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**From** Gary P Kearney, MD

**Subject** Subject: Copy of The Arena Newsletter November 2020



Dear TRA Annual Meeting Supporter,

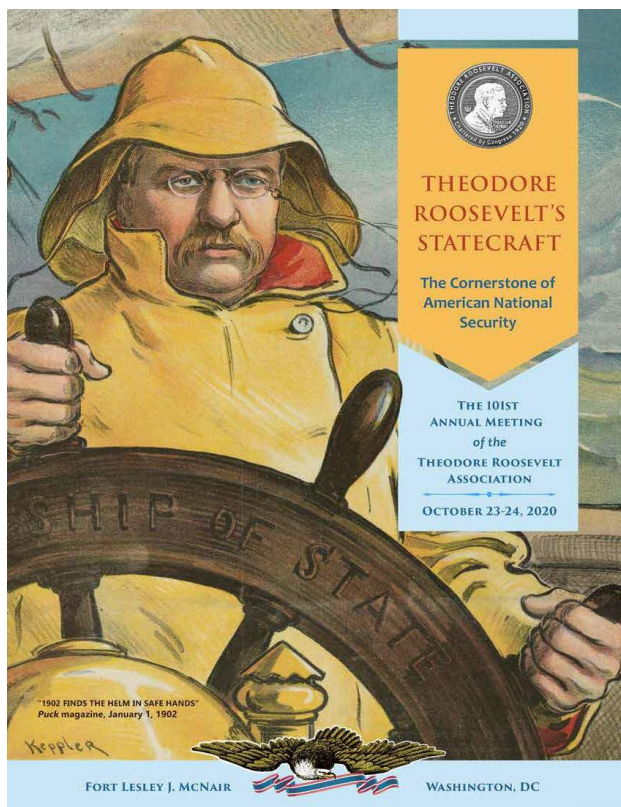
Welcome to this edition of The Arena! There is a lot of information, provided in the form of interesting articles and announcements, packed into this month's edition. I know each of you will enjoy reading about the Copper Beech Tree, visual tours of Theodore Roosevelt Island, updates on the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, a great summary of our recently completed 101st Annual Meeting and so much more.

By all accounts, our annual meeting was a resounding success. Through efforts like this, we are increasing our outreach and partnership with organizations like the National War College, National Park Service, the Theodore Roosevelt Library and Museum, Long Island University & Theodore Roosevelt Institute and the Roosevelt family.

Enjoy this edition of The Arena!

Sincerely,

David Architzel  
Chair and President TRA



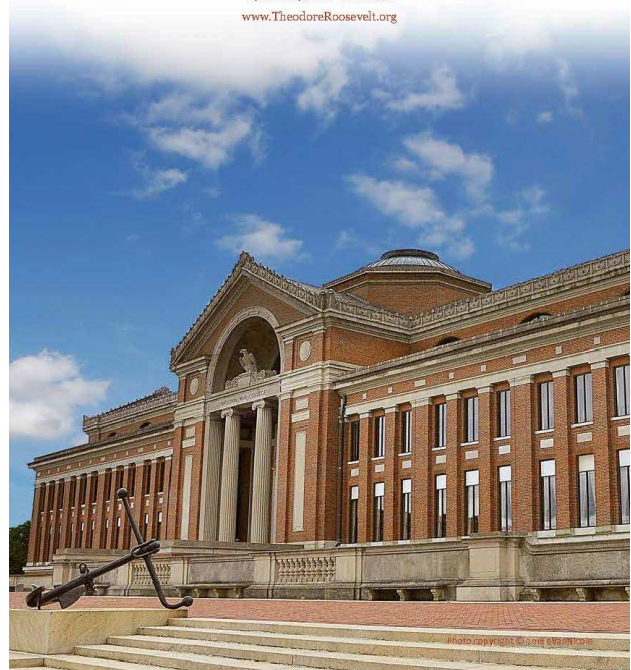
The annual meeting was attended virtually by more than 225 people on the first day of the meeting and more than 75 people on the second day. This does not include many of the National War College (NWC) students who also attended virtually. The TRA leadership could not be more pleased with the overwhelming praise we have received from our members. Congratulations go to all the members on the planning committee for the annual meeting. We are particularly indebted to Nicole Goldstein, chairwoman of the planning committee; Marie Kutch, our Executive Administrator in the national office; and to Admiral Steve Abbot (USN Ret.) and Rear Admiral Rabbit Christenson (USN Ret.), who raised more than half of all the sponsorship funds.

