



CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

Retired Men's Association of Greenwich, Inc.
37 Lafayette Place, Greenwich, CT 06830



www.greenwichrma.org

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“Today it takes more brains and effort to make out the income tax forms than it does to make the income.” Alfred E. Neuman

President **RUSS HARDEN** rushed from the 9am Program Committee Zoom Meeting to open the Zoom business meeting at 10:01am. **LEN CARUSI** proudly broadcast the RMA song, followed by recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance by the big cheese himself. Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** recommended a Netflix show, a British series that will appeal to do-it-yourselfers and those who appreciate fine craftsmanship: “The Repair Shop” (see <https://decider.com/2020/01/14/the-repair-show-on-netflix/>). He then gave a punny history of his working career (e.g., At my first job I was working in an orange juice factory, but I got canned. I just couldn't concentrate.). He generated a few wry smiles with a story about two Italian men who had a sexy way with words.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **JOEL BLUMBERG** sternly reminded members to get the flu vaccine ASAP. The high dose quadrivalent version is the choice for us older folk. You should try your own doctor or various pharmacies. The vaccine is also administered at the ShopRite near Commerce Boulevard in Stamford. Although the Town will have a drive-through flu clinic on Saturday October 24th at the Island Beach Parking Lot, they will NOT have the high dose version. Also, you must register in advance and complete a consent form; credit cards are not accepted. For questions regarding the Town flu vaccine program, call 203-622-3774.

2. **PETER STERN**, Membership, noted that there were 64 in attendance. There were no guests. We sang Happy Birthday to **ED FARRELL 82**, **DAVID WATKINS 75**, **MARSHALL TOPPO 87**, and **BILL FEATHERSTON 78**.
3. **RUSS HARDEN** delivered a memorial for long-time Greenwich resident and RMA member **JACK POOLE**, who had died at Edgehill on September 27th. He was 77 years old. His obituary can be found here:
<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/greenwich-ct/john-poole-9380841>
4. Treasurer **JEFF JUNKER** noted that he had received dues from two members since last week, bringing our total paid membership for the year to 218. Our UBS account has been closed and the \$72,000 balance is now in a Chase Bank checking account.
5. **MIKE AMBROSINO** happily had no reports for Visiting but reminded everyone to let him know if any of our members are ill or hospitalized (brooklynoil@yahoo.com). He stayed on stage to relate a Human-Interest Story; the recent feature added to our business meeting agenda. On May 15, 1957, several NY Yankees were celebrating at the Copacabana: Mickey Mantle, Yogi Berra, Hank Bauer, Billy Martin, and Whitey Ford with their wives (except for Martin, who was single at the time). An infamous altercation arose when members of a tipsy bowling team seated at the next table began insulting Sammy Davis, Jr., the entertainer that night, with racist remarks. One or more Yankee told them to knock it off but one of the bowlers challenged Hank Bauer to a fight. Hank was blamed for punching and knocking down the bowler before they could exit the club, and the event made all the newspapers. But it was later determined that Joey Silvesti, an off-duty club bouncer, had actually punched the bowler.
6. **STEVE MEYERS** invited everyone to tune in to today's speaker, Joseph Cirincione, one of the nation's leading authorities on nuclear weapons, whose topic is "National Security and Nuclear Policy after the 2020 Election." **HOLLISTER STURGES** reminded everyone that the Speaker Program for the next two weeks will be part of the Greenwich Reads Together partnership with the Greenwich Library. Next week will feature an interview by Lesley King with Claudine Humure, a Rwandan cancer survivor and health advocate, about the touching story "Partners in Health: A Second Chance at Life." **HOLLISTER** announced that the Program Committee will conduct an e-mail survey of the full RMA membership next week on several aspects of the speaker programs and to see which topics members are most interested in. The survey will also ask members for new ideas and thoughts on how to improve programming. Everyone is encouraged to participate.

FUN AND GAMES

1. INDOOR TENNIS: **SAM MARASSO** announced that three sets were played by various teams composed of **DON BREISMEISTER, PETER DODGE, SAM MARASSO, and PETER ORBANOWSKI**. Winners were the two **PETERS, DON** and **PETER ORBANOWSKI**, and **SAM** and **PETER ORBANOWSKI**. A trifecta for **PETER O**. Next week's captain is **PETER DODGE**.
2. GOLF: **PAUL CAMPION** reports that golf on Tuesday was pretty much a "washout" with only four hardy souls braving the soggy and misty conditions. Next Tuesday, October 20th, will be the last outing of the season. Tee-off will start at 8:20am; please sign up with **PAUL** by Thursday as we get ready for those chilly autumnal mornings, contact **PAUL** at (paulcampio1@optonline.net).
3. TAI CHI: **WILL MORRISON** reminded everyone that sessions are held on Mondays and Wednesdays at 3pm. Improve your Balance and Flexibility and your golf and tennis games, attested to by GRANVILLE BURGESS AND GEOFFREY BURGE. Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/99622029436> Meeting ID: 996 2202 9436 Passcode: raisehands Beginners welcome. Private individual and small group sessions are available. **WILL MORRISON**: wdmorrison@gmail.com
4. WALKERS: **TAD LARRABEE** strolled to the mic to tell us that last Thursday morning 10 walkers had a very pleasant perambulation in the Mianus River Gorge Preserve in Bedford, NY, even though the fall color was only a hint. On October 15th, they walked in the Cranberry Preserve near the Kensico Dam where they clambered to the top walls of the stone quarry and had a view over the tree canopy. Fall color was better. The group normally walks at 9 AM every Thursday. If interested, please e-mail **TAD** at tadlarra@optonline.net.
5. BRIDGE: **ANDRZEJ MAZUREK** shuffled a bit as he dealt us the news that there were 5 players. High pointers were: **ED MASTOLONI** 4040, **JOHN FEBLES** 3920, and **ANDRZEJ MAZUREK** 2610.
6. HEARTS: **DON CONWAY** reported something, but the details were lost in the shuffle.

