



Gene Ziegler

Octogenarian Time Capsule

Essays indexed here are organized into five groups:

TIME CAPSULE

Stories based on memories from my childhood, family legends and personal life experiences.

ESSAYS & MUSINGS

Essays on serious reflections along with some playful musings.

POLITICAL & SOCIAL COMMENTARY

Essays on contemporary issues, some old, some current, including letters to the Editor of the Arizona Republic, some published, most ignored.

LIMERICKS, PARODIES & POEMS

Playful parodies, limericks, and poems. One in particular achieved international fame.

TRAVELOGS

Older writings based on travel experiences with a playful twist.

INDEX-TIME CAPSULE

Underlined Titles are clickable links

[Don't Cry for me Venezuela](#) ★

The power of music to touch Latin souls. On location in Caracas.

[Full Moon](#)

Wait here but stay alert. We may have to leave in a hurry! Based on a true family story.

[Girl Crazy](#)

A teenager discovers the opposite sex. Pining for my lost youth.

[Girl in a Window](#)

Our brain stores memories with a value marker. Set in Aachen Germany.

[Juárez Inocentes](#)

The power of faith and forgiveness. Coming of age in Mexico.

[Little Richard](#)

It's not the size of the man in the fight... The exuberance of youth.

[Mirage](#)

Seeing is believing. Living and working on the deserts of West Texas.

[Original Ride Share](#)

One car in a family with five drivers and five sets of keys.

[The Paymaster](#)

My Irish grandmother orders a hit on grandpa.

[Scars of Freedom](#)

Memories of World War II. Hitler celebrated my birth by invading Poland.

[Star Grazing](#)

Close Encounters with the stars among us.

[Tears of the Copper Queen](#)

You could hear her heart break. Among the hills of Bisbee Arizona.

The Fight

What it's like to sit quietly while the world is crashing down around you.

The Whistler

Fathers and Sons. It took me 80 years write this memorial.

Wheels

Our first family car at the end of WWII.

Your Mother Wants you

The last thing you want to hear from your commanding officer.

INDEX-ESSAYS & MUSINGS *Underlined Titles are clickable links*

Anyone Can Teach

The making of a college teacher -Autobiographical (Posted on LinkedIn)

Harold's Shock and Awe

Those high paying industrial jobs may be a thing of the past. (Posted on LinkedIn)

Mitchell's Secret

How did this guy get to be so smart? (Posted on LinkedIn)

Road Dancers

Memory is triggered by smells and tastes and sights and sounds. A song on the radio catches me in a meditative state driving down a highway late at night and brings back the ghost of a forgotten teenage crush.

Second Avenue

Courting on the streets of Nashville.

Simeon

Originally published in The Ecphorizer, No. 33, May 1984, a publication of the Stanford Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (no comments please). It's the story of a man who stared too long at his computer screen and lost his soul.

Smoke gets in my Eyes

An encounter, a flirtation and a glass wall in the Toronto airport.

The Harpist

The fine art of embellishment in storytelling.

The Magic Hat

If I never believed in magic before this event, I sure do now. I thought the stories of Frosty the Snowman were made up to entertain kids. That was before I found a magic hat of my very own.

The Night Visitor

Who's that scratching ever softly, scratching at my apartment door? Was that a real dog, or just a dream?

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

Ran out of dishwasher soap. How about liquid hand soap concentrate? That ought to work, right?

You're Never Too Old

Written for Marcia Connor's LineZine e-Magazine ten years ago and still one of my favorites. "...the purpose of life is to love and to learn."

INDEX-POLITICAL & SOCIAL COMMENTARY

Underlined Titles are clickable links

[Arizona Border Blues](#)

Ain't no Wall High Enough! If I were a Latin from Central America, I would be on top of the train with the rest of the migrants. (Letter to the Editor)

[Boycott the NFL, Make Them Stand](#)

Those who kneel stand for something more important than a flag. (Letter to the Editor)

[Church & State](#)

Why our founding fathers added the "religion clause" in the Constitution.

[Dark Traits](#)

Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy, Oh my!

[Dead Babies](#)

If every life is precious, why are there so many dead babies in the world?

