



# CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



[www.greenwichrma.org](http://www.greenwichrma.org)

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**SCRIBE: TIM BROOKS**

*"May the bird of paradise fly up your nose,  
"May an elephant caress you with his toes..."*  
- RMA Song of the Day (see below)

Following the customary open chat session from 9:15-10:00 am, which dealt with everything from baseball's Brooklyn Cyclones to crocodiles on the golf course and the upcoming Bruce Park bridge closure, **MICHAEL AMBROSINO**, subbing for President **RUSS HARDEN**, opened the business meeting at 10 am.

The meeting began with a rousing chorus of "We Are the RMA!" by the Melody Men, followed by the pledge of allegiance recited by **ED FARRELL**, as Old Glory waved on the screen.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** began with the answer to last week's puzzler, which was "what is the origin of the name 'hush puppies', for a food?" He offered two new puzzlers for next week, "why is yawning contagious?" and "why are your eyes closed when you sneeze?" No cheating!



The scheduled jokester, **GEOFFREY BURGE**, was absent (getting his 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccine shot), so **ARNOLD** bravely substituted. He gave examples of real signs and news articles that were malapropisms or wording mishaps, such as:

- “Panda Mating Fails - Veterinarian Takes Over” (What a guy!);
- “We can repair anything (Please knock hard on the door; bell does not work)”;
- And this notice in a health food shop window: “CLOSED DUE TO ILLNESS.”

He followed that folly with a description of the famous Indian Hills Community Center road signs found in Indian Hills, Colorado, a town of only 1,000 people. Their clever and humorous but punny signs have a huge following online (see [www.indianhillscolorado.org](http://www.indianhillscolorado.org)). Finally, he told a story about an older woman trying to be sexually alluring as she lay nude on the sofa by telling her husband that it was her love dress. He said it needed ironing, and he wanted dinner. He did not hear the gunshot.



In a meeting surprise, former president **JERRY SCHWENDEMAN** followed with a short story about a very short country music star, “Little” Jimmy Dickens, and his very big 1965 hit “May the Bird of Paradise Fly Up Your Nose,” which **JERRY** then sang for us, quite competently. [Note: Dickens, who died in 2015 at the age of 94, is well remembered in Nashville. There is even a statue of him outside the Grand Ole Opry, on which he starred. At left, your Scribe and an even shorter friend pose with Little Jimmy in Nashville.]

Vainly attempting to top that, membership Chairman **PETER STERN** reported that there were 69 members and two guests in attendance. Birthdays during the last week were **GEORGE UBOGY** (83), **MARTY WAINE** (88), **HENRY BAKER** (90), **JOE ROE** (90), **GERRY GIBIAN** (83) and **GERRY LESSUK** (95). All were serenaded with the “Happy Birthday” song.

Guests this week were Robert Sibley (guest of **PETE UHRY** and **BOB MEANEY**) and Wayne Campbell (guest of **PETER BERG**).

**PETER STERN** then led us in a joyous occasion, the induction of the newest member of the RMA, Lou Rupnik. Lou was nominated by **MICHAEL AMBROSINO**, who related that Lou has had a distinguished career in business, for Korn/Ferry, Xerox, and Eastman Kodak among others, and loves tennis, golf, skiing and music—regarding the latter, he plays jazz saxophone

in the local Bob Button Band. His full bio is [here](#). **LOU RUPNIK** was seconded, enthusiastically, by **PETE UHRY**, and approved unanimously by the membership.



Welcome, **LOU RUPNIK!**

Finally, **PETER STERN** noted that “nomads” **FRANK SCARPA** and **PETER TUNLEY** were attending from Florida, and “local” Zoomers included new member **JOE ANGLAND**.

There was no treasurer’s report, as Treasurer **JEFF JUNKER** was absent and dust is gathering in the treasury. **MICHAEL AMBROSINO**, for Visiting, reported a relatively quiet week as well. He said that **JOE MANCINELLI** was recovering nicely from his recent treatments.

**FRANK SCARPA** delivered this week’s human-interest story, recounting his chance meeting with fellow military veteran **SKIP AUCH** who happened to belong to the RMA and also have a home in the same Florida community as Frank.

