



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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July 5, 2017

"Philosophy is common sense with big words" James Madison

Feeling the summer languor, DON CONWAY rang his presidential bell an easy 5 minutes after the appointed 10 AM hour.

TONY DIROLLO led the post-Independence Day pledge to flag and country. GRAN BURGESS, waving a virtual baton, and BOB MORGAN, playing a very real Steinway, led the assembled in singing *Our National Anthem*, *You Made me Love You* (you woke me up to do it) and *Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree* (no no, no no, no no).

Wannabe stand-up-comic-of-the-week, TOM HEALY told a fish story. There were no returnees.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. From GERRY GIBIAN: The Mentor's job is to greet each guest and candidate and make him feel welcome and comfortable. You can help by introducing any guests or candidates you know to the mentor of the day.
2. From DON CONWAY: The board has proposed a change in the rules, which the membership will be asked to vote on at the **July 12th meeting**. The proposed rule changes the number of required meetings to be attended by potential members from 6 to 3 –in a six month period. This means that on a potential member's third visit-in a six month period, he may be presented to the membership for a vote on his candidacy for membership.

COMMITTEES

VISITING: CHUCK STANDARD contacted JOE COLEMAN, JIM FAHEY and TIM NOLAN at Nathaniel Witherell. Apparently, HARRY TWITCHELL was sent home from Witherell, but CHUCK was unable to reach him. GEORGE SUTER is in Hospice. On another note, CHUCK offered season's tickets to the Greenwich Symphony for an RMA discounted price of \$150, a \$25 saving from the sticker price.

MEMBERSHIP: Before doing the numbers, HORST TEBBE put out a request for someone to back up JIM FAHY, our official welcome and major-domo of the welcome desk. The pay is lousy, but you get a chance to meet a lot of interesting people. The numbers: 102 members, 1 candidate, Larry Posner and 1 guest, Larry Spahn, guest of JIM FAHY. Birthday celebrants this week are MIKE AMOROSO 80, JOHN CARON 93, HOLLISTER STURGES 78 and DAN FREDLAND 83. Bon anniversaire, amis ! More happy news, Joan and HENRY BAKER celebrated 66 years of wedded bliss on July 4, 2017!

VOLUNTEERS: GERRY MAYFIELD, reported that for this week there were 291 outside hours by 34 members and 113 RMA hours by 27 members. Top honors went to ARNOLD GORDON with 24 hours.

PROGRAMS: ARNOLD GORDON urged all to stick around for a panel of three state congresspersons which he will moderate as today's program. Details below. HOLLISTER STURGES heads' upped next week's speaker, Robert Gallucci, a man of many titles and much expertise and experience in the world of diplomacy, will provide much needed insight into "North Korea and Nuclear Deterrence in the 21st Century". Nothing could be timelier. Come early to get a good seat.

SPECIAL EVENTS: MIKE FERRARESE presented the upcoming events through September. Details below:

GAMES OUR GUYS PLAY

HEARTS: JOHN KNIGHT heartily reported that on Table 1, MIKE AMBROSINO won two games and TOM HEALY won one. On Table 2, LES CHEIKEN and JACK SWEGER each won one game. 4 Men "Shot the Moon", JACK SWEGER, LES CHEIKEN, TOM HEALY and GRANT PERKINS MIKE AMBROSINO *did it twice!* JOHN KNIGHT had the dubious "honor" of being stuck with the Queen of Spades six times.

BRIDGE: TONY COCCHI shuffled to the podium and dealt the scores.#1 DICK CASE 3770, #2 JOE ROE 2570 and PETER STERN 2310

TENNIS: There was no tennis report.

GOLF: JIM SANTORA had no scores to report, but did announce that he would be the point man for next week's outing.

TODAY'S SPEAKERS

Today's program featured three State Representatives who represent Greenwich districts and parts of Stamford. **Fred Camillo** of District 151, **Livvy Floren** -149 and **Mike Bocchino** -150. The topic was "What's Happening in Hartford" .

As moderator and local pundit ARNOLD GORDON explained, this was a report to constituents and not a political debate. The report covered the efforts to establish a

workable state budget, business and citizen flight due to onerous taxes, aid to schools (particularly New Lebanon) the uncertainties emanating from discussions in Washington on a health plan, ways to overcome the union's power, and the transportation lock box, among others. The trio, fighting to represent the best interests of their constituents and the state as a whole were sure to mention who the "bad guys" were; Democrats in general and Governor Molloy in particular. Unions in general and the union representing state workers in particular. Questions from the floor elicited much discussion by the panel.

