



*Bigelow Center Lifelong Learners  
are pleased to present*

# **Lifelong learners**

**Fall 2024**

**September 9th - November 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Live In-Person at Bigelow**

Bigelow Center for Senior Activities  
100 Mona Terrace - Fairfield CT 06824  
(203) 256-3166

## **LIFELONG LEARNERS READ CAREFULLY!**

Lifelong Learners is a not-for-profit community-based organization for those who share a love of learning. This fall, Bigelow Center Lifelong Learners are proud to offer **LIVE AND IN-PERSON six weekly courses and seven single classes.**

Courses of five classes cost \$30; a one-off class costs \$12. Mark your own calendar carefully so you don't forget and miss the course dates you register for.

Please note that a minimum number of participants are required for the course to run.

The Bigelow Center no longer charges a separate registration fee for Fairfield residents. Residents of other towns will be charged \$25 a year to participate in any Bigelow programs. If you are an out-of-town resident, please remember to mail a check for \$25 addressed to the Bigelow Center c/o Janet Merando.

Once you are a member of the Center, **registration for Lifelong Learners classes may be done in the following ways.**

1. Register AND pay by credit card online on your myactivecenter.com account. (If you have not yet created an account, please call the Center for instructions on how to set up your account.)
2. In-person at the Center with cash or check. No credit cards accepted at the Center.
3. Mail in your registration and payment to the Bigelow Center, 100 Mona Terrace, Fairfield, Ct. 06824.  
Attention: Janet Merando

You will not be fully registered for the class until payment is received.

## **SIX 5-WEEK COURSES (\$30 EACH)**

### **TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION: GREAT STORIES IN EUROPEAN HISTORY**

**Diane Stone**

Monday afternoons 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.  
September 9, 16, 23, 30, October 7

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### **FROM THE BIG BANG TO THE MILKY WAY GALAXY**

**William Preinitz**

Monday mornings 10:00 A.M. – Noon  
September 23, 30, October 7, 14, 21

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### **INDUSTRIALIZATION OF RACIAL HYGIENE**

**Mark Albertson**

Tuesday mornings 10:00 A.M. – Noon  
October 8, 15, 22, 29, November 5

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### **THE ROARING TWENTIES**

**Evan Weiner**

Tuesday afternoons 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.  
October 8, 15, 22, 29, November 5

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### **MIDDLE EAST ETHNICITIES OFTEN OVERLOOKED**

**Mito Mardin**

Wednesday Mornings 10:00 A.M. – Noon  
October 16, 23, 30, November 6, 13

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### **TOOLS FOR LIVING IN TIMES OF TRANSITION**

**Art Gottlieb**

Thursday mornings 10:00 A.M. – Noon  
October 10, 17, 24, 31, November 7

# TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION: GREAT STORIES IN EUROPEAN HISTORY

**\$30**

**Diane Stone**

Monday afternoons 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

September 9, 16, 23, 30, October 7

This course covers the following stories in chronological order with strong focus on the sights travelers will visit which are central to them.

- 9/9** The Bonfire of the Vanities (Florence 1497)
- 9/16** Europe's "Crazy Kings" (Spain 1700-1724), (England 1760-1820), (Germany (1864-1888)
- 9/23** Affair of the Necklace (France 1785), Victor Hugo The Activist France (1802-1885)
- 9/30** Mayerling: A Great Love Affair and Suicide Pact or a Cold Case Murder? (Austria 1889), Million Dollar American Princesses (Late 19<sup>th</sup>, early 20<sup>th</sup> England)
- 10/7** Plots to Assassinate Hitler and How they Failed (1940s Germany), Lost & Found Art Stolen by the Nazis 1940-Present (many European countries)

**Diane Stone** studied history at Queens College of the City University of New York, and earned her master's in European History at The University of Michigan. Diane has been an OLLI presenter (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) at UCONN Waterbury since 2011 uniting European History with travel. Her own business and leisure travel made her realize that knowledge enriches travel experience by understanding the social, political, cultural and economic forces operating when these historical sites were created. Diane graced our 2024 winter program and got rave reviews.

