



CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



www.greenwichrma.org

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Print/Distribution: **Joe Mancinelli**

VOLUME 68 NUMBER 33 March 3, 2021

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“The only thing that holds a marriage together is the husband bein’ big enough to step back and see where his wife is wrong.” Archie Bunker

The schmoozing regulars, up to 30 of them, logged on between 9:15 and 10am to exchange pleasantries and complaints, while President **RUSS HARDEN** and the Board held their monthly meeting. But **RUSS** quickly opened the business meeting just after 10am. **LEN CARUSI** broadcast the Melody Men rendition of the RMA song. Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance followed by **RUSS**, subbing for the missing, scheduled designee (you know who you are).

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** recommended that everyone get on the mailing list of member **STEVE MESKER'S** regularly posted Capitol Update, which has useful, current information on the corona virus, vaccinations, important local news, and the latest goings-on at the State Legislature. To obtain a copy, write to **STEVE**: Stephen.Meskers@cga.ct.gov

ARNOLD then opined that live music was sorely missed at our meetings and proceeded to subject the members to a performance on camera of *When the Saints Go Marching In* by an antique trumpet-playing automaton. The audience was bemused!

BOB CAREY took over the mic and held sway with his brand of medical humor, trying to convince us that speaking English was a heart attack risk. In an encore, he impressed us with the scientifically invalid relationship between the newspaper one reads and whether you are a mover, shaker or loser.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **PETER STERN**, Membership, noted a maximum of 66 in attendance. There were two guests: Flemming Heilmann (guest of **BOB MEANEY** and **HOLLISTER STURGES**) and Steve Scheraga (guest of **JAN MEYER** and **STEVE MYERS**). Birthday celebrants were **RALPH NEWITTER 78, DON ROTZIEN 79, ED MASTOLONI 84, PETER BERG 18** (see explanation below), **PETE JUNIUS 82, CHET RISIO 93, and ROBERT WEISBROD 74**. They all were wished well with the recorded Happy Birthday song. **PETER BERG** may have been a member under false pretense. He was born on February 29, 1948 and has only had 18 official birthdays. By consensus, he was given dispensation for the blatant deception and allowed to retain his membership, but atonement is in order. At the February 2nd meeting **PETER STERN** announced **TOM MCGUIRE** as 94 but he was actually “only” 93½. RMA hereby returns those 6 Months! Everyone welcomed back **GENE SCHWARTZ**, who has been missing in action for a while. Joining us from Florida were **GERRY GIBIAN** and **FRANK SCARPA** and they did not even apologize for enjoying wonderful weather.
2. Treasurer **JEFF JUNKER** noted that there were only two transactions this past week, for the Survey Monkey membership questionnaire and the recurring monthly fee for our Zoom meetings.
3. **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** for Visiting happily reported that he had not heard this past week of any members having medical problems. However, **ALAN GUNZBERG** reported that he had just learned that **DAVID NOBLE** recently became ill. **DAVID** welcomes mail to 73 Mallard Drive, Greenwich 06830, but no calls. Please let **MICHAEL** know if any of our members are ill or hospitalized (brooklynoil@yahoo.com).
4. El Presidente **RUSS** provided a snapshot of some key findings of the membership survey on meetings that was spearheaded by **JIM FISHBEIN, TIM BROOKS** and **PETER STERN**. When we meet in person again, there is a strong desire for more fellowship time, i.e., a longer coffee break; easier access to meetings, including Zoom as an option when we meet in-person; members also called for smoother, “tighter” meetings, including on Zoom, and for more variety of offerings. **RUSS** will continue to provide updates as plans evolve. Discussions are ongoing with the Church as to when it might be possible for us to return for in-the-flesh gatherings. **GERRY GIBBIAN** commented that the Milbrook Club alerted their members that the State of CT now allows indoor private event gatherings of 100 and outdoor of 200 and are taking reservations for a St. Patrick’s Day celebrations on March 14th. Whether other organizations or institutions follow suit remains to be seen.
5. **ARNOLD GORDON** urged everyone to watch today’s speaker, Bill Diamond, CEO of the SETI Institute, whose subject is “Seeking Life in the Cosmos – The Search for Intelligent Life in the Universe and What it Means for Mankind.” **HOLLISTER STURGES** told us that next

week's speaker will be John Celock, president of the Celock Media Group and an award-winning journalist, who will discuss "How Young Elected Officials are Impacting the U.S."

