



Root Beer Float

**Root Beer and
Checker Club**
Established 1944
April 2024

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A publication of the

**Root Beer and
Checker Club**

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Issue 210

Root Beer and Checker Club President's Message April, 2024



April means: EARTHQUAKE! I felt it! Today April 5, 2024 at around 10:25am. Holy cow!

Now where was I? April also means: March Madness is finally wrapping up; April showers? We have had enough, already!; April Fools - remembering epic pranks, like when Jeopardy and Wheel Of Fortune TV hosts switched places back in 1997, which is still fun to watch: <https://youtu.be/56EEsp8P1nI?si=Zl4ld9nPibtSSC4r&t=85> ; the Great Eclipse on April 8 (totally cool, with the proper eye protection); April 15 – our daughter's birthday (she hates it when I remind her it's also Tax Day); Earth Day on April 22 – one of my favorite songs is What A Wonderful World by Louie Armstrong.

And of course we are enjoying our Root Beer and Checker lunches - every Tuesday at Bahrs' and on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month at Luigi's in Little Silver. Some notable upcoming events for Root Beer and Checker Club include two lunch speakers:

April 23, Tom Bull of Two River Computers will talk about ChatGPT

April 30, our own Al Zager will describe his recent visit to Israel, to lend a hand there.

We also have two Root Beer parties scheduled: our Spring Cocktail Party on May 23 at the Atlantic Highlands Yacht Club, and our Fall Cocktail party on September 11 at the Rumson Country Club River House. Mark your calendars! Check this issue of the Float for details.

I have been thinking about the thought provoking comments on electric vehicles (EV) by Bob Kelly, our former Root Beer and Checker President. I would like to add to Bob's comments by describing our EV driving experience. My wife's new car is a plug-in hybrid, which has about 40 miles EV range. And she even lets me drive it! A 40 miles EV range covers virtually all of our in-town driving. We hardly ever buy gasoline for her car, except for when we go on long trips to visit our grandkids. I plug her car in to a 120 Volt outlet to charge it overnight. A full charge for 40 EV miles costs about \$2.00. In EV mode, her car is fun to drive! It is very quiet and it has amazing acceleration – my wife's car has more torque than my Mercedes, which had a big 6 cylinder gas guzzling engine.

(cont. next page)

Club News

President's Message (cont.)

I am also learning the 'lingo' of EV cars: the battery energy storage is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh). Instead of MPG, we talk about miles per kWh (4.0 miles per kWh is pretty good). With her plug-in hybrid, we are getting around 90 MPGe, which is 90 miles per gallon of gas used with electric-power assist. For winter time driving, the interior heater is all electric with instant warmth, and the heated steering wheel is a welcome feature. Of course, the economics and reliability of plug-in hybrids are important issues to ponder.

Finally, I would like to thank the many club volunteers keep everything running smoothly for the Root Beer and Checker Club. Our club website says it all: **The Club feels that it has, and will continue to have, a membership that represents the outstanding business and professional people of the community. Let's have lunch sometime!** <https://rootbeerandcheckerclub.org/about-us>

Rich Vodhanel, President of the Root Beer and Checker Club



**March's
Birthday Cake**
Photo - Jim Powers

Frank is still MIA!

Not Frank Haftl, but our Root Beer and Checker Club mascot and Looney Tunes tweetie bird 'Frank'.

This photo shows Frank Haftl proudly displaying Looney Frank.

In honor of Frank Haftl's legendary jokes (which are funnier in German!), Looney Frank is the prize awarded for a week to a club member who tells a great joke during lunch. Thanks for Al Zager who instituted this time honored tradition for our club. But unfortunately Looney Frank is now MIA. It would be appreciated, with no questions asked, if someone would return Looney Frank.



**If you have outstanding club payments and did/do not receive a invoice from
Donna Topinka please advise Charlie Parr
cdparro3@msn.com**

Club News

Our Birthdays This Month

Ray Veth	8	Bill Armstrong	15	George Morris	15
Lew Anderson	20	Jim McGuinness	20	Ralph Wyndrum	20

Note: Friday (cash) lunches now offered at Luigi's Famous Pizzeria on the **first and third** Fridays of each month

This month's **Birthdays Cake** - Bahr's - Tuesday **4/16**

Speaker - Artificial Intelligence
Tom Bull of Two River Computer - **4/23**

Speaker - Al Zager - Volunteering in Israel - **4/30**

Spring Cocktail Party - AHYC - Thursday **5/23**
60 attendees max - Details page 4

Evita - Axlerod Theater - June 2 @3 pm - Will advise price PP
Contact Charlie Parr if interested - cdparro3@msn.com

Phoenix Productions - Count Basie - Details on pages 6 & 7

RB&CC visit to Saratoga Springs, NY - **July 31 thru August 1** - Details page 8

Blue Claws Baseball Game in the works - Details to follow.

