



# Y's Men of Meriden - Newsletter

Dec. 2023

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

## Dec. Programs

**Dec 5** Presenter: Peter Burch  
 Program: Erica Cirino, Author, Photojournalist and Artist  
**“Picture the Planet: Documenting the Oceans in Art and Photography”**

Author, photojournalist, and artist Erica Cirino has traveled the world to document both the beauty and challenges now facing our planet—especially our oceans. To better understand our living Earth, she has frequently embarked on adventures, embedding herself in wildlife habitats all over the world and confronting plastic pollution up close. Join Erica for an exciting presentation of her art and photography, and a rich discussion of her expeditions sailing to the remote edge of the Arctic Circle, Great Pacific Garbage Patch, South Pacific, North Sea, and beyond.

**Dec 12** Presenter: Peter Burch  
 Program: Justin Piccirillo, Historian and Author  
**“Meriden People of Note”**

Welcome to Meriden’s People of Note! In truth, where can I begin... 400 years of history and I have to pick 30-or-so people and say, “Here are Meriden’s greatest.” It can’t be done. This presentation will include some familiar, some not so familiar, and a few true Meriden “unsung” heroes who our city has been blessed to have.

**Y's Men Holiday Party on Dec. 19**  
**See page 5 for details and reservation form**

### Officers

Chairman	Phil Callan
Vice Chairman	Mike Rohde
Asst. Vice Chairman	TBA
Secretary	John Colaresi
Asst. Secretary	Tom Marshall
Treasurer	Jack Brooks
Asst. Treasurer	Lew Bither
YMCA Rep.	Dave Grodzicki
Past Chairman	Dave Grodzicki

### Directors

Maurice Poirier

### Committee Chairmen and Associates

Awards	Lew Bither
Bridge	Jim Chapman
Coffee	Richard Gault
	Michael Devlin
Cribbage	Walt Ziemba
General Activities	Sherwin Borsuk
Hiking	Ron Pell
Historian	Bill Glick
Hospitality	Tom Marshall
Membership	Bill Heath
Newsletter/website	Peter Burch
Programs	Mike Rohde
	Ron Pell
Special Events	Bruce Burchsted
Story Tellers	John Colaresi
Technology	Matt Bushey
	Richard Grossman

## News Items

- Brian Gray shared his battle with prostate cancer using chemotherapy and radiation.
- Walt Ziemba returned to the Ysman meeting after healing from a hip fracture two months ago.
- George Lucian used a story teller slot to describe Albert Lexie, a shoeshiner at Children’s Hospital of Pittsburg, who donated all his tips to its Free Care Fund, totalling over \$200,000 beginning in the 1980s.
- Doug Peary used a Happy Dollar to mention his birthday and growing up on a farm in Maine.
- Great to see Paul Lamoureux back attending on Nov. 21 and Bruno Carabetta on Nov. 28.
- We note with sadness the passing of Ysman member Al Banas on Nov. 16 at age 70. Al was a member since 2015.



Bring a potential new member  
 (friend and/or relative) to a Ysman  
 meeting as your guest.  
 We need to increase our  
 membership and attendance!

- Sherwin Borsuk gave a story teller presentation about the “Pope’s Nose”, the fatty tail of a turkey scientifically known as the pygostyle and also referred to as the parson’s, bishop’s or sultan’s nose. It’s use as a delicacy was temporarily banned

<u>Date</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Nov 7	38
Nov 14	39
Nov 21	33
Nov 28	45

<u>Date</u>	<u>Raffle winner</u>
Nov 7	Paul Scollan
Nov 14	Jim Chapman
Nov 21	Britt Hall
Nov 28	George Lucian

<u>Date</u>	<u>Guests</u>
Nov 28	Thomas Truehwald (visiting from Germany), guest of Hermann Kasper

<u>Treasurer's Report</u>	
Nov 28, 2023	\$6294.23

<u>Cribbage</u>	
Nov 21	Ron Carlstrom defeated Walt Ziemba (+13) and Lenny Cheerman (+21)
Nov 28	Ron Carlstrom defeated Walt Ziemba (+13) and Tom Marshall (+17)

## *Nov. Programs*

**Nov 7 - Peter Picone, Wildlife Biologist for DEEP (CT Dept of Energy and Environmental Protection)**

### **“Managing the Invasive Tree of Heaven (Host of the invasive Spotted Lanternfly)”**

Connecticut is currently draped by some 2800 plant species, of which 1800 predate the colonization of the state and about 1000 were subsequently introduced by later settlers and travelers; however, among these newer types are 97 invasive species which aggressively affect the surrounding flora and destroy surrounding habitats. Speaking to 38 Y’s Men of Meriden on November 7, Peter Picone, Wildlife Biologist with DEEP (CT Dept of Energy and Environmental Protection) provided a colorful slideshow and talk about the Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), one of the more aggressive species.

