

PENN68

CLASSMATES WRITE....



Penn goalie TONY PARKINSON (8) makes one of his 17 saves against Yale, thwarting an Eli power play attempt as midfielder BOB GAL (6) looks on. Parkinson led the Quakers' strongest defensive showing to date.

From Tony Parkinson

THE PUCK STOPS HERE

Harry Truman stopped the buck. Gretsky skated to the puck's next stop. And so it goes. The puck and the buck are inextricably linked.

As a businessman who has also been a sportsman and vice-versa, I discovered that one doesn't need to exclude the other. It can be magical, immersive, and incredibly rewarding. Leading, teaching, challenging, receiving advice from the next generation. Nothing needs to be excluded. Everything can be integrated, to the profit of all.

Playing two collegiate sports along with a full academic course load can be daunting. After graduation, I found myself immersed in my first job on The Street, but still playing pick up hockey every chance I got. *Then* discovering that senior partners did not find it entirely appropriate for young masters of the universe to greet clients and negotiate multimillion dollar deals with butterfly bandages on their faces.

Sixty years on it is still a great ride.

At age eight my mother took me to the Wollman Memorial Ice rink in Central Park for a skate. Looking back, the afternoon was life-changing.

Three years later I was in prep school where I qualified for the between period snow clearing squad – the human Zambonis (no relation to the flying Wallendas). By my Junior year at St. Mark's, I was the fifth defenseman, then played a regular shift. I went to PENN, recruited to play lacrosse, and ended up playing both sports.

After graduation, investment banking morphed into my own venture capital firm. At the time that Kronos was born I had to take the Eastern Shuttle to Boston with my knee in a cast. I made the trip to ink the deal before Paine Webber's Massachusetts office could make the drive out to Framingham. The injury was courtesy of an on-ice check.

In 1972 the New York Islanders hockey franchise was established by the owner of the New York Nets Basketball NBA club through a \$5.0M territorial payment to the New York Rangers. By 1976 I was coaching Bantam youth hockey on the North Shore of Long Island, playing with the St Nicks and our local club team, Beaver Dam. The future Chairman of Chase was my assistant coach. Within two years a local group of us hockey mad investors paid the bankruptcy trustees \$2.0M to acquire the Islander franchise. They promptly lost their first Stanley Cup bid to the Rangers in the quarterfinals. But we turned things around pretty quickly. By 1983, the Islanders had won four Stanley Cup Championships in succession.

Not everything has been smooth skating. Like the time late one evening when I was discussing the sport with a Canadian customs and immigration officer. I was flying into Vancouver, and it was late. The customs hall was virtually deserted and the officer I approached was a talker and enjoyed banter with Americans. We circled around to hockey and the fact that the NY Islanders had used Vancouver as a steppingstone to the Cup. Within seconds the bright-eyed officer's expression turned serious. He raised his hand to signal his associate and yelled out to the empty hall: "Strip search!" It took me a moment to realize he was joking, and then both he and I were overtaken by laughter.

Fast forward to my most current business interest in the li-ion battery/electric vehicle marketplace. I was recently able to secure a meeting with a difficult to access client because his passion is the NHL and we got to talk hockey. Likewise, one of the key manufacturers of synthetic graphite is headed by a Montrealer who still "laces them up" and listens to one of our most prolific scorers do the color for the Canadians. As these discussions and negotiations progress the access to a bit of nostalgia and tall stories from the rink to interrupt and massage a ticklish issue has been invaluable: a point of connection beyond what is generally on offer.

How has this bit of madness on ice morphed into a career of business ventures and adventures around the world? In the last 35 years there has not been a year or even six months when a business initiative has not turned into a spirited discussion on playing, coaching, or even refereeing ice hockey. And it was many times when these departures from the negotiations of business purpose that individual bonds, reconnecting bridges, and long-term relationships are born.

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From Don Morrison

Two hundred forty-seven years ago next month, at a rude bridge in Concord, Mass., embattled farmers fired what Ralph Waldo Emerson immortalized in verse as "the shot heard round the world." The result wasn't just American independence. But also a democratic model that captured the world's imagination.

That model eventually produced our current so-called liberal world order – the rules-based, U.S.-led system of international treaties and institutions that emphasizes democracy and open markets as a path to global stability. Worked pretty well for the past 75 years or so.

Lately, the liberal world order seems to be wobbling, or at least its democratic underpinnings. V-Dem, a Swedish research group, says the number of truly democratic countries peaked a decade ago at 42. It's now down to 34. V-Dem also finds that 70% of the world, or 5.4 billion people, are living in non-democratic states, up from 49% in 2011. Authoritarian regimes are on the march.

