



THE WAYLAND TOWN CRIER

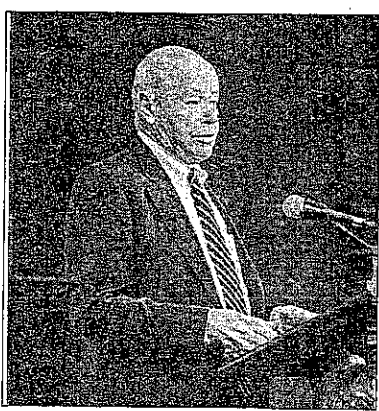
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VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

VETERANS DAY

Introduction to keynote speaker



Former Moderator C. Peter R. Gossels at the Veterans Day ceremony at Trinitarian Church on Monday. PHOTO / BRADLEY CAUCHON

Note: The following is the introduction given by Capt. Carrie Quinn, PhD, of the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine to the keynote speech at the Veterans Day ceremony by C. Peter R. Gossels.

Chateau de Chabannes in 1941 by a Jewish welfare organization called Oeuvres de Secours aux Enfants, that is the subject of a film by Peter's daughter, Lisa Gossels, which is available on Amazon and Netflix.

As the Nazis prepared to launch what is now known as the Second World War, they made it increasingly impossible for German's Jewish population to live in peace and to earn a living.

Later that year, Peter and Werner were given a Visa to come to the United States by a lady from the American Friends Service Committee (known as the Quakers). The Gossels brothers arrived in New York with about 100 other Jewish refugees on Sept. 9, 1941, and were quickly placed with families that lived about a mile apart in Brookline.

In 1939, Charlotte Lewy Gossels, Peter Gossels' mother, finally managed to obtain visas from the French Embassy in Berlin, which allowed him and his younger brother, Werner, who was 5 at the time, to escape from the Holocaust that subsequently killed his mother and most of his family.

Peter went on to Boston Latin School, Harvard College and Harvard Law School, served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, and returned to Boston in 1956. He joined a Boston law firm, married Nancy Lee Tuber in 1958, and moved to Wayland in 1961.

The Gossels brothers came to live in a group home at Quincy sous Senart, 20 miles southeast of Paris with 39 young refugees until the German Army overran them and the French forces near Fontainebleau in June of 1940.

During the 52 years that Peter and his family have lived here, he has contributed a great deal to his community and to Wayland in particular, which he served as a member of the Finance Committee, as town counsel and as moderator, for a total of 45 consecutive years from 1966 to 2011.

After a series of harrowing adventures, Peter and his brother were placed at another group home in unoccupied France called the

VETERANS DAY

Former town moderator discusses public service

Note: The following is the keynote speech given at the Veterans Day ceremony by C. Peter R. Gossels.

When George Bernard, who has worked so hard to produce this program, asked me to talk about service to country and community, I realized that the subject matter posed quite a challenge: How can I talk about my service to country and community without preaching or boring you to death.

But I will do my best.

When I arrived in this country on Sept. 9, 1941, I was an 11-year-old Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, who came to this country without his parents, thanks to the American visa that I had received as a result of the kind generosity of members of the American Friends Service Committee, who were working in France, where we had fled before being overrun by the German armies.

I was well aware of the miracle that had saved me and my younger brother, Werner; and I was determined to do what I could to serve my new country and Wayland, the community that welcomed my family to town in 1961.

I suppose that my service can be described as falling into three categories:

My service to Wayland

I am sure that many of you will recall that I was elected and served as Wayland's town moderator for 30 years and that I codified and published,

for the first time, the rules and regulations that govern Wayland's town meetings. In order to make better use of our time at town meetings, I established time limits for speakers and gave opponents of the main motion equal time to present their case, another innovation. And I introduced electronic voting to our town meetings, making Wayland the first community in New England to adopt a system that allows voters to vote by secret ballot and assures them a quick, accurate count. (Credit should also go to Alan Reiss, who first broached the idea and fought for it, the ELVIS Committee headed by Dave Bernstein and all the others, who helped to make this happen.)

