

CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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

www.greenwichrma.org

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"Ah, but I was so much older then, I'm younger than that now."

Bob Dylan

VOLUME 66 NUMBER 43 MARCH 6, 2019 SCRIBE: JOE MANCINELLI

President TAD LARRABEE'S bell ringing at 10:04 am brought an abrupt end to BOB MORGAN'S delightful pre-meeting background music.

BOB then proceeded to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. JACK SWEGER, accompanied by the aforementioned BOB MORGAN, led the assembled group in a rousing version of *The Star-Spangled Banner*, followed by the more sentimental favorites, *The Tennessee Waltz* and *Bye Bye Love*.

WAYNE DEVRIES presided as treasurer with JEFF JUNKER acting as assistant treasurer. GEORGE DIPPY was the RMA Mentor for the day.

TAD announced **returnees**: BOB MORGAN from Vero Beach, Florida, WAYNE DEFRIES from Egypt, Israel and Jordan, RANDY MOTLAND from Lake Tahoe, California, and JOHN AWDZIEWICZ from Tortuga, British Virgin Islands. Celebrations: SAM MARASSO has been married to his wife Louise for 53 years.

RICH BISK regaled us with two humorous tales. The first story involved a Greek and an Irishman who debated the various contributions of their ancestors towards the attainment of today's superior culture. Secondly, he related the tale of a mid-day burglary where the victim made a very unusual appeal to the would-be robber.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Incidents**: TAD introduced CHET RISIO who has recommended a new weekly meeting discussion segment. CHET pointed to the fact that we have all had incidents in our lives that shaped us, brought us joy or conflict, gave us a direction we had never contemplated. Incidents where we came out as heroes or

victims. This discussion topic will reflect those personal incidents, allowing us to get to know each other better and perhaps derive some enjoyment and knowledge from these stories. Funny or tragic, they will be true stories told by our members.

CHET introduced our first true story from JOE MANCINELLI who will describe his experience in dealing with a serious illness while traveling in a foreign country. JOE described his experience while suffering a heart attack during a vacation in Athens, Greece. Following his successful medical procedure, JOE highlighted the excellent care and assistance he and his wife received from a “flight escort” who managed every aspect of his trip back to Connecticut. Thanks to this escort, JOE and his wife had a smooth and comfortable journey back home. JOE’S salient message to RMA members was to thoroughly investigate trip insurance when traveling to a foreign country. It could pay big dividends!

2. **Volunteering:** RICH BISK gave a thank you to the group for an apparent uptick in the recorded volunteer hours. He announced an increase in volunteer hours for February 2019, of 2,285 hours over and above the February, 2018 total of 1,888 hours. Likewise, the year-to-date totals for 2019 are 10,911 hours over and above the 2018 total of 10,824 hours. Great job to all the RMA volunteers! Keep up the good work. The year-to-date RMA lead volunteers were: MIKE AMOROSO, 420 hours, MICHAEL AMBROSINO, 420 hours, RICH BISK, 341 hours, MAURICE KROHN, 317 hours and ALAN GUNZBURG, 304 hours.

3. BOB BISHOP then called our attention to the “silent service” volunteers that give their time each and every week to making sure that the RMA meetings run smoothly. They work behind the scene, arriving early, and staying late.

These internal volunteers include: ED PARKER – Audio Group, STEVE MARINO – Projection, MAURICE KROHN – Refreshments, DON CONWAY and TED SPOOL – TV Production, BOB BISHOP, PETER STERN, DON SARGEANT – RMA Set UP, and JERRY BERRAFATI, JOHN CRAIN and HENRY BAKER – ID Badges. BOB urges everyone to look over the list of tasks, talk to anyone of these individuals and see where you might fit in to provide added support to the “silent service.”

COMMITTEES.

PROGRAM: HOLLISTER STURGES announced that today's speakers would be **Clarinda Higgins and William G. Armstrong Jr.**, presenting the fascinating story of Mark Higgins as detailed in their book *Against the Current: How Albert Schweitzer Inspired a Young Man's Journey*. HOLLISTER also announced next week's speaker: **Sylvia Reiss**, collector and recorder of 18th and 19th century New England stone walls, who will be presenting *The Stone Walls of Connecticut*.

VOLUNTEER HOURS: GERRY MAYFIELD announced for the week ending March 6, 2019, 305 outside hours by 34 members, with 118 hours reported by 27 members. The top RMA member for the week was MIKE AMOROSO WITH 60 hours.

