



The Hundred Club of Connecticut

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"The Club with a Heart"

Addressee or Current Resident

THE Hundred Call

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Past Club President Posthumously Honored

The late General John J. King—past President and an early member of The Hundred Club of Connecticut—was posthumously inducted into the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame (CVHF), in ceremonies held in Hartford on November 17, 2009. He was one of 11 Connecticut veterans honored at the year's ceremony. Governor Jodi Rell addressed the gathering.

King's son Bob accepted the award.

Although honorees must be veterans of the armed forces, CVHF stresses that it is not a *military* hall of fame. Rather, it recognizes meritorious service to the community. People are honored "who continue to serve and inspire their fellow man with their deeds and accomplishments throughout their lifetime."

Or their "fellow woman," one now needs to add. Navy veteran Barbara Miller, RN, was inducted in 2008. Inducted the same year—posthumously—was former Governor William



General John J. King

A. O'Neill. A strong supporter of The Hundred Club, O'Neill appeared frequently at Club functions and several times addressed the annual meeting. The Club had bestowed on him its Distinguished Public Service Award and, in 1997, Honorary Life Membership. He died in November 2007.

John King served as an Army brigadier general in World War Two. His service decorations included the

Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star. Afterwards, a civil engineer living in Hartford, King was active in many professional, charitable, educational, church, and veterans' organizations.

One of the original members of The Hundred Club of Connecticut, King served long as chairman of the Special Assistance Committee. He died in 2002.

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New Officers and Directors Presented at Annual Meeting



Outgoing President Andre K. Charbonneau passes the gavel to Maurice "Moe" McCarthy

Officers and Directors for 2010 were presented at The Hundred Club of Connecticut's annual luncheon meeting, held October 26 at the Rocky Hill Marriott. There outgoing President Andre K. Charbonneau symbolically passed the gavel to Maurice (Moe) McCarthy.

McCarthy served in the Waterbury Fire Department

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"Thanks to You ..."

Families The Hundred Club has assisted often write to express their gratitude. Most often, a purchased card of thanks bears also a handwritten personal note. The notes are touching and heartwarming—as well as saddening that the need had been there in the first place.

From time to time, as space permits, *The Hundred Call* will reprint, anonymously, selections from these personal notes. A recent sampling follows.

"As Thanksgiving nears, I want to take the time to say 'Thank you!!' for all the wonderful things you do for my child and me and so many others like us. . . . You are such a special organization, and I am so grateful for you in our lives."

Another, written at about the same time, reads,

"I just want to write to all of you and thank you for your generosity over the years. I am overwhelmed with your thoughtfulness. No one else remembers widows, widowers and orphans as you do. It will be 40 years this January for me and my family. I am speechless about how the time goes by and yet you still remember. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Finally,

"Sincere thanks for your generous gifts. Words cannot explain what a comfort it is that you all continue to remember those of us who feel the void of not having our loved ones with us, especially during the holidays."

One semantic distinction is subtle but I think revealing. On most cards I have seen, the note is not inscribed, "To The Hundred Club." Rather, it is inscribed, "To the members of The Hundred Club." —Ed. ■

New Officers *Continued From Page 1*

for 25 years. He retired in 1995—as Battalion Chief and Deputy Fire Chief—and became Public Works Director of the Town of Stratford, a position he continues to hold. McCarthy has been a Club member since 1986. He is a resident of Southington and the father of three adult daughters.

Michael Lambert becomes First Vice President; Bernie Sullivan, Second Vice President. Gerri Roberts is Secretary; George Edwards, Jr., Treasurer; Jeff Lederman, Assistant Treasurer.

Four new Directors begin three-year terms in 2010. They are Theresa C. Lantz, Celeste Robitaille, Matthew A. Service, and James M. Thomas.

At the annual meeting, State Attorney General Richard Blumenthal addressed the

Club. Stratford Mayor James R. Miron also spoke, and the Connecticut Firefighters Pipes and Drums delivered a brief though rousing performance.

In an interview with *The Hundred Call*, President McCarthy described his management style as "low-key, off-the-radar." Far from low-key, though, was his praise for the Club's professional staff: Bill Sydenham (Managing Director), Patricia Grenier (Office Manager), and Phyllis Carrier (Accountant).

McCarthy listed two goals for his year as President. The first is to "increase the membership of a club that is the most worthwhile one I've ever been a member of."

The second goal is "not to have to make a visit to a family that has suffered a loss this year." ■

Past Club President *Continued From Page 1*



Bob King accepts the award from Governor Jodi Rell. To the right is state Veterans Affairs Commissioner Dr. Linda Schwartz

Governor Rell founded the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame by executive order in 2005. The institution is administered by the Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and the state's Military Department. The first class of Connecticut veterans inducted—in November 2005—included former President George H.W. Bush.

Fifty-one people have been inducted into CVHF since its founding. The institution does not yet have a physical location. The DVA is attempting to secure some space for

the hall of fame within the State Capitol, a spokesperson said.

