



SOUNDS from the BEACH

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THE QUARTERLY S.B.P.O.A. NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 213
SOUND BEACH, N.Y. 11789

Sound Beach Property Owners Association

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HONORING GEORGE FECHT

By Vic Scalone

In 1992 when our association was in jeopardy of being dissolved, one long-time member stepped forward to take the lead and put the SBPOA back on the road to success. That man was George Fecht.

George became President. He, and his wife Evelyn worked tirelessly to help organize fundraisers starting with the "Save our Beach" barbecue which has become an annual event renamed the "Clam-B-Que". Other events followed, "Trash & Treasure Sale", "Field Day", Halloween Dance, New Years Eve Dance, etc. He was able to negotiate the payment for a new bulkhead that we badly needed over several years. This he did on a handshake!

George attracted new board members and organized volunteers to repair our beach stairs that were de-

stroyed by winter storms. Because the association's funds were thin, work had to be done by members who were both willing and familiar with the required work. Working with other board members, he organized work crews throughout the spring. Many of these new volunteers went on to become new board members, infusing new "blood" and ideas into the association. His efforts were truly in the spirit of the founding members of the SBPOA. George's warm smile and likable nature made it hard to say no. Eventually, when Evelyn became ill he left his

leadership role to help her as the devoted man that he was. He still managed to attend some of the events he helped launch and was always there to counsel us when we asked him. George Fecht passed away on November 11, 2001. The Sound Beach Property Owner's Association that exists today was George's dream. We will continue the dream and we all will mourn his passing. Thank you George, our association will always remember your efforts for making our association and community a better place.



Message from the Editor

"THE GOOD NEW DAYS"

This issue of the SBPOA newsletter covers topics that are sad, like the loss of George Fecht and Mary Garbarino this past year and it covers topics that are joyous, like the memories of people who lived in our community during the 1950's and 60's (Tom Savarese). Let me briefly mention Sound Beach today. Yes, the woods are mostly gone, replaced by new houses. And I can no longer pick wild beach plums from bushes on the dunes. But, and I repeat BUT, the community is still here. Calace's is gone, but Rubino's is here. I stopped in to get some lunch a few weeks ago and met my neighbor who is an eight year Sound Beach resident. We chatted and spoke about his children and his plans for the future and my plans for the future. Another neighbor has helped me with some things I couldn't manage on my own, and when I make a good batch, I give him some

cookies to share with his family as a small thank you. When I asked Martin Streef of Streef Tree Service to prune some of my trees, during our conversation I told him that I had eaten at Hartlin Inn in the fall and had a wonderful meal. I learned from him that his brother owns this Sound Beach landmark.

Every year I take a walk on the beach on New Years Day (by the way, I am not the only one who does this!) I see how the beach renews itself and how the water becomes clear and fresh. I see the Loons and Mergansers who visit us briefly. And I am amazed at how lucky I am to be a part of such a wonderful place, and a member of a community with such wonderful people. Those of you who read this and are not members of the SBPOA, please join us!

You are not joining a 'beach club' , you are joining a wonderful way of life.

Germaine "Mimi" Hodges



A BLAST FROM A PAST

Tom Savarese sent us this picture of himself with his friend Gerry Mackin with these comments:

"Remember those pants!? They had a buckle in the back and tore up a lot of car seats! All of us who spent the summers here in the '50's have a lot of fond memories of our great times together. It would be nice to start a 50's Bulletin Board (BB) on the SBPOA web page and add to the history files of Sound Beach. There is a small group of former SB 1950's funsters that are still in contact. Can we get a '50's BB and photo site going, ...this is like a "round-up". I remember when we all used to pile into Norman Sabesse's mother's car and she would drive 14 of us to Port Jeff to the movies. Saturday we would stop at a Root Beer stand on the way to or from Port and gawk at the daughter of the owner who was very protective of her. We all tried to date her in our teen years , and we all failed.

