

CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



www.greenwichrma.org

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SCRIBE: ARNOLD J. GORDON

"We must have respect for both our plumbers and our philosophers or neither our pipes or our theories will hold water." - John W. Gardner

Fresh from the Board meeting and after closing the lively pre-meeting member-chat session, President **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** began the meeting at 9:45 and proceeded to recite the Pledge. In place of a traditional song, **MICHAEL** arranged for a showing by **LEN CARUSI** of a rousing rendition of George M. Cohan's famous WWI song, "Over There," in an excerpt with the star James Cagney from the 1942 movie of the same title.

President **AMBROSINO** then announced that at its meeting that morning, the Board decided to restart in-person meetings on February 16th with the usual mask wearing but a new vaccine requirement for all guests as well as members at meetings and speaker programs: proof of full vaccination AND a booster shot. The meetings will still be available by Zoom as well. The church approves of our serving coffee and refreshments. He had no Visiting report this week, pointing out that permission is needed from the member to make an announcement; no one had informed him of any members hospitalized or otherwise ill for the past week. There is a need for a volunteer to replace him as Visiting chair and he welcomes all those interested to contact him. He is also looking for someone to chair a food and clothing drive in the spring.

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** provided some recent news on managing covid-19. Contrary to popular opinion, certain masks can be sanitized after use and reused. See

https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/blog/how-to-reuse-n95-kn95-and-other-disposable-masks/?utm_campaign=WirecutterWeekly&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_content=BestOfWeek&utm_term=ReuseFaceMask

He also pointed out that three free N95 masks per person will soon be available in CT at CVS, Costco, RiteAid, ShopRite, Walmart and Walgreen stores. They are expected to arrive within a week or so. Details can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/retail-pharmacy-program/participating-pharmacies.html>

Two members who have recently tested positive, wondered how long the virus can linger in the body and be transmissible, even after isolation up to 10 days. Two recent articles address these issues:

https://www.medpagetoday.com/special-reports/exclusives/96765?xid=nl_mpt_investigative2022-01-26&eun=g1787845d0r&utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=InvestigativeMD_012622&utm_term=NL_Gen_Int_InvestigateMD_Active

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html#isolation>

ARNOLD is still looking for someone who was friendly with recently departed former member Charlie Marshall in order to deliver a memorial; please contact **ARNOLD** if you knew him and can oblige (ajgordo@verizon.net; 203-340-9336). The Corresponding Secretary joke brigade has lost two members recently. Although we are now five-strong with **PAUL CAMPION** as a newbie, we need one or two more. All you need is a funny bone, a speaking voice, and the honor of entertaining your fellow RMAers. Get in touch with **ARNOLD** please. Still hogging the Zoomlight, **ARNOLD** pinch hit for the scheduled jokester for the day, who was unable to appear. He offered a potpourri of some groaners, wise cracks and otherwise silly material.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership: **PETER STERN** reported that there were 59 in attendance, including three guests: Tom Doody g/o **ED MASTOLONI**; Dick Williamson g/o **STEVE BOIES** and **STEVE MYERS**; Bob Mendelsohn (from Colorado) g/o **BOB SHULLMAN**. Three snowbirds from Florida participated:

BILL O'DONNELL, TONY FITZPATRICK and GRAN BURGESS. DIETER BLENNEMANN, at 86, was the only birthday boy.

An induction ceremony was held for **GARY RIDDELL**, who was nominated by **ANDERS EKERNAS**, seconded by **FRED WU**. **GARY** was Risk Manager for Swiss Bank UBS. **ANDERS** described him as a wise man with a wealth of knowledge, who served with **ANDERS** on the asset management committee and council for the First Congregational Church in Old Greenwich. In his comments, **GARY** said that Greenwich is fortunate to have a group like the RMA; he looks forward to meeting the members.



Gary Riddell

In anticipation of having in-person meetings starting on February 16th, **PETER** urged members to provide him in advance with a copy of their vaccination card showing evidence of the booster shot. You can attach a copy (e.g., .pdf or .jpg) to an e-mail message and send it to members@greenwichrma.org. In the subject line, put VAX + Booster, and your name. You can also show your vaccination card at the screening desk by the Social Hall to be added to the approved list. **PETER** gave kudos to **LEE LUNDY**, the first member to send in his vaccination data.

