



Stories

Long time Y's Men Pete Wolgast remembers past speakers:

- **Jim Nantz:** When Jim lived in Westport, he spoke to the Y's Men nearly every year. One year as I met him in the parking lot, he apologized for not have time to prepare a presentation. Spoke for five minutes. Then, he took questions for one hour. One of best programs ever. I still remember some of the stories. His dad lived in Houston and Jim expressed disappointment he did not have a club like ours. Asked if we would make his father an honorary member of our club.
- **Martha Stewart:** She spoke to us in 2002. I knew her from when I was president of the Westport Historical Society. Her people came to our meetings prior to her presentation. No reporters allowed and not recording by us. It was right before Valentines Day. She gave each Y's Man a cookie in the form of a heart and told us to give it to our wives or significant others. Without telling Martha prior to the meeting, I invited her mother, "Big Martha" who was living with her sister in Weston. Martha was thrilled when she learned her mother was present. I have a picture of the three of us.
- **Governors Ned Lamont & Jodi Rell.**
- **U. S. Senators including Richard Blumenthal.**
- **Congressmen Christopher Shays and Jim Himes multiple times.**

- **State Supreme Court Justice Chase Rogers.**
- **Geno Auriemma** - UConn celebrity men's basketball coach.
- **Jim Calhoun** - UConn celebrity men's basketball coach.
- **Frank Gifford** all time great N.Y. Giants running back and commentator on Monday Night Football for about 20 years. Husband of Kathy Lee. Picture of Bill Meyer with Frank and me.
- Mobil CEO **Lou Noto** who engineered the merger with Exxon CEO **Lee Raymond**. I worked with Lee.
- Jet Blue founder and CEO and now founder of Breeze and Azure in Brazil, **David Neeleman**. David and I became friends. He has spoken three times. Featured in a Jeff Benedict book "The Mormon Way of Doing Business." We brought in several other top Mormon business speakers from New Canaan.
- **Dave Checketts**. Former president of Madison Square Garden and the N.Y. Knicks. Owner of the St. Louis Blues NHL hockey team. I arranged for his to speak when David Neeleman was forced to reschedule a January date with the Y's Men due to a stock offering by Jet Blue. When David's executive assistant Carol Archer called me about the need to reschedule, I asked to speak with David. I told him I would excuse him he would obtain Dave, one of his best Mormon friends in New Canaan, to sub for him. David laughed and then complied with my request.
- **Jeff Benedict**, investigative author. Has spoken to the Y's Men on three occasions. One of our best of all time. Definitive books on Tiger Woods, NFL's New England Patriots, story behind one of Connecticut's casinos, NBA's culture of rape & violence, criminal who play in the NFL, etc.
- **Joel Smilow**, Playtex owner and CEO and major Yale booster who also brought us Yale, head football coach from 1965-96.
- **Cindy Bigelow**, CEO Bigelow Tea. Parent quiet live in Westport.
- State Senate Minority leader and 2014 gubernatorial candidate Westporter **John McKinney**.

Let me embellish by adding a Jim Nantz story.

Jim was quite close to George H.W. Bush whom he called "Bush 41". Jim was visiting Bush 41 at the family summer home in Kennebunkport, Maine early in the summer of 2006 after he lost the presidency to Bill Clinton in 1982. Jim and Bush 41 had a golf game scheduled in August and Bush mentioned one of the members of the scheduled foursome would not be able to join them. Jim suggested they invite Tom Brady. Bush responded, "You think he would play with us?" Showing his humble side. Jim responded, "He might".

Jim and Brady were fairly close as well, so the next day he called Tom. When he received the invitation, Tom replied, "Oh, I would love to play golf with you but Coach Belichick has me scheduled to work out with the receivers on that day. He would never let me go." Jim responded, "Would you like me to call Belichick for you?" Somewhat embarrassed, Tom said, "No, I will talk to him tomorrow."

So to make a long story short, Tom Brady joined the foursome with Bush 41 and Jim Nantz that August. As it developed, CBS with Jim Nantz in the lead was scheduled to broadcast the first game of the season in Foxborough in early September. As was the practice before the Sunday games, Jim was in Foxborough the Thursday before the Sunday game.

Almost immediately after his arrival at the Patriots' headquarter, Coach Bill Belichick invited Jim Nantz into his office. When Jim sat down, Belichick said, "Jim, what is this when one of my players is invited to play golf with former President Bush and you and I am not included?" Needless to say, Jim did not have an adequate

response. I must mention that Bill Clinton was the other member of the golf foursome.

At another moment Jim told us that he could have selected any town or city to locate his home. He and Lorrie chose Westport where they remained until their divorce