Like the one that's now marching through Ukraine, threatening to wipe that democratic country from the map. Russia, along with many dictatorships, does have elections, but they're run by a self-perpetuating cabal of kleptocrats. That model is spreading throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Some of these regimes are military dictatorships, others are the fiefdoms of charismatic leaders who exploit ethnic resentments and xenophobia, a few are the result of rigged elections. They all share a disdain for actual democracy and, in most cases, for global cooperation, human rights, press freedom and the rule of law.

Even in Europe, democracies are under siege from extremist, xenophobic political parties, mostly on the right, that would prefer a more top-down system – with them on top. We've got folks like that in U.S. They're still trying to overturn the 2020 election. A recent Pew Research poll found that 72% of Americans no longer think our democracy is an example for other countries.

Which raises an interesting question: Who are we to lecture the world about forms of government?

Turns out we don't have to: Ukrainians are doing it for us. By putting their lives on the line in defense of democracy, they've captured the world's imagination. Other democracies are coming to their aid, and the entire democratic West has found unaccustomed unity because of Ukraine. The liberal world order seems to be rising from the dead.

That's not because the U.S. itself has been such an inspiring success lately. We've had problems with race, inequality, extremism, violence, partisan division, disastrous overseas adventures.

No, our present moment of cohesion came because the idea of democracy remains powerful. People all over the world, when given a chance, choose that path – as they did in Ukraine in 1991 after the fall of the Soviet Union, and again in 2014 to oust an authoritarian president. Also, as in Ukraine, people are willing to die for democracy.

That poignant reminder has certainly been noticed in the U.S. Our country may not have invented democracy (credit the ancient Greeks, though some neolithic societies got there first), but it implanted democracy's desirability in the minds of the modern world. Now, after years of partisan division, the U.S. seems to be coming together on a consensus that fellow democracies must be supported, and dictators confronted.

Leading Republicans have begun jettisoning their party's recent enthusiasm for Russia and joining Democrats on the need to support Ukraine. A new Decision Desk HQ poll found that 83% of Americans have an unfavorable view of Russia's Vladimir Putin, 70% support sanctions against Russia and 73% favor sending U.S. weapons to help Ukraine – numbers up sharply from earlier polls.

Some commentators see vast shifts in the tectonic plates underlying American politics and, indeed, the entire postwar world. I see something else.

Yuval Noah Harari, the Israeli historian and best-selling author of "Sapiens," explained what's happening in Ukraine in a recent essay for The Guardian: "The president who refused to flee the capital...; the soldiers from Snake Island who told a Russian warship to go f___ yourself; the civilians who tried to stop Russian tanks by sitting in their path. This is the stuff nations are built on. Stories count more than tanks."

American democracy has a good story to tell. It begins at a rude bridge in Concord, Mass. It winds through setbacks and triumphs, mistakes, and the courage to correct them. The story is not over.

Donald Morrison is a Berkshire Eagle columnist and co-chairman of the advisory board. The opinions expressed by columnists do not necessarily reflect the views of The Berkshire Eagle.



From Neal Friedlander

During Covid, I read incessantly, alternating detective novels/mysteries with good fiction. Reviewing my Kindle, I would suggest *The Chaneyville Incident* by David Bradley (he was featured in a recent Penn Gazette), *A Place Worse than Hell*, *How the Civil War Changed America* by John Matteson, *Deacon King Kong* by James McBride, *My Monticello* by Jocelyn Nicole Johnson and *The Voice at the Back Door* by Elizabeth Spencer.

From Michael Crow

In terms of reading - I've been reading some history/ biographies over the last couple of years. Lioness was interesting (and reminded me of how little I knew). *Hamilton* (similar comment). Re-read *Exodus* for the first time in forty or fifty years. *The Warburgs*. *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us* and *What We Can Do* (Psychology , but interesting and applicable). Not sure I could pick a favorite.