MEMBERSHIP: HORST TEBBE reported 86 members in attendance with one candidate for induction. **Birthdays** included PETER BERG 71, DAVID WEISBRUD 72, MIKE RYAN 81, ROS CURTIS 95, and CHET RISIO 91.

SAM MARASSO and BOB MORGAN proposed TOM WEST for membership. TOM has resided in Greenwich for twenty years. He is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and the University of Michigan Graduate School. TOM was the former CEO of the Reinsurance Company. He enjoys tennis, pickleball and golf. TOM was unanimously accepted into the RMA and we welcome him!

FUN AND GAMES

BRIDGE: KURT SCHAFFIR reported that there were five players. First was TONY COCCHI with 3880, second was RON FRIEDMAN with 2830, and third was ANDRE MAZUREK with 2740. KURT also informed us that he will be moving, and he will no longer be able to attend RMA meetings. We wish KURT SCHAFFIR the best of luck in the future and at his convenience, we look forward to seeing him at future RMA meetings.

HEARTS: ED FARRELL reported that seven games were played. Winners were: TOM HEALY, PETER BERG, GRANT PERKINS, JOE DOWLING, JACK WEIR, JOHN KNIGHT, and CHARLIE GRAVES. Moon shots included TOM HEALY, PETER BERG, ED FARRELL, JOE DOWLING, GRANT PERKINS and JACK WEIR with two moonshots. Next week's captain is GEORGE DIPPY.

TENNIS: JOHN KNIGHT reported the following tennis results. Preliminary Round: Court #1 winners, GEOFFREY BURGE and DON BREISMEISTER. Court #2 winners, PETER STREICH and JOE MANCINELLI. Final Round: Court #1 winners, DON BREISMEISTER and JOE MANCINELLI, Court #2 winners, BILL FAKUNDINY and ANDY HOLMES. Next week's captain is RICH BISK.

WALKERS: The RMA walkers had a very nice walk in the Byram area led by JEFF JUNKER, exploring a completely new area for many of the group.

SPECIAL EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENTS are open to all, Guests, Candidates and Spouses. Checks should be made out to RMA, must be received within two weeks following the reservation or the reservation will be cancelled. Contact **MIKE FERRARESE** at myagentmike@yahoo.com / 203-554-0678 or **ABBEY SMOLER** at abbeysmoler@gmail.com / 203-531-0236 for information.

Bush Holly House Museum: Date: March 28, 2019. Time: 10:00 AM. Cost: \$25 per person. Transportation: Individual car. Lunch: Bush Holly House. Status: Four openings.

The Cloisters: Date: May 2, 2019. Cost: \$105 per person. Transportation: Bus leaves St. Catherine's at 9:00 AM. Lunch: New Leaf Café. Status: Wait listed

NOTE: For information regarding the Bush Holly House and/or The Cloisters events please contact **HOLLISTER STURGES** at hollistersturges@aol.com.

TODAY'S SPEAKER

HOLLISTER STURGES introduced Clarinda Higgins and Bill Armstrong who presented the remarkable story of their search to discover what happened to Clarinda's first cousin Mark Higgins. At the age of 19 he mysteriously disappeared during a trip to the Congo. While Mark was from a well to do family from Boston, he decided to take a different path than one might have expected, and in 1959, at the age of 18, he became the first student staff member at a jungle hospital in Gabon. In this position, Mark worked under the tutelage of the famous medical missionary Albert Schweitzer. During this time, Mark truly gave of himself and became part of the village community. He helped to build houses, worked in a leprosy village, observed native rituals, did gardening and supported two teens in their quest to attend college.

After a time, Mark took on more responsibility as a medical assistant working at least twelve hours a day and administering up to 300 injections a day. After a year, Mark decided to make a 2,000-mile trip, going deeper into the Congo. This was a period of rebellion and unrest and the last letter from Mark described a scene of panic and violence as he progressed on his lone journey north. Shortly following this letter, it was determined that Mark was missing. Clarinda and her husband made it their mission to determine what the facts were around Mark's disappearance. They conducted years of research and traveled deep into the jungle of Gabon to learn more about Mark's last days. They chronicled their journey and their findings in a book, *Against the Current: How Albert Schweitzer Inspired a Young Man's Journey*. Their presentation was a fascinating story depicting aspects of the "Blessing of Service" that Mark Higgins possessed.

NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER

Next week the RMA will welcome Sylvia Reiss.
Subject: *The Stone Walls of Connecticut*

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