

ON THE

SHOULDERS



OF GIANTS

WORCESTER, MA

FOUNDED 1952



Greetings!

Here we are, coming into May, just a few weeks from now, our Retired Friends Club year will come to an end, and what wonderful times we as a club have had!

What is the Month of May all about. May has seven holidays in it—*did you know that?* May starts

out with May 1st (May Day) which is Lei Day in Hawaii; May 5th (Cinco de Mayo) this day celebrates the victory of the Mexican Army over the French Army; May 10th (Mother's Day) don't forget MOM!; May 16th (Armed Forces Day) honors those who have served in our Military; May 18th (Victoria Day) in Canada; May 22nd (National Maritime Day) this holiday recognizes the efforts of the U.S. merchant marines during both war and peace; and finally May 25th (Memorial Day) a reminder to remember those who died while serving our country, that made the Ultimate Sacrifice for our Freedom!

We have some great programs each week in May starting with Tom Bruhl, DJ Extraordinaire; Followed by Jim Vuona / Retired Fire Chief from Shrewsbury, coupled with the presentation of pins and certificates to our members turning 80 and 90 years of age; Followed by a Memorial Day Special featuring, Retired Master Chief Petty Officer Timothy White, who honorably served for 20 years with the Coast Guard and is now Director of Veterans Services for the Town of Rockland; Then we finish off the month with a Memorial Day Concert with the RFCG Chorus along with a special flag presentation.

As I finish the Presidents Message for May, I ask you to bring a Retired Friend to a weekly meeting (we only have a few left) to see what the Retired Friends of Greendale is all about, what a Fantastic organization it is to make New Friends, travel with them and at times break bread with them. God bless you all!

—STAN SWENSON, *President*

Save The Date!

Annual Corn Roast

Wed., August 12th, 10:00am

at SAC Park in Shrewsbury

Free for all Paid-Up and Life Members and One Guest

No Reservations Needed

More details to follow next month



Check out this great line-up of Programs !

We invite our members, friends, and spouse to be our guests at ALL of these great programs held at the Greendale YMCA. Come at 8AM for Coffee & Donuts. Meeting begins at 9AM with our Color Guard followed by our Chorus and the Program.

May 6 Tom Bruhl: DJ Extraordinaire

May 13 Fire Safety: Learning from the Past

With 32 years experience, retired Shrewsbury Fire Chief, **Jim Vuona** has seen it all. Now President Emeritus of the Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts, Jim will dive into how the industry learned from past tragedies to save lives today. He'll explore how major shifts in fire codes, local laws, and public safety messaging have fundamentally changed the way we prevent fire-related injuries and deaths.



Also during this meeting we will have a brief ceremony recognizing our members who have or will reach their 80th and 90th birthdays during 2026.



So, if you were born in 1936 or 1946, we encourage you to attend this meeting and please check-in at the membership desk when you arrive so that we can recognize you during the ceremony.

May 20 Memorial Day Celebration

A Worcester native and retired Coast Guard Master Chief Petty Officer, **Timothy White** concluded a distinguished 20-year military career spanning search and



rescue to counter-drug operations. After transitioning to the Department of Homeland Security and directing major maritime infrastructure projects, he now serves as the Director of Veterans' Services for Rockland. There, he uses his extensive experience to advocate for veterans, securing vital healthcare, housing, and financial benefits.



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More Upcoming Programs (continued)

May 27 Memorial Day Tribute

Please join us for the annual Memorial Day Musical Tribute by the **Retired Friends Club of Greendale Chorus** under the direction of **Lee Bartlett**.

Special Announcement!

During our club's recent excursion to Washington, D.C., Trip Leader Ralph Shapiro secured a truly unique gift: a United States flag that has flown over the nation's capital. This historic flag will be officially presented to the Greendale YMCA at our May 27th meeting. It is our honor to see it raised at the main entrance, where it can be admired by all as a symbol of community pride.



June 3 Three Timeless Tours

Please join us for a brief review of three RFCG trips presented by their Trip Leaders; **Rick Ferguson, George Barry** and **Dick Pinkes**. They will take you through their memorable trip. Members that were on these trips will be encouraged to talk about their favorite parts. The Trip Leaders will talk about why he chose this trip and what made it stand out. What surprised him about the trip. Were there any problems that had to be resolved. Often there are, but not always. Come join the discussion.



June 10 Solo Singer: PE James

P.E. James has been entertaining audiences by singing and playing acoustic guitar for over four decades. He is an interpreter of well-known songs, having a large repertoire that stretches from sing-along classics of the 20's, 30s, and 40s, to standards and show tunes, early 50s rock and roll, 60s folk songs, and acoustic rock songs of the 70s.