A pamphlet on CVHF (in PDF format) can be downloaded from the DVA Web site. The pamphlet includes photographs and capsule biographies of the 51 inductees. The address of this file is http://www.ct.gov/ctva/lib/ctva/MEMBERS_OF_THE_CONNECTICUT_VETERANS_HALL_OF_FAME.pdf. ■



Hundred Call Retrospective

Chapter Two: The Owen Years

From 1969 to 1994, *The Hundred Call* was edited by Gerald Demeusy. Demeusy was a tough, old-fashioned crime reporter—straight out of *The Front Page*, according to one admirer. His crime stories for the Hartford *Courant* had the rat-a-tat staccato beat of a hard-boiled-detective novel.

None of which you'd guess from his writing in *The Hundred Call*. Here his prose was elegant, formal, even old-fashioned—a bit like the *Spectator* essays by Addison & Steele that one had to read in high school. Clearly, Demeusy was a hard act to follow—and one that nobody could duplicate.

Fortunately, his successor—another veteran newsman, named Joseph A. Owens—also knew how to write and to edit. From June 1994 through 2008, the Club newsletter maintained its professional level of quality.



Joseph A. Owens

Owens' writing seldom attempted the formal, literary style of Demeusy's. It had a different sort of elegance: clean, spare, concise unobtrusive. Nothing special, you might think at first reading. Until you took a paragraph and tried to

say the same thing more clearly, precisely, or economically. You'd seldom succeed.

On rare occasion, Owens would create a more "literary" style. But his writing was best when it sounded like it came from an accomplished and experienced newspaper reporter. As he had been, in Connecticut, for four decades. By 1969 he had gained the title of Editor of the Editorial and Opinion Pages of Bridgeport's morning *Telegram* and afternoon *Post*. He retained that position until his retirement in 1988. During his tenure, The Hundred Club recognized his services, awarding him an Honorary Lifetime Membership in 1980.

A friend recalled some of Owens' old-fashioned editing skills, probably nearly extinct now, worldwide, in this age of digital layout and digital typesetting. Say, as deadline approached, a newsletter issue had five column-inches of unfilled space. Owens could sit down, run a sheet of yellow paper into his typewriter, and zip off a good story—maybe on public-safety news, maybe on Club history. When later typeset, it would fit the empty space exactly.

However well-honed his skills in writing and editing, Owens could give the impression that what he *really* liked was golf. The June 1994 newsletter issue included a capsule biography of the new editor . . . which devoted as much space to golf as to

journalism. Details of that year's forthcoming golf outing fill the entire back page, including advice from the country club's golf director on the particular challenges the course offers.

At that time, the event was split over two days. The venue alternated, by year, between courses at the Glastonbury Hills and the Tunxis Plantation country clubs. The 2004 event was scheduled for the White Course at Tunxis where, golfers are advised, "water comes into play on five holes and there is at least one bunker on all 18 holes."

The October 1995 issue featured both a substantial recap of that year's golf outing at Glastonbury Hills and a centerfold double-page spread of photographs from it. Governor Rowland played the following year, at Tunxis Plantation, the newsletter later reported—the first chief executive of the state to do so. Readers eager to assess the executive golf skills were disappointed, however. "As for his score," *The Hundred Call* reported, "club officials granted him 'gubernatorial immunity.'"

* * *

Like his predecessor, Owens recognized the value of good photographs—preferably lots of them. Nearly all he took himself. Another centerfold spread appeared in the June 2006 issue—attendees at the 2005 annual meeting, which was the Club's first "in the form of a luncheon." October 2006 had a centerfold spread (less one column) featuring 28 photos of golf outing participants.

Inevitably, not all of the hundreds of photos published over the years were candidates for a Pulitzer, but some were striking. An informal portrait by Owens of Mrs. Ustjanauskas—seated, illuminated apparently by window light—is radiant (undated special 30th-anniversary issue, 1997).

Two artificial officers rated memorable photos and a story to match (April 2006). "Trooper Pride," a carved and painted statue at Public Safety headquarters in Middletown looks, well, rather wooden. On the other hand—apart from the impossible face—the firefighter "Sparky" looks alive and in motion as he strides towards the camera. The article reveals that Sparky, who resides at the state Fire Academy in Windsor Locks, is built of 14,460 Lego pieces.

Or rather, "A spokesperson at Lego said" Sparky is built of 14,460 Lego pieces (*emphasis added*). To a pro, *no* subject is small enough to warrant treating unconfirmed assertions as facts.

On occasion, an unremarkable photo was improved by its caption. One shot of some faces at a golf outing social hour carried a caption that began, "Three friends of Irish extraction enjoyed the opportunity to exchange a few stories . . ." The Irishmen were past president Paul McQuillan, Msgr. Joseph Devine, and former Governor William O'Neill—all regular participants in Club activities.

* * *

The design of the newsletter changed little during the Owens years. The simple three-column layout proved both clean and flexible. The "Hundred Call" nameplate, carried over from Demeusy's tenure, was the most eye-catching graphic element, with its impression of extruded, three-dimensional block letters. The nameplate approached the baroque in 1997, when a large seal and ribbon commemorating the club's 30th anniversary were superimposed on the rest.

