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HomeHaven News

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JUNE 2017

A BIT from BITSIE:

"Sumer Is Icumen In....." FINALLY

Can you believe—the rain has gone, the flowers are out, the air is warm and HomeHaven's Activities Committee is keeping right up with the weather, planning useful, fun, and exciting programs.

We are also celebrating the season because we have working for us a wonderful summer intern, Margaret Reager, a student at Carnegie Mellon University. You will have a chance to meet and get to know her soon.

We hope you have been assembling all those old papers from your file drawers and will be bringing them to the HomeHaven office parking lot behind 291 Whitney on Saturday, June 3, from 9 am to 12 noon, ready to toss into the shredding truck! Just \$5 for a grocery bag and \$10 for a box of paper junk.

We also hope you have been thinking about your favorite tasty dish—appetizers, main course, salad, or dessert—to bring to our Annual Members' Pot Luck Picnic at Edgerton Park (rain or shine) on Tuesday, June 6, from 5 to 7 pm.

THEN- from Saturday, June 3, through Saturday, June 24, the International Festival of Arts and Ideas offers a HUGE smorgasbord of theater, dance, film, music, and thought-provoking IDEAS on history, literature, economics, along with food experiences and tours of the city's neighborhoods. Pick up a program book from the HH Office or the lobby of 195 Church St.

Ticketed performances include the world premiere of composer Martin Bresnick's oratorio, "Whitman, Melville, Dickinson-The Passions of Bloom," at Sprague Hall on June 20 at 8 pm, and "Leo: The Anti-**Gravity Show**" at the University Theatre on Friday, June 23, at 8 pm and Saturday, June 24, at 12 noon & 8 pm.

HomeHaven will be offering discounted tickets for "(BE)LONGING," by librettist Aaron Jafferis

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Margaret and Bitsie

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and composer Byron Au Yong, (creators of "Stuck Elevator") at the Long Wharf Theatre on Saturday, June 17, at 2 pm.

And on Saturday, **June 17, at 6 pm**, join HomeHaven's Downtown Village on the Green on for Latin American Music. *For more on the Festival, see Events, p. 11.*

For July, August, and beyond much more information will be published in the July/August issue of the *HomeHaven News*, but here is a quick peek at what is in store.

- July 13: A tour of the Osborne Homestead Museum and Kellogg Environmental Center in Derby
- August 10: A boat tour out of New London of lighthouses in Eastern Long Island Sound
- August 17-Sept 3: The Elm Shakespeare Company performs Romeo and Juliet in Edgerton Park.

AND BEST OF ALL

The Live Video Stream of Dr. Atul Gawande's talk, exclusively to the Village to Village Network, originally scheduled for February but cancelled due to a blizzard, has now been rescheduled for Monday, September 25, at 5 pm at Bethesda Lutheran Church, 305 St. Ronan Street.

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL AT THESE EVENTS!

Frances T. "Bitsie" Clark, Executive Director

HomeHaven News

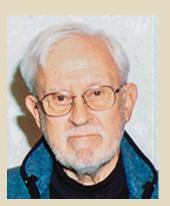
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Ellen R. Brainard, Editor erbrainard@gmail.com
Jane Jervis, Associate Editor hh.jervis@comcast.net
Published by HomeHaven, Inc. 291 Whitney Avenue, Suite 103
New Haven, Connecticut 06511 203.776.7378
info@homehavenvillages.org

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IN MEMORIAM JOHN MOSES RAKUSIN (1920-2017)

HomeHaven extends condolences to the family and friends of John (Jack) Moses Rakusin, who passed away on March 14, just eight days shy of his 97th birthday. He is survived by his wife, Kim Karlin Rakusin, his first



wife, Florence Karp Rakusin, his daughter, Ellen Rakusin Peterman, son-in-law John Peterman, grandson Jeremy, and many nieces and nephews.

Jack was a warm and kind man with a generous spirit who considered his greatest accomplishments to be his relationships with his family and friends. He had an inviting twinkle in his eye and a hearty laugh that put those around him at ease.

Jack grew up in Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania, where his parents owned a clothing store. After graduating from Penn State, he served in Panama during World War II, returning to Penn State to earn his PhD in clinical psychology under the GI Bill. His work brought Jack to Connecticut, to the newly opened VA hospital in West Haven, a training center for Yale. A long and productive work life followed—at the VA, the Newington Children's Hospital, the Grove School, and in private practice. Jack was a beloved therapist and supervisor, and maintained friendships with former students and colleagues throughout his life.