That led to a preview of the speakers for this week and next, by **HOLLISTER STURGES** and **GEORGE UBOGY**. This week’s talk, “Progressivism and Its Philosophical Origins” by Dr. Khalil Habib, will be described below. Next week’s speaker, Janice P. Nimura, will expound on her new book *The Doctors Blackwell: How Two Pioneering Sisters Brought Medicine to Woman, and Women to Medicine*.

### **AND IN THE WORLD OF SPORTS**

Golf: **PAUL CAMPION** reported that Tuesday, April 20th, will be the opening day for the RMA golfing season, which will continue into October. Interest is high. Tee times begin at 10:30 am,

at the “Griff”. RMA golfers have been assigned four “slots,” the same as last year. Those wishing to play should contact **PAUL** at [paulcampion1@optonline.net](mailto:paulcampion1@optonline.net). In May we will be assigned earlier tee times beginning at 7:30 am, but those who wish to play earlier or later can go online for different tee times. Tee times will be determined on a “First Come, First Served” basis. The only new feature this year is that we can make online reservations seven days in advance, vs. four days last year. COVID-19 restrictions are the same as last season: masks, one man per cart, and NO hugging!

Tennis: **ANDY HOLMES** announced that with just four weeks left in the current indoor tennis season, we are already starting to gear up for next year’s season. The season runs from early September to early May and we play on Friday afternoons at the Old Greenwich Tennis Academy. To date, deposits have been received from 16 players, including two players new to our group. Anyone who would like to join the indoor tennis group for the 2021-2022 season should get in touch with **ANDY** at [andyholmes56@gmail.com](mailto:andyholmes56@gmail.com).

As for last Friday's tennis results, the winners in the Finals Round were **RALPH NEWITTER** and **MIKE SMITH** on court one and **TOM HEALY** and **BOB FRISHMAN** on court two. This week’s captain will be **PETER ORBANOWSKI**.

Pickle Ball: **TONY COCCHI** reported that there were five players this week for pickleball for our first session at the new 11 am time. It rained the night before and the court had a few wet spots, but we toweled them up and the games proceeded normally. We play Mondays at 11 am at Christiano Park. Members interested in playing should notify either **JOHN KNIGHT** at [JohnKnight7@gmail.com](mailto:JohnKnight7@gmail.com) or **TONY** at [Anthony.Cocchi@Lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:Anthony.Cocchi@Lehman.cuny.edu).

Tai Chi: **WILL MORRISON** reported, “The results of the survey are in. One hand clapping please! The new class time is 4:00 Wednesdays. We will meet at the Greenwich Commons, which is across from the Senior Center and adjacent to the Board of Education building. Stop by, join in and learn how to clap with one hand.” If you are curious about Tai Chi contact **WILL** at [wdmorrison@gmail.com](mailto:wdmorrison@gmail.com), or check <https://experiencetaichi.org>.

Walkers: From **TAD LARRABEE**, the following. “[Last week] Ten walkers explored the hilly territory in White Plains around Battle Hill, which was the western side of the Continentals’ defensive positions under George Washington. On August 27, 1776, the Continentals were

defeated on Long Island. That was followed by several skirmishes as the Continentals retreated north followed by British forces who were trying to capture the army and end the American Revolution at its inception. After the retreating Continentals found a good defensive position on what is now known as Battle Hill, the larger Battle of White Plains took place from October 29 through November 1, 1776. The out-numbered, out-gunned and under-supplied American forces escaped from White Plains and finally settled in Pennsylvania for the winter, crossing the Delaware River and attacking the Hessian forces at Trenton on December 26, 1776, resulting in a major early victory in the Revolutionary War.”



Walkers in White Plains inspect the RMA cannon

“Should we shell the next town? General Washington, how does this thing work?”

It should also be noted that some RMA members take weekly “bicycle hikes” on local bike paths and welcome participation by anyone. Contact **TED** at [tadlarra@optonline.net](mailto:tadlarra@optonline.net) to add your name to the bikers’ email list.

