The Town of Fairfield and
the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities
are pleased to offer

# Lifelong Learners Winter 2027

**January 11 to February 8, 2027**
**Live & In Person**



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

# IMPORTANT REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR WINTER 2027 LIFELONG LEARNERS

Lifelong Learners is a nonprofit, community-based organization for adults who have a love of learning. The program is offered through the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities. To participate, you must be a current member of the Bigelow Center.

To become a member or renew your membership, complete the membership application online at www.fairfieldct.org/bigelow/membership or visit the Bigelow Center in person. Out-of-town members must pay the $25 annual membership fee before registering for classes.

Class registration is available in the following ways:

1. **In Person**
   Register at the Bigelow Center and pay by cash or check made payable to the Bigelow Center.

2. **By Mail**
   Mail your completed registration form and a check payable to the Bigelow Center to:
   Bigelow Center
   100 Mona Terrace
   Fairfield, CT 06824

3. **Online**
   Current Bigelow Center members with an active MyActiveCenter account may register and pay online at MyActiveCenter.com.

## “GREAT HOAXES”

$15
Dave Shafer
Monday, January 11, 10:00 to Noon

Did Marco Polo actually ever go to China about 1285 or even leave his house? The jury is still out. How did P.T. Barnum (local boy makes good) make his own profitable hoax about the Cardiff Giant hoax? Discover the answer to these and other great hoaxes!

*David Shafer is multi-talented and has given classes for many years at the Bigelow Center on topics such as opera, operettas, silent films, fascinating personalities, the technology of computer chips, short novellas, photography, ancient history, the history of weaving, and other subjects.*

## “HIGHLIGHTS OF JAPANESE ART”

$15
Dr. Ive Covaci
Tuesday, January 12, 1:00 to 3:00

This course will present eight exemplary works of Japanese art spanning more than 10,000 years, from prehistoric pottery to contemporary art, with painted scrolls, screens, and Buddhist sculpture in between. We will look closely and learn about the makers, materials, styles, patrons, iconography, and uses of the works, while placing them in their historical contexts. Participants will gain an introduction to the diversity of Japanese artistic expression, an understanding of its craftsmanship, and an appreciation of subject matter ranging from the poetic to the playful to the profound.

*Dr. Ive Covaci is a specialist in Japanese art and has been teaching Asian art history at Fairfield University since 2010. She holds a PhD in art history from Yale University.*

## “MIDTERM ELECTION REVIEW”

$15
Harvey Heyman
Thursday, January 14, 10:00 to Noon

This course will present an analysis of the US 2026 Midterm Elections. “Where do we go from here” now that the Democrats have won both chambers?

*Harvey Heyman retired in 2022 from a career in the business side of healthcare. He received a BA from Brown University and an MBA from the Harvard Business School. He is a passionate consumer of contemporary political events.*

## “ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM”

$15
Dr. Marcie Slepian
Thursday, January 14, 1:00 to 3:00

Isabella Stewart Gardner had a vision for an intimate experience of great art masterpieces. After sitting in on the first art history courses at Harvard and many, many art-filled journeys to Europe and Asia she collected outstanding works of art including ones by Titian, Velazquez, Whistler and Sargent (both good friends). She built a Venetian palazzo in Boston to display them in a unique fashion. She also was a renowned gardener and made sure to include a gorgeous display in the courtyard. As a collector, she was untiring, knowledgeable, and understood the deeply emotional experience art can evoke.

*Dr. Marcie Slepian has an AB in Art from Brown University and a PhD in the History of Art from Yale University. Her specialty is Italian Renaissance and Baroque Art. She has taught at the Bigelow Center for the past 10 years.*

## “AFRICAN AMERICAN HUMOR PART II”

$15
Dr. Benjamin Schwartz
Friday, January 15, 10:00 to Noon

This class will build on African American Humor Part I (offered in September 2026), adding new scholarship, theories, and hilarious examples to our already-rich discussion. Participation in Part I is not a prerequisite for enrollment in Part II—all levels of knowledge and interest are welcome. We look forward to learning and laughing together.

*Dr. Benjamin Schwartz holds a PhD in English from Vanderbilt University, an MA in English from Columbia University, and a BA in American Studies from Brown University.*

## “The Media Landscape: Its History and Its Future”

$30
Dr. Jonathan Silverman
Thursdays, January 21 and 28, 1:00 to 3:00

January 21: The instructor will talk about the way journalism has developed in the last fifty years, with an emphasis on the last ten.

January 28: He will discuss the future of journalism, reasons to be optimistic and reasons to worry. He also will look at the historic business model of journalism and why it’s failing.

*Dr. Jonathan Silverman is professor and chair of English at UMass Lowell and director of American Studies and Sports Studies. He is the editor of Astros and Asterisks: The Houston Sign-Stealing Scandal Explained and author of Nine Choices: Johnny Cash and American Culture.*

# “AI FOR EVERYDAY LIFE”

$30

Dr. John Varghese

Mondays, January 25 and February 1 and 8, 1:00 to 3:00

Learn how to use artificial intelligence in practical, everyday ways. This interactive course includes live demonstrations of tools such as ChatGPT, tips for asking better questions, and examples for research, writing, planning, travel, hobbies, and problem-solving. We’ll also briefly explore how AI works, its limitations and risks, and key policy and societal questions so participants can take part confidently in conversations about AI’s future.

*Dr. Varghese, “VJ”, John is a physicist, technologist, speaker, and educator with a passion for making complex ideas accessible and engaging. He has a background in scientific research and extensive experience leading technology initiatives for financial institutions. VJ teaches a wide range of topics, including artificial intelligence, astronomy and cosmology.*

**WINTER 2027 COURSE REGISTRATION APPLICATION**

**This form is only for those not paying online.**
**One form per person, please.**

**A Single Session Course is $15; Multiple Session Courses are $30.**
**(A $25 registration fee is valid September through June for those not residing in Fairfield).**

Name_____

Phone#_____

Email_____

Street_____

Apt.#_____

Town_____State_____Zip_____

New address? _____

Course Title _____

Course Title _____

Course Title _____

Course Title _____

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

# of 1 session courses_____ x $15.00 = $_____

# of 4 session courses_____ x $30.00 = $_____

Total Due & Enclosed = $_____

**Please make checks payable to and mail to:**

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