique store and met a man who collected vintage cameras. Jerry purchased a few



cameras from him and thus began a life-long friendship and a passion for collecting vintage cameras. He found a camera collectors club in Pasadena and kept adding to his collection until he owned more than 900 cameras! In 1986 he decided to donate his vast collection of cameras to the Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara.

Travel photography, family photos and social events are his main interests. Jerry and Rita have traveled the world and have a vast collection of photos from those journeys. Last spring, Jerry decided to retire from teaching. He still attends our photo classes to support the new instructor and give us feedback.

When I go out to photograph, I hear Jerry's voice in my head saying, "Try that shot vertical, put your subject off center, have your subject looking into the photo." When someone asks, "what is the best camera?" Jerry's answer is "the one you have with you."

Over the last ten years, Jerry created a wonderful, supportive environment for Emeritus Photo Students. We will miss him.

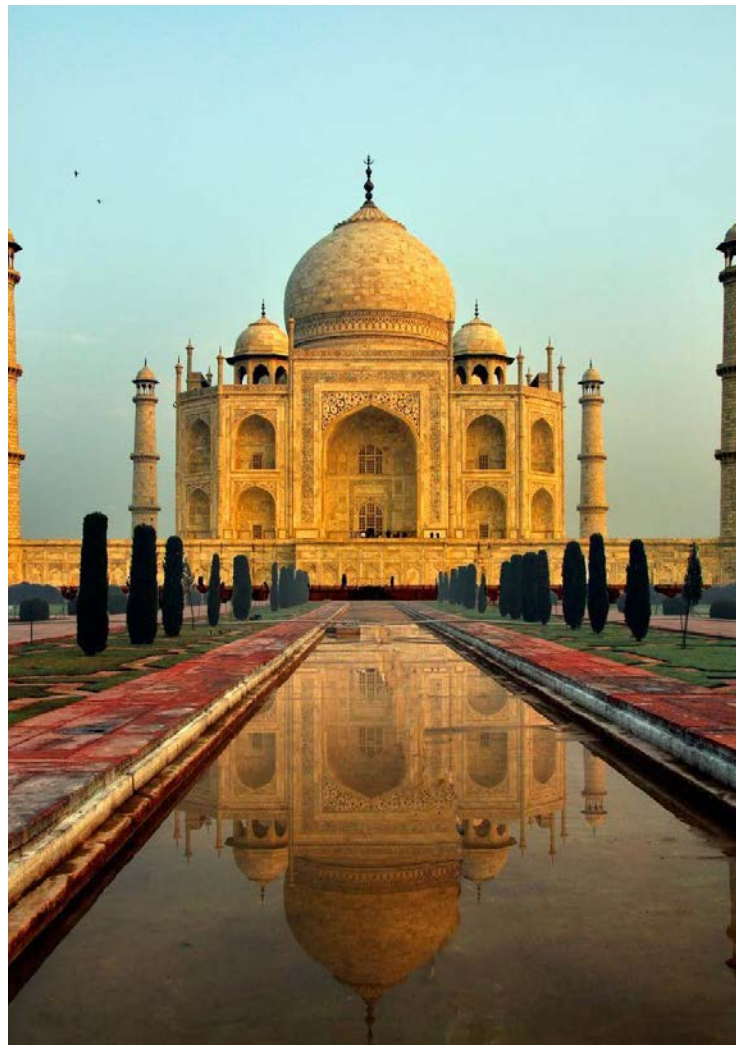


Photo by Jerry Schneir

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# Allan Popelka: Volunteer Extraordinaire

By Linda Rosman

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It took Allan Popelka a while to sign up for a class at SMC Emeritus after toying with the idea for a number of years. When he finally did take a class, it was a home fix-it class. He quickly realized that he wasn't the fix-it type and would rather hire a handyman. He quit after one session! Then he decided to try the photo class but was concerned about his ability to be in it since he didn't have a "real" camera, and only used his iPhone. AI used to end up with his finger in the frame when he first started, but as time went on he became more confident in his images. It turned out that he was only one of two or three students that used a phone camera, but he felt comfortable in Jerry Schneir's class and continued. Since Jerry encouraged congeniality and offered gentle criticism and positive feedback, AI became more confident and realized that he had a good eye for composition. That's not a surprise since AI's career is in a creative field with his company, Pacific Marketing Research in Santa Monica.

