



# CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



[www.greenwichrma.org](http://www.greenwichrma.org)  
Chair/Editor: Joe Mancinelli

Scribes: **Av Rivel, Arnold Gordon, Ed Farrell, Gerry Lessuk, George Stockbridge,**  
**Joe Mancinelli, Chet Risio, Frank Scarpa, Tim Brooks**  
Archivist: **Tad Larrabee** Format: **Jack Cuff, Andrzej Mazurek, Len Carusi**  
Print/Distribution: **Joe Mancinelli**

**VOLUME 68 NUMBER 38      APRIL 7, 2021**  
**SCRIBE: ARNOLD J. GORDON**

“Don’t be sexist. Broads hate that.” Tee shirt seen on Key West

Thirty-nine schmoozers logged on between 9:15 and 10am to exchange pleasantries and complaints while waiting for senior management to complete the first-of-the-month Board meeting. President **RUSS HARDEN** finally opened the Zoom business meeting at 10:04am. **LEN CARUSI** proudly broadcast the Melody Men rendition of the RMA song, with everyone muted to obviate the usual cacophony of member sing-along. Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance by **RUSS** then followed (he graciously once again substituted for the assigned pledger who was a no-show; come on guys, do your duty).

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** somberly pointed out that the positivity rate for covid-19 in CT is back above 5% from a low of 1.5% in mid-February. Deaths and hospitalizations are also rising. The variants seem to be partly responsible, especially the so-called British mutant. In Greenwich, there have been about 4700 cases since the beginning of the pandemic, with 126 new cases reported over the past week. All of the above so as to remind everyone, vaccinated or not, to maintain vigilance and diligence; keep the masks handy!

**ARNOLD** reminded everyone of the puzzlers he posed at the previous meeting. (1) Why 18 holes on a golf course? Believe it or not, the game was invented in Scotland during the 15<sup>th</sup> century and until the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, the number of holes varied a lot, from a low of 5 to 22. In 1764, the prestigious Royal and Ancient Golf Club at St. Andrews in Scotland reduced its number from 22 to 18 and it became the universal standard from then on. (2) Why do our clock hands rotate “clockwise” rather than in the opposite direction (like baseball runners)? One of our members offered the correct answer: clocks were invented in the northern

hemisphere, where sundials followed the sun in what we call the clockwise direction. Conceivably, if clocks were invented in South America, e.g., they may have gone in the opposite direction. **ARNOLD** then asked the group why beef patties are called hamburgers even though they do not contain ham? A member quickly answered correctly: it was first introduced in Hamburg, Germany. The homework assignment for this week also relates to food: what is the origin of the term hush puppies, the fried corn meal concoctions popular in the south?

Speaking of ham, he introduced **TOM HEALY**, jokester for the day, who had members cringing as he related the tale (or is it tail?) of a man who lost his you-know-what in an accident. After discussing with the surgeon what model for a transplant and the different high prices, he consulted with his wife. "They" decided to get new granite countertops for the kitchen.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. **PETER STERN**, Membership, noted a maximum of 70 in attendance. There were two guests: Robert Sibley g/o **PETE UHRY** and **BOB MEANEY**, and Wayne Campbell g/o **PETER BERG**. Birthday celebrants were: **ALLAN DEERING 87**, **MIKE FERRARESE 79** and **LEN CARUSI 73**. They all were wished well with the recorded Happy Birthday song. **PETER** gave a special welcome to **FRANK SCARPA** and **PETER TUNLEY** joining from Florida, and to some folks we have missed: **CHET RISIO**, **ERIC ZITZMANN**, the newest RMA Member, and **CARL WHITE**, calling in by iPhone.
2. Treasurer **JEFF JUNKER** noted that we had a gain of about \$1000 in our checking account, the result of a refund of our deposit made last Spring with the NY Botanical Gardens (trip cancelled last May because of the pandemic); also, a few new members paid their dues.
3. **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** gladly reported there were no members he was aware of with medical issues. However, **ARNOLD GORDON** mentioned that long-time member **LARRY REBAK** has been sidelined for a long time due to Parkinson's Disease and was hospitalized recently for an unrelated situation. He would appreciate a call: (203)434-0335 or (561) 799-3069. Please let **MICHAEL** know if any of our members are ill or hospitalized (brooklynoil@yahoo.com).
4. **HOLLISTER STURGES** urged members to watch today's speaker program with Thomas Dyja, who will relate highlights from his recent book "New York, New York, New York: Four Decades of Success, Excess, and Transformation."
5. **SKIP AUCH** gave us some details about next week's speaker, Dr. Khalil Habib, an Associate Professor of Politics at the Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan; it was founded in 1844 by Abolitionists. In order to avoid Government interference, the college accepts no Government financial support. Dr. Habib is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of the University of Maine, received his Master's

Degree in Political Science from the University of Toronto, and his Ph.D. in Philosophy from Boston University. He links the history of political philosophy and philosophical literature and will talk on "The Progressive Movement and its Philosophical Origins."

