Message from the President and Vice-President

The cooler weather and the change of clocks remind us that the holiday season is fast approaching. We hope you will join us at the annual YUWO holiday party held this year on Sunday, December 12, from 4 to 6 pm in Horchow Hall on the corner of Sachem and Hillhouse.

This is a wonderful way to support our YUWO scholarship funds by donating an item for the holiday baskets to be raffled, or by writing a check. Please remember to bring a favorite savory or sweet ready for everyone to enjoy.

Donations to the holiday baskets are being collected by Johanna Becker in Hamden (203-248-6391) and by Pam Rackliffe on the shore (203-488-2667). The baskets will be assembled on Wednesday, December 1, at Johanna’s. Please contact her if you would like to help.

An exciting addition to the party this year will be a dinner for eight auctioned by the Gourmet Luncheon group. This would be a wonderful gift for a special person or a welcome treat for yourself. Plan to stop by their table for particulars. Additional items to be offered at silent auction are welcome. Perhaps you make a special holiday dessert, i.e. Gingerbread House or Yule Log, or know a vendor who would be willing to donate a item or service, i.e. spa treatment. If so please contact Johanna or Pam.

The Study Group lectures on Acquisitions and Gifts – the Yale Art Museum have been an outstanding success. We are grateful to the committee for their efforts and to the lecturers for sharing their time and expertise.

Enjoy your Thanksgiving festivities and we hope to see at Horchow Hall on December 12th.

Audrey and Pam
Explore New Haven
We will not meet in December. Our next excursion is a tour of the Coop School for the Arts and Humanities designed by Cesar Pelli. It is planned for Wednesday, January 26, at 3 PM and will take 45 minutes to an hour. January 27 is the snow date. The school is the modern building on the SE corner of Crown and College. Parking is available in the Crown St. garage (Shubert garage) right across the street. Remember, Crown St. is one way east to west. Also, the Yale shuttle stops nearby. Call Eleanor Radune, 203-483-6528, eradune@comcast.net or Anne Schenck, 203-787-3705, annefschenck@aol.com to join the tour group.

December Books

Holiday Party
Sunday, December 12
4-6 PM
Horchow Hall
Hillhouse at Sachem

The holiday party gives us a chance to get together and to raise money for our scholarship fund. One way we raise these funds is through our famous basket raffle. The holiday party committee is asking members to contribute items for these theme baskets, which will be raffled at the party. Suggested themes include gardening, food, happy hour, cooking, games, etc. Items are currently being accepted by Johanna Becker in Hamden (203-248-6391) and by Pam Rackliffe on the shore (203-488-2667).

This year we will also have a silent auction. If anyone would like to contribute an item for it, we would appreciate it. This item could be hand or home made, or a donation of a service like a meal for two from your favorite restaurant, a spa session, or anything you can think of that would be desirable to a YUWO member. No artwork, please, tastes are too individual. Contact Pam Rackliffe or Johanna Becker if you have questions.

There is no admission charge, but we do ask that you come with your favorite finger food ... hors d'oeuvres or dessert. We don't want an overabundance of sweets (though we do want some!). Therefore, people with last names of A to P please bring something savory, and those with last names of Q to Z please bring something sweet. You can trade assignments if you wish. YUWO will provide the wine and non-alcoholic punch.

Significant others and friends are welcome!
Activities

ART AFICIONADOS — The next meeting of Art Aficionados will be Wednesday, December 8, 12 noon, at the Yale Art Gallery. Whatever the weather is in New Haven that day it will be warm and tropical in La Farge’s paintings, sketches, and watercolors that make up the exhibit “La Farge’s Second Paradise, Voyages in the South Seas, 1890-1891” at the Yale University Art Gallery. We will stick to an historical mode by going to lunch at the John Davenport’s restaurant at the top of the Omni Hotel- spectacular views of the city. Please call (no emails) Nancy Ahlstrom (203-865-2028) to make reservations for lunch.

BOOK CIRCLE — Read approximately eight recently published books for the price of one. Books are circulated, with each member keeping one book at the end of the cycle. Cost share is about $25. Genevieve Goff has taken over running the Book Circle following the death of Nancy Hoskins. Genevieve is asking people to start gathering information on books they might want to include in the book circle next year and to pass this information on to her. Book Circle needs a new chair for next year. If someone would like to volunteer, they can contact either Genevieve or Audrey DeFronzo who will make the appointment. Genevieve Goff, 203-208-1357.

BRIDGE GROUP — This duplicate bridge group will meet for lunch and play at the New Haven Country Club once a month, usually on Wednesdays, starting in September. You can bring a non-YUWO partner, but at least one of each couple must be a member of YUWO. Britta Chambers, 203-453-5813.