Deceased Members

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| KENNETH E. CHAD | WILBUR A. JOHNSON |
| ROGER E. CRAY | ROBERT;T A. PHANEUF |
| MICHAEL L. FOLEY | DIANE F. MEUNIER |
| RAYMOND H. GARRY | RICHARD J. MORSE |
| LEO R. GRAVEL | WILLIAM WITHERS, SR. |

Trip Descriptions

LOG CABIN – KENNY ROGERS TRIBUTE SHOW

August 5, 2026 (Wednesday) \$159 pp

Highlights: We are off to the Log Cabin Restaurant and Showroom for a fantastic Kenny Rogers Tribute Show. First we'll have a delicious dinner with choice of twin lobsters or prime rib accompanied by starch and vegetables, with coffee/tea/desert included. Then it's show time. Dave Karl will have everyone tapping their feet, dancing, and singing along to Kenny Rogers' favorite tunes. You will be mesmerized by his performance of classics such as: "The Gambler" "Lady" "Ruby" "She Believes in Me" and so many more! You'll be blown away by the authentic sounds of this tribute show.

Trip Leader: Dick Pinkes 508-769-2913

Parking: Immaculate Conception rjpinkes1@verizon.net

SAN FRANCISCO / RENO / YOSEMITE / NAPA VALLEY

August 14 to 22, 2026 \$4,998 pp/do

Highlights: Join us as we fly to San Francisco and stay for two nights having city tour and a cruise on San Francisco Bay. We'll also visit Muir Wood State Park on our way to the Sonoma Valley and have lunch at the Viansa Winery and savor their outstanding wines, We continue into the Napa Valley where we will stay for two nights. We'll tour Napa and also enjoy a three-course luncheon with Napa Wine accompanying each course as we glide through the rolling vineyards. Now we begin our stunning nature days as we descend from Napa to Yosemite Valley. We will stay for two nights at the Yosemite View Lodge right in the National Park. The next day and a half we will explore the park with our guide. Highlights include the granite cliffs of Half Dome and El Capitan along with stunning waterfalls and vast meadows, the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias; and many other sites. We then head to Reno, Nevada "The Biggest Little City in the World". On the way we'll stop in Carson City, the state capital, and visit the Capitol House and the Nevada State Museum. Upon arrival in Reno we will stay for two nights at the downtown Silver Legacy Hotel and Casino. Voucher meals are included with time to enjoy the site and casinos. On day 8 we'll meet our local guide and visit Virginia City- the gold rush time where time has stood still in the "Old West". Stroll along "C" Street to visit the unique shops, saloons, and explore an old mine shaft. On our last night in Reno, we end with dinner and a show. On our last day we return to San Francisco for our flights home. As with all my trips it includes RT air, airport hotel transfers, portorage of one bag PP, trip insurance, and all gratuities (for driver, escort, and all local guides).

Trip Leader: Dick Pinkes 508-769-2913

Parking: Maironis Park rjpinkes1@verizon.net

Chorus Group Activities Schedule

Our choral group will sing on meeting days, following practice. If you'd like to attend one or more of the following outside programs, call ahead to check space availability.

- | | | |
|---------------|------------|------------------------------------------------|
| May 13 | | -No Sing Out- |
| Wed. | | |
| May 20 | 11:45 a.m. | Sturbridge Senior Center (978-630-4067) |
| Wed. | | 480 Main Street, Sturbridge |
| May 27 | 10:30 a.m. | Auburn Senior Center |
| Wed. | | 4 Goddard Drive, Auburn (508-832-7799) |

Leathernecks United After 57 Years

Ron Jablanski walked into the Greendale Y to pay annual dues for the Greendale Retired Friends Club at the Christmas celebration and walked away with the best present of all, the gift of friendship. Debby Swenson spotted Ron and told table mate **Rick Ferguson** "I know him. He's a vet too."

Ferguson, a Marine who served and was wounded in Viet Nam, asked Ron what branch he served in. Marines was the answer. Rick said "me too." "When did you join?" 1969 was the reply. "Me too." They were just teenagers.

From there the similarities in experiences multiplied. Both men were injured in a battle in the demilitarized zone of Viet Nam in September 1969. Ron was presented the Bronze Star With Valor for being the point man directing machine gun fire when his Company L, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, 3rd Marine Division was ambushed, outmanned and overrun by the North Vietnamese. The Bronze Star commendation in part read that PFC Jablanski unhesitatingly moved to a forward position, quickly established firing positions for two machine gun teams and effectively directed their fire. With complete disregard for his own safety, he fearlessly led an aggressive assault through the entrenched enemy force and boldly continued until he reached the top of the Mutter's Ridge area of Quang Tri Province.

"We were outnumbered at least 5 or 6 to 1," said Ron. He suffered wounds to his legs and foot and was partially blinded when hit by a grenade. He fought on with only three of his company surviving the attack.

A sense of doom hung over the heads of the wounded men as they anticipated a second wave of attack. Nearby, Rick was a front line radio man directing artillery fire. Ron credits Rick's reinforcement company for coming to the rescue and saving his life. Rick himself suffered shrapnel injuries that he carries around with him today. Both men were awarded the Purple Heart.