**FROM THE BIG BANG TO THE  
MILKY WAY GALAXY  
\$30**

**William Preinitz**

Monday mornings 10:00 A.M. – Noon  
September 23, 30, October 7, 14, 21

Almost everything we thought we knew up until about 10 years ago, was completely and amazingly wrong. Come for an astronomy buffet and learn about the latest theories and preparations for meteor defense!

- 10/23**      The Big Bang – How it all Got Started!
- 10/30**      The Creation and Evolution of Our Solar System
- 11/7**        Visitors! Asteroids, Meteors and Comets
- 11/14**      The Unique Astronomy of Black Holes
- 11/21**      Our Milky Way Galaxy and Its Local Group

**Bill Preinitz** grew up in Chicago, but has been a Weston resident for 45 years. He attended Northern Illinois University at DeKalb, graduating with a BS in Finance and a BA in Mathematics. After graduation he served in the U.S. Army. After leaving the service he returned to Chicago and obtained an MBA with a concentration in Operations Research. In 1980 he moved to NYC to begin a career on Wall Street in the Investment Banking industry. He retired in 2008 and published two books with Wiley & Sons on financial analytics and modeling. He currently lectures on archeology, anthropology, astronomy, astrophysics, paleontology and history.

# **Industrialization of Racial Hygiene**

**\$30**

**Mark Albertson**

Tuesday mornings 10:00 A.M. – Noon  
October 8, 15, 22, 29, November 5

This is a look into assembly line mass murder. Perfected by the Hitlerites to purge the Thousand-Year Reich of those afflicted with “inferior genes,” while on their way to creating that New Society of the Master Race. This was Industrial-Finance Capitalism at its starker, the epitome of collusion between government-finance-industry-party and the medical community.

**10/8 Weak Die, Strong Survive**

**10/15 Killers in the White Coats**

**10/22 General Government and the Death Camps**

**10/29 Assembly Line of Death: Auschwitz-Birkenau**

**11/5. Trial of the Century: Nuremberg**

**Mark Albertson** is the historical research editor at Army Aviation magazine. He has authored several books, including *They'll Have to Follow You!* and *The Triumph of the Great White Fleet*. *Mark lectures regularly on a variety of historical topics and current events.*

## THE ROARING TWENTIES

**\$30**

**Evan Weiner**

Tuesday afternoons 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

October 8, 15, 22, 29, November 5

- 1920:** Woodrow Wilson is an invalid after suffering a stroke.
- 1921:** Warren Harding is new president. Prohibition begins. Most women get the right to vote.
- 1922:** America emerges from recession. The first Women's Olympic is held.
- 1923:** President Harding suddenly passes away leaving a mountain of scandals that his successor Calvin Coolidge must deal with immediately. Flappers enjoy parties and alcohol during the Prohibition while dancing The Charleston.
- 1924:** American policy changes; immigrants no longer had easy access to settling in America.
- 1925:** Hitler goes to jail. Vladimir Lenin dies, is replaced by Joseph Stalin. A cultural divide emerges in the U.S.
- 1926:** The Jazz Age and speakeasies are the rage. The American economy hums mainly for the wealthy.
- 1927:** Charles Lindberg flies solo from NY to Paris. The “first” talkie movie. Babe Ruth hits 60 home runs. New York Yankees win 110 games and the World Series.
- 1928:** Gangsters supply alcohol to speakeasies. Herbert Hoover easily defeated Al Smith as President.
- 1929:** Mickey Mouse is introduced, The stock market crashes on October 29, 1929. Popeye appears in comics. Bingo invented.