Then there were the "Ping-Pong" matches at "TEX" DeCastro's log cabin home just behind the Blue Goose. Tex was a great ping pong player and his daughter Emma was even better. She had looks, which she inherited from her mom. Her home was always open to all the teens, and we took advantage of it. Her mom was quite the lady, a spectacular person. I can go on and on , but I'm going to break now. I'll be back for more and perhaps in an organized fashion. For the record, Rosalie's mother was much like Emma's, her home was always open to the teens, and did we ever pile in and "hang out". We had good times. Really, "GREAT" times. Rose and I are trying to get photos together, I'll be sending scans or a web address as soon as I get it going, but first we need to gather up the photos. We are no longer property owners , but is there a way we can access the message board or set up one for former "50's funsters.?"

Well, folks, What do you say to this?!! - email us if you are interested.

OTHER NEWS

POST CHRISTMAS NEWS:

The *Klang Family* of 75 Valley Drive were mentioned in *Newsday* as one of the "houses to see" for beautiful outdoor Christmas decorations. There was a reindeer drawn sleigh led by Rudolph, poised for flight in a nearby tree. A Nativity tableau was set up on the lawn and a large cross, crafted by *Sal Mauro*, father of homeowner *Patty Klang*, shone brightly in front of the house. The other decorations added to the scene and made it a delight to the eyes.

We also want to commend a

group of families who planted a tall stately evergreen in the triangle dividing Sound Beach Blvd., Glen Drive, and Jamaica Drive. Decorations were added making it look very festive. Maybe years from now the tree will be set up in Rockefeller Plaza, but right now it really brightens up a barren piece of land. Thank you to the donors. Let us know who you are.

A NOVEMBER HAPPENING

that didn't make our last issue: On Friday, Nov. 9, 2001, a very special ceremony was held at Joseph A. Edgar School in Rocky Point. The

Sixth Grade students honored our nation's veterans. Each of the almost 200 veterans who were present received a personal letter of thanks as well as a metallic lapel flag. As each veteran approached the podium he gave his name, branch of the service, and field of operation.

The room was decorated with stars inscribed with each veterans name. Present at the ceremony were SBPOA members *John Cruse*, *Marty Fulham*, *Joe Loiciano*, and *John Moerlins*. Other members whose names were printed on stars were *Joe Comito*, *Joe*

Taranto, and *Bill Winiarski*. Many other Sound Beachers were also mentioned.

The ceremony was followed by patriotic musical presentations and then all were invited to the cafeteria for delicious refreshments. Our own *Margaret Smith* was one of the PTA mothers serving.

The Newsletter of the Rocky Point Schools called the event "A great learning experience for students and veterans alike." We thank them for a wonderful day.

IN MEMORY OF MARY GARBARINO (NÉE: PENSA) APRIL 4, 1904 — NOVEMBER 3, 2001

By Nancy M. Paul

This past fall Sound Beach lost one of its' finest citizens, my Grandmother, Mary Garbarino. At 97 years old she was a longstanding member of this community, but she didn't always live in Sound Beach. She came from humble beginnings like so many others of her generation. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to this woman who was such a big part of my life and who touched so many other lives on her long journey. Throughout her life she was known to many different people by various names — Mom, Mary, May, Mamie, Aunt May, Maria & Mrs. G., but to me, she was "Gram". Now if you'll just follow me, I'll do my best to do her justice....

Born the youngest child to Italian Immigrants in Brooklyn, NY, Gram enjoyed her childhood and teen years amongst her extended family and friends in their little ethnic community. Gram often told charming stories about life in Brooklyn at the turn of the century where her father was employed as a night watchman at the macaroni factory and her mother taught her to cook and sew. One of my favorites was how, as a little girl, she proudly rode on her fathers' shoulders to the local tavern

where he bought his daily tin pail of beer. Afterwards I sat on the stoop with my father, along with some of the other neighborhood men, who drank their beer and told stories of the old country. She never lost her taste for beer and often shared one with me on a hot summer day. During those formative years her life was steeped in Italian traditions which are still passed down today, but even though Gram was always proud of her heritage — she felt equally proud and privileged to be an American.

