

Observations

Study ♦ Activity ♦ Growth ♦ Enrichment ♦ Winter 2026

THE LATEST ON ACTIVITIES — WHAT'S GOING ON



Activities represent interest groups that create their own agenda to explore their passions. They self-determine where and when to meet, on-site, at member homes or visits to whatever venues match their interests. Unlike study groups, activities continue as long as the interested members decide to meet. Some current suggestions are a group interested in looking at different hobbies, architectural trips to visit craft homes, polished concrete homes, etc.

In 2026, Activities celebrated two and half years of increased membership and expansion of groups. For example, ***The Play Reading Group*** was so successful a second Play Reading Group was created. The Play Reading Group gives you a chance to actually be a character while enacting the original script. Besides the fun of acting, hearing the lines up close provides a new and deeper understanding of the meanings, innuendos and sly references that make plays so enjoyable. Discussion follows and further enriches the experience. If you are interested in joining, please contact Jana B.



The Opera Group has also expanded its offerings. While still primarily watching and discussing operas, they have added *light opera* and Broadway musical performances based on operas. *The Three Penny Opera*, the first such offering, is a “ballad opera” based on a play by Kurt Weil and Bertolt Brecht, and full of well-known popular songs such as “Mack, The Knife.” The Group will also add movie theater performances off-site (Metropolitan Opera performances). If you would like to attend some or all, get in touch with Cal T.



In response to input from The Dinner Group members, we are planning a slightly different version, ***The Brunch Group***. Dinner Group members indicated strong interest in meeting earlier so members could return home before nightfall. They also requested individual food orders to allow for personal taste preferences. Whoever coordinates will no longer have to negotiate menu items and pricing. Anyone interested in joining/leading should contact either Wilma H. or Marcy G. by February 15.

The Film Group has the longest history of any of the SAGE Activity Groups. They meet once a month and review two to three films the members have viewed on their own prior to the meeting. After very lively discussions, another set of films are chosen for the next group meeting. Films can be vintage, current, documentary, drama, comedy, or international. Members determine the content and scope. The group generally meets on Zoom but can also arrange to view a film in person. Contact Phyllis H for information.

The Current Events Group continues to meet to try to understand what is happening here and now. ***Fact-based discussions*** cover a wide range of topics including local, national and international issues. All perspectives are welcome. The group explores social, technical, political, cultural and other topics introduced by group members. Anyone interested in joining should contact Wilma H. or Marcy G.

PROCEDURES FOR ACTIVITY GROUPS

The Activities Administrators are Marcy Goldstein and Wilma Helms.

Members who have an idea for an activity group they would like to initiate and lead should write up a brief description of the activity with pertinent information and email this to Marcy or Wilma.

The Activities Administrator will review the proposed idea for consistency with SAGE policies and principles. Groups may not have a commercial or purely partisan purpose. It is not the intent of the administrators to filter ideas based on their personal preferences. The administrator will communicate with the submitting member to clarify details.

The administrator will then have a global e-mail sent to assess the interest of other SAGE members. If there is interest in starting the new activity, the administrator will assist the leader in scheduling the first meeting.

There is no minimum number of participants required to launch a new activity. It is up to the group to determine how many participants they would be willing to take.

Once the activity is launched, the ongoing administration of the group, such as scheduling meetings, contacting participants, promoting the activity and recruiting new participants is up to the group leader.

The activity administrators will be available for consultation or advice, if desired by the leader.

There are no rules regarding how long an activity group will remain active. If participation wanes or if the leader chooses to leave the group, participants can decide to dissolve the group or to choose a new leader.

If the group is dissolved, the leader should notify the activity administrators.



"On May 8, 1965, more than a year after Kennedy's death, Dwight D. Eisenhower did something that revealed just how deeply the loss still affected him—he traveled to the Kennedy Library groundbreaking ceremony in Boston, despite his own failing health and doctors' warnings against the trip. Eisenhower, now 74 and recovering from his third heart attack, stood beside Jacqueline Kennedy and told the assembled crowd something that made even hardened reporters weep: 'President Kennedy possessed the greatest campaign weapon any man could have—he had Jacqueline Kennedy by his side, but more than that, he possessed a quality I grew to admire deeply in our many conversations—the courage to admit when he didn't know something and the wisdom to seek counsel.'

