



The Hundred Club of Connecticut

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"The Club with a Heart"

THE Hundred Call

President: Andre K. Charbonneau • Editor: Kenneth Dowst

THE Hundred Call

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Sergeant Dario Aponte

Fallen Officer Honored in Meriden

On May 20, Sergeant Dario Aponte, late of the New Haven Police Department, was honored at the 21st annual memorial celebration at the Connecticut Police Academy, in Meriden. Along with Sgt. Aponte, the ceremony honored officers who had fallen before him.

Aponte's name, recently inscribed, was the 129th on the memorial, which commemorates all the Connecticut police officers who died in the line of duty.

Sgt. Aponte had been honored earlier in New Haven. In a ceremony held October 22, 2008, his photo was added to a monument honoring officers from the New Haven force who died in the line of duty. They now number 20,

counting from the beginning of the force about 150 years ago.

The 43-year-old Aponte was killed in a crash of his patrol car in New Haven at 11:27 PM on Tuesday, September 9. He was responding to a 911 call, made four minutes earlier, reporting a man severely beating a woman in the middle of a street in the city's Fair Haven section.

Another New Haven officer, in another patrol car, likewise sped towards the scene of the reported incident. This was officer Diane Gonzalez. At the intersection of Chapel and East streets the two cars collided with violent impact. Sgt. Aponte was killed, and officer Gonzalez critically injured. A report of May 22 stated that Gonzalez remains hospitalized with a brain injury.

Dario Aponte joined the New Haven Police Department in November 1991. His diligence and wide range of skills, including "people skills," led to promotions. He was promoted to detective in 2004 and served in the crime scene unit. Promoted again to Sergeant, in July 2008, he moved to the overnight patrol shift.

Former police chief Francisco Ortiz highlighted Aponte's wide range of abilities. "He was a mounted officer, with the bureau of investigation at crime scenes and in the laboratory, . . . and, most recently, a supervisor of patrol."

Ortiz continued: "He had that rare combination of being people-centered but also highly meticulous and reliable.

"He really got it. He was the consummate

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President Tom Guerra, Congratulates low gross winner Ralph Giansanti at the 2008 Golf Tournament

Golf Outing Set for July 28

Mark Tuesday, July 28 on your calendar--the date of The Hundred Club's 35th annual golf outing. As last year, the tournament will be played at Tunxis Plantation Country Club in Farmington.

You'll find a registration form on page 4 of this newsletter.

The entry fee this year is \$145 for golfers, \$45 for non-golfers. This includes greens fee, use of golf cart, on-course luncheon and other refreshments, prizes, and the customary steak dinner. The non-golfers fee includes luncheon and the steak dinner. ■





André Charbonneau

New President Sees Maintaining Membership, Continuing Commitments as KEY TASKS IN 2009

The U.S. Presidency had its Adamases and Bushes. The Hundred Club presidency has its Guerras and now Charbonneaus.

For the second time in the club's history--and the second year in a row--its President is the son of a previous President. Andre K. Charbonneau's presidency comes nine years after that of Andre L. Charbonneau (2000). The previous father-son pair was the Guerras: Peter (1997) and Thomas (2008).

Andre K. is a lifelong resident of South Windsor and owner of Andre Furniture Industries. He founded that commercial millwork firm in 1978, when he was a senior at South Windsor High School.

He says he's grateful to his father for encouraging him to join the Hundred Club and for sponsoring his membership--25 years ago, in 1984. He says also that his enthusiasm for the organization increased still further when he joined the Board of Directors in 2001.

As Board member and member of its Finance Committee, he has been focusing a good deal on matters financial.

Asked about the main focus he expects to have as President, Andre replied, "Maintaining membership, so we can continue the level of support and commitments we have made to the families of our fallen heroes."

Andre is also a 25-year member of the South Windsor Rotary Club. He's been married for 25 years to Sandy Charbonneau. They have two college-age children, Hillary and Andre W. ■

Brooklyn Warden Dies

Another public servant has died too young. Award-winning employee Robin H. Sutherland had risen in the state Department of Correction from correction officer to Warden of the Brooklyn Correctional Institution.

In 2008 she suffered a major heart attack. By August she had also undergone heart transplantation surgery and was recovering. By this point she was eligible to retire, but she vowed to return to work as soon as she had recovered sufficiently.