FYI - If anyone is having a problem with transportation to our lunches or special events, please let Jim Powers (seamuspowers@yahoo.com) know.

Note - Emails from Dona Topinka are your RB&CC invoices !
Please use **separate checks and note "Annual Dues, Party, etc."**

CARE COMMITTEE

Note, that if anyone should know of a fellow member being ill, incapacitated or unfortunately deceased, please let one of the Board members know so that as a club we can get in touch by phone call, get well/sympathy card, or hospital/nursing home visit.

Club News (cont.)



The Root Beer & Checker Club

*Cordially invites you to attend our
Spring party at the*



The event will be held

May 23rd 6:00pm to 8:30pm

*Upon arrival you will be welcomed with a complimentary
glass of wine followed by passed hors d'oeuvres and a
sumptuous buffet dinner followed by dessert and coffee.
There will be a cash bar for alcoholic beverages. Live
entertainment will be provided.*

Due to limited capacity, the club can accommodate only 60 guests. Reservations are now being accepted until May 3rd. on a first-come basis. If you plan on attending email me at difedes@verizon.net and promptly mail a check for \$55.00 per person to the "Root Beer & Checker Club, P.O. Box 6121, Fair Haven, NJ 07704." Be sure to annotate "Spring Party" in the comment section of the check.

Club News (cont.)

**SCAN (Senior Citizens Activities Network)
Monmouth Mall**

is offering a Defensive Driving Class two 3-hour classes
June 18th and June 25th

Cost \$20 pp check payable to AARP

Completing class can get a discount on car insurance.

Contact SCAN to register

732-542-1326

office@scannj.org

CPR - AED Class is being offered

Wednesday, April 17, 1 PM

At the Fair Haven First Aid, River Road, Fair Haven

Cost Free to just take the class.

If certification card is desired then cost is \$21 cash.

The money goes to the American Heart Association

Theater News**Phoenix Productions 2024-2025 Season Shows cont.**

It is time to renew the RB&C tickets for Phoenix Productions shows:

Cost for 3 Shows: \$107.10 per ticket

NOTE: If we can obtain another senior discount a credit will be issued. Of course, that is TBD! If we get a discount a credit will be applied to your RB&C account.

Shows & Dates:**West Side Story - Sunday July 28, 2024, at 2:00 PM**

Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet is transported to modern-day New York City as two young, idealistic lovers find themselves caught between warring street gangs, the "American" Jets and the Puerto Rican Sharks. Their struggle to survive in a world of hate, violence and prejudice is one of the most innovative, heart-wrenching and relevant musical dramas of our time.

The Color Purple: The Musical – Sunday, November 17, 2024, at 2:00 PM

An unforgettable story of enduring love and triumph over adversity, The Color Purple is a landmark musical from the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Alice Walker. This stirring family chronicle follows the inspirational Celie, a downtrodden young woman whose personal awakening over the course of 40 years forms the arc of this epic story. With a joyous score featuring jazz, ragtime, gospel, African music and blues, THE COLOR PURPLE is a story of hope, a testament to the healing power of love, and a celebration of life. (*cont.*)

Theater News (cont.)**Kinky Boots – Sunday, May 4, 2025, at 2:00 PM**

Kinky Boots is the big-hearted musical extravaganza featuring a joyous, Tony-winning score by pop icon Cyndi Lauper, and a hilarious, uplifting book by four-time Tony winner, Harvey Fierstein. Charlie Price has reluctantly inherited his father's shoe factory, which is on the verge of bankruptcy. Trying to live up to his father's legacy and save his family business, Charlie finds inspiration in the form of Lola, a fabulous entertainer in need of some sturdy stilettos. As they work to turn the factory around, this unlikely pair find that they have more in common than they realized... and discover that when you change your mind, you can change your whole world.

The deadline for letting Ed know & send in your check is 4/10/2024. This will allow us to get the best seats.