But that is just the start of the shared experiences. Ron was carried from the battle field via a plastic poncho and then loaded into a helicopter for a flight to the medical ship USS Sanctuary. "Me too," said Rick. He recalls laying two hours on a stretcher only to see a rescue helicopter flying away leaving him alone before it fortunately circled back to pick him up and take him to the ship.

Rick underwent surgery aboard the Sanctuary and required further medical treatment at a hospital in Guam. So did Ron. One was treated at an annex, the other at the main building. They were at Andrews Air Force base before being shuttled via plane to their home environments. They were heavily sedated and were not aware of the others presence. Ron was ushered from the plane in Albany NY near his Hudson NY stomping grounds and spent 18 months healing and learning how to walk again.

Rick was transported to Chelsea Naval Base to be treated for lower body injuries. After recuperating he returned to the Worcester area and settled down in Shrewsbury with his wife Cheryl. Rick spent his adult life in education specializing in teaching alternative kids who had difficulty in adjusting to normal classroom settings. His love for education began when he was president of the last



Ron and Rick with their combat medals

class at Commerce High in Worcester where he was captain of the hockey and football teams.

Ron also was the class president in his senior year of high school. He went on to a 26-year career in the postal service after his military duty ended and worked at North American Martyrs Church in Auburn for 19 years.

Both men admitted to getting goose bumps after learning of their many shared experiences though they had never met. Since their introduction Rick has talked his fellow warrior into joining a golf league at Green Hill and they are part of a veterans group that meets on Friday mornings. They thank their wives for standing by them during their recovery periods. For Rick, Cheryl has been his rock while T, yes that is her full first name, has supported Ron. He also has a furry friend in a Bernedoodle dog called Charlie, his constant, lovable companion who quietly makes himself at home at Bayberry Lanes while Ron is bowling.

Rick served as president of the Retired Friends Club and is known for his positive outlook. He says "every day is a holiday and every meal is a feast." That feast on Christmas day at the YMCA certainly turned into an unexpected and rewarding experience for two proud Marines.

Submitted by JIM CONNOLLY



Ron's best friend Charlie

More Trip Descriptions

NANTUCKET ISLAND

September 15, 2026 (Tuesday) \$223 pp

Highlights: Experience the quintessential charm of Nantucket Island with this seamless day trip. Your journey begins with a scenic high-speed ferry from Hyannis, followed by a narrated tour of the island's most iconic landmarks. You'll visit the historic Old Mill, the rose-covered cottages of 'Sconset Village, and the striking Sankaty Head Lighthouse. Spend your afternoon in the town center, where you can enjoy local seafood for lunch, browse boutique shops, and explore the world-class Whaling Museum. It's a perfect blend of maritime history and coastal beauty packed into one unforgettable day.

Trip Leader: George Barry 508-799-0739

Parking: Immaculate Conception george.barry77@yahoo.com

PERU: MACHU PICCHU — AND THE SACRED VALLEY

September 18 to 29, 2026 from \$4,945 pp/do

Highlights: This 11-day Peruvian odyssey begins in Lima with a private tour of the Larco Museum. After flying to Cuzco, you will explore the Sacsayhuaman fortress and ancient waterworks. The adventure continues with a rafting trip on the Urubamba River and a home-hosted lunch in the Sacred Valley. A "Day in the Life" visit to Izcuchaca offers a chance to browse local markets and visit a weaving cooperative. Finally, travel by train to stay at the base of Machu Picchu, enjoying ample time to discover the "Lost City of the Incas".

Trip Leader: Ralph Shapiro 413-537-2435

Parking: Maironis Park ralphshapiro@msn.com

MAGNIFICENT SPAIN!

Sept. 28 to Oct. 9, 2026 \$6,119 pp/do

Highlights: This grand tour captures the essence of Spain, from Barcelona's modernist flair to the rugged peaks of Montserrat. After a high-speed train to Madrid, you'll explore the history of bullfighting at Las Ventas before stepping back in time in Avila and Segovia. There, you'll marvel at the fairytale Alcázar and savor traditional suckling pig. Journeying south, you'll witness Cordoba's iconic red-and-white arches and Sevilla's massive Gothic Cathedral, paired with an authentic Flamenco performance. The journey culminates in Granada at the breathtaking Alhambra, a Moorish masterpiece and the ultimate highlight of Andalusia's rich heritage.

Trip Leader: Dave Cochran 508-769-9323

Parking: Maironis Park cochradw@verizon.net

LAKE GEORGE OCTOBERFEST CRUISE



October 3 to 4, 2026 \$613 pp/do

Highlights: Deluxe Motorcoach Transportation, accommodations at Fort William Henry Hotel with breakfast; Lake George Steamship dinner/cruise with polka band and German Oktoberfest buffet; Prospect Mountain overlook; guided tour of Fort William Henry and museum entry fee; scenic train ride, free time in Lake George and Saratoga. Trip Insurance; driver gratuities and all taxes.