[Honduran Invasion](#)

We ignore Latin America at our peril. (Letter to the Editor)

[Latin Hegemony Council](#)

An insidious Mexican plot to recover lost territories from the USA. (Letter to the Editor)

[MAGA Medicos](#)

Immigrants everywhere taking "Merican's" jobs. (Letter to the Editor)

[Nicotine Addiction Cure](#)

What would it take to break the habit?

[No Mexican Fords Please](#)

America First & tariffs are ignorant of the realities of global citizenship. (Letter to the Editor)

[Shades of Gray](#)

The search for truth in a black and white world.

[Should I buy a gun?](#)

Open carry crazy Arizona gun laws. (Letter to the Editor)

[The rent is too damn high](#)

Where does government regulation come from? Why is the government so big?

[The Transitive Fallacy](#)

A real estate hustler becomes President. Will that work?

[Value Voters](#)

The political left are also value voters. You might want to check out their list. (Letter to the Editor)

LIMERICKS, PARODIES & POEMS

Underlined Titles are clickable links

[A Grandchild's Guide to Using Grandpa's Computer](#)

An original poem, persistently viral since I wrote it in 1994, written in classical Dr. Seuss, Cat-In-Hat style. The poem has a colorful history of both pain and pleasure for the author. Often reposed under different names. A Google search using "Packet hits a pocket" will return two million hits even today.

[Hang the Information Highwayman!](#)

A poetic appeal for respect for another's written words, provoked by abuses of "Grandchild's Guide". This one has been adopted by various writing programs and teachers' groups around the world to teach internet publishing ethics.

[Caribou Barbie](#)

if Sarah Palin had become President of the United States?

[Lincoln Gettysburg Address Rewrite](#)

Two years and many months ago our electoral college brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in ignorance, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are not created equal.

[Noah's Arc](#)

The untold story of Noah's famous voyage and the complications he faced as told through dialog.

[Officer Krupke](#)

West Side Story lyrics rewritten by a mathematician. Only a statistician or a student who has recently suffered through a stat course will dig this one.

[The Raving](#)

Edger Allen Poe has a Raven on his laptop screen.

[Oh the Links you can Link!](#)

The World Wide Web has given the us new meaning for words like surfing and linking. You are limited only by your imagination.

INDEX-TRAVELOGUES

Underlined Titles are clickable links

[The Balboa Chili Dog](#) *A reflective essay on taking time along the way to enjoy life, inspired by a sunset on Southern California's Balboa island off the coast of Newport.*

[Best Tour by a Dam Site](#) *Hoover Dam is a legend in the annals of American construction projects. It is a thrill to see and an even bigger thrill to tour (What was that noise?)*

[London Bridge is Falling Down](#) *There is a new London Bridge in old London, if that's your thing, but if you find yourself in Arizona, you can see the original London Bridge right here in the good old U.S. of A.*

[Arizona Drifter](#) *The forgotten southwest corner of Arizona is lower, flatter and less attractive than most of the rest of the state, until you get to the Colorado river basin which forms the western boundary. There the mountains rise dramatically in a portrait of dusty colors.*

[Japanese Canyon Photo Op](#) *Japanese tourists in America make the Grand Canyon a must-see event. Armed with cameras to spare, a Canyon visit is chance to capture world-class vacation snapshots for that family album.*

[Road Dancers](#) *Memory is triggered by smells and tastes and sights and sounds. A song on the car radio seemingly in rhythm of the beat of windshield wipers on a lonely New York highway late at night brings back memories of a forgotten teenage crush.*

[The \\$500 Maryland Crab cake](#) *Crabs have been known to travel great distances to spawn. Crab cakes, on the other hand lose something with each mile distant from Chesapeake Bay.*

[On the road again!](#) *The drifter takes a road trip following the job like a migratory worker, Phoenix - El Paso - Dallas - Memphis - Nashville. Where next, I wonder.*

[Americana Roadrace](#) *If you have never been to a NASCAR race, you may be in for a bit of culture shock. There is lot of unique fan ritual which takes some getting used to, but I was not prepared to see Jesus in the passenger seats.*