Picone noted that this species was introduced from Asia to America in 1784 by a gardener from Philadelphia. In Connecticut, it was first identified along the Housatonic River, with seed spread via the river’s stream. If unchecked, this species may grow to a height of 80-100 feet (with trunks up to three feet in diameter) and multiply via the 350,000 seeds created by each. Furthermore, the Tree of Heaven acts as host for the Spotted Lanternfly, a destructive insect also introduced from Asia, which infests food crops including soybeans, grapes and stone fruits.

Removing this plant species remains challenging. It is best to remove it early in its life cycle, because of its logarithmic growth if unchecked, displacing native vegetation. Simple felling is ineffective, as the extensive root system responds by creating additional plants. For removal, large trees require girdling, while smaller trees are cut down and the stump treated with a foliar herbicide which is absorbed into the root system.

Picone has devoted special attention to scenic Charles Island, located a half-mile off the coast of Milford and accessible by land only at low tide (during a full moon) via a tombolo (sandbar); visitors are sometimes trapped as the tide comes in. Vigorous action by Picone and others has successfully eliminated the Tree of Heaven along with planting benign trees on this Natural Area Preserve. A flurry of questions from the audience followed this presentation.

**Nov 14 - Pamela Fields, CEO of MidState Arc Inc. and ATECH**

### **“Using Technology to Stay Independent as we age”**

In this age of ever-expanding utilization of computer technology and artificial intelligence, there is growing hope for those with disabilities (including aging, autism, and intellectual and physical incapacities) to remain independent in their own homes, rather than relying on round-the-clock nursing or institutional care. Speaking to 39 Y’s Men of Meriden on Nov. 14, Pam Fields, CEO of Midstate Arc Inc. and ATECH (Assistive Technology Training Center, a growing commercial spinoff) described in detail how this occurs.

Fields first described how technology can assist people with living on their own and aging in place, including robotic vacuums and mops, window blinds that adjust by remote or voice controls, pull-down cabinets, and temperature control. Doors may be opened or relocked by voice commands, and cooking may be automated using smart burners and pans (which adjust cooking time and then shut off). If you leave your stove (e.g. for more than five minutes), it will shut off if you don’t reappear within the set time, and microwave ovens can be regulated to shut off if a burning odor is detected.

Health of the home’s occupant can be enhanced using automated medication dispensers (which alert you when it’s time for your next dose, or call a friend or family member if you fail to take it). Blood pressure and pulse oximetry can be computerized. Visual impairment is being conquered; BlindSquare technology will walk you through a building to your destination, warning you of objects in your path, and an OrCam device (attached to your eyeglasses frame) can read text to you and identify people in front of you. For the hearing impaired, an automated bed shaker will alert you in case of fire.

And speech barriers: devices are now being developed to “degarble” jumbled speech. Several programs are now competent to verbally or textually translate languages (e.g. Spanish to English). GPS devices tracking one’s location can now be incorporated into patches sewn on clothing. Fall pendants are common, alerting authorities if you should tumble. But today, ATECH has teamed up with Mule Security Systems, assisted by artificial intelligence, to create devices which after a two-week training period can send an alert if

your toilet flushing routine deviates significantly from your norm, or provide smart door locks (activated by eye gaze, fob, or fingerprint recognition).

**Nov 21 - Kenneth Morgan, Meriden Fire Chief**  
**“Antarctica and the Penguins”**

“Antarctica and the Penguins” was the subject of an illustrated talk to 33 Y’s Men of Meriden on Nov. 21 by Ken Morgan, Meriden Fire Chief. Providing details of his Jan. 2023 summertime trip organized by Norwegian Cruise Lines, Morgan also concentrated on the environmental damage occurring due to global warming.

Antarctica is the coldest, driest and windiest of the seven continents, with a summer population of about 5000 (mainly researchers), a number that shrinks to about 1000 in the Antarctic wintertime (when Americans are enjoying summer weather). Temperatures vary from 50+ degrees F. in summertime to a rock-bottom -128.6 degrees F. in winter (a record global cold recorded at the Russian Vostok Station in 1983).

This cruise also included Argentina (the world’s 6th largest producer of beef and home to soccer star Lionel Messi), as well as a visit to the beautiful city of Buenos Aires, eagerly sought by tourists. The tour also encompassed a visit to the Falkland Islands, known for rough weather and seas and becoming newsworthy following an Argentinian invasion of these British dependent territories in 1982, a 10-week conflict won by the British. At that time, Argentina was close to war with Chile, and so sent its best troops to guard the Chilean border, leaving less-trained troops to take part in the invasion.

And Chile itself, the longest country in South America, was a tour highlight, known for its great camping, hiking and fishing. The country is heavily populated by Magellanic penguins, named after Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan, who noticed them in 1520. Morgan displayed numerous photos of these human-friendly birds that feed in the water, often diving to depths up to 150 feet, to feed on krill and other prey. These penguins have poor eyesight on land but excellent vision underwater. Their biggest threat to survival: humans, through oil spills and other ecological disasters.