### FUN AND GAMES

1. INDOOR TENNIS: **BRIAN MAHONEY** reported that on Friday, April 2nd, **PAT McCARTHY** and **ANDRE MAZUREK** prevailed over **BILL HOWLAND** and **RANDY MOTLAND**, while **PETER DODGE** and **MIKE SMITH** beat **JIM FISHBEIN** and **BRIAN MAHONEY**.
2. PLATFORM TENNIS: **RUSS HARDEN** mentioned that the season was over and thanked **JIM DEAN** for managing the arrangements.
3. TAI CHI: **WILL MORRISON** noted that as everyone waits wait for availability of space at the Senior Center and with friendly weather and vaccinations in hand, meetings will be held outside. During foul weather, they will revert to Zoom. **WILL** has set up a survey to hone in on the best times and places to meet during the coming months. Click here to take the survey: <https://forms.gle/Y4QuRbqhBn6U9hmXA>. Curious about Tai Chi? See [www.experiencetaichi.org](http://www.experiencetaichi.org). Contact: [wdmorrison@gmail.com](mailto:wdmorrison@gmail.com); Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/99622029436>, Meeting ID: 996 2202 9436, Passcode: raisehands
4. WALKERS: **TAD LARRABEE** sadly mentioned that the RMA Walkers were rained out last Thursday. The plan for tomorrow (April 8) is a jaunt in White Plains around Battle Hill, which was the western side of the Continentals' defensive positions under George Washington. Details of **TAD** and the Irregulars' battle will be given next week. If interested, please e-mail **TAD** at [tadlarra@optonline.net](mailto:tadlarra@optonline.net).
5. BRIDGE: **ANDRE MAZUREK** dealt the top three scores for the 5 players. **RON FRIEDMAN** 4,010; **JOHN FEBLES** 3,000; **ED MASTOLONI** 2,890. **RON** and **JOHN** bid and won a vulnerable slam for 1,470 points. They play every Wednesday at 1pm using the Trickster bridge app; if interested, contact **TONY COCCHI** ([tony.cocchi2@gmail.com](mailto:tony.cocchi2@gmail.com)).
6. HEARTS: **DON CONWAY** had no report since it seems as though the players had no heart to play this week.
7. PICKLEBALL: **TONY COCCHI** reported that 8 men rotated teams on two courts in playing several sets on Monday. Please note that as of Monday, April 12, play will begin at 11am instead of 1pm. Weather permitting, come to Christiano Field. Anyone interested should contact **TONY** ([tony.cocchi2@gmail.com](mailto:tony.cocchi2@gmail.com)).
8. Golf: **PAUL CAMPION** noted that the season at the Griff will begin on Tuesday, April 20<sup>th</sup> with a 10:30am start. Details on reservations will be given next week. For questions contact **PAUL** ([paulcampion1@optonline.net](mailto:paulcampion1@optonline.net)).

## POST-MEETING RAMBLINGS

As usual, as the meeting ended **RUSS** asked if there were any more announcements or comments and the flood gates opened.

1. **BOB MORGAN** gave much-delayed credit and thanks to **ERF PORTER** for his playing of the snare drum in the recording of the RMA song. He also suggested a novel theme for an RMA Zoom meeting: Bring-your-pet-day! Do you have a dog, cat, snake, monkey, bird or other creature to show everyone? Stay tuned.
2. **DON CONWAY** mentioned that the Town BET has approved the new budget (\$450 million and not a penny for the RMA).
3. **RUSS** and **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** told the group that a new crop of RMA hats, this time in steel blue, will soon be available.
4. **PETER STERN** reminded us that dues will soon be due. It remains \$100 for the year (May 1 through April 30) and will be collected by mail. The request will be sent out soon; start saving.
5. **GERALD WAKEFIELD** wanted to know where to donate prescription eyeglasses. **ALAN GUNSBURG** suggested leaving them at the Perrot Library; through a program with the Lions Club, they are recycled for overseas distribution.
6. In response to a question from **DON CONWAY** about donating no longer used medical equipment, **ALAN GUNSBURG** advised bringing it to Wheel-It-Forward in Stamford (www. <https://www.wheelitforwardusa.org/>; 203-652-8600).

