

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, Jim Butler, Arnold Gordon, Ed Farrell; Martin Grayson, Emeritus; **Format and Layout:** Gene Schwartz, Paul Levine and Jack Cuff; **Archivist:** Harold Frost; **Printing:** Chet Risio, Larry Schmitz

Promptly at 10:00am Prez RALPH VIGGIANO rang the bell urging all to enter the cold church. "The more bodies the warmer we'll be." He gave a brief history of Thanksgiving from George Washington through FDR. He also complimented the many members who keep the RMA vital.

CHUCK STANDARD led the group in the Pledge.

TOM HEALY, a last minute song leader, ran the group thru *The Star Spangled Banner, I Had A Dream and I've Been Working On The Railroad*. GEORGE STOCKBRIDGE ably accompanied on the piano.

BILL DYNAN told a funny story about a big city lawyer outwitted by an old rancher and his missing bull.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **BOB ROBINS** said the Romeo lunch on January 27, 2016 will be held at the Innis Arden Country Club.
2. **PAUL SETTELMAYER** told of a verbal altercation between an executive of Fairfield House and a member parked illegally thereby blocking the entrance. Members were cautioned about this parking issue.
3. **GEORGE STOCKBRIDGE** is looking for new members to join his opera group. Contact GEORGE at grspersonal@aol.com.
4. **RALPH VIGGIANO** announced that the Audubon society will hold a Volunteer/Intern Open House at the Society on Sat. Dec. 5, 2015 from 3 to 5pm. Audubon Greenwich is at 613 Riversville Road, Greenwich, CT 06831. Contact Susan at 203 869-5272.
5. **MARTIN WAINE** said the AARP will help anyone with their tax returns. He presented an award to ROSS CURTIS for his 20 years in that regard.
6. **JOHN FEBLES** said the Salvation Army needed volunteers to man the Christmas Kettles. Contact JOHN at 203 869-5343. He reminded members that contributions are always accepted with checks made out to the Salvation Army.
7. **DON CONWAY** said the Melody Men sang at Edgehill and the program will air on Channel 79.
8. **CHUCK STANDARD** said he had no news of anyone in the hospital or in rehab and wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP: HORST TEBBE said there were 91 members, three candidates and no guests at today's meeting. The candidates are Mike Ferrarese, Jack Galvin and Bill Fakundiny. The **birthday boys were:** DAVE NOBLE 81, ROGER PISANI, 80, GERRY FOX, 81, DAVE DOWNS, 86, GIG CHELWICK, 90 and NEVILLE SARGEANT, 80.

VOLUNTEER HOURS: DOUG FRANCEFORT said, for the week of Nov. 25, 2015, there were 693 hours for outside agencies by 66 members and 216 hours for RMA activities by 35 RMA members. The person reporting the most hours: DOUG FRANCEFORT with 67 hours.

SPECIAL EVENTS: GERRY LESSUK said the NY Philharmonic Open Rehearsal is fully subscribed and is wait listed. He also announced a new trip to the Bruce Museum. (Details below)

FUN AND GAMES

BRIDGE: KURT SCHAFFIR said the RMA bridge group on Oct. 18, 2015 had 10 players. JOHN FEBLES led the pack with 3,450 points; WAYNE DEVRIES had 2,870 and FRANK LEE with 2,620.

TENNIS: GERRY GIBIAN announced the tennis results for Nov. 20th. Winners on court 1 were Bill Fakundiny and PETER ORBANOWSKI. On court 2 they were GERRY GIBIAN and JOHN KNIGHT.

TODAY'S SPEAKERS

Instead of the usual speaker at today's meeting, titled "Volunteer Day" and presented by JOHN DECSEPEL, five RMA members were featured each of whom spoke about their volunteerism and the respective organizations they represented.

First up was MIKE RYAN and the Call-a-Ride service. MIKE, a 15 year volunteer, said the service was started in 1975 and it provides free transportation in Greenwich and Stamford. It consists of 45 drivers half of whom are RMA members. They drive people who lack transport to hospitals, supermarkets, doctors, etc. Approximately 85% of the riders are women. Two women guests spoke of how C.A.R. was a wonderful life line and relieved their sense of isolation. New volunteer drivers are always welcomed.

Next in line was ERF PORTER of the Greenwich RTM. He said it was organized in 1933 and based on New England Town Meetings. Even in these more complicated times it constantly tries to stay true to that model. Initially it contained 150 members and is now capped at 230. They serve a two year term representing 12 districts and strive to be apolitical. The board is a fiscally conservative group that approves or reduces town budgets but cannot increase them. Other duties are reviewing capital improvements and labor contracts, land use, wetlands, etc. Vetting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation and the Budget Committees is an essential duty. Meetings are broadcast on channel 79.

The third speaker was JOHN TONER, a Greenwich Hospital volunteer. In addition to wheeling patients around the hospital they make them comfortable, particularly in the Emergency Room. They are trained to reassure patients and relieve their anxieties. As members of the Hospital Auxiliary they raise money for the hospital. During a two year period they donated \$1,250,000 to the hospital. In spite of being constantly on call there is some down time. In the call station off the lobby volunteers share recipes and favorite restaurants. That food interest has resulted in a restaurant group and comradery.

Fourth up was DOUG FRANCEFORT speaking on behalf of the Book Recycling at the Holly Hill Transfer Station. The construction of a book shed in 1995 helped considerably in maintaining a safe and dry area for the huge number of books donated or discarded. As of the middle of November this year there were a total of 41,000 books. Sorting and screening this amount takes considerable effort. Three RMA members were cited for their diligent efforts in this regard: STEVE BOIES, TOM CAHILL and JIM FAHY. However, two more, on call volunteers, are needed, particularly on Fridays.

Last up was BOB PHILLIPS for Meals on Wheels which provides nutritional meals for those unable to shop and/or cook for themselves, some recipients being on financial assistance. Started by the Woman's Club in 1960 the all-volunteer organization provides meals up to seven days a week. More than the meals, the drivers provide vital interaction with seniors who constantly express their gratitude. One of the most important elements of this service is drivers. Currently there is a roster of 60 to 70 drivers of which 15 are RMA but, in light of fairly frequent driver unavailability, more are needed to drive the 11 routes within Greenwich covered by MOW each day Monday through Friday.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Open to all members, spouses, candidates, and guests. Checks made out to RMA.

NY Philharmonic Orchestra Open Rehearsal on Thursday, January 14, 2016 with lunch at the Atlantic Grill. The cost is \$98.00 pp. Bus departure from St. Catherine's at 8:00am. Status: Wait listed.

Bruce Museum on Thursday, February 4, 2016. Cost and restaurant to be announced. Transportation is personal. Arrival time at the museum is 9:45am. Status: Open. For details and sign up contact GERRY LESSUK (gerrless@att.net 203 698-9451) or ABBEY SMOLER (abbeysmoler@gmail.com 203 531-0236)

NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER

Governor Dannel (Dan) Malloy will speak on issues of critical importance to Connecticut. These areas include creating Jobs, improving public education, stabilizing the state's finances and addressing the state's transportation infrastructure. Governor Malloy graduated from Boston College Law school and became a prosecutor in Brooklyn, NY, winning 22 of 23 felony cases and was the longest serving mayor of Stamford, CT.

CBB Scribe, **CHET RISIO** Visit our website at www.greenwichrma.org