Trip Leader: George Barry 508-799-0739

Parking: Maironis Park george.barry77@yahoo.com

ROB ZAPPULLA CELEBRATES

HERB ALPERT & SERGIO MENDEZ — AT AQUA TURF

October 13, 2026 (Tuesday) \$132 pp

Highlights: Experience the non-stop energy of renowned trumpeter Rob Zappulla and his 10-piece orchestra at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville, CT. Rob's incredible trumpet-playing skills are front and center as he is joined by sensational vocalists. Today's delicious luncheon is served family style by a friendly, efficient staff, and we will have a complimentary glass of beer, wine or soft drink. There is also a cash bar for additional drinks. Trip Includes taxes and gratuities.

A Brass-Filled Blast!

Get ready for a high-energy afternoon of jazz and nostalgia

THE SHOW: Rob Zappulla, world-class trumpeter and vocalist, celebrates Herb Alpert & Sergio Mendez, featuring Rob's incredible 10-piece orchestra.

THE JOURNEY: A musical tribute covering the Tijuana Brass era, Herb Alpert's solo hits, and the infectious rhythms of Sergio Mendez.

THE MENU: A delicious family-style luncheon featuring Lemon Chicken and Pork Schnitzel, fresh greens, vegetables, and dessert.

THE PERKS: Enjoy a complimentary glass of beer, wine, or a soft drink with your meal (cash bar also available).

Trip Leader: George Barry 508-799-0739

Parking: Immaculate Conception george.barry77@yahoo.com

NH TURKEY TRAIN

October 15, 2026 (Thursday) \$135 pp

Highlights: Join us as we travel North to scenic NH. Sit back and enjoy the changing colors signaling nature's change of seasons. We'll make a stop at Moulton Farms in Meredith. This store has been in existence for decades and provides a unique, farm store, experience. Now it's off to the train. On your arrival at the station, it's All Aboard your scenic dining car for your train ride, traveling along the lake shore through the scenic woods setting. You'll also be served a delicious full course luncheon (included) featuring Hart's Turkey Farm Roast Turkey with whipped potatoes, butternut squash, a beverage and a ice cream sundae for dessert, YUM.. After our train returns, you'll board your motor coach for additional sightseeing and a stop at the Kellerhouse gift shop. We'll also make a rest stop on way home at the NH State Liquor Store. Sign up early as this sells out fast.

Trip Leader: Dick Pinkes 508-769-2913

Parking: Immaculate Conception rjpinkes1@verizon.net

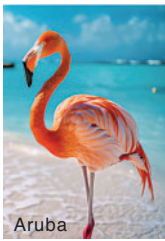
ATLANTIC CITY, NJ — TROPICANA RESORT & CASINO

October 27 to 29, 2026 (Tuesday to Thursday) \$439 pp/do

Highlights: This Tropicana Atlantic City motor coach getaway package includes round-trip transport, two nights on the Boardwalk, and \$100 in total bonuses (\$50 slot play and \$50 dining credit). You'll enjoy two 8 PM evening shows, with all taxes, baggage handling, driver gratuity, and trip insurance fully covered. It's a perfect, worry-free escape to enjoy gaming, entertainment and world-class dining.

