

Men's Club Report

By Paul Nettler

The Men's Club meeting on Thursday, January 14th, unfortunately, started on a somber note, as our President, Toby Horowitz, eulogized our Founding President, Al Fuchs, who died on December 15th. He pointed out that without Al the Men's Club would never have come into existence. He was a trusted friend to all who came into contact with him. Al was passionate about the activities of the Men's Club and always thought of the members' interests. Toby feels that as a tribute we all have a responsibility to make sure that the club continues to grow and remain strong and to remember his final words to Toby, "keep it going."

Our speaker, Saul Silas Fathi, treated us to a fascinating current events cum history lesson about the world's trouble spots. His knowledge is first hand, having been born into a prominent Jewish family in Iraq. At age 10, he and his younger brother were smuggled out of Baghdad and eventually reached Israel. He served in both the Israeli Air Force and the US Army. His life story is most unusual.

Saul started the lecture by giving us a brief review of the history of the Middle East and Islam from Roman times, through the birth of Islam. He touched upon the difference between the Sunnis and Shia, and the role that corruption and stolen resources played through the centuries. He also discussed the Arab Spring.

Saul has some pretty strong opinions, which seem sometime shocking. For instance, he believes that the military dictatorship is the only entity that can bring stability to the Egyptians, and yet they are well known to be corrupt. He believes, "Afghanistan is a hell hole not worthy of American sacrifices, and the only reason Afghanistan pretends to be our ally is because of the money they get from us." If that stops, the Taliban will move back in from Pakistan. He believes that Iran's desire to build an atomic bomb should be

feared most by Turkey and Saudi Arabia because they are Shia and the Saudis are Sunni. He believes that invading Iraq was a colossal mistake, exacerbated by the disbanding the Iraqi officers corps, sending them back to their homes without any source of income or hope. Saul believes that these men became the core of ISIS, seeking revenge. He does not rule out putting our boots on the ground to destroy ISIS. He also believes that we should stay out of the Ukraine, because it is a corrupt country and it's not worth risking another cold war. Saul also said that there will never be a two-state solution with the Palestinians. Both parties want Jerusalem to be its capital and you can never have two nations with the same capital.

What Saul fears the most is the possibility that rather than bomb Israel with an atomic weapon and risk certain devastating retaliation, some rogue nation such as Pakistan or North Korea would sell its capability to a group such as ISIS which has no territory of people to destroy. The presentation ended with a lively Q and A, with some disagreement from the audience.

On Thursday, February 11th we will turn our attention away from the sublime to the ridiculous, as we travel back in time to our world of Abbott & Costello. Who can forget that plaintiff cry: "Hey Ab-boooot?" Our speaker that evening will be Sal St. George, a playwright and living history consultant. His talk is entitled: "The Forgotten Funny Men, The Abbott and Costello Story." In 1972 Sal visited Bud in his home. The conversation was recorded as Bud reminisced about his life as part of one of America's most beloved and hilarious comedy teams. It should be a fun and revealing evening.

The Current Events Group met on Monday, January 11th, chaired by Gary Darche. Amongst the topics covered were the fact that there is nothing new about citizens not paying taxes if they object to them. In 1791 there was a "Whiskey Rebellion" in

this country put down by none other than George Washington. Other topics touched upon included the high cost of some prescription drugs and medical care in general, the Syrian refugee crisis, the Clinton-Sanders contest and of course, no discussion of current events would be complete without mentioning "The Donald" himself.

The topics that are planned for the February meeting include the Iowa caucus results and primary contests, financial attacks on Israel, New York City and State relationships, Muslims in America, and an update on the Iran treaty. As you can see, we have something for every taste and you will be pleasantly surprised to see how well versed your neighbors are.

Gary will be dodging tornados in Florida for the next few months, so Ralph Edwards will be leading the discussions. The meetings are at 10:30 until noon in the Coleridge Lounge and will be held on February 8th, March 14th and April 18th. For further information contact Ralph at (347) 235-0472.

Ralph will also be leading the Book

Group on April 11th at 10:30 am. The books to be discussed, "Ally" and "Devil in the White City," will be available at the Glen Oaks Library in March.

Future events include Bingo Nights on January 24th and February 28th in the large card room near the theater, where there will be door prizes, and a members only Super Bowl Party on February 7th in the Coleridge Lounge to which attendance is limited to 35 members. Heros and soft drinks will be served at no charge. There will be a dinner on February 9th at The Heart of Portugal Restaurant and a Stud Poker Tourney on February 23rd at 6:30 pm in the downstairs card room. Informal breakfasts continue to attract new members every Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 9:15 am in the restaurant. And don't forget to bring a dollar for our Chuck-A-Buck drawing. The odds are much better than the Lottery. For more information, go to our web site, northshoretowersmensclub.org, or call our Events Committee Chairman, Arnie Rabinowitz at (516) 317-6705.