

CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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*Here are the volunteers who publish this Bulletin each week for your enjoyment: **Editor:** George Stockbridge, Chair; **Scribes:** Gran Burgess, Av Rivel, Kurt Schaffir, Peter Uhry, Bernard Schneider, Jim Butler, Arnold Gordon, Ed Farrell; Martin Grayson, Emeritus; **Format and Layout:** Gene Schwartz, Fred Waldron; **Archivist:** Harold Frost; **Printing:** Chet Risio, Larry Schmitz*

President BOB PHILLIPS called the meeting to order promptly at 10:00 AM and introduced ARNOLD GORDON, your faithful Scribe for the day, to lead us in The Pledge. First, though, he reminded everyone to celebrate Patriot's Day on April 18th and to remember Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt with key anniversaries on this date, for helping to make and keep America "one country." With BOB MORGAN at the keyboard, CHUCK STANDARD led us in singing *God Bless America, Grand Old Flag and Yankee Doodle Dandy*. GERRY SCHWENDEMAN clucked about a randy rooster who had his way with more than hens.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: BOB PHILLIPS announced that RMA's Annual Meeting will take place on April 29th. PETER UHRY encouraged members to attend a Public Forum on the long-term master plan for Binney Park with the Town's Parks and Recreation Department at the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center 7:30-9pm on Wednesday, April 22, 2015. ARNOLD GORDON reminded members that today is Holocaust Memorial Day and invited them to attend commemoration ceremonies at Temple Sholom beginning at 6pm today with the showing of an award winning documentary film followed by comments from a Holocaust survivor and ceremonies involving various clergy from around Town. BOB ROBINS brought us up to date on the Romeo Luncheon at the Stanwich Club, to begin immediately after the May 6th RMA meeting. There is still time to buy tickets (\$40) and make food selections (filet mignon, salmon, or vegetarian plate); there will be a cash bar for alcoholic beverages. A visitor, Janeen Bjork, announced that The Master Singers will be holding a "Sizzling Hot Jazz & Latin Concert" at Diamond Hill Methodist Church. Attend either the Dress Rehearsal on Friday, April 24th at 7pm (tickets only \$10 for seniors) or on Saturday, April 25th at 7:30pm (\$20 for seniors). BOB PHILLIPS brought JIM FAHY and STEVE MARINO to the front of the room to thank them on retiring from their long, devoted and tireless service as Chairs of their crucial RMA committees, Membership and Volunteering, respectively; they were given a rousing RMA applause.

RETURNEES: This week's returnees are: JOHN VECCHIONE from 3 months in California, JOE NEWBERRY from June Beach, Florida, GEORGE UBOGY from Sarasota, Florida, RICH BARTHOLOMEW from Jupiter, Florida and Savannah, Georgia, and JACK BAUSMAN from Cuba.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Visiting: CHUCK STANDARD reported that RICH LIMBACHER is likely to be absent from meetings for several months due to knee surgery and rehabilitation. He also mentioned that DON O'KEEFE, MEL MARGULIS and BURTT EHRLICH were absent due to medical problems.

Program: JOHN DECSEPEL announced that today's speaker is Ambassador April Foley, currently Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Hungary Initiatives Foundation. BOB WYLIE told us that next week's speaker will be Ronald Kahan, MD, who will speak about the complexities of Medicare and how to maximize your coverage.

Membership: HORST TEBBE reminded all that annual RMA dues of \$70 must be paid no later than May 31, 2015. Checks should be made payable to RMA and given to HORST. Please include your current e-mail address and phone number on your check to help HORST prepare an accurate up-to-date membership list. He reported 109 members present along with three guests (Don MacKenzie, guest of JIM BUTLER; Charlie Jensen, guest of JIM SANTORA; Mike Grant, guest of HOLLISTER STURGESS). There was also one candidate, Gerry Gibian, who was inducted as a new member following supporting comments by BOB PHILLIPS, TOM CAHILL and RALPH VIGGIANO.