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.

- [Mark Twain House/Museum, July 20](#), \$76/pp, bus from St. Catherine's at 8:45am, box lunch: 4 places available.
- [Sound Waters Cruise, August 31](#), \$35/pp, car to the ship. 7 places left.
- [Goodspeed Opera House, the musical "Oklahoma!" September 21, 2017](#), lunch at Gelston House, cost \$120 p.p. Bus leaves St. Catherine's at 9:45 AM. Status: 15 places available.

NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER: Robert Gallucci – *"North Korea and Nuclear Deterrence in the 21st Century"*

AV RIVEL, I did it this time

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MEMBER PROFILE

This is the fourteenth in a series of Member Profiles intended to allow members to get to know one another beyond a face and a nametag

KURT SCHAFFIR was born in Vienna. When the Nazis overran Austria, his family was forced to flee. A cousin in Cleveland provided the necessary Affidavits enabling them to enter the U.S. Kurt, with his mother and brother, arrived in Cleveland in 1939 as a fourteen-year old boy, to start a new life.

Thanks to the excellent Austrian school system, Kurt was fluent in English when he arrived. He completed high school and worked his way through college, graduating in 1945. He was then drafted into Army service. Not yet being a citizen, he could not become an officer but the Army took note of his ability to speak German and assigned him to serve in the Army of Occupation in Germany.

Meanwhile his family moved to New York City. Upon his discharge, and with the help of the G.I. Bill of Rights, Kurt completed his Masters' degree in chemical engineering at Columbia University. He joined Merck & Co. in 1947. Over the next ten years, he held a number of management positions in production, engineering, research, and in the Controller's Division. He continued his studies at Columbia and earned the degree of Doctor of Engineering Science. He became particularly interested in, and acquired expertise in Operations Research -- the application of mathematical techniques, in combination with emerging computer power, to business problems.

In 1957 Kurt joined the new consulting division of Arthur Andersen & Co. in New York to develop work in the areas of production scheduling, inventory control, and statistical analysis. Kurt and Sandra met that year at a resort in the Adirondacks. They were married the following year. Kurt was elected to partnership in 1963, and served as partner for over 25 years. In that role he visited and promoted work with clients in most of the firm's U.S. offices.

In the 1970's the firm decided to expand its European operations. Kurt took an assignment to spend three years with his family in the Brussels office. As a specialist, he was called on to give support to the other European offices also.

"The Iron Curtain was beginning to lift, and before returning to the States, I took part in a special assignment to develop contacts with the Russian ministry for economic development. This involved moving my family to Vienna for a year, and participating in a Russian-sponsored, multi-national scientific excursion to a remote site in Siberia. The Soviet Union had constructed, under very difficult, icy conditions, a huge hydroelectric facility comparable to our Tennessee Valley Authority project of the 30's. It turned out, however, that the Russians were more interested in impressing our group with their accomplishments than in learning what we might be able to contribute".

Upon their return to the New York office in 1976, the Schaffirs took up residence in Greenwich. In 1985, Kurt took advantage of a favorable early partner retirement plan. He then found a new position -- quite different from consulting.

The Johns Manville Corporation, a primary producer of asbestos products, was forced into bankruptcy when it became known that exposure to asbestos was deadly. Asbestos insulation which had been installed in schools and factories had to be removed, and thousands of claims for reimbursement of the costs of removal were filed against the company. The bankruptcy court established a Property Damage Settlement Trust to process and pay these claims. Kurt served as Executive Director of the Trust, organizing and overseeing a staff of some 50 claims adjusters, for ten years.

“As I approached retirement, I became actively involved with the National Executive Service Corps - a group of retired executives providing pro bono consulting services to non-profit organizations. There I met Bill Burke, a former RMA president, who invited me to join the RMA, and I became an active member in 2000. I took charge of the RMA bridge group about 2005 and have served as a CBB scribe for the last eight years”.

Kurt has served as Financial Secretary of Temple Shalom and as president of his condominium association. He currently serves as a member of the Greenwich Board of Health.

Sandra gets the credit for having kept the kids (two girls and a boy) on track. She had to give up her career as book editor to do the job. Kurt and Sandra have seven grandchildren – now in college or out of college.

The Schaffirs have done quite a bit of traveling – they have visited every continent except Antarctica. They enjoy classical music, bridge, golf and the movies.

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