

# CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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*"We can't all be heroes. Some of us have to stand on the curb and clap as they go by."*

Will Rogers

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

PETER UHRY, standing in for RALPH VIGGIANO, rang the bell at 10:00am. Members ambled in slowly, its being a cold, wet day.

CHUCK STANDARD served as our pledge leader reminding all that a salute is not given indoors.

ERF PORTER led the group in singing *It's a Grand Old Flag* and a medley of *Button up Your Overcoat* and *By the Light of the Silvery Moon*. GEORGE STOCKBRIDGE played the piano accompaniment and the prelude to the meeting.

CHUCK STANDARD told an amusing story of a bee sting on someone's finger.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **PETER UHRY** then introduced Janeen Bjork who is responsible for the two books that are still missing. She requested that the books be returned to the library immediately as charges are mounting.
2. **PETER**, speaking of the upcoming tour of the American Wing (April 21), recommended highly our taking time after our docent led tour to view the rooms of a house that once stood on 5th Avenue in 1865. The house was purchased by the Rockefellers and several of the rooms were preserved.
3. **BOB LUCE** told the group that a performance of "Judas Maccabaeus" by Handel will be presented by the Greenwich Choral Society on Saturday, March 5, 2016 at 4:30 pm at Christ Church. Tickets are \$45, \$38 and \$28 and can be ordered at 203 622-5136.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**VISITING:** CHUCK STANDARD reported that JOE MALARA is still in rehab and is not ready for visitors but will accept phone calls at 203 594-5200. CHUCK also announced that HAVEN KNIGHT and BARRY NOVA are both doing well.

**EULOGY:** HARRY TWITCHELL eulogized AL HARTIG, who passed away on February 12, 2016 at 94 years old. AL was born in New York City on April 26, 1921 and attended Hamilton College in Clinton, NY. He was inducted into the US Army in 1942 and served

in the South Pacific. He was active in the Red Cross, Meals on Wheels and the RMA. A memorial service will be held at the 2nd Congregational Church on Saturday, Feb. 27 at 11:00am.

**PROGRAM:** PETER McSPADDEN said today's speaker, Tom Niles, former diplomat, will speak on the crises in the Middle East. Next week's speaker will be Robert Rubin, a civil rights attorney focusing primarily on voting issues. Mr. Rubin will give an address titled "Our Precious Right to Vote: Riddled by Fraud or Targeted for Suppression?"

Peter added that JOHN DECSEPEL , who ably directed the Speaker Program for seven years, has turned over that difficult and time consuming task to JIM FISHBEIN and HOLLISTER STURGES. They will continue JOHN'S tradition at the same high level of excellence.

**MEMBERSHIP:** DOUG TAYLOR announced that 88 members were in attendance with three candidates and four guests for a total of 95 attendees. The candidates were Larry Chiaramonte, Harold Kuplesky and James Chung. The guests were Carl Brainin g/o RALPH MASTOLINI, Peter Stern, g/o JIM SANTORA, Mitchell Goldberg, g/o PETER UHRY and Jack Weir, g/o RUSS HARDEN. The **birthday boys** were GEORGE DAVIS, 88, MARTIN GRAYSON, 88 and ROLAND KLINGNER, 91.

**VOLUNTEER HOURS:** MIKE HAYDEN reported, for the week ending Feb 24, a total of 614 hours for outside agencies by 40 RMA members and 121 hours for RMA activities by 23 members. The person reporting the most hours was MIKE AMOROSO with 175 hours.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:** GERRY LESSUK mentioned the upcoming Belmont Race track trip and the two others already planned. See Special Events below.

## **FUN AND GAMES**

**BRIDGE:** KURT SCHAFFIR gave the bridge scores for February 17th. There were nine players, GRANT PERKINS led the pack with 3,270 points, KURT himself was second with 3,010 and BOB UNDERWOOD at 2,980.

**TENNIS:** JOHN KNIGHT gave the tennis scores. Winners on court one were JOHN KNIGHT and Suzie Orbanowski and on court two the winners were PETER ORBANOWSKI and RANDY MOTLAND. Next week's captain is MIKE AMBROSINO. It's too early for golf but it will get underway soon.

## **TODAY'S SPEAKER**

Tom Niles, former diplomat, gave an illuminating talk and focused on two issues; the Middle East and the European Union. Using history going back to World War I he showed that many of the problems in the Middle East today were created by the haphazard division of tribal lands by England and France. The underlying tensions there are exacerbated by the mounting refugee crises emanating from the war in Syria.

Europe, aided greatly by the United States' Marshall Plan after World War II, is attempting to maintain its Union while some of its nations are struggling with debt. The problems are increased also by the refugees spilling across borders. It is estimated that one million refugees are seeking refuge with another 800,000 on the way.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

**Metropolitan Museum of Art on Thursday, April 21, 2016.** A guided tour of the American Wing and lunch in the Petrie Court café. Cost is \$95pp. Bus departs St. Catherine's at 8:30am. Status: Places available.

**Goodspeed Opera House, a production of Cole Porter's "Anything Goes". Thursday, May 26, 2016.** Lunch at The Gelston house, Cost is \$105pp. Bus departs St. Catherine's at 10:00am. Status: Places available.

**Belmont Race Track on Thursday, June 16, 2016.** Lunch at the Belmont Room buffet. Cost is \$75pp. Bus departs St. Catherine's at 10:30am. Status: Places available.

Open to members, spouses, candidates and guests. Checks made payable to the RMA. For questions, call GERRY LESSUK (203 698-9451) [gerrless@att.net](mailto:gerrless@att.net) or ABBEY SMOLER (203 531-0236) [abbeysmoler@gmail.com](mailto:abbeysmoler@gmail.com).

### **NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER**

Next week the RMA will welcome:

**Robert Rubin**, former Legal Director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of San Francisco:

"Our Precious Right To Vote: Riddled By Fraud Or Targeted For Suppression?" Mr. Rubin has been prominent in the judicial battle over voting rights, and will present both sides of the issues Visit our website at [www.greenwichrma.org](http://www.greenwichrma.org).

Your humble scribe, **CHET RISIO**

**Visit the RMA website at [www.greenwichrma.org](http://www.greenwichrma.org)**