From Carol Greco

I love retirement! After spending 30+ years as a real estate agent in the Virginia suburbs of Washington DC, I decided that I did not want on my tombstone that I sold 30 million houses and that it was time to explore and enjoy something different—Act III in my life. So, I sold my business and moved back to my hometown, Philadelphia. Even though I had some friends and family in Philly, I was still the new kid on the block and took the advice of a friend to join everything when new to a city. Luckily, I found out about the Philadelphia Chapter (it is a national organization) of The Transition Network (TTNWomen.org)—a wonderful group of engaged, active and accomplished 50 and 50-plus women living in Philadelphia and surrounding areas. TTN is composed of many components, and I participate in most of them. Here are just a few:

First, there are great **Events** of which many are centered on places not known to many Philly residents. Did any of you know about the Love Note Mural tour along the Frankford EL not far from Penn? Or did you know there is a world-famous chocolate factory, Michel Cluziel, about a 25-minute drive from Center City? And guess what? Not too far away from town there are wineries such as Paradocx Vineyard, where the countryside evokes the spirit of Napa Valley.

Second, there are **Peer Groups** through which I initially met the very best of new friends. They are informal discussion groups composed of 8-12 TTN members who meet monthly. These groups create a small, safe, supportive space within the larger TTN community. Women have thought-provoking and stimulating conversations on topics of interest to them.

Third, there are **Special Interest Groups (SIGs)** which are kind of like mini clubs. Members share social activities such as books, art, movies, wine, food, games and more. I lead an Art Appreciation SIG where we have discovered (aside from the large museums) a vibrant art scene in Philly. I also lead an Off the Beaten Track Lunch Group so if you are looking for a hole in the wall, clean and delicious Philly restaurant, I am the one to ask.

Fourth, we participate in many **Volunteer Activities** geared to helping those in need in our area. Our main philanthropic arm, however, is our **Giving Circle** where individuals pool their dollars to support our mission of helping women and children in Philadelphia. Each year through our small grants review

process we come together to learn about and identify deserving non profits that could benefit from our grant support. In May, our members vote to select our grant recipients. This year we are seeking to raise \$100,000. If any of you wish to make a donation, contact me at CarolSellsPhilly@gmail.com. Your money will be put to good use.

So ladies, sorry gentlemen, if you are living in the USA, go to TTNWomen.org and see what TTN has to offer you. It truly is one of the best groups I have ever joined. I can honestly say that TTNWomen will enhance your retirement life.

From Geof Stone

I grew up in New York but have lived in Chicago for the past fifty years. I have had more or less one career path, but that depends on when one begins the path. I went to Wharton because my Dad thought I should be a stock broker. I went to law school in order to avoid being drafted. I intended to be a civil rights lawyer, but then I got sucked into being a professor – a position I've held since 1973

I continue to teach Constitutional Law at the University of Chicago. In the last five years I've published books on Sex and the Constitution; The Free Speech Century; The Enduring Constitutional Vision of the Warren Court; National Security, Leaks and Freedom of the Press; and soon Social Media, Freedom of the Press and the Future of Our Democracy. I am also an editor of the Supreme Court Review (the nation's leading journal on the work of the Court); the editor of a now twenty-five volume series published by Oxford titled Inalienable Rights; and the lead editor of two leading casebooks – Constitutional Law and The First Amendment.

From Bobbi Penneys Laufer

After having tutored foreign languages in a part-time capacity, I have stopped. In May, I will be celebrating 40 years (!!!!) in the travel business, always working as an independent contractor from my home office, specializing in exotic destinations. Twice a year, I escort very tiny groups all over the globe and the rest of the time, I sell travel to anyone and everyone who is interested in traveling. I have, thus far, taken groups to Outer Mongolia, Cuba, Tibet, Ethiopia, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Madagascar and Mozambique, Borneo and Brunei, Tonga, Kiribati, and Tuvalu. Upcoming are Uganda, Rwanda, and Zanzibar July 2022, the Marquesas and Austral and Gambier Islands Oct. 2022, Botswana, Namibia, and Zambia 2023, and possibly Yap, Micronesia, the Solomon Islands, and Palau 2023.

I have been a member of the Travelers Century Club and am currently considering joining the Explorers Club. As you can see, I have been obsessed with the business.

I have enjoyed my marriage to Steve since 1999 and my three grown sons and their families as well as my stepfamily. I now have five granddaughters. I enjoy tennis, films, reading, photography, theatre, supporting the arts and walking all over the place, wherever I happen to be.

I treasure my time at Penn, my education there as well as my friends from college. I have been attending all the reunions every five years for 1967 and 1968 since graduating. I have found the Zooms so enjoyable and a wonderful way for all of us to continue to connect with each other as well as to make additional friendships with those we did not know during our college years. The past two Covid years have been very challenging for all of us, and I sincerely hope the Zooms will continue, even if life eventually comes back to normal, whatever the new normal may be.

I eagerly look forward to seeing all of you at our beloved Penn....or, as they now say, UPenn.