



Y's Men of Meriden - Newsletter

February 2018

www.ysmenofmeriden.com www.facebook.com/ysmenofmeriden

February Programs

Officers

Chairman	Mark Burwick
Vice Chairman	Paul Scollan
Asst. Vice Chairman	Mike Rohde
Secretary	Dewey Dow
Asst. Secretary	Tom Marshall
Treasurer	Sherwin Borsuk
Asst. Treasurer	Joe Giannetti
YMCA Rep.	Terry Clarke
Past Chairman	Terry Clarke

Directors

Dewey Dow
Jim Teagle
Rene Tompkinson

Committee Chairmen and Associates

Awards	Jim Teagle Rene Tompkinson
Bridge	Joe DeMaio Paul Lamoureux
Coffee	Steve Volpini Ken White
Cribbage	Walt Ziemba
CyberSeniors	Dennis Kababik Bob Newcomb
General Activities	Bill Glick Sherwin Borsuk
Hiking	Mark Burwick
Historian	Bill Glick
Hospitality	Joe Giannetti
Membership	Hamp Pratt
Newsletter/website	Peter Burch
Special Events	Bruce Burchsted Lenny Cheerman
Story Tellers	Phil Callan
Technology	Jack Brooks Matt Bushey Richard Grossman
Volunteer Services	Joe Kata

Feb 6 Presenter: Mark Burwick Story Teller: Terry Clarke
Program: Mark Maged; Former CEO Schrodgers, Inc. and Chairman of Edgar Online, Inc.

“The USSR in Transition - My Adventures and Misadventures”

The talk will deal with various of my personal adventures, and misadventures, in the USSR during the years immediately preceding and following its dissolution.

Feb 13 Presenter: Paul Scollan Story Teller: Ken White
Program: Julie Jason, Author and Money Manager at Jackson, Grant Investment Advisers

“The Retirement Survival Guide: How to Make Smart Financial Decisions in Good Times and Bad”

Julie will present an insiders view on retirement and investment management. This program will discuss how to deal with the uncertainty of the markets so that an investor can anticipate, not react to, market-moving events.

Feb 20 Presenter: Mark Burwick Story Teller: Steve Volpini
Program: Alan G. Smith, Professor Emeritus, Adjunct Professor at Central Connecticut State University

“The President’s Ideology”

Trump’s ideology seems to be composed of much that is traditional Republican conservatism (though often in unusually extreme form), a bit that is more moderately conservative, and a few points in line with European-style “populism.” On some points, it is important to distinguish between what he said on the campaign trail and what he does in governing.

Feb 27 Presenter: Peter Burch Story Teller: Bruce Burchsted
Program: David Wyskiel, Magician

“Magic! by Dave Wyskiel”

Magician Dave Wyskiel returns to the Y’s Men. Prepare to be amazed! After a brief presentation on the history of magic, Dave will create a series of illusions designed to amaze the audience. And watch out - the audience may be part of the act!

News Items

• A moment of silence was observed on Jan. 2 in memory of Joe Borriello, a beloved long-time member of the Y’s Men, who passed on Dec. 13 at age 94.

• Mike Iovanna used a happy dollar to recall working in the Meriden school system under Joe Borriello; among many memories was that Joe, the school principal, always had the door to his office open (unlike other school principals).

• Jack Braddock noted his current interest in the diaries and photos of his father, then followed up with a story telling session about it.

• Sherwin Borsuk displayed an old metal document clip manufactured by the Judd Co. of Wallingford, a foam scraper

used to provide quick access to the liquid beer in your mug, and a hobo nickel, often expertly carved by hobos in the 20th century from buffalo nickels.

• Bob Newcomb has created a Facebook page for the Ysmen; go to www.facebook.com/ysmenofmeriden, or you can link to it from the Ysmen website at www.ysmenofmeriden.com. Any Y’s Men member can post messages or photos on the page.

• Bill Glick encouraged the Y’s Men to take up snowshoeing as a great way to get out into the winter countryside while getting a bit of exercise as well.