After her formal schooling, Gram went to work as a secretary for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and worked until she was wooed by John 'Jack' Garbarino. After a long courtship they were married in July of 1932 and settled in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn — another Italian community. In 1934 they had their first child, Robert, who was followed by my Mother, Carol (Cookie) in 1938.

The Garbarinos discovered the cozy little hamlet of Sound Beach while summering in nearby Rocky Point and eventually (around 1940) purchased a bungalow and several lots on Thomas Rd.

by the west ramp. Grandpa always said they picked that house because Gram, being a city girl, insisted on indoor plumbing, which was a rare commodity for a summer bungalow in those days. Gram also had some great tales to tell about the 'early years' in Sound Beach— like walking all the way to the railroad yard in Rocky Point while dragging the kids along in a wagon just to get a chunk of ice for the icebox. On those excursions, which were usually taken every other day, she bought milk and made the kids drink the whole container on the way home before it soured in the summer heat— that way she was sure they were getting the milk they needed for their growing bones!!!

During World War II Gram did her part for the 'war effort' in both Brooklyn and Sound Beach. While in the city she served as an Air Raid Warden, and during the summer months she helped take care of the soldiers stationed along our beach. In the early morning hours she made big pots of coffee and pans full of biscuits which she, with the help of her children, carried down the stairs to the soldiers. I've heard some interesting stories about being on the beach

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Nancy Paul (Continued from page 3)

during those precarious times—including how some of our own Navy & Coast Guard ships created a bit of a tidal wave problem by practicing dropping depth charges a little too close to the shore!!

Soon after coming to Sound Beach, the Garbarinos got involved with the Sound Beach Property Owners Association and rumor has it that the annual dues were about \$6.00. Grandpa served on the Board for many years until retiring around 1980 at which time they bestowed upon him a lifetime membership to the S.B.P.O.A. Since that time, I and other family members followed in his footsteps and served on the Board.

I have some great memories of my own from spending my childhood summers in Sound Beach with my family, cousins, Gram and Grandpa. The bungalow seemed so big then, but today I wonder how we all fit in there. I guess there's always room for one more at Gram's house. One summer day, Grandpa convinced his grandchildren, myself included, that a long time ago some pirates had buried some treasure on the North side of the house—he even had a map to prove it. Before too long, he had 6 kids in an absolute frenzy, and the dirt was flying! We were going to dig to China if we had to, using everything from plastic sand shovels to Grams' serving spoons. Gram finally insisted that we come in for lunch and I suspect that she had a little chat with Grandpa because by the time we got back to our project some loose change had mysteriously appeared in the hole. Grandpa was also ready with an explanation: — he figured the loot had already been plundered and that was all the murdering thieves had left behind. But alas, it was no great loss because it just so happened that Grandpa needed a hole dug in that very spot and we did

end up with enough money for the ice-cream man.

As a kid during the summer months in Sound Beach, I always knew exactly where to find Gram and Grandpa—down the beach of course—sitting in the "Seniors' Circle", with their straw hats on, perhaps having a cocktail from a picnic jug while discussing their favorite topic—the grandkids! As I walked towards the "circle" to greet them and maybe get an extra dime for the ice-cream man, Gram would always say—"and here's my little Nancy now..." Those were the days—Gram always ready with a hug and a dime!

In 1968 my family took up permanent residence in Sound Beach and the following year Grandpa & Gram followed suit. They winterized the old bungalow and in no time at all they were enjoying the many delights of Sound Beach on a year round basis. They joined the Sound Beach Senior Citizens which, incidentally, met at our clubhouse. They fostered many wonderful friendships that still endure today. They had a great time traveling—visiting family and friends, both in the United States and abroad. As a child I so enjoyed seeing them off at New York Harbor as they boarded yet another grand ocean liner (Gram despised flying and only did so if absolutely necessary) bound for Europe. Gram took up painting after taking a few classes at Home Extension and became quite an artist. She was creative and talented in many ways. From the time she was a young girl she was an accomplished seamstress—making her brother Andrews' graduation gown. Later on she made clothes for her own children and then her grandchildren. Gram was also quite the cook—her recipe for homemade ravioli has been a Christmas Tradition in our family for generations.