I believe unequivocally that our distinguished panel of speakers at the National War College generated intense interest among the attendees. So to select a few highlights from our two-day meeting is not an easy task. However, here is a



**Theodore Roosevelt Association**

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**Annual Meeting Summary  
TRA Annual Meeting 2020  
Roosevelt Hall, National War College,  
Fort Lesley J. McNair  
United States Naval Museum  
Washington, DC**

Howard Ehrlich  
Chief Executive Officer  
Theodore Roosevelt Association

Saturday was essentially the TRA's day in the sun. After two enjoyable presentations on "TR and Diplomacy," the TRA presented its annual awards. Gregory Wynn, TRA Vice President, presented the 2020 TRA Book Award to Dr. Jack Thompson for his book "Great Power Rising: Theodore Roosevelt and the Politics of U.S. Foreign Policy." Also announced at the awards ceremony was the winner of our first TRA Children's Book Award. This year the winner was Barb Rosenstock for her book entitled "The Camping Trip that Changed America." The awards were followed by an incredible presentation by curator Michelle Krowl of some of the most intriguing letters from the Theodore Roosevelt Papers at the Library of Congress.

The day was capped off by the TRA Annual Gala Reception and Awards presentation. This reception featured presentation of the TRA's most prestigious awards. The first one was presentation of the USS Theodore Roosevelt



brief summary of some of the highlights.

The welcoming remarks from the leadership of the NWC could not have been more gracious. Dave Architzel, our President and Chair of the Board of Trustees, reciprocated those feeling in his own welcoming remarks. TRA trustee Congressman French Hill, TRA trustee, set the tone of the meeting in his opening.

Next came three outstanding student presentations on TR's record on race, Native Americans and women's suffrage, followed by an eye-opening presentation by Dr. Jerry Hendrix on "TR and the Unbalanced Fleet." The day culminated with a scintillating, dynamic and humorous panel that included four retired four-star generals and flag officers and a former senior civilian executive in the Department of Defense. It included James Mattis, Former Secretary of Defense; Michael Mullen; Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen and Admiral Dennis Blair, who also served as the Director of National Intelligence as a civilian. Michele Flournoy, who is being widely considered to serve as President-Elect Biden's nominee for Secretary of Defense, also was a panel member.

The panel was moderated by David Ignatius, Washington Post Pulitzer Prize-winning foreign affairs columnist. The question that received the best response from all the panelists was "Do former senior military officers transition well in becoming effective senior government policy-making officials?"

(CVN-71) Junior Officer Leadership Award. The award was presented by David Architzel (USN Ret.), former commanding officer of the USS Roosevelt (CVN-71) and now President and Chairman of the TRA Board of Trustees, to Lieutenant. Benjamin D. Wallace, USN. The second award presented was the TRA Rose Award for Distinguished Service. This award is given to one of our members for outstanding service. This year's award was presented to Marie Kutch, who is the association's Executive Administrator. Howard Ehrlich, TRA CEO, has affirmed that she is "the backbone of the TRA."

The day ended with a keynote address by General James N. Mattis, which was then followed by the presentation of the TRA Medal of Honor to the former Secretary of Defense.

A final note: our virtual attendees were treated, throughout the two-day meeting, to pre-recorded tours of the National War College, Theodore Roosevelt Island and the building where the Lincoln assassination conspirators' trial was held at Fort McNair.