What made this moment so powerful was that Eisenhower then revealed he'd been keeping every letter Kennedy had ever written to him, bound in a private collection he called 'Letters from a Young Lion.' He donated them that day to the future Kennedy Library, saying he wanted history to know that their friendship had been real, that politics hadn't divided them where it mattered most. Jackie Kennedy squeezed Eisenhower's hand and whispered something that those nearby heard: 'He called you his North Star, General. He never stopped seeking your guidance.' Eisenhower's voice broke as he replied, 'And I never stopped believing in him.' Here were two people from different worlds—the widowed First Lady and the retired Republican general—united in grief and mutual respect, showing us that the bonds forged in service to country transcend everything else. That's the America worth fighting for—the one where we see each other's humanity first.

WORDS, WORDS, WORDS

stochastic terrorism

refers to the public demonization of a person or group, often through inflammatory rhetoric, that can incite violence from an individual or individuals, even if the rhetoric doesn't explicitly call for it. It's a phenomenon where influential figures use language to create a climate of fear and animosity, making violence statistically probable, though the specific act and perpetrator remain unpredictable.

vexillology noun | vex·il·lol·o·gy əvək-sə-ələ-lə-jē

The study of flags is called vexillology. “

Enthusiastic vexillologists might be able to tell you why Nepal's flag has such a weird shape, or what you legally can't do with flags in different countries. “

kakistocracy noun | kak-i-sto-cra-cy

1. Government by the least suitable or competent citizens of a state:

“The danger is that this will reduce us to kakistocracy.”

2. A state or society governed by its least suitable or competent citizens.

erstwhile adverb/adjective | ərstwīl

The adverb *erstwhile* has been part of English since at least the 16th century, but it is formed from two words that are much older. It comes from the Old English words *aer*, meaning "early," and *hwil*, which has the same meaning as the modern word while. (The English word ere, meaning "before," is also a descendant of *aer*.) These days *erstwhile* is more likely to be encountered as an adjective, as in “erstwhile enemies.” That adjective use is a much more recent development, having joined the language about three centuries after the adverb.

myrmidon noun | my-mir-mi-don

A follower or subordinate of a powerful person, typically one who is unscrupulous or carries out orders unquestioningly

abstruse adjective | əb-STROOSS

Abstruse is a formal word used to describe something that is hard to understand.

“I avoided taking this class in past semesters because the subject matter is so abstruse, but the professor does a good job explaining concepts as clearly as possible.”

ineffable adjective | [inəfəb(ə)l]

too great or extreme to be expressed or inscribed in words

diachronic adjective | die-krānɪk

concerned with the way in which something, especially language, has developed and evolved through time. Often contrasted with *synchronic*.

The census is also a diachronic dataset.

Linguistic change is the diachronic aspect of linguistic variation.

metonymy noun | muh-TAH-nuh-mē

Metonymy refers to a figure of speech in which a word that is associated with something is used to refer to the thing itself, as when *crown* is used to mean “king” or “queen.”

Metonymy is closely related to [synecdoche](#), which is a figure of speech in which the word for a part of something is used to refer to the thing itself (as in “need some extra hands for the project”), or less commonly, the word for a thing itself is used to refer to part of that thing (as when *society* denotes “high society”).

synecdoche noun | sə-nek-dō-(ə)kē

a figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole (such as *fifty sail* for *fifty ships*), the whole for a part (such as *society* for *high society*), the species for the genus (such as *cutthroat* for *assassin*), the genus for the species (such as *a creature* for *a man*), or the name of the material for the thing made (such as *boards* for *stage*)

Rage-bait (also spelled as *ragebait* and *rage bait*)

is content (usually, but not always, found online) that tries to provoke anger or outrage, as a means of gaining attention or making money. The word is also used as a verb (“to make intentionally provocative or inflammatory statements”). *Rage-bait* often refers to inflammatory content posted online for the purpose of gaining ad revenue through clicks, but it can also refer to trolling behavior, in which someone says or posts something offensive simply for the enjoyment of eliciting a strong reaction.

At its core, rage bait is backed by algorithms which seek to keep users scrolling, responding and consuming the content, which in turn results in the social media platform profiting. In this way outrage is monetised by the social media platforms.

Where does *rage-bait* come from? *Rage-bait* appears to have sprung up in the 2010s, formed in similar fashion to the earlier [clickbait](#). It combines *rage* (“violent and uncontrolled anger”) with *bait* (“to try to make angry with criticism or insults.”)

How is *rage-bait* used? *Rage-bait* is slang, but not vulgar, and is found in a variety of types of writing.

fascism the U.S. government document explained, “is government by the few and for the few. The objective is seizure and control of the economic, political, social, and cultural life of the state.” “The people run democratic governments, but fascist governments run the people.”

quiddity noun | *KWID-uh-tee*

refers to the essence of a thing—that is, whatever makes something the type of thing that it is. *Quiddity* can also refer to a small and usually trivial complaint or criticism, or to a quirk or eccentricity in someone's behavior

orthogonal adjective | or -thog-o-nal or THagen-l

Of or involving right angles, at right angles.