Gram was dealt some tough blows over the years. After 53 years of marriage she lost Grandpa to a heart attack in 1985 and then my mother to cancer in March 1997. She herself suffered a near — fatal heart attack in December 1997, but she pulled through and made a full recovery, much to the doctors' surprise. As some would say—"She was a tough old bird" and I loved her for it. For the last few years of her life she had a wonderful live-in aide, also named Mary, who took great care of her and became a good friend. As many of the neighbors around the West Ramp area would tell you—Gram could often be seen 'going for a ride' in her wheelchair with Mary at the helm and Enu (Grams' adopted part-time dog from Riverhead Dr.) tagging along. Enu still comes around looking for her. Gram was a great lover of all animals and would feed anything that came along—birds, squirrels, raccoons, cats, dogs and even a few stray people. She was so concerned about the wild bunnies and raccoons having a place to live that she would not allow anyone to clear out one of her overgrown lots. That's Gram for you.

In her final days Gram was looking forward to being reunited with all of her family and friends that had already departed this world. She had so enjoyed the life she had, but she was ready to move on.

Well, I certainly enjoyed this little stroll down memory lane and I hope you all have too. As you can see, Gram has left me with some great memories that I will cherish always. For those of you who knew Gram, maybe you know her a little better now and for those of you that didn't know her, you missed a heck of a lady—but thanks for listening. I'm sure she's getting a big kick out of this.

NEWS ABOUT YOU

John James Chianese was born on December 8, 2001 to *Carmen and John Chianese*. Grandmother *Millie Chianese* is a long time member of the SBPOA and a retired Post Office employee. Her

smiling face and helpful ways are still missed at the Sound Beach branch.

We are proud of SBPOA member *Brooke Bonomi* who was selected as "Educator of the Year" by the Village Beacon Record. Mr. Bonomi teaches Social Studies at the Rocky Point High School where he

is praised for his skills by students, parents and faculty.

In addition to his work in the classroom, he is known for getting young people involved in community service outside the classroom. He started the Singing

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News About You (Continued from page 4)

Santa's, a group of students who entertain at nursing homes, hospitals and soup kitchens during the holiday season. They put on shows, sell their CDs, and donate the money to various charities.

Brooke has also involved students in a program called BANN (Be a Nicer Neighbor) which performs a wide range of community projects. Our Association has benefited from their help with our annual beach clean-up day. Our seniors enjoy the "Senior Prom" which they host every year. The group held car washes, garage sales, etc., to raise money for the victims of the WTC disaster.

Congratulations *Brooke Bonomi* on this well deserved honor!!

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of *Shirley Strittmatter* who passed away in January, 2002. Shirley was a tireless worker who never had to be asked to do anything. She saw a need and was right there to help.

Shirley, and her husband *Charles* raised

four children in Sound Beach. The children, *Peggy, Anne, Charles, and Dennis* were taught the values of kindness, compassion, and hard work. Her grandchildren were also raised to always help others. Her beautiful crafts adorned her home and she shared her talents with all who expressed interest in learning.

It was a tribute to Shirley that so many young people attended her services. Many of them were given a place to stay, a meal and some down to earth advice when they were teen-agers. She made a difference in their lives.

Shirley, we'll miss you at Trash and Treasure this year. Thank you for always being there to help and for bringing along your hard working family crew.

A "Super" Super Bowl Party

Die hard football fans as well as people who just love a party enjoyed the game together at the clubhouse on February 3rd. There was a big screen, plenty of food, prepared by *Margeaux Ringwald*,

prizes, and lots of excitement. The committee, *Paul Picciotti, Michelle Pacilio, Keith Cully, Willie Smith* and others made sure everyone had a good time. Many thanks to *Dave, the manager of Waldbaums in Rocky Point* for donating decorations and inflatables which gave a festive air to the place and were raffled off as door prizes at the end of the game.

