

# 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: JOE ANGLAND**

*"If you get to a fork in the road, take it." - Yogi Berra*

President **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** opened the meeting, which began with **ED PARKER** leading members in the Pledge of Allegiance. **TOM HEALY**, accompanied by **BOB MORGAN** on piano, then led the group in singing, through their masks, "My Country Tis of Thee," "Heart of My Heart," and "Oh What a Beautiful Morning."

**AMBROSINO** asked for volunteers to deal with Visiting, something he has handled for three years. **MICHAEL** also directed members to the Bulletin Board for information about volunteering for the Greenwich Library's Oral History Project, for which there will be training sessions on October 5 and 12.

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** opened with a baseball trivia question: A fair ball is hit to the outfield. The fielder runs toward the ball and throws his glove at the ball and hits it. What if any are the consequences? Most people think that the batter gets an automatic double, as if it were a ground-rule situation. But the official rule gives the batter a triple.

He then asked the audience who had had a covid-19 booster shot. Only a small number responded affirmatively. As of last Wednesday, according to the CDC, eligible populations of importance to us include people 65 years or older and residents in long-term care settings. Officially, only people who initially received the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine can get a

booster shot at least six months after their second inoculation, but there is an exception under the original policy: those who are immunocompromised and got a Moderna vaccine can get a third Moderna booster shot. Officials have not granted approval for the expanded eligibility for those who received the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccines. However, it is relatively easy to get a booster with the Moderna vaccine under both the original and expanded eligibility criteria. Many pharmacies, such as CVS and Walgreens, are quite lenient in making exceptions. In general, vaccine provider locations can be found by going to [www.CT.gov/COVIDVaccine](http://www.CT.gov/COVIDVaccine).

Substituting as joke teller for **GEOFFREY BURGE**, who is outside the country trying to get back in, **ARNOLD** fed us more of his groan-worthy puns and some short stories about husbands who get into trouble by opening their big mouths. Sample pun: The man who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.

**Membership: PETER STERN** presented the following membership report:

- 1. Live Attendance: 91
- Zoom Attendance: 5
- Total Members Attending: 96

Guests: 1

2. Birthdays:

MARK	GEIMER	73
HORST	TEBBE	82
GEOFFREY	BURGE	64
BILL	HORN	88
BILLY	LONDON	81

- 3. Tony Kane was the guest of **RUSS HARDEN**
- 4. It's nice to have **DOUG TAYLOR**, our "Official" attendance certifier, back.
- 5. **PETER TUNLEY** has returned following his knee replacement.

**JOE MANCINELLI** reported that planning is well underway for the next enjoyable RMA Social Event: the Annual RMA Banquet/Luncheon. It will be held on Wednesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 a.m., at the Tamarack Country Club. **JOE** reported that he has had an enthusiastic response from many Table Hosts and that he hopes to get many more. Cost is \$60 per person; checks should be made out to the RMA and can be sent to **JOE**. Do not forget to include each entrée selection and special dietary restrictions as needed. All attendees must be fully vaccinated. We have a VAX data base for RMA members, however we are asking Table Hosts to help with VAX confirmation for non-RMA guests at their table.

We also have a number of members that are not currently associated with a Table Host, so please let **JOE** know if you need additional guests to complete your table. Please contact him with any questions or clarifications regarding the Banquet/Luncheon at [jlmanc@optonline.net](mailto:jlmanc@optonline.net) or 973-886-1798.

**STEVE MYERS** reported that today's speaker will be Dr. Steve Holmes, a cosmologist who will discuss the past and future of the universe. **HOLLISTER STURGES** announced that next week's speakers will be Jack T. Scully and J. Chris Davala, who will address "Mianus Village – History and Literature."

**BART BARTHOLOMEW** requested volunteers to serve as song leaders at future meetings. **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** requested more volunteers to serve as Scribes.

**DON ROTZIEN** reminded members that the second ROMEO lunch of the year will take place next Thursday, October 7, at Greenwich Point. It's BYOL (Bring Your Own Lunch) and will be held behind the main concession building. There are plenty of tables; no reservations are necessary. The concession stand at Greenwich Point is open, and there are no lines. You do need a beach pass, and if you don't have one you should contact **DON** at [dsrotzien@gmail.com](mailto:dsrotzien@gmail.com) or **TONY COCCHI** at [Anthony.cocchi@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:Anthony.cocchi@lehman.cuny.edu), who will help you get a day pass. The weather forecast looks good at the moment!

