

***RETIRED MEN'S ASSOCIATION OF GREENWICH, Inc. (RMA)
invites you to attend its meeting, on Wednesday, June 17, 2015.
First Presbyterian Church, Lafayette Place, Greenwich, CT.***

SHERMAN BULL, M.D.

CLIMBING EVEREST AT 64, AND OTHER ADVENTURES



“In 2001, at 64 years old, Sherman Bull, a retired Stamford surgeon, was the oldest man to look down at the world from the summit of Mount Everest. It took Bull five tries at charging up the frozen slopes of the mountain to finally get to the top. The group with which he finally summited Everest included his son Bradford, and was led by Eric Weihenmayer, a blind adventurer who started the organization Touch the Top.” “I think in pushing yourself to the limits, you find out what's inside of you, you find out extra reserves, and that's terribly exciting.” In his life's adventures, Dr. Bull has not only climbed Everest, but also reached the highest peak on each of the seven continents, ran in seven marathons, a 50-mile ultra marathon and 100-mile century bike races. “Most of us have this notion that we're here for a very short time on this planet,” he said of his drive for challenges. When he first climbed the Matterhorn in the Swiss Alps, he saw the man in front of him slip on the ice and fall to his death. His own near-death experience came on his third attempt to summit Everest in 1998 at 17,500 feet at 2 a.m. “I came about as close to dying as a person possibly could. I fell 200 meters down the southeast face of the mountain. I was sort of log rolling down the face.” He suffered two crushed vertebrae, a broken pelvis, three to four broken ribs, and bruised kidneys.

“I think we should try to make this world a marginally better place while we're here. I've always wanted to live life to the fullest; I've always wanted to help. I think also it's nice to try to set examples of what's possible, and if you can inspire people, that's pretty exciting stuff.” As part of a program called Soldiers to Summits, he led a group of soldiers who were critically disabled in Iraq and Afghanistan, some with prosthetic limbs, all struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder, to the top of the Himalayas. A documentary about the trip, “High Ground,” was produced in 2012 and won several film festival awards.

Bull retired from a 42 year career about three years ago and said he can now catch up on some missed time with his wife and grandchildren. “One of the sub-themes of climbing is that it's a very sort of indulgent sport in that the people at home worry about you. In the beginning, before cell phones, you couldn't communicate very well. I'd go away six to eight weeks with no word,” he said. Now 78, he's training for a two-month-long, cross-country bike trip, which he said might be the most physically challenging excursion of his life. “I enjoy life so much,” he said. “Sometimes I'm embarrassed how much I enjoy life. I'm enjoying my wife, we do everything together. It's wonderful.”

RMA Meetings are free and open to the public; no reservations are required. Please plan to arrive around 10:45 for our social break (coffee and cake), followed by our speaker at 11:00. Meetings are held at the First Presbyterian Church in Greenwich. For additional information, call Bernard Schneider, 203-698-2558; bgsesq@gmail.com.