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September, 2008

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## President's Message

The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported on January 29, 1939 that two German scientists, Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann, had demonstrated that the uranium atom could be split into two or more parts. A young physicist, Louis Alvarez, on reading the account stopped his barber and got up from the chair. He ran to the Radiation Laboratory at Berkeley to tell his colleagues. When he told Dr. Robert Oppenheimer the news, Oppenheimer went to his blackboard and wrote some formulae which proved that this atom splitting or 'fission' process could not happen.

Alvarez, exuberant and therefore undaunted by Dr. Oppenheimer's superior knowledge, experience and mathematical proof, successfully repeated the described experiment in his laboratory the next day. He invited Dr. Oppenheimer to see the experimental proof on his oscilloscope – low level alpha particle pulses emitted by the uranium contrasted with much larger spiking pulses. This oscilloscope screen graphic indicated the presence of higher energy particles much larger and heavier than the naturally emitted alpha particles from the un-fissioned uranium.

After less than fifteen minutes contemplation Dr. Oppenheimer agreed the reaction was indeed fission and postulated that in the process extra neutrons would become available to fission more uranium atoms<sup>†</sup>. This recognition of something that 'could not happen' happening began the thought processes which led to the age of nuclear weapons, energy, chemistry, and medicine.

Review the collection of topics identified in the Curriculum Committee Report below and the course descriptions in the Academy Fall 2008 Catalog. Identify those subjects and short course offerings in which you have experience and knowledge. Register for those classes as well as others in which you have a general interest. Given that you may be cur-

rent or decades steeped in your present knowledge of a given topic, you might well be surprised to learn something radically different than what you knew or perceived. Then, though you may not bound with excitement from of your barbers chair, hair dressers chair, or easy chair; you will enjoy the rewards of having expanded your knowledge.

*Larry Peyser, Academy President*

## **Be Sure You Receive Your Copy of *The Spiral***

*The Spiral* is sent each month to the email addresses of record for each Academy member. Paper copies are mailed to those without email addresses.

If you are not reading your own personal emailed copy, it may be that the Academy has not been able to deliver your copy to you. Every month many mailings are returned as undeliverable or otherwise not received by their addressees.

Common causes of email delivery failures are:

- Incorrect email address on file.
- Mailbox full.
- Mailing classified as spam by software on your computer or on your email server. Be sure to check any folder in which spam is placed.

You may contact Laura Anderson at USCA (641-3563 / [lauraa@usca.edu](mailto:lauraa@usca.edu)) to update your email address.

## ***Academy Courses filling at a Record Pace***

Classroom size limits and other considerations cause the number of participants that can be accommodated in some Academy courses and events to be limited. As a result, you may not get into all the courses and events you request. When you receive your receipt back from the USCA Continuing Education Office, be sure to check it carefully to determine your status in each course and event. In some cases, you may see that a course you requested is

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<sup>†</sup> Kai Bird, Martin J. Sherwin; *American Prometheus*, p166; Alfred A Knopf, 2005.

already filled and you are wait-listed in case a cancellation causes a space to open up.

### **Academy Members: Please Wear Your Academy Name Tags**

Academy members were all issued name tags last year. New members and returning members that need new nametags may request them via a sign-up sheet at each monthly meeting. With a broad membership from all over the surrounding area, we each can't possibly know everybody else. Please wear your nametag to Academy functions so that everyone will know who you are. We *ARE* all seniors with senior memories, after all.

### **Rob Courteney to speak at September Monthly Meeting**

Mr. Rob Courteney is a native of South Africa who is now a US Citizen. He was raised in the gold mining area near Johannesburg. After a short career working underground in the Zambian area mines he studied at the Rhodes University in South Africa. He graduated with double degrees in Economics and Psychology.

Rob spent most of his working career with Kodak in South Africa and the U.S and retired to Aiken in 2005. With regular visits, and with family in South Africa, he maintains close contact with people and events there.

Mr. Courteney's topic for presentation and discussion at this general meeting is "South African Perceptions of the USA".