Sadly, she died four months later, on Nov. 28, 2008. She was 41.

She is survived by her husband, George Sutherland, and two children: Ryan, now 15; and D'Neja, now 13.

Robin Sutherland earned a B.A. from Virginia State University, where she majored in sociology with concentration in Administration of Justice. Her career in the field of correction began in Somers in 1989, at what was then the Connecticut Correctional Institution--Somers.

She entered as a correction officer. At that time the facility was the state's maximum-security prison for persons convicted of serious offenses--complete with death chamber and electric chair.

In 1994 the institution was transformed into a medium-security prison and renamed the Osborne Correctional Institution (OCI). The following year the Death Row inmates moved into the newly built Northern Correctional Institution nearby. Osborne kept the death chamber, though, and it remains there (now called the execution enclosure).

Officer Sutherland spent 17 years at the facility. Promotions came quickly, first to Correctional Counselor then to Counselor Supervisor for Special

Management, Counselor Supervisor for Unit Management and Records, then (in 2003) Major of Programs and Treatment at OCI. Town of Somers minutes from 2005 identify her as Acting Warden of OCI.

In February 2006 she was promoted to Warden of the Brooklyn Correctional Institution and--for the first time in 17 years--parked her car in the morning at an address other than 335 Bilton Road, Somers.

Like OCI, the Brooklyn facility is medium security though substantially smaller. Recent data show around 450 inmates, versus nearly 2,000 at OCI.

Announcing Sutherland's 2006 promotion, state Correction Commissioner Theresa Lantz cited "the leadership skills that have made her a stand out choice for advancement to warden." The new warden's expertise in treatment

was thought especially valuable at the Brooklyn facility, which houses many of the state's incarcerated sex offenders and conducts several treatment programs.

At the DOC's 2008 annual awards ceremony, attended by some 800 people, Warden Sutherland was one of four Department employees honored for their exemplary commitment, dedication, and courage. Commissioner Lantz cited the warden's stated determination to continue her work at Brooklyn, even in the wake of heart attack and heart transplant.

Following Warden Sutherland's death on November 28, spokesperson Brian Garnett said that "The Department of Correction is grief stricken" over the loss of a colleague who was not only "exemplary and dedicated" but also "truly a wonderful person." Garnett concluded, "She was an inspiration to our agency." ■



Warden Robin Sutherland

Fallen Officer *Continued From Page 1*

professional."

At his funeral mass in New Haven's small Ukrainian Catholic church, attendees well outnumbered the available seats. Several dignitaries attended.

State Attorney General Richard Blumenthal spoke at the funeral. Referring to the large police honor guard, Blumenthal began by noting that his words would be "far less eloquent than that long line of blue outside paying homage."

The Attorney General was eloquent nonetheless. He noted that Aponte had been "a calm presence at countless scenes of domestic violence . . . a steady hand at accidents . . . a dedicated professional at crime scenes."

Blumenthal continued, "He was a true hero, and he will be sorely missed."

New Haven mayor John DeStefano Jr. also spoke, saying that Aponte brought to his work "a big heart, a steady hand and a good soul."

DeStefano stated that "New Haven is a better place, and we are all better people for his life."

Possibly Aponte's diligence and wide range of competencies stem from an early recognition of his calling. His cousin Chris Coppedge recalled that "from when he was in diapers, Dario knew he wanted to be a cop."

Dario and Donna Aponte--his widow, also a New Haven police officer--had two children together. They are Brandon, now approaching six years old; and Andru, now one. He is survived also by two children of a previous marriage: Ashleigh Aponte, now 21; and Dario Scott Aponte II, now 12. ■



Hundred Call Retrospective



Gerald Demeusy

Like The Hundred Club of Connecticut, *The Hundred Call* continues to evolve . . . slowly and in a good direction. This issue—which marks the newsletter's 40th anniversary—brings an updated design and a new editor.

The new look was created by graphics designer Robin Sherwood, of Sherwood & Company, in Bloomfield. "I was trying for a more contemporary look, and one that emphasized the pictures as well as the stories," she explained.