6. **TAD LARRABEE** offered an opportunity to learn some new and interesting skills and to have a positive impact on RMA. A TV Editor is needed who would work with the Co-Chairmen of the TV Editing Committee. The position will involve learning how to edit our TV recordings that are posted on the RMA website after each speaker presentation and are made available to the Town's TV station. Our speaker program is our most visible presence to the public and the recordings are frequently consulted for many months after the actual presentation. Therefore, good quality editing of our TV recordings is an important function for both RMA and the general public. Please volunteer for this interesting position. Contact **TAD** (tadlarra@optonline.net) or **JERRY SCHWENDEMAN**, Chairman of the Nominating Council (JerrySchwendeman@Yahoo.com).

FUN AND GAMES

1. INDOOR TENNIS: **ANDY HOLMES** announced that plans have begun for the September through May 2021/2022 indoor tennis season. An email was recently sent out to those currently participating in the indoor tennis season, asking them if they had an interest in participating again next year and, if so, to submit a deposit. If any participant did not receive the email or if there is anyone new that would like to join the indoor tennis group for the 2021/2022 season, contact **ANDY** at andyholmes56@gmail.com. As for last week's tennis results, the 1st round winners were **PAT MacARTHY** and **ART DELMHORST** on court 1 and **ANDRE MAZUREK** and **PETER DODGE** on court 2. In the finals round, winning again were **ANDRE** and **PAT** on court 1; **BILL FAKUNDINY** and **TOM HEALY** held sway on court 2. This week's captain will be **ANDRE MAZUREK**.
2. PLATFORM TENNIS: **RUSS HARDEN** mentioned that at the regular play time at Loughlin Courts on Tuesday morning at 9:30, he and 7 others played several round robin games.
3. TAI CHI: **WILL MORRISON** was on a trip to CA and could not report this week. However, members are reminded that sessions take place on Mondays and Wednesdays at 3:00pm via Zoom. Spouses are welcome. Contact: wdmorrison@gmail.com; Zoom link <https://zoom.us/j/99622029436>, Meeting ID: 996 2202 9436, Passcode: raisehands
4. WALKERS: **TAD LARRABEE** stepped up to tell us that seven walkers enjoyed a very nice morning last Thursday with a walk to and around the Old Oak Country Club golf course near Purchase College. Anyone wishing to join the walkers, please email tadlarra@optonline.net to add your name to the walkers list for weekly announcements. The group normally walks at 9 AM every Thursday.

5. BRIDGE: **ANDRE MAZUREK** reported that there were four players. Top scorers: **RON FRIEDMAN** 4,630; **TONY COCCHI** 4,480; **ED MOSTOLONI** 3,210. Play is every Wednesday at 1pm using the Trickster bridge app; if interested, contact **TONY** (tony.cocchi2@gmail.com) or **ANDRE** (mazurek.a.j@gmail.com).
6. HEARTS: **DON CONWAY** dealt the news that he, **TOM HEALY**, **MIKE AMBROSINO**, and **JOHN KNIGHT** played 5 games. **MIKE** and **TOM** each won one game each with **DON** winning the last three games. **TOM** had two moon shots; **MIKE** and **JOHN** each had one. **JOHN** also had the only "that-a-boy" (whatever that means!).
7. PICKLEBALL: **TONY COCCHI** reported that only three players showed up this week. One court was very wet, so they just practiced. The other court was covered with ice, so **PETER UHRY**, **JOHN KNIGHT** and **TONY** removed most of it, hoping that it remains clear until the next outing on Monday. If interested in joining the group, notify either **JOHN KNIGHT** (JohnKnight7@gmail.com) or **TONY COCCHI**. (Anthony.Cocchi@Lehman.cuny.edu). Weather permitting, play occurs at 1PM at Christiano Field.