## SPECIAL EVENTS

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

## SPEAKER PROGRAM

**HOLLISTER STURGES** welcomed everyone and introduced Thomas Dyja, author of his third non-fiction, critically acclaimed novel, *New York, New York, New York: Four Decades of Success, Excess, and Transformation*, covering the 1970s until recent times. Using an interview format, **HOLLISTER** asked Mr. Dyja pointed questions about his professional life and key aspects of New York City life as covered in his book. Mr. Dyja grew up in Chicago, which he loved, but became smitten with New York on a college-hunting visit to Columbia University; it helped, he said, that the drinking age was 18. He majored in English there and always wanted to be a writer. He described the Koch era in the 1970s, when the city's financial crisis was still in bloom, resulting in high levels of borrowing leaving the city in survival mode. He gave

special credit to the Parks Commissioner of the time, Gordon Davis, who energized the parks for public use, for creating the Central Park Conservancy, the Urban Park Ranger program, and vast improvement of Bryant Park, all of which helped to lift the spirits of New Yorkers on the way to revitalization of the metropolis. Koch restored pride in NYC, by among other things shepherding massive investments in much needed housing; empty buildings were restored and new construction led to community building which helped to reduce crime. But Koch was also divisive on racial issues and police brutality was evident during his reign.

It was the beginning of an era of visible wealth and celebrity as well as laudable philanthropy. However, donations were mostly to art and culture institutions enjoyed by the rich rather than toward societal needs. The clique of wealthy donors represented a power base in the city, which came to a peak during the Bloomberg mayoral years (2002-2013). He pointed out that there are about 1 million immigrants living in the city who have contributed to the economy by creating small businesses, such as the large number of Korean delis in the boroughs during the 1980s. The Giuliani years (1994-2001) began with things going well in the city; he brought competence and leadership to the office but he did not have a good relationship with the business community and was overly controlling. Although he improved the operation of the police department, he “went too far.” Bloomberg had a visionary view and encouraged experts to help pave the way for a better future for the city; it helped that he was well connected to the business community. But his stop-and-frisk policing policy detracted from his legacy.

When asked who he thought were unusual New York characters, he mentioned as examples Donald Trump, the artist Cristo, and a hip-hop artist from Queens. During the Q&A, he made the following points in his answers:

- Anybody’s guess what will happen to the office building market after the pandemic is behind us
- Bloomberg was ahead on climate change but should have also focused on much-needed subway system improvements
- For the current mayoralty race, the key question to ask the candidates, who all have similar ideas and goals, is this: Who will you choose for Deputy Mayor and your advisers? He also looks forward to the results of the newly instituted ranked choice voting system.
- Will Broadway recover? Yes, but it will take time.
- 

“Start spreading the news.” The Big Apple is alive and well.

**NEXT WEEK’S SPEAKER**

**April 14th**, Dr. Khalil Habib, Associate Professor of Politics at the Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan will talk on "The Progressive Movement and its Philosophical Origins."

**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](mailto: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](mailto:jlmanc@optonline.net) if you are interested in supporting this continuing effort.

Retired Men's Association of Greenwich, Inc. · 37 Lafayette Place · Greenwich, CT 06830 · USA  
 Visit our website at [www.greenwichrma.org](http://www.greenwichrma.org).

### RMA 2021 CALENDAR

Weekly Repetitive Activities			
Date	Time	Activity	Contact
Mondays	11:00am	Outdoor Pickle Ball at Christiano Park	Tony Cocchi - anthony.cocchi@lehman.cuny.edu
Tuesdays	Various Tee Times	RMA Golf, "The Griff Golf Course," Greenwich	Paul Campion – paulcampion1@optonline.net
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	Various times TBD	On-Line Hearts	Don Conway - spiderduck4@gmail.com
Fridays	1:30pm to 3:00pm	Indoor Tennis	Andy Holmes - andyholmes56@gmail.com