The nameplate eventually quieted down, aided by the decision to make the newsletter a tri-fold "self-mailer." The nameplate was reduced and simplified, and most of the top third of page one was reserved for postage and mailing label. The other eleven-twelfths of the newsletter changed little until a new and more elaborate design (by Robin Sherwood, of Bloomfield) debuted in June 2009, along with a new Editor.

The history of *The Hundred Call* during the Owens years would be incomplete without mention of two compositions—one small and frequent, one large and unique. The "small, frequent" compositions are "filler": tiny, narrowly-focused stories that appear—truth be told—mainly in order to fill up a column-inch or two. Probably response to these gems varies greatly from reader to reader, but many of them are rather interesting.

The patron saint of firefighters? Florian; and the Saint Florian medal married nationwide was designed by the Catholic chaplain of the Hartford FD in 1955.

The first woman public safety office to lose her life in the line of duty since the Club's founding? Police Officer Nancy F. Nichols, of Naugatuck, in 1991.

Guest of honor at the 10th anniversary dinner? Former Governor John Dempsey.

Number of dues-paying members recruited by founder Anthony Ustjanauskas in 1967? 31.

By July 2006, 371 Connecticut State Police cruisers had been outfitted with special push bumpers at a cost of \$75,000.

One good source of such small gems is the "large and unique" composition mentioned, above: *The Hundred Call* Special 30th Anniversary Edition, published in 1997. In eight pages of substantial articles, the issue presents a great deal of Club history. It includes profiles of key figures—both members and supporters—such as Governor Dempsey, Lieutenant Governor Joseph Fauliso, State Police Commissioner Leo Mulcahy, and former Managing Director Edward Funk, among others.

A highlight is a story on Mrs. Ada Ustjanauskas, billed as her first public discussion of the early days of the Club. She reveals that the *de facto* recruitment headquarters was the family's kitchen and that building the club was "a family endeavor" involving herself, Anthony, and all

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Notes and Comments

Save the date!

This Year's Annual Golf Outing will be held on Tuesday, July 27, at the Tunxis Plantation Country Club in Farmington. More details in the next issue.

Remembering the Lakewood officers—and their families

Americans were stunned to hear of the unprovoked fatal shooting of four uniformed police officers in the town of Parkland, Washington, last November 29. The four members of the Lakewood, WA, police department were seated at a table of a coffee shop that Sunday morning, prior to the beginning of their shift. Without warning, a man standing at the counter drew a gun and opened fire on the officers. All four left behind young children, and three a spouse.

The four slain officers are Sgt. Mark Renninger and officers Ronald Owens, Tina Griswold, and Greg Richards. A man believed to be responsible for the murders was killed in a confrontation with police in South Seattle two days later.

Lakewood Police Independent Guild president Brian Wurts writes, "If you want to donate to the families, our Guild has a benevolent account. Every penny will go to the families." Club members wishing to contribute may write a check payable to "LPIG Benevolent Fund" and mail it to Box 99579, Lakewood, WA 98499.

More news from the Northwest

A friend from Washington State reported that 20,000 police officers from across North America attended the funeral service for the four slain Lakewood officers. The service was held in a large sports stadium, the Tacoma Dome, on December 8. Peace officers paying their respects included 100 from New York, 100 from Boston, and 1,000 officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, resplendent in their red dress-uniforms.

A 10-mile-long procession of 3,000 police vehicles drove from Lakewood to the Tacoma Dome. Thousands of citizens lined the route despite the 20-degree-Fahrenheit temperature.

Our correspondent reported that the funeral service honored not only the four fallen police

officers but all public safety officers in the nation.

More chiefs discover The Hundred Club

The December 2009 issue of the *CPCA Hotline*—quarterly newsletter of the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association—carries a long essay by Chief Paul Fitzgerald, of Berlin. Titled "NEVER FORGET! — Here's How," the piece praises the work of The Hundred Club . . . enthusiastically and at length. Fitzgerald concludes by encouraging "each and every police chief to join." You can read the entire issue online at

http://www.cpcanet.org/Visitors/Documents/0911_Hotline_000.pdf ■



Funeral of the four slain Lakewood officers, December 8. A phalanx of 1,000 Mounties (light gray rectangle) can be seen in the left middleground of the photo.

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six children. The oldest of the children—Andrew, then a college student at Central—in fact handled much of the Club's paperwork and correspondence in those early days, Mrs. Ustjanuskas said.

* * *

Over its first 40 years, in the hands of two skilled editors—seasoned newspapermen both—*The Hundred Call* changed a fair amount graphically, a little in its tone of writing, and very little in the nature and quality of its content.

It always kept Hundred Club members informed, reminded of the risks and sacrifices of our public safety officers, and occasionally entertained as well. Its standards of reporting and of writing style have been far higher than one would normally find in a small, volunteer-run nonprofit organization.

As *The Hundred Call* enters its fifth decade, anyone presuming to take on the duties of Editor faces a sobering realization. *The project had better succeed . . . as there's no way any failure can be blamed on lack of good examples of how to do the job right!* ■

Photos - 2009 Annual Meeting



Connecticut Firefighters Pipes and Drums



State Attorney General Richard Blumenthal addresses the meeting.



Edward Funk, Paul Young, Diane Sydenham



The Board