• Paul Lamoureux noted his 88th birthday and commented that many of the bridge players were in their 80’s.

Bridge



Jan 2	1st Bill Schultz (11½ pts); 2nd Bill Wheaton (10½ pts); 3rd Paul Lamoureux (9½ pts)
Jan 9	1st Vin Rossitto, George Thomson (tie-10 pts); 2nd Marv Beloff (8½ pts); 3rd Joel Cohen, Bill Schultz, Ken White (tie-8 pts)
Jan 16	1st Paul Lamoureux, Bill Schultz (tie-9 pts); 2nd Marv Beloff (8½ pts); 3rd Ken White (8 pts)
Jan 23	1st Bill Schultz (12½ pts); 2nd Hamp Pratt (9 pts); 3rd Bob Southland (8½ pts)
Jan 30	Scores not available

Cribbage



Jan 2	(+6) Joe Giannetti, Lew Bither over Tom Marshall, Jim Brooks (+32) Joe Young over Walt Ziembra
Jan 9	(+48) Jim Brooks, Ron Carlstrom, Joe Giannetti over Bill Wheaton, Joe Young, Walt Ziembra
Jan 16	(+14) Jim Brooks, Bill Wheaton, Walt Ziembra over Jim Janz, Ron Carlstrom, Tom Marshall
Jan 23	(+82) Ron Carlstrom, Bill Wheaton, Jim Brooks over Walt Ziembra, Tom Marshall, Joe Giannetti
Jan 30	Walt Ziembra 1st, Tom Marshall 2nd, Joe Giannetti 3rd (3-man game)

Wise Words for Y's Men

If corn oil comes from corn, where does baby oil come from?

Volunteering

“As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands — one for helping yourself, the other for helping others.”
Audrey Hepburn

Treasurer's Report

Dec. 31, 2017 \$2579.57

<u>Date</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Raffle Winner</u>
Jan 2	52	Peter Burch
Jan 9	53	Bob Fowler
Jan 16	57	Sherwin Borsuk
Jan 23	61	David Juliano
Jan 30	26 (snow)	Bob Southland

Y's Men record attendance of 89 was set on Oct. 19, 2004

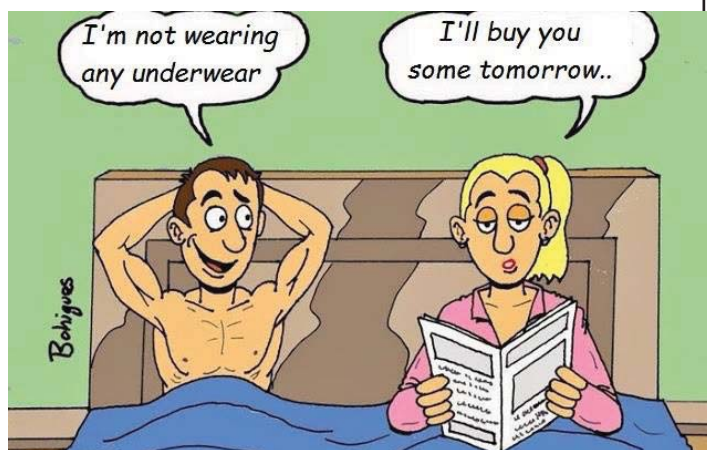
<u>Guests</u>	<u>Introduced By</u>	<u>Date</u>
John Zagorski	Walt Ziembra	1/2/18
John Colaresi	Peter Burch	1/2/18
Bob Gattalia	David Juliano	1/2/18
Bob Southland	Peter Burch	1/9/18
Joe Franco	Tom Marshall	1/16/18
Hermann Kasper	Peter Burch	1/16/18
Joe Ruel	Sherwin Borsuk	1/23/18
Sean Stewart	Peter Burch	1/30/18

<u>New members</u>	<u>Interests</u>
John Colaresi	Movies, bowling
Bob Southland	Woodworking, fishing
Roy Cross	
Robert Gattalia	
Joseph Franco	Engineering
Joseph Ruel	Meriden history, napping
Sean Stewart	

CyberSeniors

13 CyberSeniors met on Jan. 9 and resumed a discussion about the Google Home Mini (and first watched a humorous video about a grandmother trying to use this digital assistant and getting very frustrated). The advantages and disadvantages were reviewed, including possible security concerns that the device might be listening and recording your conversations, even when not activated. Another video was then played demonstrating the “world’s smallest phone”.

