



Root Beer Float

**Root Beer and
Checker Club**
Established 1944
December 2023

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Checker Club**

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Issue 206

President's message from Rich Vodhanel for December, 2023

Season's greetings to my friends in the Root Beer and Checker Club!



I hope you and your families are enjoying this quiet, relaxing time between Thanksgiving and the end of year Holidays. Ya, right – good luck with that! We just gave thanks for our many blessings, including family, friends, and good health. But before you know it, we will be racing to celebrate the end of 2023, and hoping for a better year in 2024.

We are looking forward to the Root Beer and Checker Holiday Party Wednesday, 6 pm December 13 at the Beacon Hill Country Club. It will be a very festive gathering, and I hope to see you all there. We told Old Man Winter to stay away from our Holiday Party. More details are given in this issue of the Float.

2023 has been quite a year for the Root Beer and Checker Club. We paid final respects to some of our long-time friends, and we welcomed several new members. I really enjoyed our Tuesday lunches at Bahrs' Landing Restaurant, and recently our Friday lunches at Luigi's Pizza in Little Silver (1st and 3rd Friday of the month). Several speakers have graced our lunches with excellent presentations, as summarized in recent issues of the Float. One of my favorites was the presentation by Ray Cosgrove co-owner of Bahrs' Landing Restaurant. We had several enriching outings, including touring historical sites at the Nike Missile site at Sandy Hook and at Lakehurst Naval base where the Lindenberg crashed. We also enjoyed a Day at the Races at Monmouth Park, a Blue Claws baseball game, and a West Point Football game (with gorgeous Fall colors as we cruised on the Hudson River). And every month we celebrate birthdays with a Birthday Cake. Personally, I look forward to riding with the Root Beer Bikers, enjoying the changing seasons as we go cycling Thursdays at Sandy Hook, followed by lunch (of course). I made a video of some of our cycling adventures, which I uploaded to YouTube: <https://youtu.be/4nnxctGESDY?si=rjb1ucoDComKFTsI>

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>

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the Root Beer and Checker members who generously contribute their time, talents, and energy to keep Root Beer and Checker Club alive and kicking. The team that publishes our monthly Root Beer Float have done a great service for our club.

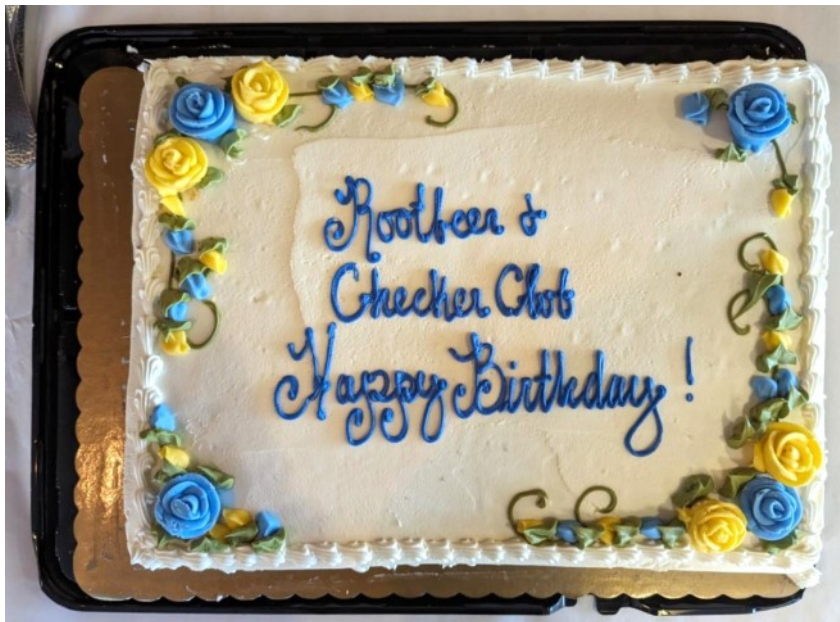
Happy Holidays to you and your loved ones!

Rich Vodhanel, President of the Root Beer and Checker Club

Club News

Look for updated RBCC invoices in a week or so.

**If you did/do not receive one please advise
Charlie Parr
cdparro3@msn.com**



**November's
Birthday Cake**
Via Jim Powers

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.

RB&CC Annual Membership dues and other payments

Annual membership dues are \$120 due July 1st with invoices being emailed in June. Payments for luncheons are due monthly. Payments for special events such as Spring, Fall and Christmas/Holiday parties are due in advance of the dates involved.

The Board has agreed to monitor and send out reminders as needed.
Please use separate checks and note "Annual Dues, Party, etc."

Club News (cont.)

