



CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

Retired Men's Association of Greenwich, Inc.

60 Years of Fellowship and Community
Service

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Here are the volunteers who publish this Bulletin each week for your enjoyment. **Editor/Chairman:** Chet Risio. **Scribes:** Av Rivel, Gran Burgess, Kurt Schaffir, Arnold Gordon, Ed Farrell, Chet Risio, Gerry Lessuk, Steve Elliot, and George Stockbridge, Emeritus. **Archivist:** Harold Frost. **Format and Layout:** Gene Schwartz, Jack Cuff, and Andrzej Mazurek. **Reproduction/Distribution:** Chet Risio.

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May 3, 2017

Following his first board meeting as President, DON CONWAY called the meeting to order at 10:03am in the Sanctuary.

CHUCK STANDARD not only led us in the Pledge of Allegiance but also in our traditional first-meeting-of-the-month patriotic songs, this time the *Star Spangled Banner*, *God Bless America*, and *You're a Grand Old Flag*. BOB MORGAN's piano accompaniment helped to make it a grand old success.

Prior to introducing BOB LUCE for joke telling, ARNOLD GORDON read a letter sent to PETER UHRY by NICKI ACHIWA who recently moved back to Japan. NICKI misses the RMA and its activities and will remain a member from a distance by paying his dues. BOB told us a story about a bridge too close for spiritual comfort and driver safety (don't ask).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. President The DON mentioned that GERRY SCHWENDEMAN was Mentor for the day and that we have a new Treasurer, LES CHEIKIN, whom we can all count on (or is it he that has to do the counting?).

a. Speaking of which, DON and HORST TEBBE are counting on all of us to make sure we bring in a check ASAP for this year's dues of \$90, made out to RMA.

2. DON also appealed for volunteers to help the Program Committee; please call or write to HOLLISTER STURGES to learn about the excitement that awaits you as a participant in that elite group: 203-861-2279; hollistersturges@aol.com. He reported returnees from parts unknown by five anonymous members (the truth? DON lost the list).

3. GEORGE STOCKBRIDGE reminded us of the newly formed RMA Shakespeare Group which meets forsooth on Thursdays at 2pm to hear a lecture and watch a film of one of the great bard's plays. If interested, call GEORGE at 203-698-0710.

COMMITTEES

VISITING: CHUCK STANDARD had nothing to report since thankfully there was no one to visit!

MEMBERSHIP HORST TEBBE noted that 106 members were with us, including **two inductees**.

ALAN GINZBURG and his companion dog, Keely, were introduced by PAUL SETTELMAYER and JIM SANTORA. A 19 year Greenwich resident, he lives in Cos Cob with his wife Jennifer; ALAN was formerly with Xerox Corporation in sales and marketing. He is very active in local and state advocacy programs for the disabled.

MICHAEL ROSS was introduced by WAYNE WRIGHT and PETER UHRY. MICHAEL, also from Cos Cob, has lived in Greenwich for 45 years (does that make him a Town Father?). He was a painting contractor who can tell you how to brush up your own painting skills. A hearty welcome to our newest members!

HORST then made us sing **Happy Birthday** to MARIO BONAPARTE (92), RICHARD COHN (91), ROBERT HARMON (91), and RICHARD HOLZ (69).

VOLUNTEERS: ROSWELL CURTIS reported that for the week ending May 3, 2017, 40 men reported a healthy 682 volunteer hours on behalf of outside agencies and 26 men reported 104 volunteer hours on behalf of RMA. MICHAEL AMBROSINO reported the most hours, 195 (Whom is he kidding? All right, cumulative).

PROGRAMS GERRY GIBIAN urged us to stay for Dr. Jean Bandler's talk on "Planning Ahead for the End of Life," hoping we all were still alive by 11am (details below).

Next week, according to GEORGE UBOGY, we are in for an operatic treat by Pamela Kuhn, who will tell us about "My Life Singing Opera from Oregon to Europe." Ms. Kuhn leads singing groups at the Senior Center in Greenwich and has a program on WGCH radio. She intends to lead us in a vocal lesson and song, so come next week with your best voice.

SPECIAL EVENTS: ABBEY SMOLER announced three forthcoming trips; details below. He was aided by TOM HEALY, whom he recruited to remind the members what a great experience the trip to Belmont Race Track represents, not only the venue in the high-end Belmont Room and the lavish buffet lunch, but conversations with the horses. Betting is not required.

THE SCOREBOARD

BRIDGE: GRANT PERKINS reported that the April 26, 2017 game drew 11 players. DICK CASE, RALPH VIGGIANO, AND FRANK LEE were the top three in that order.

TENNIS: MIKE AMBROSINO told us that wins were netted by PETER ORBANOWSKI and RANDY MOTLAND on Court 1, and PETER UHRY and BILL FAKUNDINI on Court 2. Summer tennis is ongoing every Monday and Thursday, 9-10:30am, at the courts on Loughlin Avenue in Cos Cob. A lunch for the tennis crowd will be held at the Riverside Yacht Club on May 19th.

GOLF: MIKE RYAN gave the results for May 2nd. RICH BARTHOLOMEW had the lowest score, 88, with 5 others shooting under 100. Closest to the pin on 7 was BRUCE PANTANO, on 15 was JAY SCHOENDORF. JIM BOARDMAN had the longest drive on 17. MIKE is looking for golf hosts; call him at 203-698-0441 or write to ryantomac@netscape.net.

TODAY'S SPEAKER

Dr. Jean Bandler is a social worker and founding member of the Funeral Consumer Alliance of Connecticut (FCAC), a non-profit organization dedicated to providing important information and guidance on end-of-life issues (www.ct.funerals.org). She emphasized the importance of advance planning in personalizing our choices for the inevitable in consultation with family and friends, especially in CT with its high prices and some cumbersome rules. Prices for caskets from Greenwich funeral homes range from a few hundred dollars to an amazing \$250,000. No casket will preserve the body, no matter how expensive! Caskets can be bought anywhere or even be homemade.