The new editor is Kenneth Dowst, Ph.D., of Manchester. Ken is "a word guy from 'way back," as he puts it, and his career has engaged written English from three different directions. He has been a college professor of English rhetoric and composition, a technical writer/researcher/editor in a Glastonbury consulting firm, and a freelance writer and editor for nonprofit organizations.

"It's an honor and a pleasure to work on *The Hundred Call*," Ken says, "and to contribute to such an impressive organization" as The Hundred Club.

Though the newsletter's design has been "evolving" for 40 years, Ken does not think that the metaphor applies to its writing and editing. He notes that his two predecessors—Gerald J. Demeusy and Joseph P. Owens—set and maintained "a very high standard" in these areas.

Anniversaries invite a look back at the past, and a *Hundred Call* retrospective is entertaining as well as interesting.

Chapter One: The Demeusy Years

Issue #1 was born in March 1969, sharing news about an organization less than twenty months old. "Hundred Club Off To Fine Start," the banner headline proclaimed, as indeed it was. The newsletter reported that the club had grown to 150 members, and a program of "membership luncheons" was underway to attract more. So far, the club had aided 11 families of the fallen.

An article inside described a unique feature of the Connecticut club. Its headline suggests how much American culture has changed in four decades: "100 Men And a Girl."

Even more intriguing than the headline is the second sentence, which begins, "It appears that the club has one female member—Mrs. Nancy Klock of Manchester."

It turns out that the uncertainty was not biological in nature. All agreed that Mrs. Klock indeed was a "girl." The

uncertainty concerned whether or not the by-laws permitted female members.

Mrs. Klock's attendance at the club's first anniversary dinner—joining the 100 men—"demonstrated her firm intention to be a member." She was then judged to be a *bona fide* member.

Departing from strict journalistic objectivity, the newsletter broadcast a message of perhaps greater clarity than subtlety. Mrs. Klock would remain a member "unless she is formally challenged—and it's hard to conceive who will do the challenging."

A professor of engineering at the University of Hartford, the new member might also have been referred to as *Professor Klock* or presumably *Dr. Klock*. Apparently, in the protocol of those ancient days, Mrs. was considered to be the highest of the three honorific titles.

In any case, admitting her proved to be a good call. Nancy Klock remained active in the club until her death in 1981.

* * *

From the beginning, photographs of the club's activities were an important part of each *Hundred Call* issue. The first issue bore no fewer than five. Two show notable people being "pinned." One is TV and radio personality Mel Allen, the former "Voice of the Yankees" and the first member from Stamford.

The other is the powerful FBI Director, J. Edgar Hoover. Hoover had accepted an honorary membership in The Hundred Club of Connecticut. The photo shows him in a Washington office, accepting the pin and a plaque of appreciation from a small delegation from Connecticut.

By the second issue (June 1969), the pages had increased to six, and the photographs increased in number and size. Page one, though, was dominated by a drawing. For membership in Stamford had increased greatly—to 16, one of whom was Ernie Bushmiller, creator of the famed *Nancy* comic strip.

The cartoon shows young Nancy and her friend Sluggo holding a huge birthday cake. On the side is written—apparently in icing—"The Club With a Heart." Two large burning candles are perched on top.

* * *

Well-produced, well-written, and informative the first issue may have been. Easy to read it was not. The serif typeface looked thin, light, and old-fashioned. It was decidedly small, and the "leading"—white space between lines—was spare.

It looked as though the editor were trying to fit four and a half pages of news and information—20 months' worth—into four pages. This indeed may have been the case.

In any event, over many months Editor Demeusy experimented with many changes in typeface, type size, and leading; and the newsletter grew more comfortable to look at and easier to read. The change to six pages (with Issue #2) doubtless helped, but even the occasional subsequent four-page issues looked better.

Volume 14, No. 3 came out in July 1982—shortly after the club's offices moved from Meriden to Glastonbury. Some see the issue as having ushered in a new design; others see instead more steps in a long evolution.

Certainly the title block now looked much different. "The *Hundred Call*" was now in letters looking blocky, three-dimen-

sional, and extruded, like old *Superman* comic-book covers.

One change was very substantial, however. Since June 1969 each newsletter issue published, on the last page, a list of "Our Honored Dead." (In the early days, the last page also contained a list of the entire membership and still had room left over.) Sixteen officers who died in the line of duty were named in the second issue: nine policemen and seven firemen.