Trip Leader: Dick Pinkes 508-769-2913

Parking: Maironis Park rjpinkes1@verizon.net



Aruba



Gettysburg & Amish



White Mountain Christmas



Alpine Europe

Day & Overnight Trips For The Years 2026–2027

DAY TRIPS

DESTINATION	DATES	FIRST SALE	PRICE	LEADER(S)	TELEPHONE
Cape Cod Canal Cruise	6/9/26	<i>Wait List</i>	\$143	George Barry	508-799-0739
Boston Duck Tour – with lunch at Venezia Restaurant	6/30/26	<i>Wait List</i>	\$149	George Barry	508-799-0739
Newport Playhouse - “Weekend Comedy”	7/8/26	<i>Wait List</i>	\$155	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
Tall Ships, Boston – with lunch at Venezia Restaurant	7/14/26	<i>Wait List</i>	\$160	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
Log Cabin - Kenney Rogers Tribute Show	<i>2nd Bus Added</i> 8/5/26	NOW	\$159	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
* Annual Corn Roast – SAC Park Shrewsbury	8/12/26	–	FREE		
Cape Cod Luncheon Train & Sandwich Glass Museum	8/26/26	<i>Wait List</i>	\$179	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
Nantucket Island – with Whaling Museum	9/15/26	NOW	\$223	George Barry	508-799-0739
Rob Zappulla Celebrates Herb Alpert & Sergio Mendez - Aqua Turf	10/13/26	NOW	\$132	George Barry	508-799-0739
NH Turkey Train	10/15/26	NOW	\$135	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Great Lakes Cruise – River Boat Cruise and more	5/22-6/1/26	<i>Wait List</i>	from \$6,229	John Kelly	860-798-6272
Enchanting 1000 Islands – with Boat Museum & Lake Placid	7/27-30/26	<i>Wait List</i>	\$1,450	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
Mt. Washington Adventure – featuring the Cog Railway	8/3-4/26	<i>Wait List</i>	\$630	George Barry	508-799-0739
San Francisco / Napa Valley / Yosemite / Reno	8/14-22/26	NOW	\$4,998	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
Red Sox vs Yankees (in NY) – with 9/11 Memorial and more	8/28-29/26	<i>Wait List</i>	\$644	George Barry	508-799-0739
Alaska Cruise	8/30-9/7/26	<i>Wait List</i>	from \$3,349	Ralph Shapiro	413-537-2435
Peru: Machu Picchu & the Sacred Valley	9/18-29/26	NOW	\$4,945	Ralph Shapiro	413-537-2435
Margaritaville on Cape Cod – Dolly & Kenny & Legends	9/21-23/26	<i>Wait List</i>	\$699	John Kelly	860-798-6272
Magnificent Spain	9/28-10/9/26	NOW	\$6,119	Dave Cochran	508-769-9323
* Lake George Oktoberfest – Dinner Cruise and more	10/3-4/26	NOW	\$613	George Barry	508-799-0739
Atlantic City – Tropicana Resort & Casino	10/27-29/26	NOW	\$439	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
Christmas at the Opryland Resort	12/6-11/26	NOW	\$3,976	Dave Cochran	508-769-9323
* White Mountain Hotel Christmas	12/9-11/26	NOW	\$1,048	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
Allure of the Adriatic	12/31/26-1/16/27	NOW	from \$5,645	Ralph Shapiro	413-537-2435
Caribbean Cruise	1/23-31/27	NOW	from \$2,499	Ralph Shapiro	413-537-2435
* Sun Drenched Aruba	2/25-3/4/27	NOW	\$4,659	Dave Cochran	508-769-9323
Miami / Costa Rica / Panama Canal	4/4-16/27	NOW	\$3,579 / 5,619	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
* Romantic Villages of Alpine Europe	4/10-25/27	NOW	from \$5,475	Ralph Shapiro	413-537-2435
Tulip Time on Jewels of the Rhine	4/25-5/5/27	<i>Wait List</i>	\$6,283 / 9,163	Dave Cochran	508-769-9323
Ocean City Maryland – with Annapolis & Atlantic City	5/18-22/27	NOW	\$1,436	George Barry	508-799-0739
* Gettysburg & Penn Dutch Country	9/27-10/1/27	NOW	\$1,596	Dick Pinkes	508-769-2913
* Eastern Europe to the Black Sea	11/5-18/27	NOW	from \$4,845	Ralph Shapiro	413-537-2435

* Indicates New Trips this month. All prices quoted are per person (Double Occupancy).
Refunds will be made per printed club policy.



Visit our website www.rfcg.info for detailed flyers for each of our trips.

CHRISTMAS AT THE OPRYLAND RESORT

Dec. 6 to 11, 2026 \$3,976 pp/do

Highlights: Experience the ultimate holiday getaway with a 6-day stay at Gaylord Opryland, featuring 5 million lights and the world-class ICE! exhibit. This Nashville adventure blends music history with festive flair, including tours of Music Row, the Ryman Auditorium, and the Country Music Hall of Fame. Enjoy a classic Southern lunch and holiday show aboard the General Jackson Showboat, followed by a historical tour of Belle Meade Plantation. Evenings are highlight-filled, featuring dinner at the Opryland Backstage Grill and reserved seating for a live performance at the legendary Grand Ole Opry.

Trip Leader: Dave Cochran 508-769-9323

Parking: Maironis Park cochradw@verizon.net

WHITE MOUNTAIN HOTEL CHRISTMAS

NEW

December 9 to 11, 2026 (Wed to Fri) \$1,048 pp/do

Highlights: We are going to travel to the Mt. Washington Valley area and spend two nights at the White Mountain Hotel in North Conway NH. This beautiful grand hotel is nestled right up against scenic Cathedral Ledge. On Day 1 we will travel to North Conway with lunch on our own at the Muddy Moose restaurant followed by a sleigh ride at Nestlenook Farm before arriving at our hotel in the mid-afternoon. The Hotel has a game room and a year-round outdoor heated pool and jacuzzi. On arrival, after check-in, we'll enjoy a Welcome Reception with punch in the Tullamore Tavern. **All meals** are included at the hotel, and they are all off their expansive regular menus. There are also **three** Christmas/Comedy Shows included, one on our first night and two on our second day. After Breakfasts at the hotel, on day 2 we'll have a morning guided tour of the Northern Valley area and on Day 3 a scenic ride up the Cog Railway to Waumbec Station on Mt Washington. Then we start our drive home after a wonderful visit to the Valley Area. On the way home we will stop for an **included** lunch at Moat Mountain Brewery. We will then stop at the Old Country Store and Museum followed by a comfort stop at the NH State Liquor Store & Rest Area before continuing home. This trip is a lot of fun and a great bargain with all the included meals, shows and excursions. Driver gratuity and insurance are also included in the price. This filled up quickly last time I ran this trip so don't be left out, reserve early.