### Own a Piece of History

Here is your chance to have a piece of Sagamore Hill displayed in your home or office. No, President Roosevelt's home is not for sale. However, the Copper Beech tree that stood stoically next the front entrance to his summer residence is being offered for sale. Despite extensive efforts to save it, the tree planted by TR in the 1890's has succumbed to old age and disease. But fortunately, we have been able to salvage it and carefully cut it into slabs. They will be available soon for purchase in the raw.

If you ever paid a visit to the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site and strolled up the path toward the front entrance of the President's home, you immediately noticed this gigantic tree. It stood proudly at the entrance of the home and, in a way, took on the personality of the President himself. With its sheer presence, you could almost hear the tree saying "Bully, I am glad you came for a visit!"

The association has photographed, priced and measured 42 tree slabs and will post on our website a series of slabs that will be offered for sale. Below each photo of the slab you will see a brief description that will include its measurement and price. The pricing of each piece will depend on the size, color, the quality of the grain and overall condition. We are also including a letter of provenance for each slab that will include a photograph of the tree as it stood next to the President's home. Finally, each slab will be appropriately marked to indicate its historic provenance.

We are currently in the process of finishing the final descriptions of each slab from this historic tree and will very shortly make them available for sale on our website with instructions to complete your purchase.

If you have any questions, please contact:  
Prof. Howard Ehrlich, CEO, at  
[hehrlich@theodoreroosevelt.org](mailto:hehrlich@theodoreroosevelt.org).

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### Junior Officer Leadership Award

**Presented to Lieutenant Benjamin D. Wallace, United States Navy Electrical Officer**

LT Ben Wallace, a native of Rockville Centre, New York, enlisted in the Navy in 2002 and subsequently completed the Naval Nuclear Power Training pipeline in 2004. Wallace earned a degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Oklahoma in 2016.

Upon completion of nuclear power training, Wallace reported to the USS Florida (SSGN 728) as a member of the Reactor Laboratories Division during her conversion from a ballistic to guided



missile submarine. While assigned to Florida, Wallace earned the coveted Silver Dolphins, designating him as qualified in submarines. In 2006 Wallace cross-decked to the USS Albany (SSN 753), where he completed two deployments in support of the Global War on Terrorism. In August 2008, Wallace reported to the Nuclear Power Training Unit in Ballston Spa, NY, as a staff instructor, where he earned the Master Training Specialist certification.

In November 2011 he reported to the USS Toledo (SSN 769) as the Leading Engineering Laboratory Technician. While onboard, Wallace completed a CENTCOM deployment and Docking, Selected Restricted Availability. While assigned to Toledo, he was selected as a Limited Duty Officer (Nuclear Power).

Upon earning a commission as a Limited Duty Officer (Nuclear Power), Wallace completed an operational tour on PCU South Dakota (SSN 790) as the Chemical and Radiological Controls Assistant, where he earned the Submarine Warfare qualification. Wallace reported to USS Theodore Roosevelt in 2018 as Quality Assurance Officer and relieved as the Electrical Officer in March 2020. He is a recipient of the Theodore Roosevelt Association Junior Officer Leadership Award for 2020 and is entitled to wear the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and other personal, unit, and service awards.

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### TRA Arena

In addition to the Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal, communications with our membership has primarily been through our annual meeting, travel, regional police awards, speaking contests, our website and The Arena newsletter, which has been dormant until this year. Re-establishing The Arena for our membership has been a priority. This was accomplished with help from Alice George and Greg Wynn, Co-Editor.

There are now 29 past issues of The TRA Journal on the site as a benefit to TRA members, to be reviewed/read under the "What We Do" tab, under Publications/Theodore Roosevelt Journal.