See next page - have to buy tickets for all three shows

NOTE: Please send SEPARATE CHECK noted Phoenix Shows. Do NOT include any other funds with the check. This makes record keeping easier.

If any questions, contact Ed Fenton at efentonjr@gmail.com

Saratoga Springs Outing—Bruce Rodman 7/31—8/1

Saratoga Springs Itinerary, July 31 – August 1, 2024 for Root Beer & Checker Club

Wednesday, July 31 – 1pm tour of the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame, Union Avenue, Saratoga Springs. Plan on leaving Monmouth County around 8 or 8:30am; the drive time to Saratoga Springs is about 3.5 hours plus any stops.

The drive is simple – Garden State Parkway north to New York Thruway north to Rt 87 (“Northway”) north to exit 14. Turn right at the exit and the museum is about 2 miles straight ahead, across from the track (“Saratoga Racecourse”).

Following the Museum, we will adjourn across the street to the track for casual seating and a stroll around for an overview of the track. Please plan to bring plenty of cash to Saratoga, as dining and betting will be cash only.

Following our first day at the track, we will adjourn to the Rodman residence at 6 Inlander Road, Saratoga Springs, for drinks and a short tour of the historical “Lake House District” near our home. We will then walk to dinner at 7pm at “550 On the Lake” on the shores of Lake Saratoga.

Thursday, August 1 – the day starts early with a 7:30am walking tour of the backstretch at Saratoga with yours truly as your professional tour guide. Yeah, it’s pretty early but trust me, it will be worth it. You can get a casual breakfast in the backstretch (where you might be able to eavesdrop on some trainers and jockeys) or a sit-down breakfast at the track after our tour (a Saratoga tradition). We will be done by 10am and you can enjoy some free time – maybe take in the Canfield Casino Museum in Congress Park in downtown Saratoga – an excellent experience. Or take a nap.

We will reconvene at 12:30pm for trackside seating and dining at the Racecourse. Bring cash – we may want to try to hit the Pick 5 late in the day! I’ll see if we can get up to the Steward’s Stand during the day – an eagle-eye view of the action with the folks that oversee all of the racing – and maybe the paddock, where we can rub elbows with owners, trainers and jockeys. And hopefully during the day, we’ll take a short walk to observe the start of a race RIGHT NEXT TO THE STARTING GATE in the “Wilson Chute”.

Dinner will be at one of my favorite spots, Taverna Novo at 7pm in downtown Saratoga

I have left accommodations up to everyone individually – prices and availability are highly variable. Prices decline the further away you go from Saratoga, but the drive can generally be kept to less than 25 minutes. Parking in downtown Saratoga is not good – plan to park a few blocks away from your destination. Weekdays are much more navigable than weekends, but everything is relative in “The Summer Place to Be”.

--Bruce Rodman, 732-759-5945



Fiber Optics - Rich Vodhanel - 3/19

On March 19th, RBCC member Rich Vodhanel gave a talk on the making of fiber-optic cables. This all came about due to a conversation with Bill Tice and son while traveling to the West Point football game on the Sea Streak ferry back in October of last year.

Rich began his professional career at Bell Labs in 1980 working in research. He told his father that “there’s nothing in the world more secure than working for AT&T Bell Labs research”. Little did he know that at that very moment the U.S. Government was working to break up “Ma Bell”. As a result, Bell Labs was spun off from AT&T, becoming Bellcore. Rich was there until 1984 before switching to Corning, Inc. to work in their research lab. Rich feels very fortunate to have been at both organizations that were true communication pioneers.

He began his talk by reviewing a brief history of communications. For centuries, messages had to be slowly carried from place to place by foot, animal, ship, etc. The big breakthrough was the invention of electricity and all the things that could be done over wires such as the telegraph. Now that data/text could be sent, what about voice? Cue advances such as the telephone, radio, wireless, and television. Each advance prompted the desire to process even more data, faster, and farther.

Rich then focused on the research and invention of how to make glass fiber optic cables that were flexible, strong, and could transfer vast amounts of data, voice, text and video, at the speed of light. The slides he used follow. Thanks, Rich, for a great presentation! *WRT*



Fiber Optics - Rich Vodhanel - 3/19 (cont.)

Optical Fiber and Cables

Why Optical? How they are made?