JOE MANCINELLI summarized his report to the Board on the November 2021 Banquet held at the Tamarack Club. It was a very successful event for the 176 attendees who enjoyed good food and a pleasant after-lunch program, including a performance by the Melody Men, who were in good voice and spirits! It was an opportunity for our members to gather with friends and guests in a festive atmosphere. After consideration of all expenses and income, including some gifts, we broke even.



Tamarack Club



2021 RMA Banquet

JERRY POLLOCK described this week’s speaker program with Anka Badurina, PhD, whose topic is “Immigration Today: Myths and Facts.” **BOB RIMMER** announced that next week’s program will feature Steven Katz, Chairman of the Commission on Aging for the Town of Greenwich, who will tell us about “Successful Aging at Home and in Our Community.” It will be his second RMA appearance.

JACK WEIR described the latest activities of the recently formed Publicity Committee. Several initiatives are in progress with various media (radio, TV, newspapers) in town. For example, by arrangement with the *Greenwich Sentinel*, an article summarizing the talk by Karen Dynan on the U.S. economy as well as information on RMA was published. More details on the Committee’s programs will be forthcoming. **JACK** thanked several members who had made possible the new arrangement for a weekly RMA column in the *Sentinel* (which has a circulation of 20,000), including **SKIP AUCH, BOB SHULLMAN, FRED WU, HOLLISTER STURGES** and your CBB editor and scribes.

JACOB SCHONDORF informed us that the AARP tax aide program will start next week, using a drop-off procedure this year; there will be no in-person preparations. Make an appointment to drop off your tax documents (203-548-7710). Drop-off is on Monday, pickup on Wednesday, or Wednesday for Friday pick-up. Packets indicating what you should include are available at the Town Hall front desk or at the Senior Center.

FUN AND GAMES

1. **Pickleball:** No report for this week. Games will continue from 11 am until 1 pm at Christiano Field, weather permitting, of course. If you would like to be put on the mailing list announcing the weekly schedule, contact **MARK GEIMER** (mark.geimer@gmail.com).
2. **Walkers:** **TAD LARRABEE** gave no report for last Thursday; they were snowed out and it was too slippery for walking. Gee, they could have skied.
3. **Tai Chi:** **WILL MORRISON** told us that body balance is a vital health priority. Tai Chi improves your balance as studied at Harvard Medical School, and the Mayo and Cleveland Clinics. Classes are held on Mondays, 9:30 am at the First Congregational Church in Old Greenwich and on Zoom. Sign-up is required; contact WILL at wdmorrison@gmail.com or through experiencetaichi.org. There is no charge but contributions are welcome.
4. **Bridge:** **ANDRE MAZUREK** reported that on January 19th, in-person games were played by **RON MURRAY** (1,780 points), **TONY COCCHI** (1,710), **CHARLEY LAND** (1,030) and **ED MASTOLONI** (960). Games played online with only two players on January 20th resulted in **ANDRE** scoring 6,160 points, including a slam for 1,370 points. **RON FRIEDMAN** had 1,160 points. Next week's in- person games will be at **ED MASTOLONI's** house, 10 Rincard Terrace, Greenwich, located off King Street just north of the Merritt Parkway. If interested in playing, contact **ANDRE** at mazurek.a.j@gmail.com.
5. **Hearts:** **ANDY HOLMES** described the games. On January 18th the foursome of **MICHAEL AMBROSINO, GRANT PERKINS, JOHN STANKUNIS** and **TOM HEALY** played four games online using the Trickster websites. **TOM** and **GRANT** each won two games. There were two moonshots, both by **TOM HEALY**. On January 25th the same foursome played five games. **JOHN** and **TOM** each won two games and **GRANT** won one. This time there were six moonshots – two by **TOM**, two by **JOHN** and one each by **GRANT** and **MICHAEL**. Last Wednesday, a different foursome of **JIM DEAN, JACK SWEGER, BOB SHULLMAN** and **ANDY HOLMES** played four games. **JIM** won two, **BOB** won one game as did **ANDY**. There were five moonshots, three by **JIM DEAN** and one each by **BOB** and **ANDY**.
6. **Tennis:** **ANDY HOLMES** served up the results from last Friday's session at the Old Greenwich Tennis Academy. Four matches were played. In the opening round, the winners on court one were **DON BREISMEISTER** and **PETER DODGE** and the winners on court two were **ART DELMHORST** and **BILL HOWLAND**. In the finals round, the winners