Our Birthdays This Month

Dan Levine	2	Frank Haftl	10	Henry Nemser	10
Jeff Herring	11	Dennis Swijter	11	Greg Abella	16
Mike Gentile	24	Bill Tice	26		

December's **Birthdays Cake** - Bahr's Tuesday, December **12th**

Holiday Party, Beacon Hill Golf and Country Club - December 13th

\$55 p/p member and guest - See next page for details

Valet parking will be available

Note: - Friday lunches now offered at **Luigi's Famous Pizzeria**
on the **first and third** Fridays of each month
Remaining December date is the **15th**
(Bahr's Tuesdays w/Blue Slips - Luigi's Fridays w/cash)

Speaker - General George Washington (a.k.a. Sam Davis) - December **19th**

George Washington's Headquarters at Summerseat

Note: Please arrive early - Lunch begins at 11:00 am

Information on possible RB&CC visit to Saratoga Springs, NY in **2024**

Details below by Bruce Rodman

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 !

**Health News - As per our Dr. Tim Sullivan, COVID is still out there.
Consider getting booster. (Now available online for free).**



*The Root Beer & Checker Club
cordially invites you to our annual*

Christmas Party



The Beacon Hill Country Club

December 13th 6 – 8:30pm

Agenda

6 -7pm Cash bar cocktail hour with an Antipasto display and passed Hors d'Oeuvres.

7:15pm Buffet: A choice of two mixed green Salads, Cheese Tortellini w/creamy tomato basil sauce, Roast Turkey carving station.

8:00pm Coffee and Dessert with assorted cookies and pastries.

Live entertainment will be provided.

The cost for members in good standing is \$55.00,
non-members \$73.00.

The cut-off date is November 28th.

Club News (cont.)**Theater News**

March 17, 2024 at 3 pm

20 tickets are still available

\$47 per ticket

The first musical in the Axelrod's **Sondheim Centennial Project** will be the Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece ***Sunday in the Park with George***, written with **James Lapine**, regarded as one of the most acclaimed musicals of all time. The 1984 musical, which originally starred Bernadette Peters and Mandy Patinkin, was inspired by the French pointillist painter Georges Seurat's painting A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte. The Broadway production was nominated for an astounding ten Tony Awards, including Best Musical.

If interested please contact Charlie Parr

cdparro3@msn.com

Club News (cont.)

RB&CC visits Saratoga Springs, NY in 2024 ? ***Bruce Rodman***

Hello everyone I've done some preliminary research about an RB&CC trip next summer to Saratoga Springs, NY & here are some thoughts.

Dates: Wednesday and Thursday nights, July 31 to August 1, 2024 (there is no racing on Mondays or Tuesdays, and weekends are challenging for dining and track reservations).

Accommodations: Several options, which would probably be left up to the individual members to make their own reservations. Several of the newer properties downtown are already sold out, but the Saratoga Hilton (downtown) is available for about \$400 per night. About 20 minutes south of Saratoga is the Hampton Inn of Clifton Park, NY for about \$215 per night. There are other options but probably not much else downtown.

Activities: Arrive **Wednesday** July 31 by noon, lunch downtown, which I could reserve. After lunch, a visit to the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame on Union Avenue, Saratoga Springs. Walking tour of downtown or catch the late races across the street. Dinner, which I would arrange.

Thursday: Arrive at Saratoga Racecourse around 7:30am for backstretch tour hosted by me as your tourguide, followed by breakfast on your own. 1PM -- attend the races at the oldest thoroughbred racetrack in the Americas, seating about \$50 per person to be arranged by me. Dinner, which I would arrange.

Friday: Depart

Arranging accommodations is the trickiest part -- my thinking is that each member would make his own reservations. I could try to get group rates and, if successful, communicate that info to interested members. The only thing that would be a "group" expense would be seating at the track, which I could front, and members reimburse me. Everyone could pay their own Museum fee, and the backstretch tour is free. Nonmembers are welcome, too.

Please let me know if you are interested. Thanks.

Bruce Rodman

732-759-5945

brodman8@gmail.com

Four Geniuses of Little Silver—John Barrows—November 14

On November 14th John Barrows, founder and editor of Monmouth Timeline Inc. presented with us with some exceptional and innovative people who lived and worked in Monmouth county.

John Thompson Lovett was born in 1852 in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. At age 25 he started working for A. Hance & Sons of Rumson. Six years later he started his own business. Lovett's became very popular – he developed a method of shipping and packaging that used sphagnum moss that prevented drying during shipping. He started a catalogue to sell by mail. That grew into a magazine called Orchard and Gardens. He teamed up with **Dr. Walter Van Fleet** who developed many hybrid roses. More detailed information can be found on the [Monmouth Timeline website](#).



Russell S. Ohl invented the solar cell. He was born in Macungie, Pennsylvania in 1898. After graduating from Pennsylvania State College in 1918, he entered the Army and wound up in Camp Vail, (now Fort Monmouth). After being discharged he worked in a variety of jobs finally ending up in Bell Labs facility in Cliffwood, NJ. “On June 25, 1946, the U.S. patent office approved an application from Bell Labs for a silicon solar cell invented by Russell S. Ohl, which became U.S. Patent No. US2,402,662A, “Light sensitive device.” It was one of more than 130 inventions patented by Ohl in the U.S. and elsewhere over the years, and it helped turn solar energy from a theory into a reality”. (from Monmouth Timeline website) [More details can be found here](#).