The September General Meeting will be held Friday, September 12 at 2:30 pm in Penland 106 on the USCA campus. Following the meeting will be a reception with refreshments

### **Special Event: Meet the Author – Bernard Kearse**

Bernard Kearse graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Wofford College and received his law degree from the University of South Carolina and his master's degree in law from the University of Miami. He currently practices law in Atlanta. Much of his legal work is with Wills and Testaments. His latest book, *Bethany: Adventures of the Mighty Mustard Seed*, is a book that dares to unlock the adventure of the Old Testament. He uses time travel to explore both pre-history and historical life and events of the Old

Testament. Bethany and her angel friend Gabriel go back in time to the Holy Land to find Moses. Mr. Kearse is a delightful speaker. Please come and join us for a great afternoon. Friday September 23, 2:30 pm, USCA Humanities & Social Sciences 103. This session is open to the public.

### **A Message from the Curriculum Committee**

During the fall of 2007 and spring of 2008, the Academy Curriculum Committee issued interest surveys in many classes. Sixty-one were returned in the fall and thirty-four in the spring. The topics listed most often (in order of preference) were: History, Political Science, Religion, Health, Literature, Middle East, Music, Current Events, Far East, and Economics. We have analyzed these results and have tried to provide upcoming classes accordingly.

A broad categorization of classes would include *Plantation Life*, *History of Aiken*, and *Horse Creek Valley* under the area of History – the number one choice. Under Political Science, you'll find *Terrible Decisions*, *Islamic Political Thought* (also Middle East and Religion), and *South Africa*. Classes on Religion are *Genesis* and *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*. We're offering *Cardiac Health: Living Heart Smart* as a Health class. Our always popular Literature classes include: *Russian Spies and Assassins*, *America on Paper and Celluloid*, and *Short Story and Film*. Our Music offering will be *Baroque to Big Bands* and Current Event topics are *What Were They Thinking?*, *Mexican Immigration*, and *Horse Sense* as well as *Horse Cents* for Economics. The only area not addressed was the Far East, although we did offer *Made in China* last spring. We received many requests for lighter, non-academic courses, and to that end we have *Help - I Want to (Resell, Renovate, Reorganize) My House!*, and *Wine Tasting* as well as our outings of Steeplechase, Columbia trip, and Holiday Luncheon.

Please know that we take your suggestions very seriously. If you have suggested a topic and don't see it offered, it is not because we are ignoring it. There are many reasons we might not offer a suggested class. Sometimes courses are offered elsewhere such as the Center for the Arts or Hitchcock Healthcare, and we don't want to compete with these organizations. Often we are unable to find a teacher for the class. We are always on the lookout for qualified instructors, and our surveys asked our membership if they would be interested in teaching a class. We received two responses to this question and will be following up with these individuals – who happen to be two of our most popular instructors. We make an effort to have popular instructors return as well as

look for new sources. If you or someone you know would like to teach a class, please let us know.

The top suggestion was that we get lapel microphones for our speakers, which we have done. Other suggestions included questioners being heard, hand-outs being available to all class members, and issues with operating the multi-media equipment, for which we apologize.

We were told that people like to have most classes on Mondays and so we loaded them for the fall. As you can see from our schedule, most classes were Monday through Wednesday because that's what participants have indicated they wanted. Recently, a few people said they would like the schedule more evenly spread out. Please let us know your preference. We have tried to make it so that someone could take every single class if they so desired. Whereas, this may technically be possible, please do not sign up for every class if you do not intend to attend. This is particularly a problem with classes that are limited in size.

We are currently working on great course offerings consistent with your requests for the Spring 2009 term. Be aware that there will always be a delay in getting survey requests reflected in course offerings due to necessary planning time and catalog printing schedules. We're looking forward to seeing you in the fall.

*Erna Arkin, Curriculum Chair*

### Courses Beginning in September

The Academy is bringing you a full schedule of courses for the fall term. Please see the published course catalog for more complete descriptions. To enroll, return the form in the published catalog or contact Laura Anderson at USCA (641-3563 / [lauraa@usca.edu](mailto:lauraa@usca.edu)).