Rich Vodhanel
Fiber Optics Research
Bell Labs, Corning, Retired

Root Beer and Checker presentation, March 19, 2024

Telecom Brief History

- * Progress towards more info carried over longer distances, quickly
- * Snail Mail
- * Electronic messaging: long distances, at the speed of light
 - Telegraph
 - Telephone
 - Radio
 - Television
 - Fiber optics, surpassed radio and copper telecom, world wide networks
 - Silicon revolution: IC's, Personal computers, smart phones – ubiquitous
 - "www" Internet

1901 Eastern Telegraph Company System Map
from A.B.C. Telegraphic Code 5th Edition



Why Optical Communications?

Channel capacity proportional to Carrier Frequency

Optical Carrier frequencies: ~ 1,000,000 times greater than Radio Carriers

Fiber Optic Frequency	193 THz	1.93×10^{14} Hz
FM 105.9, WQXR	105.9 MHz	1.06×10^8 Hz
Microwave (ammonia maser)	24 GHz	2.40×10^{10} Hz

But no good optical transmitter and cable until

Laser!! (1960) and Optical Fiber!! (1970)

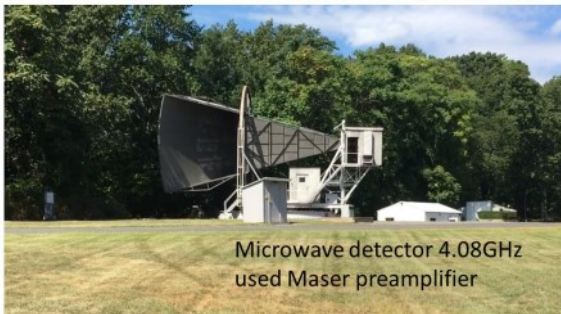
Maser (Microwave Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation)
1916 Stimulated Emission of Radiation – Einstein
Maser 1951, invented, Joe Weber? Or others??
1953, demonstrated, Gordon, Zeigler, and Townes

Laser (Light Amplification by the Stimulated Emission of Radiation)
1958, invented at Bell Labs, and then published
Charles Townes (Columbia) and Art Schawlow
1960, demonstrated Ted Maiman (Hughes Research Lab)
Gary Boyd, Herwig Kogelnik, were pioneers of Bell Labs
Laser research

Charles Townes

- 1964 Nobel Prize in Physics, 1964
one half awarded to Charles H. Townes,
the other half jointly to Nicolay G. Basov and
Aleksandr M. Prokhorov for fundamental
work in the field of quantum opto-electronics,
which has led to the construction of optical
oscillators and amplifiers based on
the maser-laser principle
- 1999 Charles Townes' book: "How the Laser Happened,
Adventures of a Scientist"

Holmdel Antenna used by Penzias and Wilson to Detect
The Cosmic Background Radiation from the Big Bang, May 1964

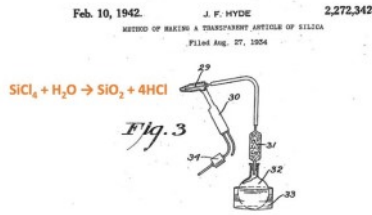


Microwave detector 4.08GHz
used Maser preamplifier

Optical Fibers – Brief History

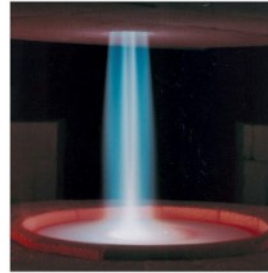
- Glass - amorphous SiO_2 , Earth's crust: Oxygen 46%, Si 28%
- 2000 BC? Glass technology beginnings by melting sand
- ?? Fused silica made by melting Quartz crystal, ~3000 deg F.
- 1927 Glass fiber bundles for imaging, about 1 meter, RCA patent
- 1934 Frank Hyde (Corning) invents using Flame Hydrolysis to make **ultra pure** fused silica
- 1961 Eli Snitzer demonstrated a fiber laser and fiber amplifier
- 1966 Charles Kao proposes pure fused silica for optical fibers
- 1970 Corning, first to demonstrate **low loss** optical fiber
17 dB/km optical attenuation at 633 nm (red laser)

Fiber Optics - Rich Vodhanel - 3/19 (cont.)