Access to the Antarctic coastline required sailing through Drake Passage, renowned for gale-force winds and icebergs, with wave heights up to 30-40 feet; it is here that the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans meet unimpeded. Shrinking of glacial ice shelves and calving of icebergs are increasing due to climate change. Morgan’s photos included an ice station and the Antarctic coastline. The continent is also home to the remarkable Gentoo penguin, which can swim underwater up to 25 m.p.h.

**Nov 28 - Mark Kosnoff, Hiker**  
**“The Inca Trail to Machu Picchu”**

Machu Picchu, built around 1450 A.D. high in the Chilean Andes for the Incan Emperor Pachacuti, is one of the “New Seven Wonders of the World” (along with the Great Wall of China, Petra in Jordan, the Colosseum in Italy, Chichen Itza in Mexico, the Taj Mahal in India and Christ the Redeemer statue in Brazil). Speaking to 45 Y’s Men of Meriden on Nov. 28, avid hiker Mark Kosnoff gave an

illustrated talk about his 2008 seven-day trek with a friend to visit the ruins of this remarkable ancient city, which at one time oversaw South America’s vast Inca Empire (larger than the Roman Empire).

The actual hike began following a required three days of acclimating to the thin air in the city of Cusco (altitude 11,200 ft.); Kosnoff’s friend promptly suffered from altitude sickness, requiring temporary supplemental oxygen, but recovering within three days. This city was the capital of the Inca Empire for three centuries prior to arrival of Francisco Pizarro and the Spanish conquistadors in the 1500s. Kosnoff visited local ruins which included extensive terracing (originally used for raising crops) and remarkable buildings and walls built with enormous stones (some the size of a small house) and precisely set together.

The three-day trek to Machu Picchu then followed. The hiking pair was required to be accompanied by a guide, two porters and a cook. Hiking was easier following the previous acclimatization, but trails reached their high point at 13,729 ft. and required a bridge crossing over the Urubamba River. The dirt trail on Day 1 passed numerous Incan ruins, with walking on the same level as surrounding clouds and viewing snow-capped peaks all around. Kosnoff became very sluggish and short of breath at one point, but quickly recovered. Day 2 required additional climbing up to Dead Woman’s Pass along a path made with flattened stones, reaching a high point at 13,729 ft. Then Day 3 started the descent into Machu Picchu (located in a valley at about 8000 ft.) along a partially-overgrown trail, with views of numerous Incan ruins.

The final day began prior to 5:30 am in an effort to view the legendary “Sun Gate” at sunrise, but a sight thwarted by rain and fog (“We couldn’t see a thing!”). Kosnoff proceeded to show a series of slides from this fabled city, with views of roaming wild llamas, Huayna Picchu (the peak seen in most photos of the city), and the well-preserved two-story Tomb of the Princess.

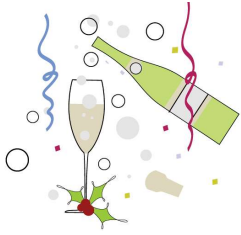


**The first testicular guard, the “Cup,” was used in Hockey in 1874 and the first helmet was used in 1974.**

**That means it only took 100 years for men to realize that their brain is also important.**

**Ladies.....Quit Laughing.**

# Y's Men Holiday Luncheon Reservation



Tuesday, December 19, 2023

**Aqua Turf Club - Wagon Room**

556 Mulberry St., Plantsville, CT

Cocktails (cash bar) - Luncheon 12-4 pm

**Entertainment:**

**Music provided by Silver City Sound**

*Dancing - Raffles - And More*

## **Early Bird Special**

**Make your reservations by November 28 and get a \$5**

**Voucher toward a beverage at the bar for each member of your party!\***

\* Those who do not drink alcoholic beverages may redeem their vouchers for an arm's length of raffle tickets

	NY Strip Sirloin	Chicken Valdestone	Pan-seared Salmon
Name: _____	_____	_____	_____
Guest: _____	_____	_____	_____
Guest: _____	_____	_____	_____
Guest: _____	_____	_____	_____

(Please print names legibly and check off entree choices)

Garden Salad • Rolls & Butter  
Penne Pasta with Sauce  
Mixed Vegetables • Roasted Potatoes  
French Vanilla Ice Cream with Hot Apple Topping  
Coffee, Tea, Decaf

**\$45 per person (tax and gratuity included)**

Make checks payable to: Y's Men of Meriden.



Please bring this form with payment to Y's Men, or mail to: Bruce Burchsted  
16 Spice Apple Lane, Meriden, CT 06450, to arrive **no later** than Tuesday, Dec. 12,  
*or by Nov. 28 for the Early Bird Special.*  
(for any questions, call Bruce at 203-631-8423)

### **Directions to Aqua Turf:**

From 1-91 or the Merritt Parkway: take Route 691 West toward Waterbury.  
Take exit 4 (Southington) and turn right. At the bottom of the hill (McDonald's on the  
corner), turn right onto South End Road. Follow until you come to Mulberry Street  
and turn left. Aqua Turf Club is approx. 1/4 mile on the left - 556 Mulberry Street.