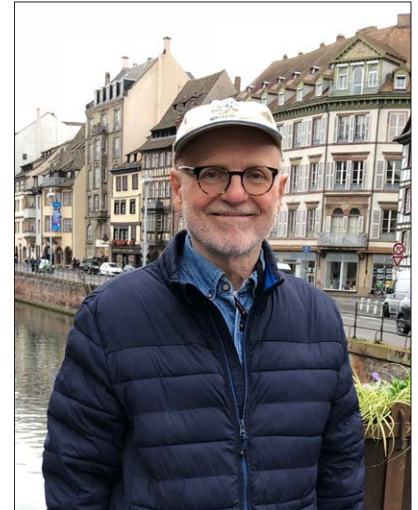
AI had early experiences with computers so when he was in the very popular current events class taught by Nat Trives and Jay Johnson, he was able to bring his technical expertise. One day he noticed that there was a cable in the room that would allow them to use video and audio as well as stills to project from the computer. The class would typically start with a YouTube video based on the topic of the day. AI offered to set it up using the cable. The first time AI tried it there was a glitch and the oldest member of the class Jerry Rosenblum said jokingly, "Fire the projectionist." Things greatly improved after that and thanks to AI's technical skills, and many timely informational videos have been shared with the class.

And then the pandemic happened and AI's technical skills became invaluable. Being the kind of person who likes to problem solve and assist others, he stepped right up and volunteered to help out. Zoom was an unknown platform to most students and teachers, but AI was familiar with

it having used it with clients in his business. In Jerry Schneir's photo class, he handled the technical side of Zoom so Jerry could focus on discussing the images.

Nat Trives and Jay Johnson called on AI in the beginning of the pandemic to help them set things up on Zoom. He had to teach them how to use the program, and also had to teach a number of the students. There are sometimes 150 people in that class, with many thoughts and opinions, which could create chaos, but Allan handled it with a quiet grace and especially patience. He's almost like the emcee creating a structure for the format and Q&A to keep things organized and fair so that everyone who wants can get a chance to speak.

AI is really proud of the fact that he was able to help a lot of people who don't understand computers to actually get on Zoom successfully. He helped get photography class and the current events class to increase registrations by 50 to 60% when there was a concern that going online could greatly reduce attendance. When classes go back in person, AI says, "I will need to bring a square box to hold around my face so people will recognize me from the Zoom Room." It's a classic example of his great sense of humor. We all look forward to the good jokes he brings as an ice breaker to start the class. AI has gone from reluctant student to being an indispensable member of the Emeritus community. Teachers and students alike are grateful.



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## Zooming into Emeritus

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"As a handicapped person with a disabled spouse, Zoom classes are a Godsend and I would have to drop out of Emeritus altogether without them."

As an educator myself with over fifty years experience, not counting time served as a student, I can relate to all of these concerns. Although I can certainly understand how some students might miss the in-person contact with longtime friends and classmates, I would hope a hybrid format would be feasible for future classes with some students attending in person and others on Zoom. That would be the best of both worlds!

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# Calm, Cool and Collected

By Shifra Wylder

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We want to be calm, cool and collected, yet with the uncertainty and confusion of world issues and inevitable aging, this can be a stressful time for older adults. Stress and anxiety are normal emotional reactions to the fear of unknown situations or events.

During stressful times, your brain releases cortisol and adrenaline hormones which give you energy and help you to focus. When stress becomes chronic, the brain begins to have a tougher time regulating these hormone levels by producing larger amounts, making them harder to shut down. It's like turning on a light. When you turn on a light switch, the light bulb goes on and until we turn off the switch, the light bulb will stay on. Over time, if you're not turning the light off, it drains energy, just like chronic low-grade stress. If the light is not turned off it will, like us, burn out.

Stress and anxiety can show up in many different ways. You may experience mood swings, increased irritability, forgetfulness, or lack concentration. You might also experience changes in sleeping patterns or insomnia, have frequent tension headaches, start overeating, have indigestion or weight loss or gain. If these symptoms become persistent, you should seek medical attention from a healthcare professional. For reducing stress and anxiety of everyday life, consider implementing some of these helpful techniques and self-care practices:

- **Identify what's causing stress in your life:** Knowing the root of your stress will help you take steps to eliminate it. Write it down or talk to someone about it. Often times simply sharing

your feelings with another helps ease some of the stress you're experiencing.