You may recall my service as moderator, but I bet that you may not recall that I served a two-year term with the legendary Bob Morgan on Wayland's Finance Committee between 1966 and 1968. I learned a lot from Bob Morgan. During the 35 years that he served as chair of the Finance Committee, Wayland's voters in town meeting assembled routinely followed the recommendations of the Finance Committee, unless Bob sensed that he might lose the vote. On one occasion, for example, the committee had voted to recommend that Town Meeting vote "no" on a proposal that Wayland contribute its share of the cost of the services being offered to several towns by the Trinity Mental Health

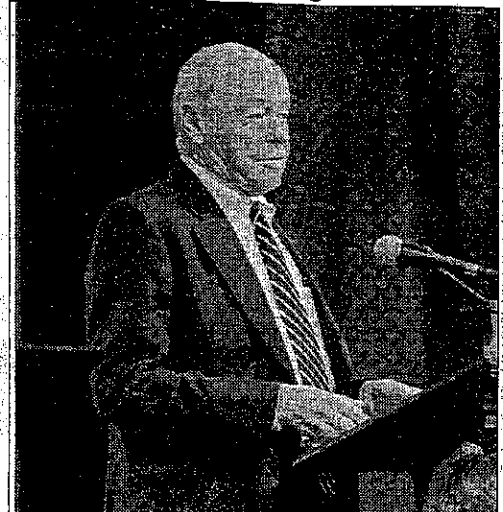
Care in Framingham. When a voter at Town Meeting delivered an impassioned speech in favor of the proposal, however, Bob sensed the change of mood in the room and announced that the Finance Committee would support the proposal.

My brother, Werner, and our wives, Elaine and Nancy, established and funded the Gossels Fund for Academic Excellence for Wayland's public schools, as well as the Gossels Fund for Human Dignity, which helped, in a small way, to fund the Wayland Veterans Memorial.

And I still serve as host of an annual two-hour Way-Cam cable television call-in program called "Ask the Candidates Live," which invites voters to question candidates for public office in Wayland before election day. Please watch us next spring on Comcast channel 9 and Verizon channel 38 and call in your questions for the candidates at that time.

My service to the Jewish community

As a Jewish refugee, I felt, and feel, a special obligation to the Jewish community that helped to sustain me and my brother during the two turbulent years we spent in France and during our teenage years in this country. I still serve as a director of OSE-USA, an American charity that helps to support OSE, the French organization that



Former Moderator C. Peter R. Gossels at the Veterans Day ceremony at Trinitarian Church on Monday. PHOTO / BRADLEY CAUCHON

helped us survive during the war.

So, when I was asked to serve as chair of the Young Adult Division of the Combined Jewish Philanthropies shortly after my discharge from the United States Army, I accepted that responsibility and was richly rewarded, because I met my incredible wife, Nancy, while attending a CJP event in 1957. We were married the following June.

When we moved to Wayland in 1961, there was no Jewish congregation in town. There were, in fact, very few Jewish families living in Wayland at the time. So we had no choice but to join the 130-member congregation in Sudbury, named Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley, which has tripled in size since that time.

During the 30 years that we belonged to that congregation, I served as its president for two years. Nancy and I held many other offices in the congregation and served a five-year term on the National Commission on Worship of the Union for Reform Judaism.

Prompted by the bar mitzvas of our three children, Lisa, Amy and Daniel, during the 1970s, Nancy and I became fascinated by Jewish liturgy, which was then dominated by ancient formulas composed by rabbis living in a world where Jews were oppressed and referred to God as a male monarch.

With the help of Joan Kaye, who also lived in Wayland, and the work of many other congregants, Nancy and I wrote, edited and published the first egalitarian Jewish prayer book for Shabbat and the festivals named "Vetaher Libenu" (Purify Our Hearts) in 1980. The proof text for our groundbreaking prayer book was Genesis 1:27, which declares that "... God created mankind in God's image; male and female God created them."

The publication of our siddur was noted on the front page of The Wall

Street Journal and newspapers across the country, and has sold more than 10,000 copies worldwide, including thousands of copies to Christian clergy and nuns. And the invocation composed by Joan and Nancy for our new prayer book, "Holy One of Blessing, Your Presence Fills Creation," has been incorporated in prayer books published by Jews and many Christian congregations as well. You can check that phrase on Wikipedia if you like.