Birthday Boys: GEORGE UBOGY 77, HENRY BAKER 84, JOSEPH ROE 84, ROBERT WYLIE 90, and GERALD LESSUK 80. Happy Birthday all. HORST also mentioned that BILL DYNAN and his wife Ann celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary this week.

Special Events: GERRY LESSUK announced that three trips are currently scheduled. See details below.

Volunteers: DOUG FRANCEFORT reported that, for the week ending April 15, 2015, 55 men reported 488 volunteer hours on behalf of outside agencies and 28 men reported 88 volunteer hours on behalf of RMA. The most hours (30) were reported by RICH BARTHOLOMEW.

FUN AND GAMES:

Bridge: KURT SCHAFFIR reported that the April 8, 2015, game drew 12 players. TOM McEVOY was high scorer with 5050 followed by MARTIN WAINE with 4410 and RALPH VIGGIANO with 3820.

Tennis: TOM HEALY subbing for MIKE SMITH reported RON FRIEDMAN and guest Mr. Warner were winners on Court 1; PETER STREICH and guest Mr. Fakundini prevailed on Court 2. RALPH VIGGIANO will be Captain for next week.

Golf: With no sightings of Jordan Spieth or Rory McIlroy on the Griff, MIKE RYAN had to make do with noting that 11 players participated on April 14th. Scoring lower than 100 were NICKY ACHIWA, BOB PHILLIPS, TOM HEALY AND JIM MACKAY. PETER COLEMAN will host the next two weeks. MIKE is still in need of hosts for several weeks during the season and would welcome volunteers. He reminded players to remit their \$15 annual dues ASAP. Make checks payable to RMA.

TODAY'S SPEAKER: Ambassador April Foley served as US Ambassador to Hungary from 2006 – 2009 after being appointed by President G. W. Bush. Earlier in her career she served in many senior management, financial and planning positions in places such as the Export-Import Bank and PepsiCo. She is currently on the Boards of Xerium Technologies and Vista Outdoor, Inc. She greeted the group in Hungarian and explained that the people call themselves Magyars (pronounced Majars) not Hungarians. She reviewed the troubled history of the country since the end of WW1 and how it escaped the clutches of the German and Soviet autocratic regimes only in 1989 following the tearing down of the infamous wall and breakup of the Soviet Union. Her talk focused on four key geopolitical issues affecting not only Hungary but all countries in that part of the world: *energy security* (very sensitive issue given the near monopoly Russia has on the supply and flow of gas in the region); *corruption* (a bribe and payoff culture, Kleptocracy by Kleptocrats, as a holdover from the days when Hungary was occupied by the Soviets); *discrimination and prejudice* (including an increase in anti-Semitism and a rise in animosity towards the Roma (gypsy) people); and the *NATO Alliance*, which she referred to as the strongest and best international organization to which the US is a partner. She pointed out that Hungary is a thriving economy of highly educated people, with the highest rate of PhD holders per capita in the world. She looks forward to Hungary's steady, if slow, progress toward a more western democratic society. Ambassador Foley's interesting presentation will soon be available on Vimeo via the RMA website: www.greenwichrma.org.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Open to all Members, Guests, Candidates and spouses. Checks should be made out to RMA.

Goodspeed Opera House: "Guys and Dolls" Thursday, May 28, lunch at Gelston House. \$115 per person. Status: Wait List.

Belmont Raceway: Thursday, June 18, lunch in Belmont Room (Dress code: Men jackets and ties; women dress or pants suit). \$75 per person. Status: Wait List.

Tanglewood: Boston Symphony Orchestra, Sunday August 9, lunch at Apple Tree Inn. \$125 per person. Status: Open – many places available.

For more details and to sign-up, contact GERRY LESSUK (gerrless@att.net, 203-698-9451)

NEXT WEEK's Speaker

Next week the RMA will welcome **Ronald Kahan, MD**

Visit our website at www.greenwichrma.org.

Respectfully Submitted: **Arnold J. Gordon**