Jack connected to Temple Beth Tikvah over 35 years ago and regularly attended the Wednesday reading group and Saturday Torah study. He loved to read about and discuss the big ideas of life. He cherished his long-term relationships at the temple. Music (jazz saxophone) and photography were lifelong interests and sources of great pleasure.

MEET OUR MEMBERS: A Conversation with Karen and John Schneider by Patty Langdon



When I drove up to Karen and John Schneider's house for this conversation, I was surprised to see a wonderful old Victorian building before me. Tall, with interesting windows and lots of space inside, the house seems to fit them perfectly. John told me that the property used to be part of a large estate belonging to Stephen Whitney. Theirs was the first lot to be sold from that large estate and the house was either built or moved there in 1887 or earlier. The Schneiders decided to move to New Haven from Hamden "if they could find a proper house" and have lived there for 30 years. Living on Canner Street, they knew Dick and Kerry Snyder, shared their interest in the goals and aspirations of HomeHaven (formerly East Rock Village), and became founding members.

John grew up in Woodbridge when it was a small town, less affluent than it is now, with lots of farms and open

Introducing New Members

HomeHaven is delighted to welcome

Manana Sikic ~ East Rock

who joined us last month.



country. His father had heard there was room for a new orthodontist in New Haven and decided to move nearby. Wait — I thought — DOCTOR Schneider? He gave me braces when I was 11 — everyone I knew from Newtown went to him for braces! Dr. Schneider lived to be 96, and John's mother recently died at 103.

Karen grew up in a diverse community on the South Shore of Long Island "where everyone was from somewhere else." Her mother, from Georgia, and her father met at the 1939 World's Fair in New York. Her father was a master cabinetmaker who emigrated from Denmark when he was 19. As children, Karen and her siblings used to play for hours in his shop as he liked having them around — it was the family room of their childhood. She has many relatives throughout Denmark, and Karen and John visit them often.

John and Karen met at Wagner College on Staten Island and were married upon graduation. They have two sons, Andy and Chris, and two granddaughters, ages 8 and 14. John and Karen travel every chance they get. The entire family has taken a European trip every spring for the past several years, visiting Paris, Rome, Barcelona, and London. Seasoned travelers indeed! They rent an apartment and choose cities that have something for every age group. The family also rents the same cottage on Block Island every summer.

Karen, who attended the Yale School of Public Health, had her own software business (Health Systems Consultants, Inc.) for many years and directed research on premature babies at the Yale Medical School. She retired two years ago. John was in public relations at SNET and later started his own PR business, working from his home office in that wonderful house. He is on the board of The Institute for Learning in Retirement and is part of the HomeHaven Activities Committee. He creates pottery at Creative Arts Workshop and particularly enjoys the wonderful and interesting people he meets there. Karen has a garden at Edgerton Park that she tends, assisted by her granddaughter Catie. She spent a year in France on a Fulbright Scholarship after college and became quite fluent in the language. She misses the opportunity to use it and would be delighted to find others who might like to get together to speak French. The Schneiders are longtime members of United Church on the Green and frequent volunteers at HomeHaven events.

HEALTH MATTERS:

Understanding Alzheimer's Disease and Current Clinical Trials at Yale by Robert Gifford, M.D.

Most of us over the age of 65 worry about the possibility of dementia. It is not an idle concern because the incidence of dementia doubles every 10 years after age 60. In a long-term follow-up study of 532 participants who had an average age of 79 at the onset of the study, only 19 of 160 participants alive at age 93 years remained free of mild cognitive impairment or dementia. Although vascular disease and neurodegeneration of aging can also be responsible for dementia, late-onset Alzheimer's disease (AD) is the most common cause of dementia. AD is characterized by the rather silent deposits of plaques outside of cells in the brain. These deposits consist of a substance called amyloid beta. In addition, there is an accumulation inside of nerve cells in the brain of a substance known as tau protein. This tau protein is toxic to nerve cells and gradually spreads across brain regions as Alzheimer disease progresses.