CONVERSATION PARTNERS — Enjoy making friends with people from other cultures, or helping a foreign student become more at ease with the English language. You can become a partner for a visiting international scholar/student at Yale. There is no language requirement. Volunteers commit to one hour per week and volunteer for just three months to give a foreign visitor a good start. To join the group, contact the Program Coordinator at the Yale Office of International Students and Scholars. You can register through their web page http://www.yale.edu/oiss/programs/volunteer/index.html Go to English Conversation Partners, sign in and fill in the form. You will be contacted by Amanda Eckler. Her office phone is 203-432-2305.

FRENCH, CONVERSATIONAL — Discussion de contes et de romans et discussion libre. Meets Mondays at 2:00 pm at Chestnut Fine Foods in New Haven. French is spoken at the meetings, so intermediate proficiency and above is necessary. Debbie St. Thomas, 203-488-1859, and Julie Crowder, 203-288-7157.

HIKING GROUP — Hiking group will not meet in December. We will have other walks in the spring. Please look in the Newsletter for announcements, or call Lyn Howe 203-288-1217.

ITALIAN CONVERSATION — Group members have enjoyed meeting on Monday mornings at the Yale bookstore during the past year, though the schedule is flexible and the venue may change. Depending on group interest, future discussions may focus on
Italian films or operas. Desiree Galassi, 203-426-3214 or dgalassi@earthlink.net.

**LUNCHEON GOURMET GROUP** — Participants share the meal’s expenses and take turns planning the menu, and preparing and presenting the luncheon. Meetings are the first Thursday of the month. Dues are $10. Happy Thomas, 203-393-7239; Marty Sherman 203-605-5773; Carol Dhawan, 203-562-0017.

**MUSIC TOGETHER** will attend a concert by Yale Philharmonia in Morse Recital Hall on Thursday, December 9, 2010 at 8:00 PM. Shinik Hahm, conductor. New music for orchestra by Yale composers, featuring Martin Bresnick's flute concerto with soloist Ransom Wilson. Meet for dinner at 6:30 PM at China Great Wall, 67 Whitney Avenue. Call Ileane Tombank, 203-288-5363 or Raejeanne Kier 203-287-2443.

**NEEDLERS** — Join the Needlers for conversation and light refreshment while working on your own project—knitting, crocheting, rug hooking, quilting, embroidery or mending. Meetings are the second and fourth Tuesdays at 1:30 pm in members’ homes. Call for directions. Betty Ann Levitin, 203-488-5862.

**SKIING** — Join other skiing enthusiasts from January to March 2011. We go to Butternut Basin (near Great Barrington, MA) for a variety of beginner to inter-mediate trails, plus a few “black diamonds.” We carpool, sharing trip expenses with the driver, usually on “Ladies Day” or at other reduced rate times. Pam Rackliffe, 203-488-2667.

**TENNIS** — Advanced or intermediate players meet weekly for a round-robin at Yale’s indoor Cullman Courts on Tuesdays, 10:00-11:30 am. There is an hourly shared court fee, as well as a membership fee. Carol Dhawan, 203-562-0017.

**TRAVEL GOURMET** -- There will be no Travel Gourmet trip in December. Tentative plans are being considered for one the last Tuesday in January (1/25/11) to a location in the New Haven area. Watch the YUWO website in January for details or call Nancy Ahlstrom (203-865-2028) for more information.

**TRAVEL THE GLOBE** — *New for 2010* -- We have had several meetings and would welcome additional members who are interested in discussing interesting destinations. Future meetings will include a presentation on China which we hope to hold at a Chinese restaurant and another will be a discussion of Central American destinations. If you would like to be on our email notification list, please contact Jodi Rucquoi, femmedeau@yahoo.com or 203-481-0160.

**WRITING GROUP** — If you have a secret (or not so secret) wish to write your memoirs, poetry, fiction or essays, join this group to share your work and get encouragement and advice from others. This forum will meet once a month to read and listen to new or edited work. Work shared will remain confidential within the group. Ina Jaffé, 203-288-9810.
A Walk around Wooster Square

On October 24th a group of about 40 of us walked around Wooster Square with Jay Bright, Architect, as our guide. He has been giving this tour ever since he was in the Yale School of Architecture, about the time that the area became a Historic District, and had his original notes now updated with new information – we were with an expert.

First called, ‘New Township’, Wooster Square was planned in 1824 as the city expanded eastward. The park was marked out with a wooden fence, later replaced by a splendid wrought iron fence much like the one surrounding the New Haven Green. The square was later renamed for the local Revolutionary War hero, David Wooster. Each house facing the park is unique with details ranging from the oldest Colonial or Federal to those with classic Greek columns near others with Egyptian lotus leaf columns. Henry Austin was a favored architect during the period these houses were built. Later houses have bow fronts, or turrets and complicated rooflines or a second story porch with railings across the front of the house matching the railings below. According to Jay, they range from early and late Greek Revival to Exotic Revival to Victorian and First Empire styles.