on court one were **PETER DODGE** and **BILL HOWLAND**; on court two the winners were **PETER UHRY** and **JOHN KNIGHT**. This week's captain will be **ANDY HOLMES**.

- 7. Platform (aka Paddle) Tennis:** **JOE MANCINELLI** reported that there were nine players on Tuesday. It was 36 degrees and overcast, which was perfect for platform tennis (no sun to distract). Players were rotated in and out so that everyone had an opportunity to play. The sport provides great exercise and sportsmanship; new players are always welcome. Come on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 am at the Loughlin Avenue Park courts.

SPECIAL EVENTS

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

SPEAKER PROGRAM

GERALD POLLACK introduced Anka Badurina, PhD, the Executive Director of the non-profit Stamford organization Building One Community – Center for Immigrant Opportunity (B1C), an operation dedicated to advancing the successful integration of immigrants and their families. Since its inception, B1C has served over 13,100 immigrants from 112 different countries, providing free services that educate, employ, empower, and engage immigrants and the broader community. Programs offered include ELL (English Language Learner) programs, family and individual support services, immigration legal services, and workforce development programs. Her own experience has had an important influence on her dedicated work. Born in Venezuela, Anka is multilingual and has a deep understanding of diverse cultures, having lived in Venezuela, Mexico, the U.S., Canada, Japan, Spain, and the U.K. She has an undergraduate degree in modern languages, an MA in Commerce, and a PhD in cultural anthropology from Kyoto University. She addressed the following aspects of immigration: myths vs. facts; why migrants flee their home countries; immigrant situation in CT and Fairfield County; and the local reality. The myths were described as follows:

- Our parents and grandparents came to the U.S. legally
- Immigrants steal jobs from Americans
- They are a burden on our public benefits system
- They do not pay taxes

Legal immigration is limited for approved work visas, family reunification, or humanitarian protection (asylum seekers). For the vast majority of immigrants, there is no easy legal pathway to enter and stay in the U.S. or to legalize their status when they are here. An example is the 640,000 people here under the DACA program (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), still in limbo. There are an estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S.; in 2016 they contributed 6.2 billion dollars to the economy. In 2018, 26% of the self-employed were immigrants, contributing to innovation and entrepreneurship. Undocumented immigrants contribute more than 120 million dollars in taxes to Connecticut and more than 11 billion dollars to the U.S. Their net contribution to the Social Security system is 12 billion dollars per year. The number of immigrants has dropped by 30% compared to recent years, which has resulted in an estimated agricultural product crop loss in the U.S. of 70 million dollars. The total economic loss for lack of all immigrant workers is as much as 390 million dollars.

The proportion of foreign-born people in CT is 14% but is almost double that in Fairfield County, 27%. In Greenwich and Stamford, the proportions are 27.5% and 35%, respectively. One-quarter of immigrants in CT are children. Undocumented immigrants are NOT eligible for public benefits, such as Medicare and Medicaid. However, they can receive emergency medical care and education.

Migrants flee their home countries for the U.S. mainly because of pervasive violence (especially in Central America and Venezuela), lack of job opportunities, crushing poverty, and food insecurity for which climate change is an increasingly important factor. Smugglers (known as coyotes) who help people enter the U.S. illegally charge as much as \$10,000 per person. It is estimated that up to eight out of 10 women crossing the border are raped. Interestingly, more people are deported from Guatemala back to the countries they came from than the U.S. deports to Mexico.