And virtually all Reform, and many Jewish Conservative congregations, including Wayland's Or Atid, have now added the matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel, to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, when they say their prayers, an innovation introduced by our prayer book for the first time.

Nancy and I subsequently edited prayer books for Rosh Hashana and weekday mornings, which were published by Congregation Beth El, before we joined Wayland's Temple Shir Tikva about eight years ago. And we are still working with our liturgy there to make Jewish prayers more accessible and meaningful for congregants.

I should add that Nancy and I have also worked hard to make the Jewish community more sensitive to and welcoming to interfaith families.

My service to the larger community

During the 57 years that I have served my clients as a lawyer, I have also contributed my skills to the larger community:

1. I organized and produced the annual New England Conference of Legal Problems of Doing Business Abroad on behalf of the Boston Bar Association between 1962 and 1967. That conference attracted hundreds of lawyers and business people, including Sen. Saltonstall.

2. You may not know, for example, that I worked with Mike Dukakis, before he became governor and ran for president, to bring condominiums to Massachusetts in 1963. There was no such thing as a condominium in the United States 50 years ago to permit such ownership of real estate, except in the state of Hawaii. The development of Wayland's Mainstone condominium communities 10 years later was made possible by the legislation we drafted.

3. Working with Professor Robert Keaton and my classmate at Harvard Law School, Jeffrey O'Connell, we persuaded then State Rep. Mike Dukakis to sponsor a novel system of "no-fault" automobile insurance legislation known as the Personal Injury Protection Act, which was enacted in 1970, the first of its kind in the nation.

4. I served for five years as a hearing officer for the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers and 10 years as chair of the Boston Bar Association's Fee Disputes Committee.

5. I have also served as a master of the Superior Court and as a guardian ad litem of the Probate and Family Court.

6. And I have served on the New England Regional Board of the Anti-Defamation League.

7. I have published articles from time to time in the Boston Bar Journal, Banker & Tradesman and Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly, which were designed to improve our judicial system. Among these are articles entitled "Knowing the Law Before Starting a Small Business," "Has the Supreme Judicial Court Emasculated the Laws Protecting Consumers," "Is the Supreme Judicial Court Ready to Authorize the Bifurcation of Divorce Proceedings," "Have the Courts Overlooked the Problem of the Predator Spouse," and my most recent piece entitled, "Flaw in the Criminal Justice System Needs to Be Fixed." A copy of those articles can be found on my website (www.gosselslaw.com).

8. The increasing cost imposed on the public, who use our courts as plaintiffs, or fall victim to it as defendants, has led me to devote a great deal of my time to make our judicial system more accessible, less costly and less time consuming. This has been a frustrating task, frankly, because some of the judiciary and many of the larger law firms prefer the status quo. But we are making progress. After two years of study, our Work Group on Cost and Time Efficiencies in the Massachusetts Courts published a report entitled, "Enhancing Cost and Time Efficiencies in the Commonwealth's Courts Through Effective Judicial and Attorney Practices," which was adopted by the Boston Bar Association in 2005. As a result, a number of the recommendations in our report have been implemented, at least in part, in the Superior Court.

9. Much more needs to be done, of course, so I am currently serving as co-chair with a retired judge of the Appeals Court on a subcommittee of the Boston Bar Association's Section on the Administration of Justice to review and update the recommendations of our 2005 report, which we hope to publish next spring.

So, you see, I am still engaged in public service ... I have not been paid for any of those services, but I must say that my life has been enriched beyond anything I might have imagined by my contributions to our country and community. There is, after all, some joy in giving back.

Now, lest you think that you have been listening to a draft of my obituary, you can find me practicing law every business day at my office at 84 State St. in Boston and, by appointment, at my Wayland office. And if you are wondering what sort of law I practice, please check my website (www.gosselslaw.com), which contains more information about my professional experience and skills than you will want to know.

So, let me conclude by quoting Winston Churchill, who wrote, "We make our living by what we get; We make life by what we give."

Thank you so much for listening.