St. Michael’s Church on Wooster Place originally was a traditional brick Congregational Church with the highest steeple in the state. Now the steeple is gone. A storm blew it down but left the sturdy base and the building has been transformed into a welcoming yellow stucco Italianate church which serves as an important center of activity in the neighborhood. South of it is a modern school building that blends well with the buildings around it.

A row of Connecticut brownstone town houses sit along Chapel Street south of the park as well as the most modern of all, a nearby house that was remodeled in the Art Deco style.

Several houses around the park are funeral parlors, all of them well maintained. Come see for yourself. There is plenty of parking along the square. Take a walk in any season but it is particularly beautiful when the cherry blossoms are in bloom in the spring.

In the picture: Jay Bright. Photo by Mary Jo Warren.
A Report of the Health Plan Representative

At my first meeting as your representative to the Yale Health Plan, we were taken on a tour of the facility. It is almost twice as large as the Hillhouse building, 146,000 square feet, compared to 89,000 square feet. The increase in exam rooms and procedure rooms means less wait time for patients. It also means that minor surgical procedures can be done in the facility, reducing the costs of sending patients to the hospital. MRI's, Cat Scans, Ultra Sounds and Fluoroscopy can be done there also.

There is much more privacy in the new building. No hallway waiting rooms and patients being moved from Urgent Care to an ambulance will no longer be wheeled through the main entrance. There are dedicated elevators for stretcher patients. The pharmacy, which is the largest out-patient pharmacy in Connecticut, and has the very latest in technology, has a much larger and very pleasant waiting area.

There are still some improvements to be made. The doors are too heavy. You must pay cash to get your car out of the garage and there is no ATM in the building. It is hoped that the machine where you exit the garage will soon accept credit cards. Parking vouchers will be given to patients admitted to the facility, or whose visits last seven hours or longer, and they are working on better telephone service.

Many people have complained about the color of the bricks, and there are 350,000 of them. The black color was deliberate but they were supposed to be more metallic and shiny. It took two years to figure out a way to keep the bricks from falling off the outward curving walls. The outside may be dark and a little foreboding but upon entering the building there is a dramatic difference. The abundance of glass, the very tall ceilings, the open space, the lack of noise creates a very peaceful, healing atmosphere.

I just had my second meeting at the Yale Health Center. Peter Steere, the director of the Pharmacy spoke. The Pharmacy not only had a big move to make but their system of operation was completely revamped. The first month was “painful,” the main problem was training the staff. They prepare 1,000 prescriptions a day and so wait time was very long in the first month. He is aiming for waiting times of only 15 minutes. When you go to the pharmacy you should go first to the “check-in window.” The busiest times are between 5:30 and 6 PM. The least busy time is early afternoon. You may not know that you can arrange to have your prescriptions mailed to you, and that the pharmacy will appropriately dispose of medications you need to get rid of.

This is open enrollment time. If you are an Aetna subscriber and would like to investigate switching to the Yale Health Plan, now is the time to do it.

Finally, regarding the parking cash payment problem, as of December 1, there will be an ATM machine in the pharmacy and the parking machine will accept debit and credit cards.

I found it a little bit hard to figure out how to get there. I think the best way is Grove to Ashmun to Lock. I have a meeting there every month, so please let me know if you have any questions, complaints or suggestions. Betty Anne Levitin  balevitin@gmail.com or 203-488-5862.
Lunch and Learn

In October, we enjoyed a very interesting talk by Dr. Karen Mitchell on the cognitive aspects of aging. A number of people asked about opportunities to volunteer as study participants. The Yale Cognition Project needs healthy adults 60+ for studies of human thought processes at Yale University. Must have 2+ yrs of college, no serious health problems, such as diagnosis of Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s Disease. Sessions average 1-2 hrs; small monetary payment plus convenient parking. Call Karen Mitchell, 432-4654 (email: Karen.Mitchell@yale.edu). Yale HIC protocol #0007011926, FAS #0501000202. Recruitment is on-going; feel free to contact them at your convenience.

Hiking Group Report

On October 26 and November 1, the Hiking Group took the last walks of the fall. Both mornings were spectacular, though on November 1 we had a sharp breeze telling of winter to come. The October walk was through the woods to the Branford quarry. Our last walk began at the end of the little railroad line coming down to the trap rock loading dock on the shore in Pine Orchard. We took the Trolley Line trail across the water and marshes to Stony Creek, and then walked through the woods to the shore and came back past the village, with soup at the Market an option, before returning to our cars on the other shore. We will have other walks in the spring. Please look in the Newsletter for announcements, or call Lyn Howe 203.288.1217.

In the photo are: Patty Pollard, Johanna Becker, Chaline Johnson, Marion Petrelli, Pam Rackliffe, and Barbara Johnson. Photo by Lyn Howe.