

New Perspective on War

An American, a Dutchman and a Frenchman are all in Saudi Arabia, sharing a smuggled crate of booze when, all of a sudden, Saudi police rush in and arrest them. The mere possession of alcohol is a severe offense, and so for the terrible crime of actually being caught consuming the booze, they are all sentenced to death! However, after many months, and with the help of very good lawyers, they are able to successfully appeal their sentences down to life imprisonment.

By a stroke of luck, it was a Saudi national holiday on the day their trial finished, and the extremely benevolent sheik decided they could be released after receiving just 20 lashes each of the whip. As they were preparing for their punishment, the sheik announced, "It is my first wife's birthday today, and she has asked me to allow each one of you one wish before your whipping."

The Dutchman was first in line, he thought for a while, and then said he wished to have a pillow tied to his back. This was done, but the pillow only lasted 10 lashes, and when the punishment was done he had to be carried away bleeding and crying in pain.

The Frenchman was next up, and having watched what happened to the Dutchman, he said smugly "Please fix two pillows to my back." But even two pillows could only take 15 lashes before the whip went through, and the Frenchman was led away whimpering loudly (as they do).

The American was last up, but before he could say anything, the sheik turned to him and said: "You are from a most beautiful part of the world and your culture is one of the finest. For this, you may have two wishes."

"Thank you, Most Royal and Merciful Highness," the American replied. "In recognition of your kindness, my first wish is that you give me not 20, but 100 lashes." "Not only are you an honorable, handsome, and powerful man, you are also very brave," the sheik said with an admiring look on his face. "And your second wish, what is it to be?" The American replied, "Tie the Frenchman to my back."

JANUARY SPEAKERS (All meetings will be at 10:00 a.m. in Morrill Hall, St. Mark's Church)

- Jan. 7** Our speaker will be Robert Levine, MD, a neurologist, resident of Norwalk, and author of a recently published book, Aging with Attitude. Dr. Levine will address issues of aging and the benefits and needs for adopting a knowledgeable and positive attitude as we advance in age.
- Jan. 14** Bethany McLean is a reporter for *Fortune* magazine and co-author of the book The Smartest Guys in the Room, about the inner workings and spectacular collapse of Enron. She will discuss current and forthcoming developments in the indictments and trials growing out of the Enron scandal.
- Jan. 21** Diane Wittry, the Director of the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra, will make a return visit to SMC – she spoke to us previously in October, 2002. Diane will discuss the progress of the NSO and programs she plans for the current and upcoming seasons.
- Jan. 28** Our own SMC member Fred Chang will speak on the mystique of the Samurai sword. He will show us videotape about the Japanese craft, and will bring several swords for members to view. Fred, a New Canaan resident, received his education in Japan, and is a consultant for A.G. Edwards in Greenwich.

COUTH

- January 19 (Wed)** Ron Seger and Mike Allocca will take us back to New York City for a first for SMC, an off-Broadway show, the humorous “Forbidden Broadway”, preceded by dinner at Le Rivage on 46th Street. \$95 per person. Check-in 3:15 for 3:30 departure.
- February 15 (Tue)** Back yet again to the Big Apple for the prestigious Frick Museum and the latest exhibits at the fun Wax Museum with its ever-changing presentation. See exceptional works of Western art from the Renaissance to the end of the 19th Century at the Frick. An added attraction will be a special collection of bronze sculptures. Bring your camera for poses with the “stars” at the Wax Museum. Lunch is planned at Churrascaria Plataforma, rated “excellent” by Zagat. \$80 per person, limit 50. Check-in 8:15, 8:30 departure. Hosts will be Bob Spence and Bob Witt.
- March 8 (Tue)** An interesting day trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show and the National Constitution Center is planned. Lunch arrangements are not yet complete. The price and check-in time are to be determined. Full details will be announced at the January 7 meeting. Hosts will be Clancy Fauntleroy and Pete Stair.

Please note: The newly stated Couth policy is as follows: The sign-up sheet is to be used as an indication of interest and intent to participate, but not to establish a reservation. The date of the check receipt by the Couth Committee will be the control of a confirmed reservation.

ACTIVITIES

- Bridge** Bridge follows weekly meetings. Games last until about 2:00 p.m. Sign up before the meeting or at start of the break at the Couth Desk. A post-meeting drawing establishes who’ll go to Waveny House for play. Eric Musa (966-3125)
- Paddle Tennis** Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 9 to 11 a.m. at Waveny. A Rec Department permit is required. George Perkins (972-6852)
- Racquetball** Players wanted. Mon, Wed, Fri 8:00 a.m. at the YMCA. Bill Patton (966-4849)
- Skyblazers** The planes are in the hanger until Lapham Community Center reopens, hopefully next September. Jack Murray (966-1416)
- Trailblazers** The season is over, but looking forward to next spring. Dave Branch (966-9782)
- 4F Luncheon** Selection of the site for the luncheon is announced at a meeting during the month. Sign up prior to or during break in fourth Friday meeting. Eric Petschek (966-0624)

SPECIAL NOTE – Eric Petschek is looking for a replacement to lead the 4F group. Please contact Eric or Jack Murray if interested.

DUES FOR 2005 Your Senior Men’s Club dues of \$30 for 2005 are now payable. The deadline for payment is February 28. Please pay as soon as possible to avoid a loss of membership. You may pay Joe Elmlinger or Chic Lyttle any Friday, by check to SMCNC, or mail your payment to SMC, c/o YMCA, 564 South Avenue, New Canaan, CT 06840.

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