Trip Leader: Dick Pinkes 508-769-2913

Parking: Maironis Park rjpinkes1@verizon.net

ALLURE OF THE ADRIATIC

Dec. 31, 2026 to Jan. 16, 2027 from \$5,645 pp/do

Highlights: Ring in the New Year on an unforgettable 17-day journey through Croatia, Italy & Slovenia, featuring a private small-ship cruise aboard the 50-passenger M/V Artemis — with only 25 exclusive spots secured for our group. Start in Zagreb before exploring the Istrian coast, featuring Pula's Roman Amphitheatre and the wildlife of Cres Island. Savor authentic culture with cooking classes, olive mill visits, and home-hosted lunches in Rovinj. After visiting Trieste and the mosaics of Ravenna, your voyage concludes in Venice with iconic sightseeing and a classic gondola ride through the winding canals.

★ **There will be an Informative Trip Presentation for this trip at Immaculate Conception later this month.**
Check with Ralph for more details

Trip Leader: Ralph Shapiro 413-537-2435

Parking: Maironis Park ralphvshapiro@msn.com

CARIBBEAN CRUISE

January 23 to 31, 2027 from \$2,499 pp/do

Highlights: Our trip begins with a flight from Boston and a pre-cruise hotel stay in Florida. You'll sail from Port Canaveral to Great Stirrup Cay, Jamaica, Grand Cayman, and Cozumel, with all taxes, port fees, and tips already covered. The package features a premium beverage package, specialty dining, Wi-Fi, and onboard credits, travel insurance and all ground transfers.

Trip Leader: Ralph Shapiro 413-537-2435

Parking: Maironis Park ralphvshapiro@msn.com

SUN DRENCHED ARUBA

NEW

February 25 to March 4, 2027 \$4,659 pp/do

Highlights: Have you had enough winter by the end of February? Do you wish you could go to a sun-drenched island in the Caribbean? We have the antidote. Come join us on an 8 day 7night all inclusive trip to the sun-drenched island of Aruba, staying in the Riu Palace Antillas on Palm Beach, February 25 - March 4 2027. The trip includes round trip non-stop flights from Boston, all transfers, all meals, many restaurants to choose from, drinks, snacks, entertainment, some water sports, baggage handling, all taxes, and trip insurance. Spend your days on the beach or golfing nearby, your nights at the casino or take in some entertainment. Do as much or as little as you'd like. Everyone gets a Junior Suite with an ocean view, and upgraded rooms are available. All of this for \$4659 per person double occupancy.

Trip Leader: Dave Cochran 508-769-9323

Parking: Maironis Park cochradw@verizon.net

GETTYSBURG & PENN DUTCH COUNTRY

NEW

Sept. 27 to Oct 1, 2027 (Mon to Fri) \$1,596 pp/do

Highlights: Take a trip to historic Gettysburg and into the heart of Amish Country on this Pennsylvania adventure. We'll learn about the iconic battle that defined the Civil War as well as cultures and lifestyles of the Amish and Mennonite people who settled the farmlands of Lancaster County. Before we arrive at Gettysburg, we will stop for lunch on our own. We'll stay in Gettysburg for two nights with breakfast daily and dinners at the historic Dobbins Tavern and the Hickory Bridge Farm. We'll have guided visits of the battlefield, Gettysburg National Military Park Museum, Eisenhower home & farm, Lincoln Train Museum, a wine tasting, and a ride on the Scenic Gettysburg Rail Line. On day 3 after completing our Gettysburg touring we will head for Lancaster and after checking into our hotel we will take in a Dinner Show at the Dutch Apple Dinner Theater. We'll have breakfast both days at the hotel. On Day 4 we tour Amish Country with a local guide, then spend time at Kitchen Kettle Village to shop for unique local goods and enjoy lunch on own. Next, we visit an authentic Amish home for a tour, then arrive at Sight and Sound Theater to see an incredible Biblical musical show featuring a cast of hundreds depicting scenes of the Bible accompanied by live animals, visual and audio effects that will leave you astounded. (Show TBA.) After the show enjoy an incredible dinner at Miller's Smorgasbord. On Day 5, we visit the local Farmer's Market before heading for home, with meal and comfort stops in route.