- ***Terrible Decisions*** – Past Academy President Vince Coughlin considers several Supreme Court decisions that may charitably be viewed as tragic in result, having questionable Constitutional basis, and/or lacking in legal clarity. The cases to be considered relate to the issues of slavery, civil rights, affirmative action, marital privacy, abortion, executions, and election law.  
Dates: 4 Mondays, beginning Sept. 8  
Time: 11:00 - 11:50 a.m.
- ***Plantation Life: A View of Our Past*** – This course will cover plantation life in our local area as well as view a traveling art exhibit dealing with The Plantation in American Art.  
Dates: Sept. 9 – USCA  
Sept. 16 – Redcliffe Plantation  
Sept. 23 – Morris Museum  
Time: 11:00am – 1:00pm
- ***Mexican Immigration*** – This course will consider economic conditions in Mexico that have spurred Mexican immigration to the US, the effect of US Immigration laws, and the impact of Mexican immigration. Brown bag lunch October 1 (time and place TBD).  
Dates: 4 Wednesdays, beginning Sept. 10  
Time: 10:00 - 10:50 a.m.
- ***Evolution: Theory or Reality?*** - In three sessions, Dr. Harry E. Shealy (Biology, USCA) will explain some of the historical background that gave rise to the ongoing debate over evolution, including what is science and what is not science. He will offer some of the historical and current explanations for the mechanisms of evolution. He will also discuss various views on the current debates and controversies about teaching evolution versus the "balanced" approach of teaching Darwinian evolution and Intelligent Design.  
Dates: 3 Wednesdays, beginning Sept. 10  
Time: 11:00 - 11:50 a.m.
- ***Islamic Political Thought*** - Dr. Steven Millies focuses on the forces that have shaped the political traditions of the Muslim world. The course examines key figures from the time of the Prophet Muhammad until the 20th century. Special emphasis is on the interplay between the Muslim political tradition and our own political tradition.  
Dates: 4 Mondays, beginning Sept. 15  
Time: 10:00am (Sept. dates)  
11:00am (Oct. 6 brown bag lunch discussion)
- ***Russians, Spies, and Assassins*** – Past Academy President Mike Lithgoe leads a discussion of espionage, from Moscow to London, from MI-5 to the Mossad, in fact and fiction. Students are encouraged to purchase or share the following three novels:  
*The Messenger* by Daniel Silva  
*The Collaborator of Bethlehem* by Matt Beynon Rees  
*Illegal Action* by Stella Rimington  
Dates: 4 Mondays, beginning Sept. 15  
Time: 1:00pm (Sept. dates)  
11:30am (October 6)
- ***America on Paper and Celluloid*** – Don Blount leads discussions at USCA of three great American novels, followed by Wednesday screenings of the film versions with Kevin Grogan at the Morris Museum Meets monthly for three months. Sept.'s topic: Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. (Note: due to inability to obtain a good movie print of *The Scarlet Letter*, on Sept 17, Richard

Llewellyn's *How Green Was My Valley* will be shown instead. Attendees are requested to read this book also.)

Dates: Monday, Sept. 15, 3:00 – 3:50pm

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 12:30 – 3:30pm

- **Cardiac Health: Living Heart Smart** - Joyce Pompey, RN, will teach a course on Cardiac Health. Topics covered will include the structure and function of the heart, lab test values and their significance, lifestyle factors impacting your heart, basic understanding of the EKG, recent technological advances and innovations in the cardiac field, and amazing facts about your heart as a dynamic machine.

Dates: 3 Tuesdays, beginning Sept. 16

Time: 2:00 - 2:50 pm.

- **Fall Wine Tasting** – Spanish wines will be the subject of this special session hosted by Lorraine Riley at her restaurant, Riley's Whitby Bull. Additional \$25 fee includes Spanish wines and tapas. Limited to 20 enrollees.

Date: Monday, Sept. 22.

Time: 3:00 - 3:50 p.m.

Location: Riley's Whitby Bull.

801 East Pine Log Road

### Non-Academy Items that May be of Interest

#### A Volunteer Opportunity for Academy Members at USC Aiken



The USC Aiken Convocation Center on the campus of the University of South Carolina Aiken is looking for enthusiastic senior volunteers to be the welcoming, smiling "faces" that customers encounter when they walk through the front doors. Available positions are ticket sellers, ticket scanners, and ushers. There are also some positions available part time during the work days that assist the Box Office and the Events/Operations Manager.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to enjoy the entertainment, to win prizes through the "How You Doin'" customer service program, and to experience the behind the scenes fun and hard work it takes to put on an event for the community. Events at the Convocation Center are typically scheduled in the evenings and on weekends and the commitment is

usually around 4 hours per event. They offer flexibility in scheduling.