**Evan Weiner** is an award-winning journalist and recognized global expert. He has been a radio commentator and TV pundit on MSNBC and ABC. He is also an author of 11 books and a frequent college speaker. Evan has been a regular on BBC radio and quoted in Bolivian and Australian news

**MIDDLE EAST ETHNICITIES  
OFTEN OVERLOOKED  
\$30**

**Mito Mardin**

Wednesday Mornings 10:00 A.M. – Noon  
October 16, 23, 30, November 6, 13

Three major ethnicities share current day Anatolia (western most Asia) as their ancestral homeland: Armenians, Kurds, and Turks.

We'll review their histories with special focus on the Armenians and Kurds, and how these ethnicities lived side by side peacefully as well as filled with ethnic cleansing and genocide-inflicted violence.

**Mithat “Mito” Mardin** was born in Istanbul, Turkey. He went on to receive his Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry, Physics and Microbiology from the University of Göttingen in Germany. Mito worked on three continents for Bayer Pharmaceuticals retiring as their VP in 2010.

From 2012 to 2020 he served as president of the Japan Society of Fairfield County and was president of the Institute of Learning in Retirement for three terms, following his passion for political sciences.

**TOOLS FOR LIVING  
IN TIMES OF TRANSITION**

**\$30**

**Art Gottlieb**

Thursday mornings 10:00 A.M. – Noon  
October 10, 17, 24, 31, November 7

In this series Mr. Gottlieb will share his experience of working with individuals, families and the elderly in discussing practical strategies for improving quality of life for those currently engaged with the challenges of interpersonal and multi-generational relationships.

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>October 10:</b> | <b>Active Listening</b><br><b>Enabling vs. Helping</b>                       |
| <b>October 17:</b> | <b>Pseudo Dementia</b><br><b>Male vs. Female Ageing</b>                      |
| <b>October 24:</b> | <b>Co-Dependence</b><br><b>Hidden Messages and Passive Aggression</b>        |
| <b>October 3:</b>  | <b>Parent-Child Role Reversal</b><br><b>Inheritance and Greed</b>            |
| <b>November 7:</b> | <b>Downsizing and Other Senior Transitions</b><br><b>Maintaining Dignity</b> |

**Art Gottlieb LCSW, CSA** is a local historian on subjects of political and military history and psychological difficulties. Art maintains a private practice as a Counselor and Certified Senior Advisor.

**SEVEN 2-HOUR COURSES**  
**(\$12 EACH)**

**September 12:** **OUR POLARIZED AMERICA:  
HOW WE GOT TO HERE**  
**Harvey Heyman**  
Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

**September 19:** **VELIKOVSKY AND WORLDS IN COLLISION**  
**Dave Shafer**  
Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

**September 25:** **UPDATE ON GLOBAL ANTISEMITISM:  
NOTES FROM AN OXFORD SYMPOSIUM**  
**Patricia Behre, Ph.D.**  
Wednesday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

**September 26:** **LOVE LETTERS FROM A PATRIOT**  
**Elinor Upton Biggs**  
Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

**October 3:** **DARK MONEY**  
**Harvey Heyman**  
Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

**October 10:** **FATHER OF THE IMPRESSIONIST MOVEMENT**  
**Scott Verchin**  
Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

**October 24:** **CONNECTICUT & INTERNATIONAL  
PHOTOGRAPHY**  
**Michael Tomashefsky**  
Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

## OUR POLARIZED AMERICA: HOW WE GOT TO HERE \$12

**Harvey Heyman**

Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.  
September 12

We are at a point in America where we don't just disagree with others elsewhere on the political spectrum, but also don't trust their honesty, motives and morality. For many of us, we have given up the notion of having current event conversations with those on the other side.

The reasons for our current polarization are many, and most have been in the making for decades. There have been a multitude of changes in America that have occurred during our lifetimes. This one-day course examines the last 50 years of economic, social and political history to see the key people, organized groups and pivotal societal and environmental trends that have contributed to the current state of our polarization. At the end of the session, there will be a class exchange of ideas on how America might become more resilient and stable against the populist tide we witness today.