Hearts: **DON CONWAY** reported, “**JOHN STANKUNAS, JACK SWEGER, MIKE AMBROSINO** and myself played five games Wednesday April 7th. **JACK** won three, **JOHN & DON** each won one game. Moon shooters were **JOHN, JACK, and DON** (one each). Not sure if **MIKE** will ever play with us again.”

Bridge: **ANDRE MAZUREK** reported the top three scores from last week: **ED MASTOLONI** (3,930), **RON FRIEDMAN** (3,740) and **JOHN FEBLES** (3,430).



## OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reminder: Those fine souls who are doing volunteer work either inside or outside of the RMA should report their hours to **JOHN FEBLES** at [jfebles13@gmail.com](mailto:jfebles13@gmail.com), so that we can keep track of the contribution of the organization to the community.

The meeting was adjourned by **MICHAEL** at approximately 10:40 am.

## SPEAKER PROGRAM

At 11:00 am sharp **SKIP AUCH** introduced the day's featured speaker, Prof. Khalil Habib. Born in Lebanon to a family that later moved to Bahrain, and then to the U.S. when he was a child (he says that English is his "third language"), Dr. Habib earned a B.A. at the University of Maine, a master's in political science at the University of Toronto, and his PhD in Philosophy at Boston University. He is currently Associate Professor of Politics at the Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship at Hillsdale College in Michigan and a favorite of the students there. Per his bio he "has studied and now teaches the works of the Great Thinkers and seeks to make their Great Books come alive, enhancing the love of learning and the exploration of ideas." According to one of his endorsers on LinkedIn, "When I hear the term 'Learned Man', Dr Khalil Habib always comes to mind."

For today's talk Dr. Habib delivered a thought-provoking and high-level lecture on "Progressivism and Its Philosophical Origins." This included the role of philosopher John Dewey and President Woodrow Wilson in the rise of progressivism from, roughly, the 1880s to the 1920s, and its roots in the thinking of Aristotle and Locke. It advanced the idea, he said, that the U.S. Constitution was fundamentally incompatible with modern life and must be viewed as a "living document," subject to change over time according to the perceived needs of the time. The rights the Constitution's framers believed were "inalienable," i.e., derived from nature, were not that at all but rather granted by government, which could withdraw them at any time. This includes free speech, freedom of religion, the right to bear arms, and everything else in the "Bill of Rights."

This led to a lively Q&A which immediately raised the question of whether this definition of progressivism wasn't a "recipe for tyranny"—a large and powerful government that could be swayed by the passions of the moment or even subverted by bad actors who could rally the mob? He agreed that it could. While progressivism might address modern social problems more efficiently than the messy "checks and balances" system of the Constitution, it was also vulnerable to capture by authoritarians. It all boiled down to whether you believed that humans were fundamentally good and would do the "right" thing in changing times (progressives), or fundamentally flawed and should operate under a system that protects them against their own worst instincts (checks and balances, to force compromise).

This summary, your humble Scribe freely admits, is a feeble attempt to capture the principal points made by Prof. Habib in his excellent talk and would probably not get more than a "C" in his class. He recommended (and I concur) that those interested in thinking more about this subject obtain the book *The U.S. Constitution: A Reader*, compiled by the Hillsdale College Politics Faculty and published by the Hillsdale College Press in 2012. It is a non-partisan compendium of 113 source documents which influenced the framing of the Constitution and is used in teaching the core course on the Constitution at Hillsdale.

The video of Prof. Habib's talk may be accessed through the RMA web site, [www.greenwichrma.org](http://www.greenwichrma.org).

### **NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER**

**April 21st**, Janice P. Nimura, will expound on her new book *The Doctors Blackwell: How Two Pioneering Sisters Brought Medicine to Woman, and Women to Medicine*.

**NOTE TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS:** next week's CBB scribe will be **ED FARRELL**. Please send a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB to **ED** at [ejf1038r@gmail.com](mailto:ejf1038r@gmail.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.

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Visit our website at <http://www.greenwichrma.org>.

## RMA 2021 CALENDAR

<b>Weekly Repetitive Activities</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Contact</b>
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	4:00 to 5:00	"Tai Chi New Joiners" – Greenwich Commons	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