In affluent areas such as Fairfield County, where one-half of Connecticut's undocumented people live, many service jobs are available. For example, in 2021, 15% of nurses were foreign born; the proportion for home health aides and other healthcare workers was 30%. As expected, there are many opportunities for landscape and gardening work in Fairfield County. Guatemala, Mexico, Brazil and Ecuador are the places of birth for most of the immigrants. In

terms of geographic region, 45% come from Mexico and Central America, compared to 10% from Asia. Of the 48,000 immigrants over the age of 16, 76% are employed.

B1C tries to help immigrants through the many challenges they face: language barrier, low literacy and education, families with members of mixed immigration status with the fear of deportation, often children or other family members left behind, lack of access to healthcare, need for legal representation, workplace abuses including unpaid wages, and lack of access to affordable housing. Covid-19 has had a disproportional effect with higher infection and hospitalization rates than other groups, partly due to overcrowded housing and the fact that many are among essential workers, almost none of whom can work from home.

Dr. Badurina mentioned that B1C will hold its ninth annual benefit breakfast on May 19, 2022. She also welcomed volunteers from the RMA. The privately funded organization has about 450 active volunteers (examples of their contributions are teaching English, acting as interpreters, and helping with an incubation program). For more information, see <https://building1community.org/>.

NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER

Steve Katz, Chairman of the Commission on Aging for the Town of Greenwich and who is co-spearheading Greenwich's Age and Dementia Friendly certification initiative with the AARP, World Health Organization, and Dementia Friendly America, will speak on "Successfully Aging at Home and in Our Community."

SPECIAL FEATURE

Past President **PETE UHRY** has asked that we include a few "historical" RMA pictures, with a question of the week. How many of these past presidents can you identify? (Hint: some are still active... and talking!)



Do you have any pictures of past RMA activities?

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS: Scribe for the next meeting, on February 2, will be →AV RIVEL←. Please send a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB to av@rivels.org.

ALL MEMBERS: Do not forget to report all your inside and outside volunteer hours to **JOHN FEBLES** at jfebles13@gmail.com.

ALL MEMBERS: The CBB Team works every week to write and publish an informative and concise bulletin for our members' enjoyment. We welcome new members to join the CBB Team. Please contact **TIM BROOKS** at tbroo@aol.com if you are interested.

ALL MEMBERS are reminded that in addition to streaming on the Internet, RMA speakers are normally shown on the local public access TV channels, Verizon FIOS channel 24 and Optimum (Cablevision) channel 79.

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

Visit our website at <https://greenwichrma.org>.

RMA 2022 CALENDAR

Weekly Repetitive Activities*			
Day	Time	Activity	Contact
Mondays	9:30 am	Tai Chi Workout	Will Morrison - wdmorrison@gmail.com
Mondays	11:00 am to 1:00 pm	Pickleball at Christiano Park	Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com Mark Geimer – mark.geimer@gmail.com
Tuesdays	10:00 to 11:00 am	Platform (paddle) tennis at Loughlin Field, Cos Cob	John Dean - jhdeanco@gmail.com
Wednesdays	9:45 to 10:30 am	RMA Weekly Meeting	Horst Tebbe - onehorst@optimum.net or Len Carusi at lencarusi@gmail.com
Wednesdays	12:45 to 3:30 pm	Hearts at the Women’s Club	John Kavanagh - jjkct176@gmail.com
Wednesdays	12:30 pm	Bridge at The Women’s Club	Andre Mazurek - mazurek.a.j@gmail.com
Thursdays	8:00 am	“Tai Chi Fundamentals” – First Congregational Church, Old Greenwich	Will Morrison - wdmorrison@gmail.com
Thursdays	9:00 am	RMA Walking	Tad Larrabee - tadlarra@optonline.net
Thursdays	11:00 am to 1:00 pm	Pickleball at Christiano Park	Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com Mark Geimer – mark.geimer@gmail.com
Friday	1:30-3:00 pm	Tennis	Andy Holmes - andyholmes56@gmail.com)

*Day & time of some events may vary; check with contact