Trip Leader: Dick Pinkes 508-769-2913

Parking: Maironis Park rjpinkes1@verizon.net

MIAMI / COSTA RICA / PANAMA CANAL

April 4 to 16, 2027 \$3,579/\$5,619 pp/do

Highlights: Join us as we fly to Miami and stay overnight in a beachfront hotel, with free time for shopping and leisure. Our 1900 passenger ship, the Norwegian Sun, was refurbished in 2024. We'll spend 11 days with 8 ports of call and includes a Panama Canal transit to Gatun Lake and back. We visit Falmouth, Jamaica; Cartagena Columbia; Gatun Lake, Panama; Colon, Panama; Puerto Limon, Costa Rica; Harvest Cay in Belize; and Cozumel, Mexico. As usual the trip includes all gratuities including the daily service charge applied to each cabin by NCL as well as those for the included Premium Beverage and Specialty Dining Packages (2 dinners per person, four for Balcony and above). It also includes RT air from Boston or Hartford, all airport hotel transfers, portorage of one bag PP, and trip insurance. This will be an exciting trip so sign up early!

Trip Leader: Dick Pinkes 508-769-2913

Parking: Maironis Park rjpinkes1@verizon.net

ROMANTIC VILLAGES OF ALPINE EUROPE NEW

April 10 to 25, 2027 from \$5,475 pp/do

Highlights: Join us on this 16-day trip thru the Romantic Villages of Alpine Europe. We will arrive in Milan and journey thru Italy, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria end in Munich Germany. Along our way we will stay at Lake Maggiore, take a private cruise of the Borromean Islands in Stresa. We will stop at the Simpson Pass, take a short train ride to Zermatt and take in the views of the Matterhorn arriving in Interlaken Switzerland. We will tour Vaduz, the Capital of Liechtenstein then on to Seefeld Austria. While in the Seefeld area we will travel to Innsbruck and Mittenwald, Germany. After leaving the Seefeld area, our final destination is Munich Germany.

★ *There will be an Informative Trip Presentation for this trip at Immaculate Conception later this month. Check with Ralph for more details*

Trip Leader: Ralph Shapiro 413-537-2435

Parking: Maironis Park ralphvshapiro@msn.com

OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND WITH ANNAPOLIS & ATLANTIC CITY

May 18 to 22, 2027 \$1,436 pp/do

Highlights: Enjoy a 5-day getaway to Ocean City, MD, featuring oceanview accommodations, scenic coastal towns, and historic sight-seeing. Stay 3 nights at the Holiday Inn & Suites Boardwalk in deluxe oceanview suites with kitchen and private balcony, plus 1 night at the Tropicana Atlantic City with food and slot vouchers. Experience a bayside sunset dinner at Harbor Watch, a guided tour of Ocean City, Assateague Island (home of the famous wild horses), and free time in charming Berlin, MD. Enjoy a classic Maryland crab feast at Hooper's Restaurant. Visit Annapolis with a guided tour of historic downtown, the State Capitol, and the U.S. Naval Academy, with lunch at Mike's Crab House. Travel by ferry to Cape May, NJ for a trolley tour of Victorian homes and the historic Physick Estate, then continue on to Atlantic City. Trip Includes: Round-trip motor coach transportation / 3 nights Ocean City Boardwalk hotel / 1 night Tropicana Atlantic City (food & \$15 slot voucher; show tickets if available) / 8 meals / Guided sightseeing / All taxes, gratuities, luggage handling & trip insurance.

Trip Leader: George Barry 508-799-0739

Parking: Maironis Park george.barry77@yahoo.com

EASTERN EUROPE TO THE BLACK SEA

NEW

Nov. 5 to 18, 2027 from \$4,845 pp/do

Highlights: Join us on this spectacular 14-day trip traveling to Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia and Hungary. Our first 3 days are in Romania where we will explore Bucharest and Constanta. On day 4, we will board our home for the next 10 days, the 162-passenger M/S River Aria cruising the Danube. Our stops in Bulgaria include Ruse and Vidin then on to Serbia. We will visit Belgrade, the Capital of Serbia and the historically rich town of Novi Sad. Day 11 of our trip finds us in Vukovar, Croatia where after our tour of the city, we will be treated to a Home-Hosted Lunch with a local family. Our cruise continues to our final port of call, Budapest, Hungary where several tours await us on our final 2 days of our cruise.

Trip Leader: Ralph Shapiro 413-537-2435

Parking: Maironis Park ralphvshapiro@msn.com

HIKING CLUB UPDATE

Our hiking season is off to a spectacular start! Mother Nature was kind to us this April, providing the perfect backdrop for our first two excursions of 2026. Here's a look back at where we've been:



April 10: Leominster State Park

Our inaugural hike saw eight eager participants take to the trails under clear skies. The conditions were nothing short of perfect. An unexpected highlight—the "jewel in the crown"—was a fantastic group lunch at Oliver's Cafe to cap off the day.