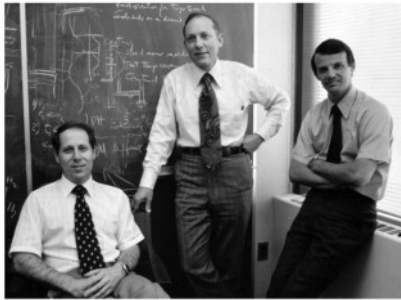
Flame Hydrolysis Process to Make Fused Silica Glass
Invented by Dr. Frank Hyde, Corning chemist 1934

Slides courtesy of Peter Schultz



Corning flame hydrolysis fused silica boule process circa 1960's.

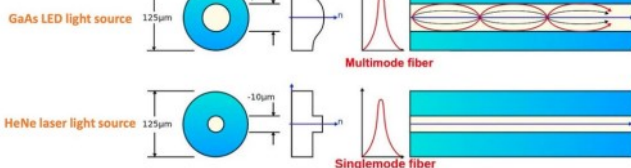
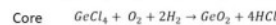
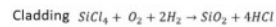
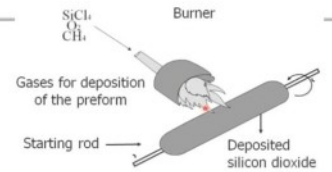
Don Keck, Bob Maurer and
Peter Schultz
Corning's fiber research
team



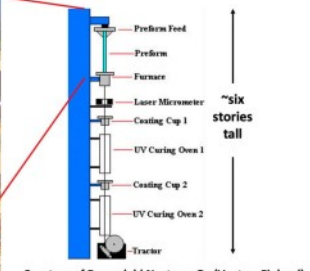
OVD Process

Outside Vapor Deposition (OVD) Process

1. SiCl_4 is deposited onto the outside of a sacrificial ceramic "collector rod"
 - Hydrolysis reaction rather than oxidation
 - Silica soot is deposited
2. Dehydrate silica soot stick
3. Remove collector rod
4. Sinter silica soot into glass (consolidation), collapse to remove hole in the middle



Preform feed section of state-of-the-art fiber draw tower



Courtesy of Rosendahl Nextrom Oy (Vantaa, Finland).

Current Fiber Preform Manufacture

- Single-mode fibers
- Germania-doped silica core
- 6000+ kilometers fiber preform
- Draw speeds $\gg 30$ m/sec
- Average 0.182 dB/km loss @ 1550nm
- 150kpsi tensile strength