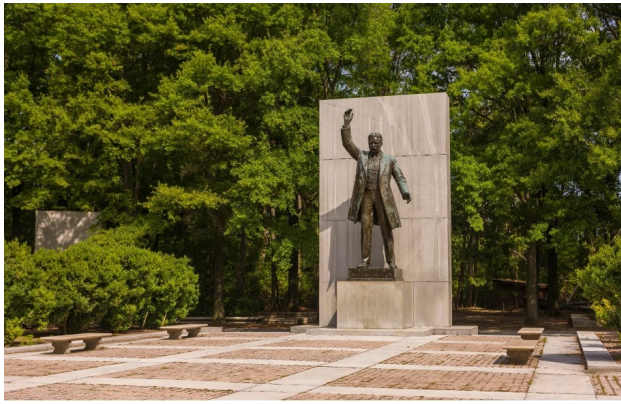
To enter the TRA website, [Click here](#)

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### Video Tour of Theodore Roosevelt Island

Theodore Roosevelt Island is an 88.5-acre (358,000 m<sup>2</sup>) island and national memorial located in the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. The island was given to the federal government by the Theodore Roosevelt Association in memory of the 26th president, Theodore





Roosevelt. Until then, the island had been known as My Lord's Island, Barbadoes Island, Mason's Island, Analostan Island and Anacostine Island.

The island is maintained by the National Park Service, as part of the nearby George Washington Memorial Parkway. The land is generally maintained as a natural park, with various trails and a memorial plaza featuring a statue of Roosevelt. No cars or bicycles are permitted on the island, which is reached by a footbridge from Arlington, Virginia, on the western bank of the Potomac.

"In the 1930s, landscape architects transformed Mason's Island from neglected, overgrown farmland into Theodore Roosevelt Island, a memorial to America's 26th president. They conceived a 'real forest' designed to mimic the natural forest that once covered the island. Today miles of trails through wooded uplands and swampy bottomlands honor the legacy of a great outdoorsman and conservationist.

A small island, Little Island, lies just off the southern tip; Georgetown and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts are respectively across the main channel of the Potomac to the north and the east.

Please take a video tour of the island sponsored by the TRA for the 2020 Annual Meeting by: [Click here to view video](#)

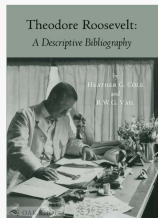
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## Researchers in Conversation | Theodore Roosevelt: Writer and Conservationist

Join Harvard's Houghton Library under the auspices of the Theodore Roosevelt Collection on Tuesday, November 17, at 12:00 noon EST, to hear Heather Cole and David Gessner (Class of '83) discuss their recent books on Theodore Roosevelt, their use of the Roosevelt Collections at Houghton Library and Roosevelt's legacy in 2020. Cole, author of "Theodore Roosevelt: A Descriptive Bibliography" (Oak Knoll 2020), and Gessner, author of "Leave It As It Is: A Journey Through Theodore Roosevelt's American Wilderness" (Simon & Schuster 2020), will interview one another about their work, followed by a Q&A. Registration is required. The session will be one hour and thirty minutes. It will also be recorded. [Click here to register](#)

## HOUGHTON LIBRARY PRESENTS RESEARCHERS IN CONVERSATION

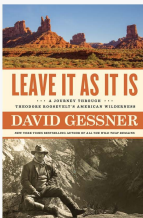
### THEODORE ROOSEVELT: WRITER AND CONSERVATIONIST



**NOVEMBER 17TH @ 12PM EST**

Hear two Houghton researchers discuss their recent books, their research, and Roosevelt's legacy in 2020. Q&A to follow.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