Seven CyberSeniors met on Jan. 23 to hear a presentation by Bob Newcomb on Artificial Intelligence (AI). Some of its history can be traced back to the movie “2001: A Space Odyssey” in which the spacecraft computer HAL decides it knows better than the astronauts how to accomplish the mission. AI is currently used in video games, smart cars, fraud detection, online customer support and virtual personal assistants. And we all know that a computer can beat any person on the planet in chess!



Jan. Programs

Jan. 2 - Phil Callan, former broadcaster “A Matinee with Bing Crosby – Highlights from the Old Groaner”

Introduced by Peter Burch

It was 7 degrees Fahrenheit on the morning of Tuesday, Jan. 2, but that did not deter 52 intrepid Y’s Men of Meriden from coming on a trip down the proverbial Memory Lane to hear and see Bing Crosby perform, narrated by former radio announcer Phil Callan. Callan drew the video clips from two movies, “Rhythm on the Range” (1936) and “Rhythm on the River” (1940).

The first movie starring Crosby (in his only Western film), along with Frances Farmer and Bob Burns, is about a cowboy who meets a beautiful young woman while returning from a rodeo in the east, and who invites her to stay at his California ranch to experience his simple, honest way of life. Projected videos included “Empty Saddles”, performed by Crosby outfitted as a cowboy astride a pure white stallion in a rodeo ring, and “Roundup Lullaby” in which Crosby sings a lullaby in a boxcar to his bull Cuddles, accompanied by Farmer (who in real life didn’t get along with Crosby, at least at first).

Other songs from this movie included “I’m an old Cowhand” (a comic song written by Johnny Mercer and performed by Crosby, reaching number two on the charts in 1936), and also featuring Louis Prima (“The King of Swing”), Martha Raye (who led a tumultuous life, married seven times) and a youthful Roy Rogers (“King of the Cowboys”). Then Crosby sang “I Can’t Escape from You” to Farmer, a song that stood in the Hit Parade for 11 weeks.

Callan then switched to the musical comedy film “Rhythm on the River”, in which two ghost writers (Crosby and Mary Martin, he writing the music and she the lyrics) write songs which are credited to a composer (Basil Rathbone). From this film, he projected the video of a song with the same name (“Rhythm on the River”) in which a high-stepping Crosby sings rapid-fire lyrics, while dancing and using a pair of drumsticks on a variety of pots and pans in a country store setting.

Jan. 9 - Zahir Mannan, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community “Who we are, what we believe”

Introduced by Tom Grimshaw

To end religious wars, condemn bloodshed and reinstitute morality, justice, and peace: these are the beliefs of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the fastest growing (and most persecuted) of 73 Muslim sects worldwide. Speaking dynamically to 53 Y’s Men of Meriden on Tues. Jan. 9, Muhammad Zahir Mannan, Director of Outreach of the CT Chapter of Ahmadiyya, used a PowerPoint presentation to review this sect’s principles.

Greeting his audience with the traditional Assalamu alaykum (“peace be upon you”), Mannan first discussed what is Islam and what Islam believes in, as drawn from the Holy Quran, the religious text verbally revealed from God

(Allah) to Muhammad (an orphan born in the Arabian city of Mecca in 570 CE) over a 23-year span. He then reviewed the Five Pillars of Islam: Shahada: Faith (no god except Allah), Salat: prayer (five times daily, facing toward Mecca), Zakāt: charity (2.5% of one’s frozen assets for almsgiving for charity), Sawm: fasting (dawn to dusk on Ramadan), and Hajj: pilgrimage to Mecca. And the Six Articles of Faith: Allah, Angels, All Holy Books and Scriptures, Prophets, the Last Judgement and Predestination.