Karl G. Jansky, the father of radio astronomy, was another genius who lived in Little Silver. Jansky worked for AT&T Bell Labs and was given the task of identifying why the transatlantic calls were getting interference. In 1932 he discovered the radio waves causing the interference were coming from the Milky Way Galaxy. This was an impactful discovery leading to the world of radio astronomy. [More details can be found on the website](#)

Marilyn Levy was a chemist in the Photo-Optics Technical Area, Electronics Command Surveillance and Target Acquisition Laboratory at The Hexagon at Fort Monmouth. Her work involved research in high-speed



John Barrows (Cont.)

photographic processing, both black and white and color; dry photographic techniques; and photography for aerial surveillance. Over her lifetime she was awarded 35 patents, primarily in areas involving light-sensitive materials, photographic chemistry, and image microstructure.. Her work was essential for the quick turnaround of surveillance films. More detailed information can be found on the website



Member News

From Jim Powers

A couple of years ago, encouraged by Al Zager, I published a book of photographs called “One Alone”, through the Blurb website. We’ve used Blurb to make books of our trips. The per book cost was a deterrent to gaining a wider readership. After listening to Bill Burnett describe how he published his book “Life on the Back Nine” through Amazon, I decided to give them a try. I’m happy to say that everything worked out well and the book is now available from them for \$14. I’m proud of the book. I think the images are interesting and evocative. Here is Amazon’s description:

“Gathered from different places and many years, these photos capture people in quiet moments. Even though the photographer didn't know them, they seem familiar. The backgrounds are colorful and interesting, making you feel the solitude in the pictures. When you look at each photo, you can't help but wonder what these people are thinking about. “

And here’s the [link](#) to the book’s web page.



Holiday Express—Paul Hester

On November 29th I had the pleasure of helping out at my first Holiday Express event. The event was held at The Phoenix Center in Nutley, NJ. Over 40 volunteers, including a musical group of 9 and the Center's staff provided an uplifting, high spirited and safe environment for over 100 young adults and kids to get together, sing, dance and most importantly get in the Holiday Spirit. The musicians played numerous holiday and happy songs and welcomed some true heroes to join the kids in celebrating the special event. Elmo and Cookie Monster joined The Grinch, Frosty the Snowman, Rudolf and of course the Big Guy himself, Santa.



While some of the kids are normally shy, the great volunteers from Holiday Express were able to make everyone feel at home. All the kids got hugs from their favorite characters, joined the musicians in playing music and sang their hearts out for several hours. Out of all the absolutely energetic enthusiasm, my favorite part, aside from the incredible conga line and Santa of course, was capturing all the smiling faces.



Holiday Express (cont.)



While most of the pictures I took during this event have to remain private, those who care and love these wonderful people will be able to see their joy forever in a photo. Knowing this will fill my heart with joy forever.



As a photographer, publishing the photos I capture for others to see and enjoy is a huge part of why I do what I do. Knowing that, you might think this would deter me from even taking the time to support an event like this. Well, you would be totally wrong. Not only did I enjoy this more than most of the events I participate in, it truly “captured” (pun intended) what I believe is the spirit of Holiday Express, selflessly giving what you can to others with absolutely nothing to gain.



Thank you Holiday Express for allowing me to participate in a beautiful time. I look forward to helping out in the future for as long and often as I can.



Holiday Express (cont.)

Tim Sullivan shares a few photos from a previous event.



English Speaking Union gathering at the Wyndrum's

ESU and RB&CC club members and friends gathered at Ralph and Meta Wyndrums home on Saturday, November 18th to hear of the ESU's latest activities in support of high school students competing in both local and national Shakespeare contests.

Janet Smuga (ESU) and Tom Cox (ESU and RB&CC) members gave the presentation of the ESU's activities

Photos by JP Elard



English Speaking Union gathering at the Wyndrum's (cont.)

Photos by JP Elard and Lynne tice



A Christmas Carol at Summeseat - Bill Tice

On Saturday 12/2 Lynne and I revisited George Washington's Summerseat Headquarters in Morrisville, PA for a one-person dramatic enactment by Alisa Dupuy of Charles Dickens story A Christmas Carol in support of the Morrisville Historic Society



*In case you missed the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade
.... Here's a couple of screen shots ...*

Bill Tice



Business Bulletin Board



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Songs of Martin Torbert 

Recorded by the artist "Fezziwhig" available on the Web at:
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smooth sailing.*

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Thanks to Terry Flynn
for making this happen !**

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Cartoon of the Month !