CT is one of the few states that mandate the involvement of a funeral director in filing the necessary papers and in transporting and burying the body. In many states, the consumer is allowed to do so. Do you have a will for your estate? A "living will" (advance medical directive) that determines how you want to die when terminally ill? Both documents are critical. Among the important decisions everyone should consider are the following: Donations, not only charitable but bodily (organs, for which there are no age restrictions, your body for research or teaching to a medical school); How to Say Goodbye, via intimate conversations with loved ones and letters to say the things you always wanted to say (forgive past wrongs, etc.); Disposition of Your Body – burial vs cremation.

Dr. Bandler explained that the tradition of embalming began during the Civil War to allow for the bodies of dead soldiers to be transported home without decay for burial. However, although commonly practiced today, she points out that it is an added unnecessary expense, since it is not mandatory, has no public health benefit in most cases, and is toxic to the environment by leaching into the soil. Although cremation is taboo in some religions (Orthodox Jews and Christians, as well as Muslims), it has

become more common due to its lower costs and other reasons. However, in CT a 48 hour waiting period is required after death to ensure no possible nefarious cause of death and for a medical examiner to sign-off on the cremation procedure.

Dr. Bandler cautions against pre-paying for funeral expenses; your wishes may change as well as the funeral parlor you chose. She urged members to join the FCAC which provides extensive information in the form of pamphlets, guidance, and up to date price lists for funeral facilities around the state.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Events are open to all members, spouses, candidates and guests. For reservations contact trip coordinators ABBEY SMOLER (203-531-0236) and MIKE FERRARESE (203-554-0678). Checks for payment are to be made out to the RMA, and must be received within two (2) weeks following the making of the reservations or the reservations will be cancelled.

- [Culinary Institute & FDR Museum - April 20, 2017](#); Lunch at the Caterina De Medici Restaurant; Cost \$96 per person; Bus departs from St. Catherine 9:30 AM; Wait listed
- [New York Botanical Gardens- May 25, 2017](#)- Bus transportation – departure from St. Catherine’s at 8:30 a.m. Lunch at Mario’s Italian Restaurant -- \$98 per person. Wait listed:
- [Belmont Race Track. -June 15, 2017](#)- Bus transportation – departure from St. Catherine’s at 10:30 a.m. Members’ Lunch Club -- Sumptuous buffet lunch -- \$80 per person. Jacket and tie required. Places open.

NEXT WEEK’S SPEAKER

The RMA will welcome **Pamela Kuhn**, an opera singer who has performed around the world. She will tell us about her career and the many adventures she has had: “My Life Singing Opera from Oregon to Europe.”

Scribe of the Week: ARNOLD GORDON

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MEMBER PROFILE

This is the twelfth in a series of Member Profiles designed to allow members to know one another beyond a face and a name tag.

HARRY TWITCHELL was born in Lisbon, Portugal to an English mother and a Vermont father. His father, a mining engineer, soon moved the family to Devonshire, England where Harry attended school. Later he attended Tonbridge, a renowned public school started in 1553. After 11 years, with World War II imminent, the family took one of the last ships from the U.K. landing in Quebec, Canada on Sept 3, 1939. They lived in Burlington, VT where Harry finished his schooling and enrolled in the ROTC at the University of Vermont earning a degree in Political Science. He then entered Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning. He shortly thereafter volunteered for the Army Air Corps. With the war winding down, this training stopped. He volunteered for running supplies to Kunming, China. That also fell through. He was sent to the Philippines. The war ended and he was mustered out in 1946. Harry's military career was defined by good luck in timing. Thanks to the G.I. Bill he studied Basic Architecture at Pratt Institute graduating with a B-Arch degree. He first worked for an architectural firm in Stamford then later moved to the National Council of the YMCA in the Building Division. After 12 years consulting with the YMCA Harry moved to Greenwich and worked with a local architect. He designed his own house opposite the Greenwich High School and a house for his parents on Byram Point. He has married twice. His first wife passed away and he is now enjoying life with his second wife, Betty. He has three sons, Keith, Colin and Owen by his first wife.

He and Betty enjoy traveling. Two trips to Tanzania with a Christ Church group were memorable. Gardening is one of his great joys but his greatest pleasure came from sailing. Harry spent 40 years sailing his sloop on Long Island Sound. He joined the RMA in 1980 and enjoys the comradery very much.

One of the pleasures of growing up in the '20s and '30s was crisscrossing the Atlantic in the "liners" of that time. The trips took four to five days. They had all the amenities for a comfortable voyage including an orchestra that played for dancing, afternoon tea and during dinner. Departure from New York and Southampton in the UK was an exciting time for a young kid. Page boys with gongs would go through the ship calling "All visitors ashore please." The hawsers would be cast off and the ship would back out of the dock accompanied by loud, deep blasts from the horn. The ship would glide through the Narrows and out to sea, dropping off the pilot on the way. These were the days before stabilizers so the ship would pitch and roll.

"I loved the motion. Once our ship rolled so much that green water passed across the port holes of the dining saloon. Dancers would slither across the dance floor and dishes would slide across but not off the table. We would not see any ships in the miles and miles of open sea. At the end of the voyage the ship would dock and the general procedure would be pretty much the reverse of the departure. Arriving at Southampton, UK, would be the "boat train" at the pier to take us to Waterloo Station in London. In New York there would be taxis to take us from the pier to Grand Central Station for a train ride to Essex Junction, Vermont and home".