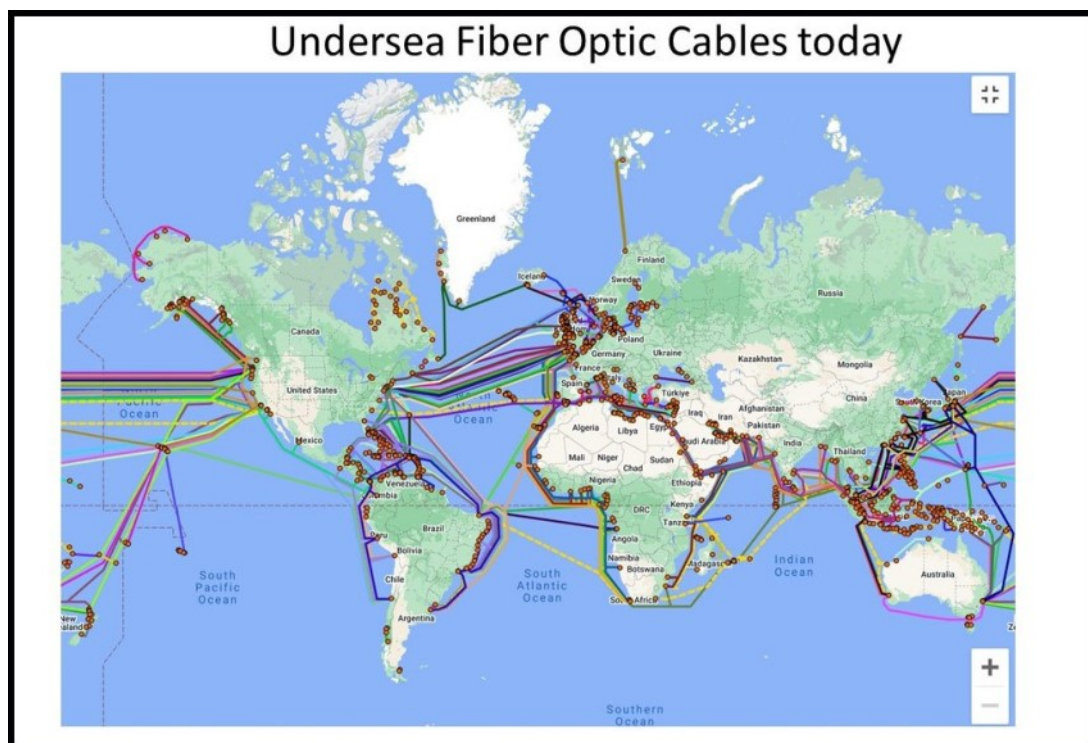
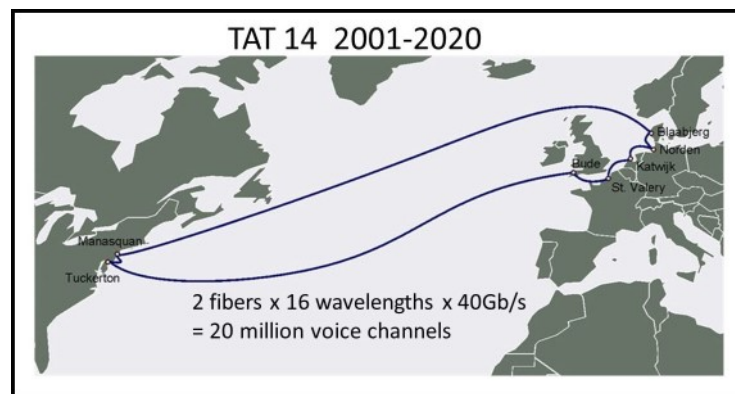
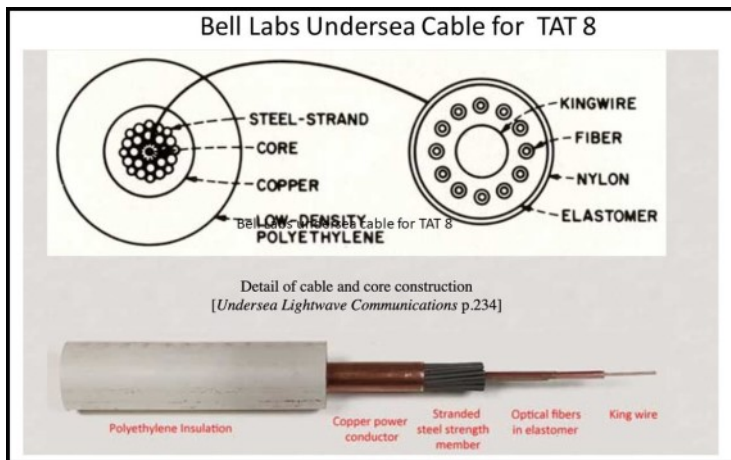


Bell Labs Undersea Cable prototype for TAT 8



TAT 8 1988-1992
6 fibers: 2 working pairs
1 spare fiber pair

Fiber Optics - Rich Vodhanel - 3/19 (cont.)



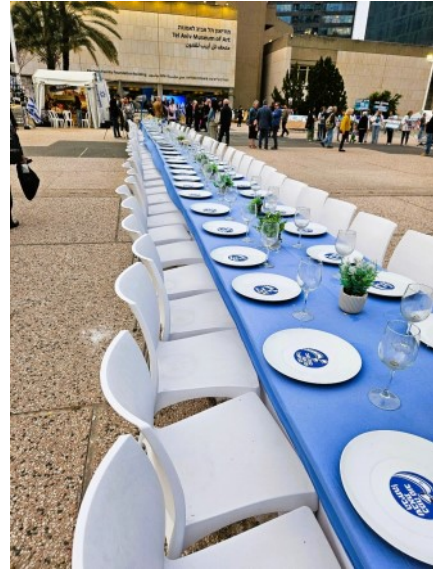
Volunteering in Israel - Al and Robin Zager

Here are photos from the 10-day trip to Israel that Robin and I took in late March. Our primary purpose in going was to volunteer to do some small part to help the Israeli people in their current active war with Hamas in the Gaza strip and with Hezbollah in the north. I will speak about our trip at the Root Beer & Checker lunch on Tuesday, April 30 and answer questions.