Although the cause of these deposits of toxic substances in the brain remains unknown, there is evidence that genetics may play a role. Each gene in our body is composed of two so-called alleles, one from each parent. One allele is generally dominant over the other. For example, the gene for eye color demonstrates that the allele for brown is dominant over blue. But if you have a blue allele from each parent, your eyes will be blue. Similarly, in AD, current research has focused on the importance of a specific allele of the APOE gene known as APOE-4 that is involved in amyloidbeta metabolism. Multiple studies have confirmed the importance of APOE-4 as a risk factor for late-onset AD, particularly in individuals who have inherited the APOE-4 allele from each parent, in other words, have two copies of this particular allele. Such individuals have twelve times the normal risk of developing AD, even though many will never actually develop the disease. See below for a clinical study at Yale directed at these individuals.

At the present time, there is no known cure or preventive therapy for AD. Certain oral medications,

If HomeHaven helps you, help HomeHaven with a bequest.

such as cholinesterase inhibitors (donepezil), when used together with an NMDA receptor antagonist (Memantine) can have modest benefits in patients with moderate to severe AD, but there is little, if any, evidence that patients with milder AD will benefit from these agents.

Recent research has focused on using human monoclonal antibody therapy as a new approach to preventing or reducing amyloid accumulation. The Alzheimer's Disease Research Unit at Yale currently participates in several different clinical therapeutic trials using human monoclonal antibody and vaccine therapy directed against the amyloid-b protein. They also support various other neuroimaging and genetic studies and are always looking for suitable volunteers for their studies.

One major nationwide study is currently enrolling participants, testing two medications in hopes that they may prevent AD in individuals who are at high risk of developing the disease because they have two copies of the APOE-4 gene mentioned above. This five-year study will involve more than 1,300 adults between 60 and 75 years old. Both treatments used in the study lower the amyloid protein in the brain. One of the treatments being tested is an active vaccine and the other is pill therapy that slows the formation of the amyloid protein. If you are between 60 and 75 and interested in possibly participating in this trial, you can register through GeneMatch, which analyzes a cheek swab to determine whether you might have the suspect gene.

There are several other on-going clinical trials supported by the Alzheimer's Disease Research Unit at Yale that might be of interest to some of our readers. Of course, in a clinical trial, you must remember that there is always the possibility that you may be assigned to a placebo. For more information, call the Alzheimer's Disease Research Unit at 203-764-8100 or see on-line here.

Dr. Gifford (aka Bob or the Doctor of Doggerel) is Professor of Medicine Emeritus at Yale University School of Medicine and Chair of HomeHaven's Health Committee. He writes this column in collaboration with members of the Committee. Suggestions for subjects are welcome and may be sent to Bob at bobbygi32@gmail.com.



NEWS FROM OUR VILLAGES

Spring seemed slow in coming this year, but HomeHaveners helped it along with get-togethers in their Villages.

On April 19, eight members of **Amity Village** got together for lunch at Antonio's Restaurant, and on the gorgeous afternoon of May 21, a dozen or so attended a Soup Sunday at the home of Wendy and Peter Wells (*above*).

Hamden and **North Haven Villages** joined forces on May 5 for lunch at The Playwright Irish Pub in Whitneyville attended by some 17 members (*top right*).

On May 7, a festive gathering of **Hamden Village** at Jeanne Drury's home heralded the spring. Attendees brought fabulous food for brunch, as old members welcomed new, and friendships grew and spread (center and lower right).

East Rock Village celebrated a brief break in the endless rains of early spring on May 6 with a Soup Saturday at the home of Al and Peggy Atherton (photo below). And on May 17, a dozen ERVers continued what is becoming a tradition of lunching at Caffe Bravo, where the conversation was so absorbing that no one remembered to take photos!

Below: Anna Bresnick and Norman Chonacky







Above, left to right: Jean Drury, Judith Colton, and Patty Langdon with new member Hanna Hyland; Below: New members Ron and Jean Rozett with Bitsie



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RESPONSIBLE DOWNSIZING: Give a Second Life to Your Old Bike

by Elaine Piraino-Holevoet

New Haven has been a city of cycling enthusiasts since April 1866, when inventor Pierre Lallement rode his invention from Ansonia to the New Haven Green, thus introducing "the art of cycling to the American public."* If you have lived in the area for a while, particularly if you raised a family here, there is a good chance you have acquired a bike or two over the years. If a bike is now standing idle in your basement or garage, it's time to dust it off and get it to a person who could make good use of it. Finding a new home for old bikes is just an email or a phone call away.