- **Be present:** Be in the moment, not thinking about the future or the past. Be still in meditation and prayer by practicing mindfulness, self-awareness and deep breathing exercises. Take a gentle, deep breath in for a count of 4. Now slowly breathe out for a count of 6, a little longer than your inhalation. Repeat 3 times.
- **Physical Activity:** Do something you enjoy so it doesn't feel like exercise. Walking, biking, swimming, or taking a class with a friend. Start with subtle forms of body manipulation and stretching. SMC Emeritus offers wonderful Yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong and Joint Health and Mobility classes.
- **Nutrition:** Eat nutritionally dense foods such as, salmon, sardines, kale, garlic, potatoes, blueberries and avoid sugar. If you must indulge, small amounts of dark chocolate in moderation can be beneficial. Use the 80/20 rule. Eating healthy, nutritious meals 80 percent of the time. Also, remember to hydrate by drinking 6–8 glasses of water during the day.
- **Community:** Become active within your community and cultivate warm relationships. Consider volunteering to serve at a nonprofit organization. Community, support and social interaction are important. Having someone to talk to and laugh with can relieve stress.

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# Are Your Feet Happy?

By Sharon Valente

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Feet are like car tires—they give good service and transport, but with age they show wear and tear. You can replace tires, but not your feet. They may have hiked miles, trudged up hills, toted children, pets, or groceries, walked down church or temple aisles, danced all night, played tennis or soccer, traveled 4,500 steps a day, and in my case, performed high roundhouse Karate kicks. By the time you reach senior status, you are fortunate if your feet are pain free and move easily.

Inspect your feet regularly. Keep them moisturized, dry thoroughly after bathing, keep them moving, and avoid

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- **Gratitude:** Write a gratitude list even if you only list a few things each day such as, a roof over your head, food to eat, or the beautiful Southern California weather. We have so much to be grateful for.
- **Relax:** Set aside time each day for favorite hobbies. Put a Jigsaw puzzle together, read a book or listen to relaxing music. Or maybe get a massage. It feels great and will loosen up tight muscles.
- **Surrender:** Embrace the unexpected and be okay with not knowing the outcome. Let go of wanting to control situations and trust the process. Drop your shoulders, take a deep breath in then breathe out a long, loud sigh of relief.

As John Lennon said, "Everything will be okay in the end. If it's not okay, it's not the end."



tight footwear. If your socks leave a red or indented ring when removed, they are impairing blood flow so get looser socks. One time I noticed my husband limping, when I removed his sock, I was aghast! A witch's talon—a 3-inch toenail curled under his foot. I hadn't realized his toenails needed trimming.

Many seniors over 65 have foot pain. If you bypassed the common corns, calluses, and bunions, you're lucky. Painful feet abound for almost 90% of seniors in residential facilities. About one-third of Americans have fungal toenail infections causing ugly, opaque nails, pain, and complications. Sometimes fashionable shoes with skyscraper heels or inadequate toe space cause problems especially in the women's ball of the foot or toes. Tight shoes can act like foot bindings that once deformed women's feet in ancient China. Most seniors wear the wrong size or tight shoes that cause misery, injury, and falls. Obesity, Diabetes, poor circulation, hardened arteries, and peripheral vascular disease can also damage feet.

Seniors need to identify foot problems and to know when to seek primary care or podiatric treatment. No one needs to put up with foot pain. Although I am not a podiatrist, as an RN and as someone who has experienced and been treated for many foot issues, I feel it is important to bring awareness to a problem that many seniors face.

#### Widespread Foot Problems:

**Bunions** When I saw the painful red protruding bony growth at my big toe joint and noticed the big toe angling toward the other toes, I had a bunion. Wearing shoes was agony. Larger shoes or a big-toe splint or spreader to realign the big toe may briefly improve comfort. When

you can't walk, surgery can reduce the excess bone, align the joint and resolve the pain but you'll be at home while the bones heal and won't be driving for a while.

**Calluses and Corns** The toes develop painful hard, thick yellow skin from friction or pressure. Home remedies may help. Creams or Vaseline can soften tough skin, donut-like pads can lessen pressure, cotton between toes can reduce rubbing and a pumice stone can defoliate. Although it might seem logical to scrape off dead skin, avoid the use of a razor to remove calluses due to the risk of infection or injury.

**Hammertoes** Have you noticed if the second or middle toe joints curl under the foot? This distresses the joint, and shoes rub painfully. Surgery can correct the joint surfaces and flatten the toe. Often sufferers wear open-toe sandals.