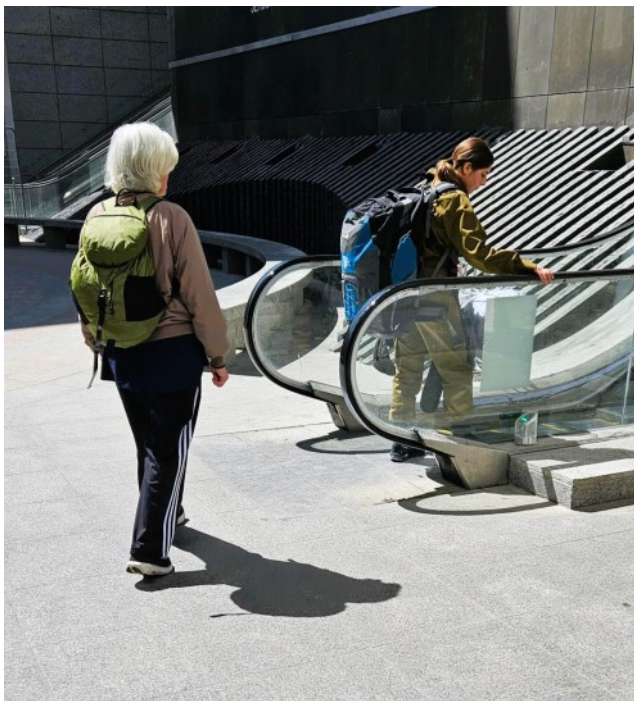
Al Zager



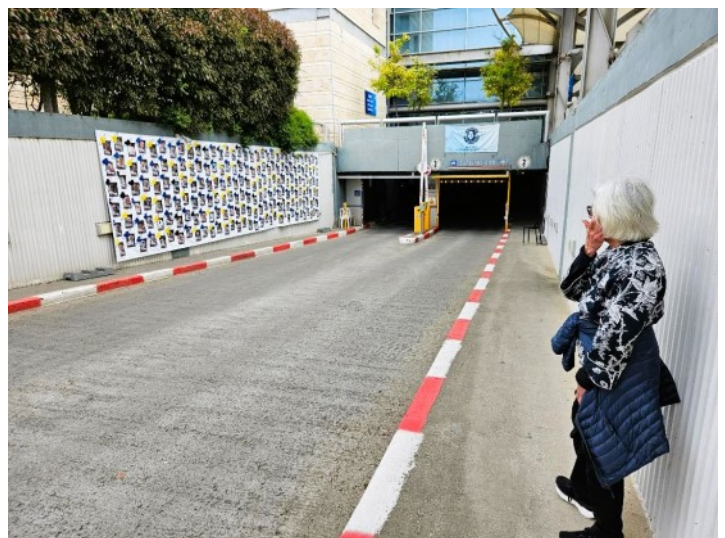
Robin at the Arrivals ramp at Ben Gurion Airport showing the photos of the hostages held by Hamas.



The banquet table set for the hostages at "Hostage Square" in Tel Aviv



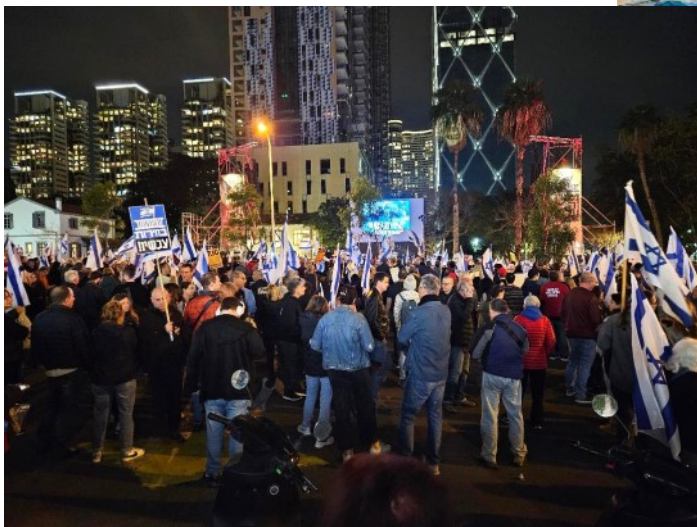
Robin and a woman soldier at the Jerusalem Railway Station. Notice the difference in size of the backpacks



Robin at the driveway/ramp leading to the basement level of the parking garage where Eran's Angels operates showing the photos of all of the hostages.

Volunteering in Israel - Al and Robin Zager (cont.)

>> Al hard at work ironing donated pillowcases and sheets, his main "job" at Eran's Angels.