SPECIAL EVENTS

No events are currently scheduled and any for the future will depend on the pandemic situation.

SPEAKER PROGRAM

Moderator **HOLLISTER STURGES** welcomed everyone and described next week's program. Presenter **STEVE MYERS** introduced Joseph Cirincione, a national security analyst and author with over 35 years of experience working in Washington, D.C. within the Government and with various NGOs. He is the author or editor of seven books, including "Nuclear Nightmares: Securing the World before It Is Too Late" and "Bomb Scare": The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons." He is an adjunct faculty member at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

The speaker traced the history of attempts to control nuclear weapons, from the prescient prediction by JFK in 1960 that 20-25 countries would someday possess such weapons, to the Johnson and Nixon eras when the first non-proliferation treaties were agreed upon internationally, to current times when the overwhelming threats are with Iran and North Korea. In 2017, the US held about 10,000 nuclear warheads (land-based, on submarines and ships), the same as in 1950, but a fraction of the maximum of 40,000 in 1986; Russia had 20,000 then. What makes the situation more dangerous (and scary) than ever before is the fact that the minimum explosive power of our current atomic bomb warheads is ten times that of the Hiroshima bomb and that hydrogen bombs are now installed on ships.

He expressed great concern about the ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan, each possessing an estimated 150 nuclear warheads. Should that conflict escalate to the use of such a weapon, in addition to the usual devastation of structures, spread of radiation, and human casualties, it could lead to a catastrophic "nuclear winter," with particulate matter circling the globe and decimating food crops.

Unless agreements can be reached with Iran and North Korea, he predicts a domino effect, whereby countries like Saudi Arabia, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan will feel threatened and will attempt to develop their own arsenals. It would also influence Israel to increase its stockpile. He thinks that leaving the Iran deal established under the Obama presidency, and cancelling several other multi-national agreements, was a mistake and that since Trump took office, the threat from nuclear weapons has grown. He lauded President Trump for his initial and unorthodox approach by meeting with Kim Jong Un before any agreements were reached, even just for holding formal talks. However, there has been no substantive follow-up, which he blamed partially on John Bolton's poor advice and on the "decimation" of the State Department (loss of experienced foreign policy experts). Although Russia, China and the EU still honor the Iran deal, the country has stepped up its development of uranium enrichment since the US bowed out.

He compared the approaches that he believes would be taken by Biden or Trump during the next administration. Biden would re-enter the Iran deal, a situation easier to control than with North Korea. He would revert to the tested step-by-step, give-and-take approach to negotiations that have been used in the past, working with allies. He would also affirm that the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is to deter war and not to be used as a first strike. President Trump, in the speaker's opinion, considers such allies as economic rivals and prefers one-on-one deals which have not led to any improvement.

As if all the above is not enough to worry about, he pointed out that, stories to the contrary, the President of the US has sole authority over launching a nuclear weapon. Such civilian control was established during the Truman administration. There are no "checks or balances" with the military or anyone else. If a Russian nuclear weapon were to be launched against the US, it would be detected so that we would have 20 minutes to react. A president could, with unfettered authority, order the launch of missiles. Considering among other reasons that there have been 5 false alarms of attacks, the process for deciding whether or when to attack needs to be reconsidered. Other countries with nuclear capability do have more systematic approaches.

NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER

October 21st, Claudine Humure, Partnership Coordinator at University of Global Health Equity from Rwanda will be interviewed by Lesley King, Board of Trustees of Partners in Health. Humure, a Rwandan cancer survivor and health advocate has a touching story, "Partners in Health: A Second Chance at Life." Sponsored in conjunction with Greenwich Library and the programs celebrating Greenwich Reads Together, the presentations will tell the story of a lifesaving mission in Rwanda and address strengthening public health care systems in developing countries, a theme of one of this year's book selections, "Mountains Beyond Mountains" by Tracy Kidder.

NOTE TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS: next week's CBB scribe will be **FRANK SCARPA**. Please send a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB to **FRANK** at fjscarpa@optonline.net.

NOTE TO RMA Members: The CBB Team works every week to write and publish an informative and concise bulletin for our members enjoyment. We can truly use new members to join the CBB Team. Please contact **JOE MANCINELLI** at jlmanc@optonline.net if you are interested in supporting this continuing effort.