By July 1982, with the list (sadly) grown to 124, President Thornton, Editor Demeusy, and others agreed that publishing the roll in every issue "tends to relegate it to something routine that is perhaps taken for granted by readers."

It was agreed that the "deep significance [that the list] represents" to all in the club would be most powerfully expressed by an annual "anniversary tribute." The roll of Our Honored Dead would be printed once a year in the January issue.

* * *

In the July 1982 issue we can see another interesting contrast between those times and now. A quarter-century back, the club—while always doing its work "quietly"—was not quite so publicity-shy as it is today.

Following the move to Glastonbury, a few members—especially Managing Director Edward J. Funk—agreed to speak with a local reporter. A long, well-researched, accurate, and inevitably positive story soon appeared in the *Glastonbury Citizen* and was reprinted in the July *Hundred Call*.

The reporter asked Funk if many members had joined in hopes that the car bumper plaque would get them preferential treatment if stopped by the police. Funk's reply was memorable: "How stupid. The annual dues are \$250 and you can get plenty of speeding tickets for that."

Gerald J. Demeusy edited *The Hundred Call* from its beginning in March 1969 through mid-1994. The first issue edited by someone other than "Jerry" Demeusy appeared in June 1994. Joseph A. Owens took over the reins then and held them for the next 14 years. His many contributions will be discussed in Chapter Two of this story.

* * *

What sort of character could edit a newsletter for 25 years? Demeusy's "day job" was crime reporter for the *Hartford Courant*, and "character" indeed may be the right word. By all accounts he was a good investigator, a shrewd reporter, a writer of what used to be called "tough, hard-hitting prose," a guy who could talk his way out of a jam, a man who earned the respect of DAs and thugs alike.

He seemed to many like a "reporter" character sent over by Central Casting. A colleague at the *Courant* described him, admiringly, as "straight out of *The Front Page*."

He was also a founding member of The Hundred Club of Connecticut. Possibly he found the club's peaceful, cooperative, and charitable works—and workers—a refreshing change from the squad cars, courtrooms, prisons, and electric chair of his "real" job.

Certainly his writing style in the newsletter was formal, balanced, polished—a far cry from the two-fisted, hard-hitting *rat-a-tat-a-tat* of his stories of "Mad Dog" Taborsky and other miscreants.

Mickey Spillane by day, E.B. White by night. He died in March 2007 at age 90. His family requested that his friends and admirers send, in lieu of flowers, a donation to the Hundred Club of Connecticut. ■



Scenes from Tournament 2008



Paul Yindra putts.



They're off!



Dick Hurley gets some pointers from his grandson.



2009 Golf Tournament Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Tunxis Plantation Country Club

Directions: Route 84, east or west, Exit 39, follow Route 4 West, take 1st right after Farmington River – Town Farm Road

\$145.00 PER GOLFER

includes golf carts, greens fee, lunch & beverage (on course) steak dinner

\$45 PER NON-GOLFER

includes lunch & steak dinner

Starting time ... Shotgun Start - 10:00 a.m.

The tournament will be played on the White Course. There will be coffee and breakfast pastries on the Pro Shop porch and lunch and beverages on the course at the halfway house. The social hour will start approximately 3 p.m. with dinner at 4 p.m. The awarding of prizes and the free raffle will precede dinner. The cost is \$145 per player – \$580 per foursome. Payment should be made to **The Hundred Club of Connecticut**.

Please register this foursome:

Number of Golfers (\$145 per ticket): Total: \$ _____

Number of Non-Golfers (\$45 per ticket): Total: \$ _____

(A check must accompany this reservation slip) Grand Total: \$ _____

**HUNDRED CLUB
GOLF TOURNAMENT
Tuesday, July 28, 2009**

Contact Name for this foursome: _____

Address: _____

Golfer #1: _____ Telephone: _____

Golfer #2: _____ Telephone: _____

Golfer #3: _____ Telephone: _____

Golfer #4: _____ Telephone: _____

Mail to: The Hundred Club of Connecticut, Inc., P.O. Box 419, Glastonbury, CT 06033
For more information, please call: (860) 633-8357 or Fax: (860) 633-8350