April 24: Broad Meadow Brook Sanctuary

Eleven of us explored this Worcester gem. The serene setting—filled with frog ponds and babbling brooks—offered a peaceful backdrop for getting to know fellow hikers.

Looking Ahead

Hiking will continue through October! Keep your eyes peeled for the next hike announcement in our emails. *We would love to see some new faces.*

Want to stay in the loop?

If you'd like to receive more information about future events and trail locations, please contact Tom Pokoly at tbpokoly@gmail.com.

**The Retired Friends Club
of Greendale, Inc.**
Greendale Y. M. C. A.
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Worcester, MA 01605

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Check out our Website: rfcg.info

HELP US SHAPE THE FUTURE OF OUR CLUB



A few weeks ago we emailed a **General Survey** to all of our members. Thus far, we've only received feedback from about 100, but to truly understand what's working and where we can grow, we need to hear from YOU.

Your input is vital in making our club the best it can be for everyone.

So, if you haven't had a chance yet, please take minute to fill out our anonymous survey by scanning this QR code with your phone or key in the website link below. *(if you are viewing this newsletter electronically you should be able to click that link and it will bring you right to it).*



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SHKQQ36>

Thank you!

TUESDAY Bowling League - (Winter Final Stats)

Coordinators: **Jim Connolly** (woostatown28@charter.net), **Bob Converse**, **Dave Meyers**

- 1st #10 **Art Douglas**, Louis Gouin, Olly Briggs, Bruce Anderson
- 2nd #3 **Jim Connolly**, Chris Mudd, Louise Hester, John McIntyre
- 3rd #5 **Gerard Piscitelli**, Dick Adams, John Hester, Mike Mudd
- 4th #12 **Charlie Welsh**, Dennis King, Rollie Laflash, Al Barsamian

HA Joe Dooley 99, Bill Plante 96, Jim Connolly 95

HIT Joe Dooley 338, Bill Plant 331, Jim Connolly 327

HIS Carl Masshardt 127, Joe Dooley 123, George Calimeris 123

HA (women) Sheila Dahlgren 79, Louise Hester 71, Pam Masshardt 71

THURSDAY Bowling League - (Winter Final Stats)

Peter Morse, Coordinator Email: morsepd5@aol.com 508-832-4351

- 1st COURCHESNE **Joe Dooley Jr.**, Paul Prince, Mike Mudd, Joe Dooley Sr
- 2nd JOHN DOLAN BARRY **Jack Geneva**, Danny King, Bob White, Dave Flint
- TIE { 3rd BORG **John McIntyre**, Don Casey, Chris Mudd, Robin White
- 3rd CASWELL **Tony Neggers**, Dave Whitney, Roland LaFlash, Jim Roy

HA (men) Joe Dooley 97.84, Evan Plante 93.69, Jim Connolly 93.36

HA (women) Robin White 88.62, Sandra White 76.98, Ollie Villensky 73.36

HS (men) Evan Plante 131, Joe Dooley 129, Ron Remillard 126

HS (women) Robin White 113, Sandra White 97, Ollie Villensky 94,

HT (men) Joe Dooley 344, Evan Plante 336, Jim Connolly & Felix Piscitelli 314

HT (women) Robin White 285, Sandra White 268, Ollie Villensky 248

RFCG Remittance Form for New Members, Renewals & Life Members

Dues For NEW Members

(Men & Women - Age 55 & Over)

- ANNUAL = \$15/yr
or
- FOR LIFE = \$150/life-membership

- Complete Application Information.
- Pay at any meeting.
- If not possible, mail form and check to:
RFCG
YMCA - 75 Shore Drive
Worcester MA 01605

The monthly Newsletter is included in dues.

RENEWAL Dues

(For Current Members)

- ANNUAL = \$15/yr
or
- FOR LIFE = \$150/life-membership

- Note address, phone, etc. info changes.
- Pay at any meeting.
- If not possible, mail form, check and a **pre-addressed postage-paid envelope AND prior Year's Membership Card**
to: RFCG
YMCA - 75 Shore Drive
Worcester MA 01605

Application Information

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY - STATE - ZIP _____

TEL (HOME OR CELL) _____

EMAIL _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ VETERAN

RETIRED FROM _____

FORMER OCCUPATION (CAREER) _____

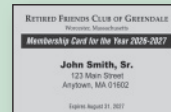
REFERRED BY _____

Membership Cards:

The membership cards for 2026-2027 are now available. Non-Life Members can renew early, if they wish to, and avoid the September rush by mailing-in their renewal dues over the Summer or do it in person at one of our weekly meetings.

Life Membership: For a one time fee of \$150, new or existing members can forget about paying annual dues and be paid-up for LIFE!

(see instructions for Renewing or becoming a Life Member at the bottom of this page).



New or Current members paying after May 1st will be considered paid-up for the next fiscal year which starts on September 1st and ends August 31st.