**Toenail Problems** Ingrown nails grow into the skin or fungus thickens, clouds, or discolors nails.

**Fungus** Toenails become opaque and painful. Fungus thrives in warm, wet places like swimming pools and sweaty feet. After bathing or swimming, make sure to dry toes well; a hair-dryer set on low can help. While home remedies abound, topical ointments may help mild cases, but sometimes have difficulty penetrating the nail. Typically, fungal infections won't disappear on their own and may lead to complications. Your primary care provider can provide additional help.

**Chronic Disease** Diabetes may impair sensation,

healing, and circulation precipitating recalcitrant foot ulcers that won't heal. Primary care providers should inspect feet regularly. Patients who remove their shoes and socks assist in this process. Arthritis and gout can cause deformities and pain.

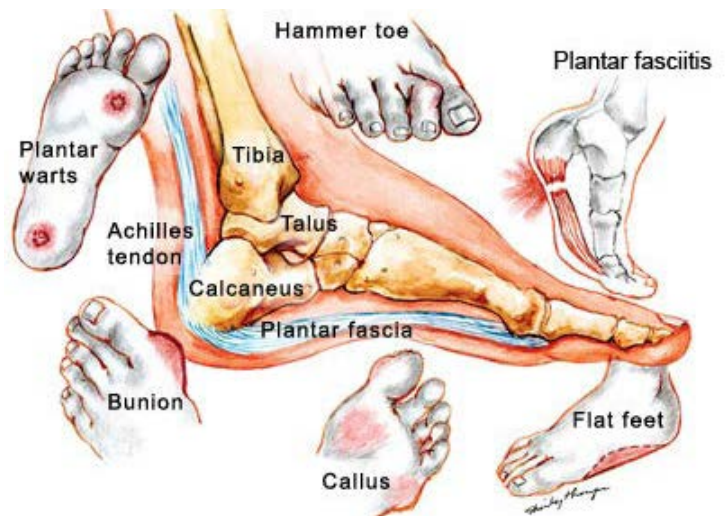
#### Less Common Disorders:

**Heel Pain/Plantar fasciitis** Heel spurs are painful bony projections. In plantar fasciitis, an inflamed ligament causes pain on the bottom of the foot. Stretching, exercises, orthotics, and aspirin or ibuprofen can relieve discomfort.

**Morton's Neuroma** If you notice a painful dense area on the ball of the foot, you may have a neuroma also called a pinched nerve or nerve tumor. This benign growth of nerve tissue often between the third and fourth toes creates pain, burning, tingling or numbness. Massage, roomy low-heeled shoes (<2 inches), shock absorbent soles, and ice may dull pain. A Podiatrist can recommend other solutions.

For several foot problems like flat arches, the podiatrist may recommend orthotic inserts to wear in your shoes. Some can be expensive but cheaper drug store varieties may work.

For additional information: [HealthinAging.org](http://HealthinAging.org); [American college of foot and ankle surgeons](http://American college of foot and ankle surgeons)



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# The Bargain Hunter: Good Deals for Streaming

By Gordon Blitz

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During the pandemic, most of us are streaming our entertainment rather than visiting theaters. Getting rid of your cable account reduces your monthly expenses but subscribing to multiple streaming sites can be expensive.

First off, there are two methods of streaming. You can use your lap top for viewing or an HDMI cord that connects your laptop to the back of your television. This allows you to view your content on a bigger screen. Alternatively, a streaming device such as Amazon's Firestick, Roku, Apple TV, or Google Chromecast, attached to your television, enables streaming by WIFI. These devices can be reasonably purchased at Best Buy, Amazon or online.

Below, I've identified some tips for saving money on entertainment:

**Netflix** Rather than selecting the HD monthly fee of \$13.99, for \$8.99 a month you will have access to the same content. The difference in quality is insignificant.

**Amazon** If you use your SMC email address, you'll be eligible for their student discount rate of \$6.99 a month rather than \$12.99. And of course, subscribing to Amazon Prime you'll be entitled to free delivery plus an additional ten percent discount at all Whole Food sale items.

**Hulu** Again, if you use your SMC email address, you'll be charged \$2.00 a month versus \$5.99. The one caveat is that you'll have to suffer through commercials.

Many streaming services allow a trial run from seven to thirty days. Once you've binged on a must-see series like **The Morning Show** on Apple

TV, if you wait a year, you can do another trial by using various email addresses and/or credit cards.

For those brave enough to enter movie theaters, check online for discounted senior tickets. AMC has a \$5.00 Tuesday for all their movies.

You might not realize that you can stream film and television free of charge on Hoopla and Kanopy with your local library card.