SPECIAL EVENTS

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

SPEAKER PROGRAM

Moderator **ARNOLD GORDON** welcomed everyone and introduced Bill Diamond, President and CEO of the SETI Institute in Mountain View, CA. Mr. Diamond has over 30 years' experience with various technology companies, from venture-backed start-ups to Fortune 100 multinationals, including CEO positions at several firms. He holds a B.A. in physics from Holy Cross College and a Master's in Business Administration from Georgetown University. The SETI Institute (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) is a nonprofit astrophysics and astrobiology research and education organization focused on the study of life in the Universe, a venture that, as Mr. Diamond states, is on a journey of ultimate discovery. SETI seeks answers to the daunting questions: "Are We Alone? Are we unique? Is (or was) there life elsewhere in the universe?" Mankind has pondered these age-old questions from Galileo to NASA (SETI is a prime contractor); even the Vatican has interest, with its own astronomer. As Mr. Diamond pointed out, it is only now that we have the tools and better understanding of galactic structures to allow serious attempts to provide answers. He provided a sweeping survey of the size and structure of the universe as we know it, with its mind-numbing dimensions and complexity. Our own galaxy, the Milky Way, spans a distance of 100,000 light years (one light year is about 6 trillion miles!) and contains more than 3600 comets and 900,000 asteroids, and billions of stars! The stars we see in the sky are all suns with their own

planets; it is estimated that there are billions of earth-like planets within our galaxy, whose size is somewhere between that of Mars and Neptune. Attempts are still being made to estimate how many technologically capable civilizations might exist in the cosmos through the use of equations developed many years ago by Frank Drake, Carl Sagan and other prominent astronomers and astrophysicists.

There are three ways to search for life: instruments and probes on site, like the Perseverance that recently landed on Mars; remote sensing, such as bio-signatures (presence of life-forming chemicals in the atmosphere, e.g.) detected with telescopes; signals of the type that SETI and its partners are capable of detecting with radio telescopes and other arrays. The equipment used by SETI is capable of scanning the entire Milky Way and beyond. Currently, detection of bio-signatures is limited to distances of about 30 light years (huge in Earth terms – 180 trillion miles – but small in outer space terms). It is important to realize that if a signal were to be detected from some far-off body, given the speed of light, such a signal would have originated hundreds or thousands of years ago! To date, there has been no evidence for convincing signals or other observations for intelligent life beyond earth, notwithstanding stories about UFOs. But the search goes on. The curiosity is an engine for innovation and SETI's work has influenced research in other areas such as climate change and communication/signal processing.

SETI is also involved in an extensive Education and Outreach program with teachers and organizations like the Girl Scouts, where 100,000 girls recently participated in one of their programs. SETI has an artists-in-residence program for works inspired by the science involved; through lectures and debates, it also educates the public on all-things-space.

This summary does not do justice to Bill Diamond's "out-of-this-world" talk, his excellent slides, or the extensive discussions during the Q&A session. You can watch the presentation here: <https://vimeo.com/519316810> You can also find out more about SETI here: www.seti.org

Mr. Diamond has offered to answer any questions you might have about his talk or about other aspects of SETI's programs (bdiamond@seti.org).

NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER

March 10th, John Celock, "How Young Elected Officials are Impacting the U.S."

NOTE TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS: next week's CBB scribe will be **TIM BROOKS**. Please send a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB to **TIM** at tbroo@aol.com.

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.

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RMA 2021 CALENDAR

Weekly Repetitive Activities			
Date	Time	Activity	Contact
Mondays	1:00pm	Outdoor Pickle Ball at Christiano Park	Tony Cocchi - anthony.cocchi@lehman.cuny.edu
Tuesdays	9:30 to 11:00	Platform Tennis, Loughlin Ave. Cos Cob	James Dean - jhdeanco@gmail.com
Wednesdays	10:00to 11:00	RMA Weekly Zoom Meeting	Horst Tebbe - onehorst@optimum.net or Len Carusi @ lencarusi@gmail.com
Wednesdays	1:00 to 3:00	On-Line Bridge	Andre Mazurek - mazurek.a.g@gmail.com
Wednesdays	3:00 to 4:00	Zoom: "Tai Chi New Joiners"	Will Morrison - wdmorrison@gmail.com
Thursdays	9:00 AM	RMA Walking	Tad Larrabee - tadlarra@optonline.net
Fridays	1:00 PM	On-Line Hearts	Don Conway - spiderduck4@gmail.com
Fridays	1:30pm to 3:00pm	Indoor Tennis	Andy Holmes - andyholmes56@gmail.com
	Various Times TBD	On-Line Hearts	Don Conway - spiderduck4@gmail.com