**Harvey Heyman** received a BA from Brown University and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He retired in 2022 as IT Director and Business Planner for a hospital-owned chain of physical therapy clinics. Harvey is a passionate consumer of current political and social events and feels we are at a pivotal point in the health of American democracy.

# VELIKOVSKY AND “WORLDS IN COLLISION”

## \$12

**David Shafer**

Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

September 19

In 1952 a blockbuster best-selling book – “Worlds in Collision” – by Immanuel Velikovsky, was published. Velikovsky, a psychiatrist and an expert on ancient history, had come up with extremely radical theories about the history of the earth and our solar system, all universally rejected by scientists everywhere. Everyone said that Velikovsky was so terribly wrong that he needed to be actively censored to keep his crazy ideas from polluting real science.

Many of his crazy scientific predictions were found to be true, as we went to the moon and sent out space probes to the planets. Establishment scientists were astonished. Velikovsky predicted Earth’s Van Allen radiation belts 2 years before they were observed. He correctly predicted what the back side of the moon would look like, an extremely hot temperature for the surface of Venus, radio waves coming from Jupiter, and countless other examples, many of which needed space probe missions before they could be confirmed. This class will show how many of his radical ideas are now accepted by the establishment. The main villain who tried to suppress Velikovsky and constantly vilified him was the famous astronomer and media star Carl Sagan.

**Dave Shafer** has designed high-tech optical systems for the last 57 years in the fields of laser nuclear fusion, top secret military projects, cinematography camera lenses, space chips. His 200 US and foreign patents range from an unusual stereo viewer for Salvador Dali, and a telescope that went to Saturn, and a way to detect hidden paparazzi cameras.

**UPDATE ON GLOBAL ANTISEMITISM:  
NOTES FROM AN OXFORD SYMPOSIUM**  
**\$12**

**Patricia Behre, Ph.D.**

Wednesday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.  
September 25

The Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) – an international consortium of scholars devoted to the study of antisemitism and the improvement of education on this difficult topic – celebrated its 20-year anniversary this year, and held its annual two-week seminars for scholars in Oxford, UK this summer, as usual. And yet this year is not like other years given the alarming growth of antisemitism around the world and even in our own country. Patricia Behre, Ph.D., will bring us an update on the state of academic engagement with this topic – the perils and plans to combat antisemitism – drawing from her participation as a scholar-in-residence, hearing from an international team of scholars, at the ISGAP Oxford seminar in August 2024.

**Patricia Behre, P.D.** is Associate Professor and Chair of History at Fairfield University. This update follows from her course at Bigelow: “Antisemitism: Medieval Hatred, Modern Reality,” which she taught most recently in Spring 2024. There will be time for audience questions and discussion.

## LOVE LETTERS FROM A PATRIOT

\$12

**Elinor Upton Brigs**

Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

September 26

War letters are history—real time, first person history, written as it happened by those most intimately involved. John D. Upton's first letter to his wife Katie was written on Friday July 31, 1942, from Fort Belvoir, Virginia. It is the first of more than 200 letters that Lieutenant Upton wrote to his wife and family until his discharge on December 12, 1945, as a captain. He was assigned to the 19<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineer Regiment and was Company Commander of "B" Company. The 19<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineers served in the all-important North African Campaign, the Invasion of Sicily and the Italian Campaign.

By 1946, John and Katie had two daughters, Mary and Elinor. They eventually moved to Greens Farms, CT. where John (aka Jack) spent the rest of his life. It was only by chance that these letters and photographs were discovered when cleaning out his home after he died in 2005 at age of 95. Clearly they needed to be preserved. Elinor felt compelled to share her father's experiences in a beautiful and unique book, *Love Letters from a Patriot*.