Mannan noted that extremists recruit by distorting Islam, and that Islam rejects violent extremism and has no desire for political power. He strongly stated that nations that produce and sell arms world-wide (including America) cease this destructive practice. “Love for all, hatred for none” is the motto of this sect. Indeed, the Ahmadis are actively involved in community service world-wide, providing medical care, blood drives and financial assistance following disasters such as Hurricane Harvey. And regarding treatment of women, Mannan quoted Muhammad, “The best of men are those who treat their wives the best.”

Mannan (a Meriden police chaplain) briefly discussed the shooting incident at the Baitul Aman (“House of Peace”) Mosque (founded by his parents) in Meriden on Nov. 14, 2015, noting that the shooter and the mosque have since embraced each other. Indeed, this mosque, located at 410 Main St. in Meriden, regularly offers the public coffee, cake and a discussion about Islam (“with no questions off the table”); call 860-670-6402 for information.

Jan. 16 - Kristen Johnson, paralegal at Aetna “Rescuing abandoned animals after a natural disaster strikes”

Introduced by Peter Burch

“Animal rescue is my true passion.” So stated Wallingford resident Kristen Johnson, paralegal at Aetna Inc., as she spoke to 57 Y’s Men of Meriden on Jan. 16 about her efforts to save dogs and cats abandoned during Hurricanes Katrina (2005) and Harvey (2017).

Johnson first detailed her Louisiana experiences during Katrina, noting the devastation and loss of lives she encountered. She had previously been trained in water rescue for humans, but animal rescue was something new. Operating under the auspices of the Humane Society of the United States, she made daily house-to-house rescue excursions after navigating through police road blocks, able to enter homes at will if the house had an opening (but requiring permission from owners if the home was intact), experiencing countless heartaches. Upon return to Connecticut, she and her husband began a series of van trips, collecting abandoned animals from overloaded shelters in Louisiana and delivering them to other shelters along the eastern seaboard.

A long-time volunteer at both the Wallingford Animal Control and the Meriden Humane Society, Johnson felt the tug again following last year’s Hurricane Harvey, the wettest and costliest hurricane in American history. After flying to Mississippi and loading a van with supplies, she initially proceeded with her rescue mission in Louisiana, but soon went to Texas which bore the brunt of the storm. Using a PowerPoint presentation, she projected scenes of the devastating floods and some of the animals she rescued.

In addition to images of loading supplies and doing

mounds of paperwork (to move animals across state lines), other photos included trapping a feral cat, an abandoned dog left in place by Johnson since the neighbors were feeding it, and her "last rescue". Photos of Daisy Mae, a dog found in a flooded home after 14 days without food or water, showed pale gums indicating anemia due to malnutrition.

And finally, an image of Rudy, a cat abandoned when her owners were airlifted from their roof with other pets they could locate. The father began suffering chest pains due to grief over leaving Rudy behind, so Johnson opted to again search the house (a previous search by others had come up empty), finding the cat on the center of an upstairs bed (11 days without nourishment after Harvey struck), presumably having ridden on this bed as it floated to the ceiling in flood waters that reached the roof.

Jan. 23 - Ruth Borsuk, Past President, Meriden Historical Society

"Up West Main St. and Down Memory Lane"

Introduced by Sherwin Borsuk

Some 61 Y's Men of Meriden were treated on Jan. 23 to a scenic trip along the city's West Main St., albeit in 1953, as Ruth Borsuk, Past President of the Meriden Historical Society, escorted them on a photographic journey down Memory Lane. Projecting a series of photographs, many previously donated by Atty. James Ullman, Borsuk (assisted by Chris Ruel and Deborah Patterson) quickly found the audience participation she sought, as Y's Men members chimed in with their recollections.