In statistics (of variates) statistically independent.

synchrony noun | [sɪNGkrənē]

Simultaneous action, development, or occurrence

The state of operating or developing according to the same time scale as something else: "some individuals do not remain in synchrony with the twenty-four-hour day" synchronic treatment or study:

"the structuralist distinction between synchrony and diachrony"

dirigisme noun or *dirigism* (from French *diriger* 'to direct'),

refers to an economic system in which the state takes an active and directive role in shaping and guiding the economy, rather than limiting itself to a purely regulatory or hands-off approach within a market economy. As an economic doctrine, *dirigisme* stands in contrast to *laissez-faire*

alacritous adjective | [əlakrətəs]

brisk or lively, cheerful readiness

“The right-leaning *New York Post* called out the “alacritous and misleading rhetoric” coming from President Donald Trump’s administration in the wake of Saturday’s shooting death of **Alex Patti**. “

almond mom phrase

a mother who pushes her daughter to be skinny, through diet

THE WORLD VIEW FROM OUR SAGE FELLOW TRAVELERS:



THE EFFORTLESS TRAVELERS

TIRZA HAVIV & YOSSI KHEN

A Tour of National Parks

“we decided that every year we will visit at least one place we haven’t seen before, and we kept that tradition going. “

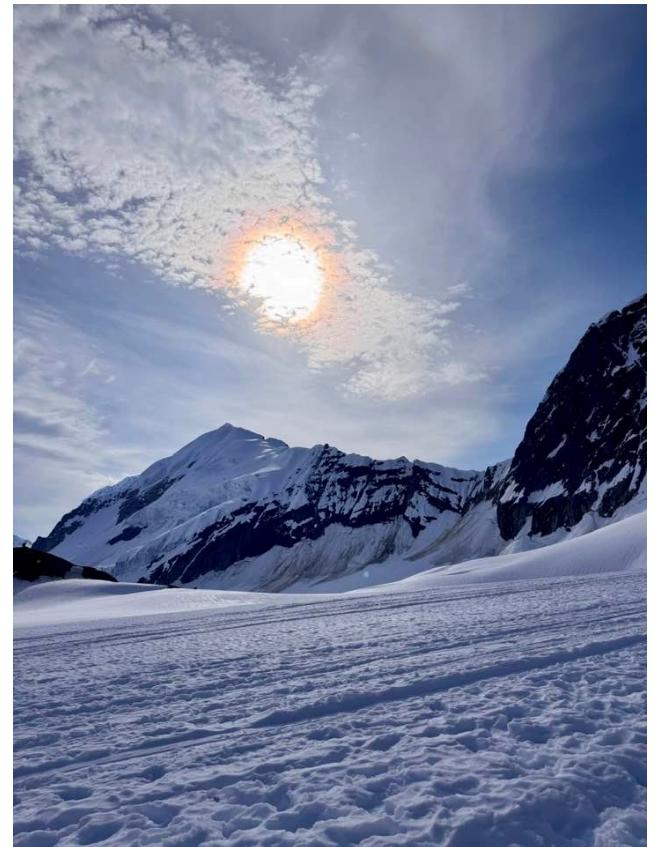






September 9 at 3:23 AM

Canceling our Mammoth Lakes part of the trip, you can see why. Driving through the smoke that came all the way from Fresno fires. Very eerie driving with masks on until we finally saw blue sky again. Nature has many facets we need to navigate its might.



A DAY IS A LIFE

By Paul Clarke

A day is a life.

We are born each morning when we wake.

As the sun climbs through the morning hours we flex our muscles and tackle our responsibilities with energy and purpose.

Morning is our exuberant adolescence.

Lunch is our proud graduation ceremony into adulthood, and afternoon the first bright blush of our budding maturity.

This is when we achieve our most productivity and gather our most hard-won lessons.

Around dusk we eat dinner and take stock of the day.

We assess what we've done and caress what we still need to do.

Dinnertime and early evening are middle age:
we're as close to the end as the beginning,
our children are having children,
our career has plateaued,
our relationships have settled into well worn grooves.

Sunset is retirement.

It is always tinged with melancholy for the things that didn't work out and the disappearance of the light.

Night is old age.

It's quiet, it's dark and there is far less movement.

It is a time for loss and reflecting on the voices in our head.

Finally comes sleep, the finisher of day, the bringer of dreams, the harbinger of rebirth.

“Truth doesn’t age, and neither does courage.”

**“One small voice can change the world
But you’d better be strong.”**

One Small Voice – Carole King