The Bradley Street Bicycle Co-op (BSBC) is a bicycle cooperative located in the East Rock neighborhood of New Haven. Housed in a former light-industrial building, it is a community space and a place for cyclists to come to work on their bikes. BSBC also runs a bicycle recycling program. BSBC volunteers fix donated bikes. Some bikes are sold, with the proceeds going to fund the recycling program; most are given away to those who don't have the means to buy one.

John Martin, the visionary founder of BSBC, describes the program's mission: "Many people in New Haven cannot afford even a cheap bike. We partner and work with people in other non-profits and organizations who can directly identify those who want a bike but cannot afford one. Our volunteers help fix these bikes and our partners help provide support during the process and well after the bikes are given away."

To date BSBC's largest partnership has been with IRIS (<u>Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services</u>), to which it donated 75 bikes in 2016 and hopes to donate 100 this year. Other program partners include: Connecticut Mental Health Center (CMHC); Columbus House; Farnam Center; VA CT's Errera Community Care

LAUGHTER, THE BEST MEDICINE

It was down in the depths of the sea, and the little fish were talking about a great monster fish who was eating them all. One said, "The trouble is, we can't get away from him because he's got this engine, and he roars along at eighty miles an hour."

Another replied, "Yes, that's the problem. He's a motorpike."

Center; Bridges, St. Martin de Porres Academy; and Wilbur Cross High School.

John urges, "If you have an old bike that you don't use anymore or you are leaving town and don't want to deal with it — bring it down to us! We will take any adult bike in any condition! We are open Tuesday-Thursday from 4-7 pm, and are located in East Rock at 138 Bradley Street. If you can't make it then, shoot us an email at john@bsbc.co and we will figure out a time. We would love to see you!"

If you are not able to transport your bike to the shop, check out the <u>donate page</u> or call John at 860-337-2777. A pick-up will be arranged as volunteers are available.

Pretty cool to think you might spot your former "ride" being pedaled around town by a happy new owner, don't you agree?

*This event is commemorated on a plaque on the Upper Green near the corner of Temple and Chapel streets.

Elaine Piraino-Holevoet is the graphic designer of HomeHaven News and the author of the blog ontheroadtogreenness.

... AT YOUR SERVICE!

In the past three months, HomeHaven provided members with:

- 38 rides by volunteer drivers
- 16 home visits by volunteer visitors
- 2 computer assists by volunteer computer helpers
- 7 referrals to volunteers or vetted providers for household help

Note: Members often call a service provider more than once without informing the office. You can help us keep records by always letting us know each time you use a provider we recommended. *It's important!!*

Look for monthly reports giving rolling threemonth totals.

COMPUTER CONNECTION: Facelift!

by Christa Sammons

Our HomeHaven website has received quite a facelift, thanks to the good work of past president Jane Jervis and board member Bill Brainard. First of all, there is a batch of great new photos illustrating individual pages. Content has been streamlined throughout, the opening menu has been simplified, and the documents page is now much easier to navigate. Visit soon and see the changes! www.homehavenvillages.org

Besides our new look, there are many good reasons to visit the website. Kate frequently updates the opening page with important announcements. The membership directory gives you access to members' street addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses. You can search it by first name, last name, or zip code. Click on the member's picture (or in most cases the silhouette and question mark where the member picture would go) to see full contact information about that person. The events calendar lists special events, ongoing group meetings, and the busy schedule of committee meetings. Click on any event to see time, place, and a short description. You can even register yourself for events if you like (or call the office and have Kate do that for you). Documents is another useful page. From there you can review past newsletters, look at recipes contributed by the Cooking in Different Languages group, or access various forms and documents, including HomeHaven's bylaws, its 2017 strategic plan, and the life care alternatives report. (If the document category has a little folder icon beside it, click on that to expand the display, then select the document you wish to see.)

CALL FOR ARTISTS!

We'd like to start a website that features HomeHaven artists. We welcome artists in any medium—sculptors and painters, fiber artists and printmakers, craftspeople and photographers, and any others we haven't thought of. Each month we'll provide a link to a virtual show of an artist's work. We might even organize a "live opening"—another excuse for a party!

For starters, we'd like to hear from any artist who'd like to participate. We can help you find a photographer if you need one, and we'll help with mounting the online exhibition. Please send a note to Lydia (lcbornick@comcast.net) with ideas and variations.