The above ways to save on movie and television viewing are only one avenue of economizing. For other bargain hunting tips please check out the most recent Emeritus Spring and Fall issues.

As you can see, if you do research online along with always being inquisitive about senior discounts, you'll be able to stretch your dollars and be less impacted by inflated prices due to COVID and supply chain shortages. Remember, seniors shouldn't feel shamed because they need to stretch their dollars. It's a little extra work but just think of it as a game, where you always come out as the winner.

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## Brain Teasers and Trivia

Peter Bergquist

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- 1) What is always on its way and never arrives?
- 2) Which planet in our solar system is the hottest?
- 3) Where does Christmas come before Thanksgiving?
- 4) What is the smallest country in the world?
- 5) Where was the Caesar Salad invented?

Answers: 1) TOMORROW 2) VENUS 3) THE DICTIONARY 4) VATICAN CITY 5) TIJUANA, MEXICO

# Where Are We With Coronavirus?

By Barbara Berner

We thought that we would be over COVID by now. Much to our dismay, not only do we have one new variant to this date, we now have six; the latest is the Mu. According to the CDC: “variants are to be expected.” The best way to slow the re-emergence of new variants is to reduce the spread of infection by taking measures to protect yourself by getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccines keep you from getting sick, being hospitalized or dying from COVID-19. The vaccines are free and widely available. Although there have been breakthrough infections in fully vaccinated persons, these are few and rarely result in death. Symptoms of breakthrough infections are similar to COVID 19: loss of smell or taste, cough, chills, fever, headaches and fatigue, runny nose and sneezing.

The information about vaccine mandates changes almost daily. At this point, in California, city and state and school employees need to be vaccinated unless they have a specific exemption such as religious belief, documented medical excuse, deferral due to pregnancy or disability, in which case they will be tested on a weekly basis. Schools are now requiring students 12 and up to be fully vaccinated by January 2022.

At Santa Monica College specifically, all employees and students who are attending classes in person must be vaccinated and show proof of vaccination before attending fall classes unless they have an exemption with the following criteria:

1. Vaccine contra-indication for precaution, documented by a medical excuse.
2. An exemption due to disability
3. Temporary deferral during the period of pregnancy
4. Religious objection based on a person’s sincerely held religious beliefs, practice or observance.



According to SMC protocol, unvaccinated students with approved exemptions or accommodations will be required to undergo COVID-19 testing at least once a week before they can access any SMC campus or facility.

Students who are not attending classes in person do not need to show proof of vaccination.

On [smc.edu](http://smc.edu) there is a vaccine webpage with information about the protocol, questions/answers and information on how to upload the form to send to SMC to verify vaccination. On that page you can also find information on where to go for free vaccinations at SMC and in Los Angeles County as well as for free testing.

If you have been vaccinated and want to get your digital copy or hard copy go to: [myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov](http://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov)

CDC states that wearing a mask is one way to reduce the spread of Delta and other variants. Even if you are vaccinated, wearing a mask is important if you have a weakened immune system or are taking medications that weaken your immune system.

In California, everyone at this point has to wear a mask inside schools, businesses and restaurants. Sports and entertainment venues can require everyone to wear a mask indoors and even outside for large crowds.

Some Do’s:

- Get vaccinated
- Wear a mask when required in public indoor spaces, and on public transit
- Get tested if sick
- Wash hands frequently

Some Don’ts:

- Lose proof of vaccination
- Assume you can’t get the virus or pass it on because you feel well
- Assume everyone is vaccinated
- Attend large events if you are sick

As of October 2021, In California 71.8% of people have at least one vaccination and 59% are fully vaccinated. We will not begin to see herd immunity until 80% of the population is fully vaccinated.

## From the Dean's Desk

*continued from page 1*

open for appointments or any foot-traffic. However, you will need to comply with the vaccine requirement effective now, for anyone who will be attending ANY in-person class, or eventually coming to SMC for any in-person services (i.e. when we re-open the office for appointments), you must be compliant with SMC's Mandatory Vaccination program. Vaccination compliance is recorded before registering for in-person classes. [UPLOAD YOUR VACCINE PROOF HERE](#)

1. Click on the form link above.
2. Enter your SMC username and password. Your username is your last, first, and middle name in this format: lastname\_firstname\_middlename.
3. Complete and submit the form. You will need to upload a photo or scan of either your physical vaccination card, OR your digital vaccination record, showing your full name and the vaccine doses and dates.
4. If you are missing information, save your form and return once you are ready. Click the Save Progress button at the bottom of the page. You can return to it later by login in at [smc.edu/myforms](http://smc.edu/myforms). The "MyForms" portal shows forms you have submitted and those you have in progress.
  - Click Pending/Draft Forms.
  - Identify the form you would like to resume and then click the Complete Form button on the right side of the screen.
  - Once you have completed the missing questions/items, click the Submit button.
5. Once submitted, SMC staff will review and once reviewed, you will get a status update email.
6. If you have a valid medical reason to not get the vaccine, or have chosen not to get vaccinated for another reason, there will be a process in the future for you to submit that information.

