

## OCTOBER DATES TO REMEMBER

### Meet for Breakfast/Coffee: October 10<sup>th</sup>

We have reserved a table at the Falmouth Grille (formerly Hearth and Kettle) for Monday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, at 9 a.m. Please join us if you can.

### NF Book Club: October 13<sup>th</sup>

NF Book Club will meet at 2:30, Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. The book selection is *Death of an Expert Witness* by J. D. James. We are now selecting books that are available on tape at the Falmouth Library. Please join us. If you're interested, call the NF office for location.

### Meet for Lunch: October 19<sup>th</sup>

We are reserving tables at the Coonamessett Inn for 11:45 a.m., Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>. Please call the office to reserve a seat. If you find you can attend at the last minute, just come. We'll simply add another chair.

### Next NF Board Meeting: October 20<sup>th</sup>

NF Board of Directors will meet at 2:00, Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, in the Boardroom at Falmouth Hospital.

## SAVE THESE NOVEMBER DATES

### NF Fall Gathering: Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup>

NF Luncheon and entertainment for members, volunteers, and guests will be held at 12:00, in Fellowship Hall, at 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church on the Green.

### New Member meeting, November 12<sup>th</sup>

NF Membership Committee is planning a public meeting, 10:30 to Noon, at the Cape Verde Club

on Sandwich Rd. Please come and invite your friends. Refreshments will be served.



**Seymour Cohen, NF Member**  
*by Mavise Crocker*

On a dank and dismal September day I walked into the home of Dr. Seymour Cohen and entered an unfamiliar world. Evidence of the life he has lived for 94 years – papers, books, manuscripts, reference material – was stacked and strewn about as casually as though waiting to be transformed into the next scientific project his active mind is considering.

Having been brought up in a world of the fine arts – music, literature, sculpture, art and architecture – I was now trying to comprehend the life work of a pioneer in the study of the chemistry of virus multiplication. Dr. Cohen's innovative research in biochemistry began at a very early age. His first paper was published when he was only 22. In 1941 when he was 24 he earned his Ph.D. from Columbia University, and the next year he won a fellowship at the Rockefeller Institute in Princeton, N.J. to study plant viruses.

During World War II, he was at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia in the University of Penn-

sylvania, and worked on vaccines for microbes causing typhus. Dr. Cohen was the first to study the chemistry of virus multiplication. For over 25 years he remained at U. Penn, where he became a full professor and Department Chair. In 1971 he transferred to the University of Colorado and later to the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He had been an American Cancer Society Research Professor since 1958.

As I sat at a table with Dr. Cohen examining volumes of papers and manuscripts he has written over 70 years, I was overwhelmed by the ignorance of my own scientific knowledge. The words he used with total familiarity were strangers to my mind, yet gradually I began to get a glimmer of his scientific world.

A quote from Plato's letters I had recently read seemed to apply directly to this interview. (Plato, Seventh Letter 344, in Walter Hamilton trans.)

*It is only when all these things, names and definitions, visual and other sensations are rubbed together and ... questions and answers are exchanged in good faith and without malice that finally, when human capacity is stretched to its limit, a spark of understanding and intelligence flashes out and illuminates the subject at issue.*

Gradually I began to get a sense of the magnitude of Dr. Cohen's work. Here was a man whose research and discoveries, whose many honors and awards had enriched but not consumed his life. Although throughout his career he moved among several universities, he and his family always gravitated to Woods Hole during the summers, even if the trip took three and a half days to get there from Colorado. An avid tennis player into his mid-80s, Seymour Cohen found the atmosphere of Woods Hole well suited to both his professional life and his hobbies.

In 1985 he retired from teaching, and moved permanently to Woods Hole with his wife, Elaine Pear Cohen, who was a well-known sculptor. Her specialty was the human condition, and in Woods Hole she is known for her beloved outdoor sculpture of three seated people (undoubtedly scientists!) holding an animated discussion. Although Dr. Cohen is no longer teaching or exploring novel

metabolic pathways in virus infection, although his wife Elaine has now passed away, and although a recent problem with his legs has kept him off the tennis courts, his mind is as active as ever. He is now working on a scientific history project -- a biography of the late 18th c. chemist, Thomas Cooper.

Actually, his creativity doesn't end there. He is currently taking piano lessons again, in order to revive a former skill long neglected. How many other nonagenarians have the inner drive and stamina to lead such a busy life? He does this with the help of his cheerful secretary, who takes care of many household chores.

He also enjoys the help of Neighborhood Falmouth, for which he has expressed sincere appreciation.

## NF/SENIOR DISCOUNTS

Falmouth Taxi Company: 25% discount to Falmouth Seniors. Be sure to ask for the discount if you use their service.

Eastman/Ace Hardware: 10% discount to members of NF on most full priced items and available every day.

Windfall Market: 5% Senior discount every Wednesday.

Family Foods: 10% Senior discount every Wednesday (no deli items or alcohol).

Mahoney's Garden Center: 10% Senior discount every Wednesday.

Dunkin' Donuts: 10% any time—you have to ask.