The HomeHaven website is a two-tiered system. The newsletters and information about the purpose, history, and structure of the organization, its staff, and its services are available to one and all. If you want to tell a friend about us, simply send her the web address, www.homehavenvillages.org. But the general public cannot see the more private aspects of the website, for example the membership directory, details about events, and certain documents. To take full advantage of the website as a member, you need to log in with a password. We each got one when we joined, but it's easy to forget it. If you don't know your password, call Kate at the office (203-776-7378), and she will walk you through the process of getting a new one. It's worth it!

Christa Sammons is a member of HomeHaven's Information Technology (IT) Task Force. This article was written in collaboration with Norman Chonacky (chair) and other members. Suggestions for subjects are welcome and may be sent to Christa at christa.sammons@gmail.com.



Happy Birthday to HomeHaven members with a birthday in June

Diane Ariker Jim Barnes
Julie Crowder Kathy Denardo
Martha Dobrowolski Steve Feinstein
Ingeborg Glier Jane Jervis
Elise Kenney Adrienne Lewis
Nancy McCleery Barbara McGhie
Lois Sackrider Anne Schenck
Annelies Sheehan Hal Spitzer
Virginia Wilkinson Israel Zelitch



THE IRON HERITAGE TRAIL

by Jane Jervis

Who knew? From 1735 to the 1920s, the watershed of the upper Housatonic River was a major supplier of iron for colonial America and the United States. The region extending through northwest Connecticut, southwest Massachusetts, and a slice of New York was blessed with high-quality iron ore in the Taconic range, ample wood for fuel to stoke blast furnaces, water power, and limestone; labor (first Irish, then Italian) flooded in as needed.

Domestic and farming equipment gave way to muskets, cannons, and large ship anchors. It was called "the arsenal of the Revolution," producing 80% of the cannons used in the war against Britain, and later much of the armament for the North in the Civil War. With the development of railroads after the Civil War, much of the area's output went to wheels for

railroad cars. All told, some 40 blast furnaces were in operation at various times.

Dick Bell (Hamden Village) organized a tour on May 19 for 24 HomeHaven members and Ed Kirby, a skilled guide (photo, upper left, p. 9). We visited restored furnaces and still-active quarries, and got a vivid sense of the extent of this once-thriving industry. After a delightful outdoor lunch hosted by Dick and Anne Bell at a private fishing club on the Housatonic River, we returned home with hunks of slag in our pockets and minds filled with information and wonder.



Photo by Margaret Reage







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Photo by John Sawyer







Photo by John Sawyer





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HomeHaven Helps

by Jane Jervis

A new feature for our Newsletter describes ways in which HomeHaven has helped our members. All names have been changed to protect privacy. If you would like to be interviewed for this feature, please contact Jane at hh.jervis@comcast.net.

Whittington

A distinguished retired professor of religious studies and a skilled woodworker, Whittington (not his real name) is a quiet and thoughtful man not much given to social chatter. He and his wife were drawn in to the organization by friends during the early days of East Rock Village and have been actively engaged ever since.

Whittington has served on the HomeHaven Board and on a number of board and management committees, where he can be counted on for wise counsel, and he has given public presentations based on his scholarly expertise. When pressed, he will say that he has

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Here's how it works: When you shop at Amazon, log in by going to **smile.amazon.com**, a website almost identical to amazon.com, where you will find nearly all the same products at the same prices. You will be asked to select the organization to receive the donation from your purchases. Choose HomeHaven from the list. Browse and shop as usual. When you check out, you will see the amount of your donation. It may look small, but if you are like many of us who do more and more of our shopping online and much of it at Amazon, these donations add up and are an easy way to help HomeHaven. On subsequent visits to Amazon, AmazonSmile and HomeHaven will come up directly. For more detailed information, go here and click on the header, About AmazonSmile.

benefitted from his participation in HomeHaven because he has been able to keep parts of his brain working that haven't had much use before.

But the gift he has brought to HomeHaven is his habit of deep reflection and analysis, seeing what is truly important in what others may see as merely busyness. Whittington sees HomeHaven as a group trying to rediscover community in a society that has lost that vision of itself, to recover a sense of the common good that was at the basis of our democracy, and as a model of neighbors helping neighbors that may serve as an inspiration to a new generation. He has found deep satisfaction in being a part of that effort.