Setting out from the corner of Colony and West Main St., a view of the historic traffic tower quickly gave way to images of Styltex, S.S. Kresge (later to become Kmart), Whalen Drugs, Thom McAn Shoes, Liggett Rexall Drugs and Cooper's Ladies Apparel. Then passing farther west past High School Ave. (now called Barrister's Court), images appeared of Grossman Shoes (owned by former Meriden mayor Abe Grossman), The Women's Shop, Brein Luggage, JC Penney, Ann Grace Dresses, Millinery Fashions, Walsh & Massari Opticians, Hyman's, and the Youth Shoppe.

Many of the parked autos were recognized by the audience, including a '52 Buick and a Hudson Jet. Buildings were often separated by small openings, allowing access to the numerous apartments above the stores, often inhabited by women or serving as offices for doctors and dentists.

Moving westward from 55 W. Main St., photographs captured J. Papandrea Jewelers, Rosamond Miller Shoes, the Capitol Flower Shop, Billie Burns (a candy shop), Nixon-Lodge Headquarters (with political posters covering the windows), Sears (for catalog orders), and Pappas Luncheonette. And finally, the Citizens for Kennedy Headquarters, Mark's Luncheonette, the Meriden Pet Center, Judy's Shop, Green Stamps Redemption Center and the vacant Loew-Poli Palace Theater.

Today's program was a treat, especially for audience members who have called Meriden home for most or all of their lives. The Meriden Historical Society is located at 424 West Main St. (203-639-1913, meridenhistoricalsociety.org).

Jan. 30 - Jack Brooks, accomplished traveler
"the Magnificent Southwest"

Introduced by Peter Burch

Jack and Barbara Brooks are closing in on their dream of visiting all 58 of America's National Parks, running their personal number to 40 in Oct. 2017 as they visited eight more in our spectacular southwest. Sharing this recent odyssey with 26 attending Y's Men of Meriden on a snowy Jan. 30, Barbara had a virtual presence during this photographic presentation with her narration embedded in the program.

Their journey took them back and forth across the Texas/New Mexico border, starting with Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1937 to provide a breeding and wintering habitat for migratory birds. Watered entirely by underground springs, it has become home to hundreds of bird species and dozens of mammalian and reptile varieties, as well as over 90 species of dragonflies and damselflies. Like many of our national parks, much of the construction was accomplished by Depression era workers under FDR's New Deal Program.

Then on to dramatic Carlsbad Caverns whose limestone caves were water-sculpted in the Guadalupe Mountain region many million years ago; huge spectacular limestone formations greeted the Brooks at every turn. It was discovered by a young boy, Jim White, who explored the cavern with his homemade wire ladder; he named many of the rooms, including the Big Room, New Mexico Room, Kings Palace, Queens Chamber, Papoose Room, and Green Lake Room. Nearly a million Brazilian free-tailed bats emerge daily at dusk from Carlsbad Cavern's uppermost chamber to feed on flying insects. Then Guadalupe National Park provided vistas of beautiful McKittrick Canyon and Frijole Ranch (a former stagecoach station), followed by Big Bend National Park (named for a u-shaped twist in the Rio Grande), resplendent with wild life and stunning rock formations.

After a visit to Fort Davis National Historic Site, built in 1854 and named for then Secretary of War Jefferson Davis (and used to protect settlers and travelers from Comanche and Apache attacks), and a trip to Organ Mountains National Monument, the trip continued to White Sands National Monument, famed for its snow-white 60-foot-high "sand" dunes (actually consisting of gypsum crystals dissolved from surrounding mountains). This was the home of the White Sands Missile Range, where the world's first man-made atomic explosion (code-named "Trinity") took place on July 16, 1945.

And this 1500-mile eight-day excursion concluded at Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, showcasing the ruins of 17th century Spanish Franciscan missions including subterranean kivas (used for kachina rituals by ancient Pueblo people) and the Gran Quivira mission.

Weather Policy

If Meriden schools are closed, the Y's Men meeting is cancelled. If Meriden schools have a delayed opening, the Y's Men program proceeds as usual (but any CyberSeniors meeting will not be held).