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**AUGUST 28, 2015  
ART BY JOHNATHAN HALLGREY**





Artist's win 7 to 4



Judge Lowe, Ray Kelly, Stu Sleppin



Richard Weiss & Mike Lupica



Paul Rickenbach, Dan Rattiner, Debra Stein, Ken Auletta, Dan Evans, Leif Hope



Colin Goldberg



Mark Weinstein



Mathew Montemaro



Ed Burns



Auletta sends the ball to the outfield

Photos by Tom W Ratcliffe, III & Daniel Gonzalez

# Artists 7, Writers 4

*Thundering Bats, Rifleshoot Throws and Leaps High Up the Wall*

BY DAN RATTINER

Indianapolis has its 500, Pasadena has its Rose Bowl, Churchill Downs has its Derby and, once a year, the Hamptons has its Artist-Writers Game. It usually takes place usually on the second Saturday in August, and this year, the 67th annual outing took place on August 15 on the sandlot baseball field behind the Waldbaum's supermarket in East Hampton.

The game originated as a tussle between the Artists of this community, who eventually came out on a particular day at the request of the Writers of this community, to see which group could get the best of the other once and for all in softball. At the time of the Artists' first game, many painters and sculptors had emigrated from Europe to escape World War II, and a number of war correspondents and novelists had retreated to this part of the world for a little peace and quiet in the summertime. Harry Truman was President. The Yankees had won the World Series a year earlier. Jackie Robinson had broken the color barrier.

As the winners varied from one team to the other over the years, both teams, to try to get a leg up on the other, took to expanding the definition of who was a "writer" and who was

an "artist"—there were trapeze artists, United Artists stars—people from Hollywood were artists, for example, or writers, if screenwriters—or re-writers or speech writers, and those who played in this game soon included former presidents, Wall Street tycoons, filmmakers, supermodels and media moguls, some who just came up to take three swings of the bat and then leave in a trail of popping flashbulbs.

Among them were Woody Allen, Alan Alda, Alec Baldwin, Christie Brinkley, Matthew Broderick, Bill Clinton, Willem de Kooning, Betty Friedan, Abbie and Dustin Hoffman (separately), Carl Icahn, John Irving, Eugene McCarthy, Carlos Montoya, Larry Rivers, Charlie Rose, Dr. Ruth, Roy Scheider, Paul Simon, Kurt Vonnegut, Eli Wallach, Tom Wolfe, Eli Wallach and Mort Zuckerman, just to name a few.

Myself and Leif Hope, who is in charge of this game, are probably the only two people left who have witnessed this change occurring somewhere in the late 1990s. Both of us have been part of the game for more than 40 years.

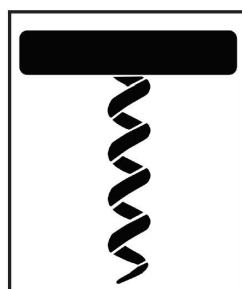
A crowd of several hundred attended the game this year, and they were not disappointed in how it went, although it was not like most of the games, which are slam-bang affairs that wind up 17 to 13 or 26 to 3 with lots of cheering,

slides into home, close calls, rhubarbs with the umpire and towering home runs with the bases loaded.

Four of us umpired. We were former New York Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, New York State Supreme Court Judge Richard Lowe III, and Hal Schroer, and also myself, founder and President of Dan's Papers. We parked ourselves at all the bases. Three of us alternated behind the mound calling balls and strikes.

We had to adjudicate, before the game began, a proposal by the teams to allow an "extra hitter" to play. Ordinarily in softball there are 10 players a team, with the tenth a short centerfielder. Here they wanted an 11th, as an extra hitter who would not field. The reason was there were a very large number of people who wanted to play and they wanted to accommodate them. The ASA Softball Rules book said you could have 11. For the first time, we had 11.

This game was tightly fought by determined defensive players, and it featured diving catches, great third-base grabs and rifle shots to first. No one even got a hit for two-and-a-half innings. After that, it moved right along with the innings passing quickly. By the top of the sixth, when the game exploded, (Cont'd on next page)



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## Game *(Continued from previous page)*



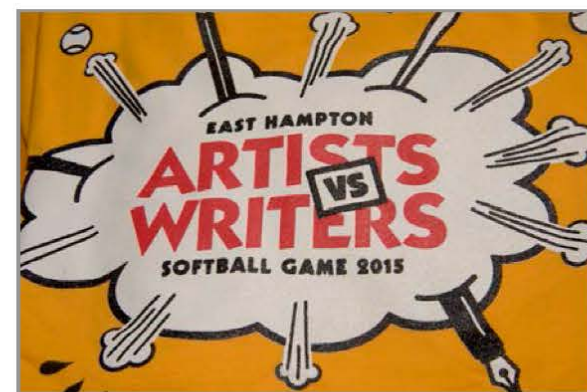
The Artists won the game with a score of 7-4 this year

only one run had been scored, brought a double hit by David Baer that drove in sportswriter Mike Lupica.