**Elinor Upton Biggs** inherits her love of writing from her great, great, great, grandfather, P.T. Barnum and her father, an advertising executive. She was an English Major and a graduate of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Her career has included senior marketing positions in telecommunications, financial and fashion industries. In addition to her business career she has been involved with a variety of nonprofits including the Arts, as a longstanding member of the Board of Directors of the Barnum Museum and as a volunteer for Make-A-Wish Connecticut. In addition to *Love Letters from a Patriot – a memoir*, Elinor is the author of three poetry books and several children's books. She lives in Southport, CT with her husband.

**DARK MONEY**  
**\$12**

**Harvey Heyman**

Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.  
October 3

This two-hour course will discuss the book *Dark Money* by Jane Mayer, written in 2016. The book describes in vivid detail how a small group of ultrawealthy individuals have organized to help to fund the radical right. Those discussed include the Koch brothers, Mellon-Scaife, Coors, Olin and DeVos. Their views are that social programs and federal regulations weaken America, and that the country should allow for free-market capitalism to reign. Through their foundations and other monied creations they have impacted tax policy, climate change beliefs, supreme court appointments and academic teachings. Their quest to alter the American political system began in the 1970's and is in much evidence today. The course will shed light on the major players, their central ideas, the institutions they've established in furtherance of their goals and how they have shaped America's political landscape.

**Harvey Heyman** received a BA from Brown University and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He retired in 2022 as IT Director and Business Planner for a hospital-owned chain of physical therapy clinics. Harvey is a passionate consumer of current political and social events and feels we are at a pivotal point in the health of American democracy.

# **FATHER OF THE IMPRESSIONIST MOVEMENT**

## **\$12**

**Scott Verchin**

Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.  
October 10

Camille Pissarro was a French Jewish painter and is widely considered the Father of the Impressionist movement. He was a mentor to many of the world's great painters including Cézanne, Degas, Renoir, Seurat, Gauguin, Monet and Van Gogh, despite some of them having anti-Semitic beliefs. We'll explore these relationships and how they impacted this great art movement.

**Scott Verchin** is an independent business consultant, which includes the visual arts and museum sectors. Throughout his career, he has served such notable roles as Publisher of MUSEUMS and ARCHAEOLOGY magazines. Scott has also been a contributor to Art Market Magazine covering US exhibitions. As a lifelong patron of the arts, Scott has frequented art museums and galleries on five different continents. Mr. Verchin hosted his first exhibition, BLACK & WHITE PAINTINGS, on Long Island in 1989.

# **CONNECTICUT & INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

## **\$12**

**Michael Tomashefsky**

Thursday afternoon 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

October 24

This two-hour class will consist of two parts. Part one will cover seasonal landscapes around Connecticut. Part two will cover travel, landscape and architectural photography in Europe, the Middle East and tropical islands. Come along on this stunning journey.

**Michael Tomashefsky** grew up in a small town in suburban NYC. The property bordered about 300 acres of woods and he was enchanted by all these had to offer. From this he developed a lifelong interest in the beauty of the natural world. He got his first camera when he was 8, and was immediately taken with its ability to capture this beauty. At the same time, Michael was introduced to history's great landscape painters and studied their techniques for creating scenes of impact and interest. This has greatly influenced his photographic style. Michael moved to Connecticut about 50 years ago to take advantage of the beautiful scenery here and has yet to run out of inspiration.



**2024 Fall Registration**  
**This form is only for those not paying online.**

**Tuition is \$30 or \$12 per course (\*plus a \$25 registration fee  
valid September through June for those not residing  
in Fairfield).**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee (valid September-June for out-of-town  
participants). \$ 25.00

# of \$30 Courses \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# of \$12 Courses \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Due & Enclosed = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**The Bigelow Center  
for Senior Activities  
100 Mona Terrace  
Fairfield, CT 06824**

*The Fairfield Senior Center  
is a program of the  
Town of Fairfield*

First Class Presort  
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