VILLAGE VERSE: Getting Back to Sleep

Sometimes in the night, Maybe at three or four, I used to wake and lie there For an hour or more.

But now when I awaken I have a little snack, And I do something useful Before I totter back.

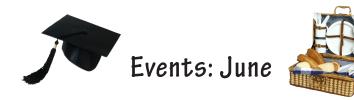
> I may write a letter, Or have a thorough look To find those long lost glasses, Or read a library book.

Perhaps I'll write my shop list, Or an email that I said Simply must be sent today. Then I go back to bed.

> First I put the lights out, Then quietly I creep Back to the warm and waiting bed And quickly fall asleep.

I don't know why it works so well. It certainly works right. "Thank you, folks, for listening. Sweet Dreams and a Good Night."

– Liz Wolf, Amity Village



Saturday, June 3, 9:00 am-12 noon, Rain or Shine Shredding Event

HomeHaven Parking Lot

Earn money for HomeHaven while uncluttering your files. For just \$5 for one brown grocery bagful and/or \$10 for a banker's box or other carton (12x13x15 in) you can clear a lot of space. If you need help bringing it in please call the office.

Tuesday, June 6, 5:00-7:00 pm, Rain or Shine HomeHaven Annual Picnic Edgerton Park Carriage House

With summer around the corner, it is time again for this happy gathering of all HomeHaveners. Bring an appetizer, main dish, salad, or dessert for six people (no hummus, please!) and come meet your friends and make new ones.

Parking is on both sides of Cliff Street and on Edgehill Road. Passengers may be dropped off near the Carriage House but there is no parking within the park.

International Festival of Arts & Ideas Saturday, June 17, 2:00 pm Long Wharf Theatre (BE)LONGING, a musical performance by Aaron Jafferis and Byron Au Yong

Created by the award winning team that produced Stuck Elevator, (Be)longing is a powerful performance event reflecting our society's emergence from large-scale tragedies. Locally cast singers, beatboxers, and hip-hop artists present this original oratorio. Made by and for the New Haven community, (Be)longing is not just a meditation on what it means to come of age in an age of guns, it's also an invitation to learn about the city's young people, to seek and find community with them.

Discounted tickets at \$30 are limited so be sure to call or email the office early to reserve your seat.

Saturday, June 17, 6:00 pm New Haven Green, Free

Bring your chair and picnic supper to join HH's Downtown Village on the Green—look for the HomeHaven banner—and enjoy the music of *Troker*, six musicians from all over Mexico, with different influences but the same goal of creating mesmerizing rhythms and presenting unrepeatable live performances, followed by *Fulaso*, a band whose music comes from New York City and is rooted in Puerto Rico, Cuba and Colombia.

ONGOING GROUP MEETINGS

BOOK GROUP

Monday, June 5, 10:00-11:30 am at the home of Gretchen Kingsley, 420 Humphrey Street, New Haven, to discuss *Thank You for Being Late: An Optimist's Guide to Thriving in the Age of Accelerations,* by Thomas Friedman. Please RSVP to Gretchen at gma322@gmail.com or 203-752-1950.

COOKING IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES: Tapas (Spanish small plates)

Monday, June 19, 6:30 pm Sign-up deadline is Friday, June 9.

Please respond by then! It is critical in the early stages of planning to have an accurate count of attendees. RSVP to Celeste Markle at <u>c_markle@yahoo.com</u>. If you don't use email please call her at 203-397-0492 or call the office. Newcomers are always welcome—it's a great way to meet other HomeHaveners. Contact Celeste for more information.

PINS AND NEEDLES

Monday, June 19, 3:30 pm at the home of Mary Barnes, 54 Lincoln Street. RSVP to her at 203-745-3930 or jim.marybarnes@gmail.com. Please be sure to let her know whether or not you plan to attend. The group now meets once a month on the fourth Monday of the month. Bring whatever project you are working on and enjoy good company and refreshments. New members are always welcome. For more information call or email Jeanne Drury at JeanneDrury@aol.com or 203 281-3227.

MEMOIR WRITING GROUPS

The groups meet on the second and fourth Mondays of the month for an hour and a half. For more information or if you wish to attend a meeting to see how it works, contact Harriet Bergmann at 203-776-0703 or hfb183@gmail.com.

HOMEHAVEN OFFICE

203-776-7378

hhkateh@gmail.com