<< "BRING THEM HOME NOW" rally held every Saturday night in Tel Aviv

>> Robin in front of the Tel Aviv EXPO sign, where Eran's Angels is located



<< Al at the sign to "Eran's Angels", the organization where we volunteered for 5 of out 10 days that distributes donated kitchen needs, clothes, toys, etc. to soldiers, hostage families, and other displaced people.

Tour of Roebling, NJ—Jim Powers and Dan Levine (3/16/2024)

Roebling is barely a blip on the map when it comes to tourism, but the mark it has left on the world is profound. (BBC article Feb, 12, 2018) [This links to the article](#)

Great words about a small town, but fitting. Dan Levine and I went on a Saturday afternoon walking tour of this community led by Lynne Calamia, PhD, Executive Director of the Roebling Museum. We were very impressed with her knowledge of the town's history and the way she connected with the community.

In 1904, he secured more than 240 acres of central New Jersey, and – much of it former peach orchards – and constructed a new steel- and wire-making plant comprising more than 70 buildings. Charles then built Roebling village to house the company's employees. (BBC Article). To his credit, Charles did not make the kinds of mistakes that other factory towns did—Pullman would be a good example. He paid his employees with real money rather than company script. He and his family regularly visited the plant and knew many workers by name.



The museum was the main entrance to the plant. Unskilled, skilled, and professional workers each had their own entrance.

Workers from Eastern Europe were brought in at cheap wages. The street directly across from the plant had Hungarian workers, the next street over—Romanians and so on. Roebling tried to keep different ethnic groups together to help new employees adapt to working in a new country.



Right—The street directly opposite the plant.



The next street over where the Romanians lived.



Huge cranes rode upon these girders lifting tons of scrap metal and dropping them into waiting rail cars like the one in this photo.

This went on 24 hours a day. Imagine the constant noise. Living across the street may have been a short walk to work, but getting a good night's sleep wasn't easy.

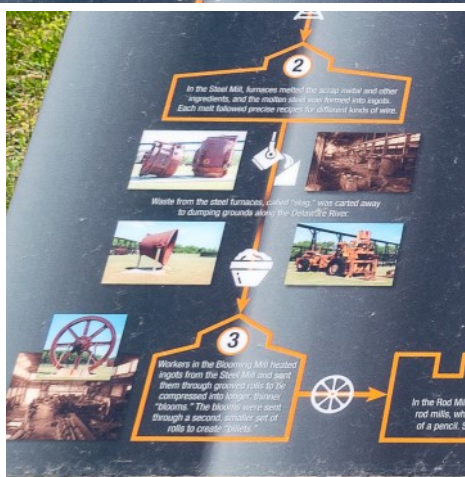
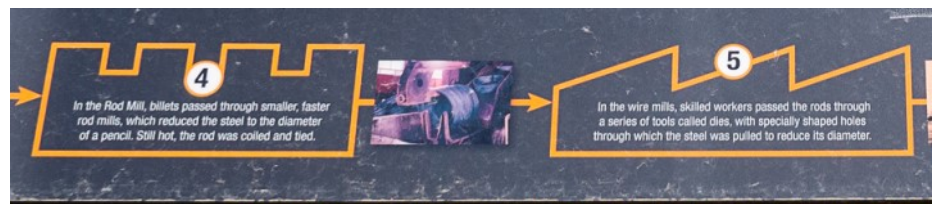


Skilled workers lived in two family houses like the one above.

Roebling Tour (cont.)



Map of the plant



American skilled workers lived on 5th street and further away from the plant.



Roebling Tour (cont.)



The grocery store, bakery, and other shops



Detail Shot of porch on well kept half of a duplex



One of the earliest buildings used to house the workers who built the factory. Now a hotel and bar.



Right—same house as above, but showing both sides.



Manasquan Visit - Dan Levine



Business Bulletin Board



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Co-Principal

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Songs of Martin Torbert

Recorded by the artist "Fezziwhig" available on the Web at:
Spotify/Apples Music/iTunes/YouTube/Amazon Music/Deezer/ReverbNation/Etc.

Google: **Fezziwhig**

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*We all long for
smooth sailing.*



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Business Bulletin Board (continued)

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**Hats ! We've got Hats !
Thanks to Terry Flynn
for making this happen !**

**\$22 each billed through
monthly invoices.**




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Cartoon of the Month !