## Harvard TRA Fellowship

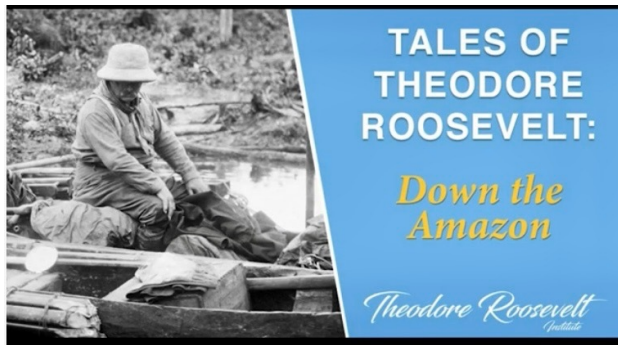
As we unveiled in a previous issue of The Arena, the TRA has partnered with Harvard University's Houghton Library to fund a fellowship: The Theodore Roosevelt Association Fellowship for the Study of the Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt --- [Click this link](#) where it has been listed in conjunction with Houghton's other prestigious fellowships:

The COVID pandemic has caused Harvard to cancel this year's fellowship program. The expectation is that the application process for the TRA's fellowship will occur in September 2021 with selection in March 2022 and our first fellow beginning their studies in July 2022.

The amount of \$5,000 will fund a researcher for 30 days in Cambridge, Massachusetts. If you would like to make a financial contribution to this cost, please contact the TRA Office! This is another great example of the TRA's priorities of enhancing our partnerships and fostering scholarship.

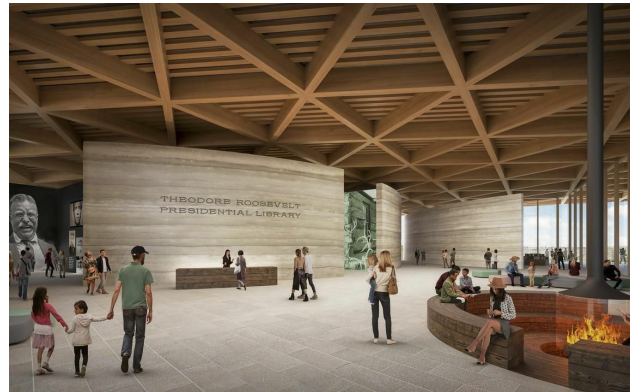
## WATCH THE TALES OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT ON-DEMAND

Tired of hearing nothing but coronavirus and raring to get out of your home again? Join Tweed Roosevelt on a journey to a different time and place. Attend the third free lecture, the first was on Theodore Roosevelt in the Badlands and the second on TR & the Navy. See flyer to the left and sign up by: [Click here to watch the video](#) link where it is listed.



## DOWN THE AMAZON

TR'S BRAZILIAN ADVENTURE, UNDOUBTEDLY HIS MOST DANGEROUS WHICH HE BARELY SURVIVED, JUXTAPOSED WITH THE JOURNEY TWEED ROOSEVELT MADE RETRACING THIS ADVENTURE THROUGH COUNTRY AS WILD TODAY AS IT WAS IN 1914.



## Theodore Roosevelt Museum

### Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library organizers raise \$100M, can tap into \$50M in state money

Organizers of the planned Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library say they've raised \$100 million for the project, unlocking \$50 million in state money. Top donors include Gov. Doug Burgum, a Walmart heir, and several North Dakota business executives. The library's foundation on Tuesday announced "\$100 million in commitments" for the project. Burgum championed the library to the 2019 Legislature, which approved a \$50 million operations endowment that will be accessible only after \$100 million is raised privately for construction, which is planned to occur near Medora. The Old West tourist town sits at the gates of Theodore Roosevelt National Park in the Badlands. The announcement came during a virtual event on the anniversary of the 26th president's 1858 birth. Roosevelt ranched and hunted as a young man in





the Badlands area near Medora in the 1880s before moving on to the White House.

"This is a project for the generations, and I am inspired the Legislature stepped up, and that North Dakotans and those with deep roots in North Dakota responded to the challenge by committing \$100 million in private philanthropy to the project," Burgum said in a statement. Burgum, a wealthy former Microsoft executive, and first lady Kathryn Burgum gave \$1 million or more, according to a donor list. Two couples in the Roosevelt family each gave \$100,000 or more.