If you are interested in learning more about volunteering at the USC Aiken Convocation Center you may attend the Welcome meeting on September 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. at the USC Aiken Convocation Center in the VIP Room. If you will attend, please RSVP to Matt Herpich at 803-641-3719 or [matth@usca.edu](mailto:matth@usca.edu).

In addition, Jennifer Kelly will make a short presentation on this opportunity at the September 12 Academy General Meeting.



**Westobou Festival,**  
**September 18-27,**  
**in Augusta, GA**

The Westobou Festival, designed to celebrate Augusta's wealth of artistic talent, will encompass a variety of performances and presentations by local, regional, and nationally-recognized individuals and organizations, primarily in the disciplines of dance, music, theatre and visual arts.

Each day and evening of the 10 day Festival will be filled with a variety of dance, musical, theatrical and visual arts presentations designed to dazzle visitors and showcase the wealth of local, regional and nationally-acclaimed artistic talent that has exploded in this area resulting in a cultural renaissance.

As part of the Festival, past Academy President Mike Lithgoe will be reading some poems on 23 Aug at the Cat Noir Theater with The Augusta Author's Club. He says there will be a box supper, fiction readings and a one act play too.

For more information, visit the Festival's website at [www.westoboufestival.com](http://www.westoboufestival.com).

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**Academy Officers:** Larry Peyser, President; Vince Coughlin, Immediate Past President; (Vacancy), President Elect; Glenn Knowles, Secretary, and Edith Mayer, Treasurer.

**Chairpersons and Other Members of the Academy:**  
**Board of Directors:** Erna Arkin, Curriculum Chair; Geraldine Bankhoff, Curriculum Chair-Elect; Judy Perkins and Elizabeth Majors, Publicity Co-Chairs; Kathy Shulz, Membership Chair.

**Non-Members:** Mary Anne Cavanaugh, Director of Conferences & Continuing Education; Dr. Elaine Lacey, Faculty Liaison; Dr. Deidre Martin, Vice Chancellor for University Advancement.

**Academy on the Web:**

[www.usca.edu/conted/academy.html](http://www.usca.edu/conted/academy.html)

ACADEMY CALENDAR – SEPTEMBER 2008						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Labor Day	2	3 <i>Curriculum Committee</i> 9am [B Conf]	4	5	6
7	8 <i>Terrible Decisions</i> 11am [H215]	9 <i>Plantation Life</i> 11am [P106]	10 <i>Mexican Immigration</i> 10am [P106]  <i>Evolution</i> 11am [H215]	11	12 <i>Board Meeting</i> 12:30pm [P110]  <i>General Meeting</i> 2pm [P106]	13
14	15 <i>Islamic Political Thought</i> 10am [P110]  <i>Terrible Decisions</i> 11am [H215]  <i>Russians, Spies, and Assassins</i> 1pm [P110]  <i>America on Paper: Scarlet Letter</i> 3pm [P106]	16 <i>Plantation Life</i> 11am [Redcliffe Plantation]  <i>Cardiac Health</i> 2pm [P106]	17 <i>Mexican Immigration</i> 10am [P106]  <i>Evolution</i> 11am [H215]  <del><i>America</i></del> <i>Wales on Celluloid: How Green Was My Valley</i> 12:30pm [Morris Museum]	18	19 <i>Meet Bernard Kearse</i> 2pm [H103]	20
21	22 <i>Islamic Political Thought</i> 10am [P110]  <i>Terrible Decisions</i> 11am [H215]  <i>Russians, Spies, and Assassins</i> 1pm [P110]  <i>Wine Tasting</i> 3pm [Riley's Whitby Bull]	23 <i>Plantation Life</i> 11am [Morris Museum]  <i>Cardiac Health</i> 2pm [P106]	24 <i>Mexican Immigration</i> 10am [P106]  <i>Evolution</i> 11am [H215]	25	26	27
28	29 <i>Islamic Political Thought</i> 10am [P110]  <i>Terrible Decisions</i> 11am [H215]  <i>Russians, Spies, and Assassins</i> 1pm [P110]	30 <i>Cardiac Health</i> 2pm [P106]				

[Location Codes]

B = Business &amp; Education Bldg @ USCA

N = Nursing Bldg @ USCA

P = Penland Bldg at USCA

H = Humanities &amp; Social Sciences Bldg @ USCA

CC = Cedar Creek Community Building