

Did you know?
February 25th is
National
Chocolate-Covered
Nut Day.



☆☆☆

WORLD WAR II VETERANS DISCUSSION GROUP
HAGAMAN MEMORIAL LIBRARY 203-468-3890
227 MAIN ST. EAST HAVEN, CT 06512



February 2015

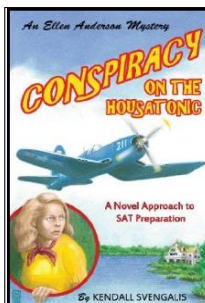
Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 25th at 2:00 pm in the Hagaman Library DeMayo Community Room.

This month, Kendall Svengalis will speak about his book *Conspiracy on the Housatonic*, a World War II Nancy Drew style mystery set locally in Stratford, New Haven and New York City in 1942. The book, his first in a series of illustrated Ellen Anderson mysteries, is loosely based on his wife, the former Ellen Haffling, a Stratford native. It is a blend of fact and fiction. In his talk, Mr. Svengalis will bring us back to the early part of World War II and share the experiences and concerns people had in their day-to-day lives right here in Connecticut.

A native of Gary, Indiana, Mr. Svengalis attended Purdue University, where he received his B.A. in English and M.A. in American history. He also received an M.L.S. from the University of Rhode Island. He is the retired Rhode Island State Law Librarian and currently president of New England LawPress/Duneland Press. He is the author of the award-winning *Legal Information Buyer's Guide & Reference Manual*, now in its 18th edition; and *Gary, Indiana: A Centennial Celebration*. He and Ellen live in Guilford.



Svengalis



Conceived in the tradition of Jack Finney's *Time and Again*, Kendall Svengalis' *Conspiracy on the Housatonic* takes the reader back to a Connecticut coastal community consumed with Allied war production shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Set in an abandoned Victorian mansion on the shores of the Housatonic River in Stratford, join Swedish-American girl detective, Ellen Anderson, and her boyfriend and bibliophile, Ken Swenson, as they attempt to unravel the strange activities of the mansion's unknown occupants, with profound implications for national security.

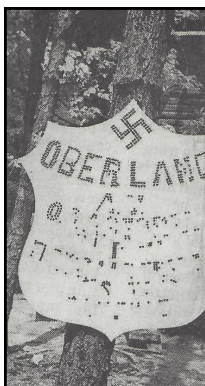
"I am both charmed and delighted by this book!" says Fawn Gillespie, our Reference Librarian at the Hagaman library and WWII Group co-facilitator, of *Conspiracy on the Housatonic*. "This novel is also an SAT vocabulary builder. If you want improve your vocabulary, or if you know a young person who needs SAT practice, he or she will also gain familiarity with World War II! This is a great gift for teens!" says Fawn.



The book includes information on the German-American Bund, and while reading it, Fawn happened on photographs (*at left and below*) in the *New York Times* from a "trove of newly released photographs from the Municipal Archives, taken by Police Department surveillance teams." (*New York Times*, Sunday, April 6, 2014)



Above: 1938—German American Bund members at Oberland Camp Siegfried, Long Island. Once the war started, members of Congress were very active in denying any Nazi-sympathetic organization the ability to operate freely.



Left: Sign for Oberland-Camp Siegfried on Long Island run by the German American Bund (German American Federation), an American Nazi organization established in 1936. The Bund was to consist only of American citizens of German descent. Its main goal was to promote a favorable view of Nazi Germany.

GEM OF THE MONTH:

"Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog it's too dark to read."
— Groucho Marx



Above: Dec. 2014—WWII Group member **Jim Morgia**, shakes hands with the **King of Belgium**, thankful for Morgia's service during the Battle of the Bulge.

Above, right: **Jim Morgia**, standing behind wheelchair, with veterans of the Battle of the Bulge in Bastogne, Belgium at the Battle's 70th anniversary ceremonies. Bastogne was a key crossroads famously defended by American troops against German advance.



©Manny Vider
 December 13, 2014
 Bastogne, Belgium
 vider@ajwv.org

December 2014. Our own WWII Group member **Jim Morgia** was among 20 World War II veterans who attended the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany, which was sponsored by the Greatest Generation Foundation. Morgia was picked from more than 1,000 applicants for this special commemoration which started on Dec. 11 in the U.S. Embassy in Brussels, with the ambassador and his staff.

The group of 20 veterans and the foundation staff marched in the Bastogne parade and met with the king and queen of Belgium. Many other celebrities were in attendance including newsman Tom Brokaw, who started the foundation.

Many smaller ceremonies were performed during the week in smaller villages with the the local mayor on the podium. Morgia, a company commander, helped to save the town of Beho Gouvvy from shelling by nearby Tiger tank crews and received the silver star for this action. (Source: *Stratford Star*)

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Barbara Esposito 2/5
Vincenza Vergati 2/24



NOTE: At our February meeting we will watch a brief excerpt of a History Channel depiction of **Jim Morgia's** action during the Battle of the Bulge which earned him the Silver Star.

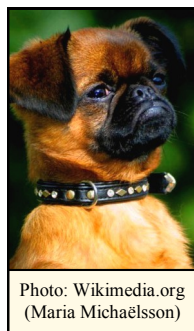


Photo: Wikimedia.org
 (Maria Michaelsson)

The Mailman — by Faux Poe

He can't get sick there is just not the time
"The mail must go through," that old familiar line.

Another expression, "He never bites, this dog of mine."
and for everyone else that's just fine.

That's a great saying for others alright,
but it's his looks that keep me awake at night.

Now the prerequisite of the perfect postman you see,
is the guy that can run as fast as can be.

So, if you're looking for the job, here are a few clues,
be smarter than dogs, get fast comfortable shoes.