**Masks are required:** Masks must be worn at all times when attending any SMC function or being on any SMC property.

**Daily COVID symptoms screening (ONLY IF COMING TO CAMPUS, SO DOES NOT YET APPLY, BUT FYI).** Students coming to campus must complete the COVID safety questionnaire through the [SMC GO app](#) (on your smartphone), or by visiting this link, every single day that you come to campus: [Daily Visitor Symptoms Checklist](#). Please remember, the Emeritus campus is still helping people remotely only, and not yet offering in-person support.

**ONLINE or IN-PERSON Emeritus classes?** The Emeritus faculty and I are working right now to determine which Emeritus courses make sense to be offered online, or hybrid (online and in-person, and several iterations in between), after the COVID-19 pandemic ends. I know many of you have shared feedback with us that you want to go back in person ASAP, in-person only, and others who want to have online classes only, and still more that are open to both. We (the faculty and I) will need to first decide which classes make pedagogical sense to continue to offer remotely. There is no reason for you to share your input on this at this time.

**Upgrades to the Emeritus Facility:** We have had some projects complete, and others will be conducted soon. Projects that are slated to be done before classes in our building resume in Winter:

- Elevator equipment upgrade (in progress)
- Sliding glass doors for the 1st floor entry to the foyer and EC Room 107 (scheduled)

- Operable/openable windows to Art Room 205. (in progress)
- Mirrors installed in EC Room 308 (finished)
- Automatic door openers (for those with mobility issues) installed in 1st floor restrooms (finished)
- Sanitizer dispensing stations, air purifiers (in progress)
- HVAC system replacement (finished)
- MERV-13 air filtration in HVAC system (compliant with top-level health suggestions) (finished)
- Rewired thermostats, controllable locally by Emeritus staff (finished)

Additionally, if you would like to participate in the SMC student program to ride the Big Blue Bus, there is an easy way to set that up:

1. Send an email to [cashier@smc.edu](mailto:cashier@smc.edu) requesting they add the Student Benefits Fee (\$22.50) to your account. (formerly Associated Students Fee)
2. Once the fee has been added to your account, you may pay online at Corsair Connect ([smc.edu/cc](http://smc.edu/cc)), via phone (310-434-4664), mail, or contact them to set up an appointment to pay in person.
3. After your fee is paid, you would receive the email within 24 hours from BBB, or they can choose to receive a TAP card. If they choose the TAP card option, they simply need to request it via email to [BBB@smc.edu](mailto:BBB@smc.edu)

That was a lot of updates all at once, but all were important.

Stay safe, and happy new school year!

SMC Emeritus wants you all to stay safe.

Sincerely,

Dr. Scott C. Silverman  
*Dean of Noncredit & External Programs*



# WHAT'S HAPPENING: *Fall Emeritus Events*



**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](mailto:emeritus@smc.edu)

Website: [smc.edu/emeritus](http://smc.edu/emeritus)

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](mailto: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.

## **EMERITUS ART GALLERY OPENINGS AND SHOWS**

### **Judy Benson, Cynthia Cottam, Young-He Keh, and Denise Peak**

**Opens 5 p.m., September 9**

Small group show of outstanding representational painters including three Emeritus students and a special professional artist—Judy Benson.

### **Bernice Glenn, Shoko Sakanaka, Karen Sandler, and Jodi Sena**

**Opens 5 p.m., October 21**

Small group show of artists working in abstraction, including painting, collage, sculpture, and photography.

### **The Ongoing Moment 2021**

**Opens 5 p.m., December 2**

Journal of Literature and Art from Emeritus—Monona Wali & Catherine Tirr, Editors. This will include a reading and a virtual tour through the art work.

All exhibitions are currently online. Visit [smc.edu/emeritusgallery](http://smc.edu/emeritusgallery) for more information.



**Bernice Glenn, *A dream of of jellyfish 40 feet down*, acrylic on paper 12" x 6"**

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



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