Coffee House

A small but appreciative group enjoyed the music played by *Jerry Costanzo's* talented friends and by Jerry himself who sang with the band. Willie Smith provided decorative table settings and a variety of coffees. *Deanna Costanzo* treated us to home made goodies. Watch for flyers and signs and check the website for their next date.

Eileen Cantwell

Keep the cans coming to Marty Fullam and the pennies to Ed Cantwell. They are a great way to raise funds!!!!

**We're on the Web!
SBPOA.org**

Have you ever read the Real Estate Advertisements in our local newspapers to see how they try to attract people to Sound Beach? You will see words like: walk to the beach" Spectacular Water view" "2 blocks to the beach" "Private Beach" The conclusion is that the beach is our biggest asset. AND IT IS!!!

Then why don't more homeowners join our association? Don't they realize that without SBPOA there would be no ACCESS to the beach?

It is from members dues that we get the materials to rebuild the stairs when they are damaged by winter storms. It is from

members dues that we hire life guards and security guards, put up safety ropes, run field days for the children and offer swimming lessons. And it is because of volunteer members doing necessary maintenance that we can keep our dues low.

Dues are also used to maintain our clubhouse on Malba Drive, again allowing us to make needed repairs and cover the overhead of heating and light bills as well as property taxes. The clubhouse as you know, is available for rental to members at a reduced rate and to others at a higher but still reasonable rate. Please don't say you don't join because you don't use the beach. We have a large

group of residents who can't make the stairs but join because they love their community and they want the beach to be here for generations to come.

We also have first time homeowners like Bonnie Boeger who was quoted in *Newsday* on December 21 as being excited to receive a letter inviting her to join SBPOA. She knew it meant she really had reached her goal, and was a member of her community!

Please complete and return to us the

application on page 6

**PLAN AHEAD: MARK YOUR CALENDARS:
FUN IS COMING!!!**

March 17 **St. Patrick's Day Parade.** Join us on our float. 12 noon, Aliano Shopping Center. Call Willie Smith—744 2067. Even if you don't march, come back to the clubhouse for refreshments after the parade.

June 8th, 9th **Trash and Treasure Sale** at the clubhouse. Our 10th year! Call Audrey 821 4103 or Eileen 744 6487 if you want to donate a 'Treasure'. We can always use help, and we always welcome customers. It's a lot of fun and a profitable fun raiser.

June 15th 10 A.M. **General Meeting** at the clubhouse. Come and find out what we've been doing all winter.

June 22nd , 23rd 10 A.M.— 4 P.M. **Free Beach Days**—If you're not a member, and you want to see why we love our beaches, come on down! No tags are required on these two days—relax, enjoy, have a swim, walk the beach, talk to us.

July 20 The event of the season - **the Clam-B-Que!!!** The 11th year for this wonderful feast of food and dancing and camaraderie. Anyone who has been there will tell you that it is not to be missed!!!

August 3rd **Field Day**—a long standing tradition—some of us participated when we were children, then our own children took our places. Now many of us have grandchildren in the games. It's a fun-filled day with races, food, prizes, and raffles.

August 17th 10 A.M. **Annual Meeting** Clubhouse—Reports from the Board. Election of Board Members. Your questions answered, your concerns addressed. Same day, that evening—our annual "Thank you Party for our Volunteers"


September 21st— We join the annual **World Wide Beach Clean-Up Day**



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Please complete this form and send check payable to **SBPOA**, to **SBPOA P.O. Box 213 Sound Beach NY 11789 ATT: Membership**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

NUMBER IN FAMILY _____

MEMBERSHIP: \$ 150 _____

SENIOR: \$ 125 _____

PARTIAL: \$ _____

(must be paid in full by May 31)

Contribution to Bulkhead and Renovation Fund? _____

Thank you!

Total Enclosed: _____