Benito Vila, who was the pitcher for the Writers, watched as the dam broke around him in the top of the sixth. Architect Geoff Prisco led off with a single. Vila then threw a pitch that Brian Pfund lined through the gap in center field. Running faster than anyone I have ever seen—including Alec Baldwin—Brian circled the bases before the defense could respond for an inside the park home run. Painter Eric Ernst and Robert Tuckman kept the rally going with consecutive singles. After a fielder's choice, artist Richard Sullivan drove them both in with a double to right making it Artists 4, Writers 1.

The Artists went wild in celebration on the field after this, delaying the game, and in that interval I got a chance to talk to this out-of-breath, flushed and perspiring redheaded young man. It was his first appearance at the game. He's Brian Pfund, a local boy, a college kid at Virginia Wesleyan, a member of the Montauk Mustang baseball team in the Hamptons Collegiate Baseball League. Boy, can he hit and run.

Plus, we had a connection. He's the son of Chris Pfund, who for years worked with his father, John Pfund, at the Pfund Hardware Store in Montauk for nearly 40 years. During these years, I sold advertising in this newspaper to both his father and grandfather. It was exhilarating to me to not only watch this great softball feat but to realize I was looking at the third generation of a family I knew. Well, that's what I got in this brief, three-



minute interview filled with softball hysteria.

In the bottom of the sixth, David Baer, the shortstop for the Writers and the Winner of the Most Valuable Player Award two years ago, hit a solo home run. It was now Artists 4, Writers 2.

There were only two further bits of drama in the game. In the eighth inning, the Artists struck again. Richard Sullivan hit another home run over the centerfield wall, driving in a runner on base, Robert Tuckman of the Creative Artists Agency, and then Pfund came up again, sending the outfielders way back up against the snow fences in fear, and he slammed it again, this time a double that drove in Ed McCarthy. Artists 7, Writers 2.

Another bit of drama occurred in the ninth inning, resulting in a desperate rally by the Writers. It all seemed so hopeless, behind as they were at the time. But Vila hit a double and then David Baer hit a single, scoring Vila. A walk to Jay DiPietro put men on first and second and then author Michael Pellman came to bat. Two on, nobody out. At the *(Continued on page 66)*

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Game (Continued from page 58)



The Writer's Team didn't win, but put up a great fight—the pen is mightier than the sword, but not the softball bat.

time, I was umpiring second base. And that's where much of the drama was. I tried to keep out of the way.

Pellman hit a fly to short centerfield, and Baer was thrown out at third—first out—but then Jay DiPietro, who had been on first, was late to tag up and so at first decided not to try for second. But then, late, getting an idea, off he went, which drew the ball to second to try to catch him, as he had hoped. He'd change that into a rundown. There was now only one out. He'd try to run around and run around back and forth between first and second with the other team chasing him in the hopes he could take up the time to let the runner ahead of him score, bringing the game up to 7 to 4. And he succeeded. When the dust cleared, Pellman had finally been tagged, but there were two runs in, two outs and nobody on, and the team was still alive, and up to the plate came Richard Wiese, the host of ABC's *Born to Explore* TV show. Wiese is a huge hitter. In the past he has hit numerous home runs and been Player of the Game. But what could he do? Even if he hit a home run, it would still be Artists 7 Authors 5 with two outs. In fact, Wiese flied out. Game over.

As always, everybody repaired afterwards to the outdoor courtyard of the Race Lane restaurant just a block past centerfield. There was a game to review, beer to be drunk, hors d'oeuvres to be served and the amount of money being raised for four different charities to be announced. The money will be divided among the Phoenix House, East End Hospice, the Retreat and the Eleanor Whitmore Early Childhood Center. The MVP was Brian Pfund.

THE BOX SCORE			
ARTISTS		WRITERS	
Eric Ernst LF	Russell Blue 3B	Benito Vila P	David Baer SS
Ed Hollander 2B	Richard Sullivan RF	Jay Di Pietro LF	Mike Pellman CF
Ed McCarthy CF	Peter Cesaro SS	Richard Wiese RF	Rick Leventhal C
Jeff Meizlik 1B	Steve Costello SCF	Brett Shevack 3B	Ken Auletta 1B
Walter Bernard P	Colin Goldberg C	Mike Lupica 2B	Bill Collage SCF
Brian Pfund EX		Brian Burns EX	
Robert Tuckman	Matt Montenaro	Lee Minitree	Peter Schwartz
Michael Dougherty	Michael Gaston	Zack O'Malley	Greenburg
Jeff Meizlik	Billy Strong	Paul Winum	
Geoff Prisco	Ron Noy	UMPIRES	
Stu Slepping	Zak Meers	Dan Rattiner of	Dan's Papers
		Fmr NY Police	Comm. Ray Kelly
		Honorable Richard	Lowe III
		Hal Schroer	
Artists 0 0 0 0 4 0 3 0-7			
Writers 0 0 1 0 0 1 0 0 2-4			

Game Director: Lief Hope. Assistant to Lief Hope: Ronette Riley. Game Announcers: James Lipton, Debra Stein, Josh Brandman

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