Jack Dura, Bismarck Tribune



### Roosevelt Hotel, New York Closes

MIDTOWN, Manhattan — It survived prohibition, World War II, historic elections and was the famous backdrop for so many Hollywood movies, but on Halloween night, the Roosevelt Hotel closed its doors forever.

"It's a landmark in NYC. It opened 1924," Christian Leone, a Roosevelt Hotel guest from Italy, told PIX11 News. "So it's really sad," he added. Hotel guests were surprised but then again they weren't, to hear that this iconic hotel, the Roosevelt — named after President Theodore Roosevelt — was closing at the end of October after 96 years on the corner of 45th St. and Madison Avenue. It had 18 stories, more than 1,000 rooms and 22,000 square feet of retail space.

It was owned by Pakistani International Airlines for decades, so it is not a surprise that it's closing, according to Ken Laub, realtor developer. "At one time, that fabulous hotel site was valued at \$1 billion," Laub said. "So to see it close down as a result of COVID-19, but also because of the owner's financial problems, is not surprising."

The owner of the Roosevelt Hotel tweeted about the sad decision to close its doors on October 31, joining the ranks of so many other hotels, including the W Hotel, Hilton Times Square, the Courtyard Marriott in Herald Square and Omni Berkshire Palace. But what will take its place on this corner and when?

"It's a phenomenal site, and I expect some developers are going to come and jump at the opportunity in the not too distant future," Laub said. "It is one of the greatest sites in New York."

With the lack of tourism in New York City, the hospitality industry has been among the hardest hit by the pandemic. More than 500 jobs are being lost here at the Roosevelt, and those who always stayed here are just so sad. "I am just at a loss for words. It's been here for a long time," Robert Griffith, a Roosevelt guest from Atlanta, told PIX11 News. "It's a historic building, and I love the hotel. I am kind of shocked, really."

By: Magee Hickey, Scripps Media, Inc.

## **Members Corner**

***From time to time, we will feature TRA members and staff and their activities not necessarily associated with Theodore Roosevelt. Please send us candidates for future Arenas***



### **Theodore Roosevelt Association Rose Award 2020**

**Marie Kutch  
Executive Administrator, Theodore Roosevelt Association**

In 1982, The Theodore Roosevelt Association established the Bertha Benkard Rose Award for outstanding service to the Association in honor of Mrs. Rose (1906-1982), a leader in historic preservation and in the restoration of Sagamore Hill. Mrs. Rose's involvement with Sagamore Hill and the Theodore Roosevelt Association came about through her close friendship with Theodore and Edith Roosevelt's daughter, Ethel Roosevelt Derby. Mrs. Rose served on the Executive Committee of the Theodore Roosevelt Association from 1956 until her death on August 24, 1982. Just one month after she died, the Executive Committee established the Rose Award to recognize officers and members of the Association who have followed her example of energetic leadership, hard work and inspired efforts on behalf of the Theodore Roosevelt Association.

The citation for the Rose Award reads as follows:  
"The Rose Award is given in the memory of Mrs. Reginald P. Rose, who served on the Executive Committee of the Association from 1956 to 1982, who was instrumental in the preservation of Sagamore Hill, and whose dedication, energetic leadership, hard work and inspired efforts on behalf of the Association represent the highest tradition of service to the Theodore Roosevelt Association. The Rose Award is bestowed on those officers and members of the Theodore Roosevelt Association who have rendered outstanding service to the Association, and who have earned special prominence and distinction in the history of the Association."

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## TRA Social Media

Don't forget, the TRA is on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)! Social media is a great way to stay involved with conversations about TR and keep up to date on the latest TRA-related happenings. We are regularly talking about interesting topics, both current and historical. So FOLLOW us on Twitter and LIKE us on Facebook!

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### Theodore Roosevelt Association

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Done