## FUN AND GAMES

**Pickleball:** **PAT MacCARTHY** reminded the members that the pickleball group meets at 9:00 a.m. on Mondays and Thursdays.

**Walkers and Talkers:** **TAD LARRABEE** reported that last Thursday the group defied the weather gods and nine walkers showed up. They took a couple of loops around the Cos Cob Park where the New Haven Railroad power plant used to be. They stopped for a while at the 9/11 monument. They then walked to the Bush-Holley house and through the neighborhood just to the north, and passed the RMA pickleball group. A very short sprinkle was concerning, but as **TAD** started to open his umbrella, it stopped! Altogether, a nice, invigorating walk! **TAD** also reported that a planned walk at the High Line in Manhattan had been cancelled.

**Bridge:** **ANDRE MAZUREK** reported the week's bridge winners: (1) **JOHN FEBLES**, 4460; (2) **MAZUREK**, 4140; (3) **RON FRIEDMAN**, 3593. **JOHN** and **RON** won a slam for 1430 points. The group meets on Wednesdays at 1:15 p.m. at the Women's Club.

**Hearts:** **DON CONWAY** reported that at table one **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** won two games, **JOHN KNIGHT** won one, and **TOM HEALY** had a moon shot. Winners at table two were **DON** and **JOE DOWLING**. **DON** quizzed the group about notable historical events that had occurred at about this date, including the Wall Street Panic of 1869, the Black Sox baseball scandal of 1920, the birth of the internet in 1969, and the swearing in of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor (the first woman to sit on the Supreme Court) in 1981. **DON** also noted that there are two photographic exhibits of interest at the Bruce Museum, one dealing with the development of nuclear weapons and the other with the rainforest. He reminded members that entry to the museum was free for seniors on Tuesdays.

**Tai Chi:** **WILL MORRISON** reminded members that the Tai Chi group meets at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. Contact him for details.

**Golf:** **PAUL CAMPION** reported that yesterday's golf was interrupted by lightning, resulting in only **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** and **TONY FITZPATRICK** completing 18 holes. **MIKE SMITH** and **FRANK SCARPA** were closest to the hole on #7 and #15, respectively, and **TONY** had the longest drive on #17. **PAUL** mentioned that there were only two weeks left in the season, with October 12 being the final day.

**FRANK SCARPA** reviewed Marianacci's Restaurant (24 Sherman St., Port Chester, 914 939 3450). This is an Italian family-owned restaurant, operating since 1972, on a side street in a

residential neighborhood. The ambience is sedate but informal, with well-separated tables covered with linen tablecloths. He focused on three excellent menu items: the beef braciolo, the lasagna (which is "light" and made with homemade pasta) and the scrod. The etymology of "scrod" was discussed. There is a small parking lot, but no outdoor dining. The service staff are well-appointed, courteous and masked.

**MICHAEL AMBROSINO** asked members to volunteer to provide restaurant or book reviews, or report on matters of general interest, at future meetings.

### TODAY'S SPEAKER

**STEVE MYERS** introduced today's speaker, Dr. Steve Holmes, who holds a doctorate in experimental particle physics from Harvard University. Dr. Holmes spent five years on the faculty of Columbia University followed by thirty-five years at Fermi National Experimental Laboratory.

Dr. Holmes began with the deceptively complex question of why the night sky is dark. In response to the explanation that at night we are facing away from the sun, he noted that the sun is simply a star, and we face billions of stars when we look at the night sky. This led to a discussion of Olber's paradox, which arose in the nineteenth century. The paradox is that if the universe is (1) infinite, (2) static and (3) homogeneous at a large scale, the night sky should be bright. (He spared us the math that proves this!)<sup>1</sup> So, at least one of those three assumptions – all of which were widely accepted until the twentieth century – must be false. Over the course of the lecture, we learned that two of them were: the universe is neither infinite nor static.

Dr. Holmes talked about the pioneering work of Edwin Hubble who in 1923 concluded that stars were moving away from us at different speeds, with the speeds greater for the stars

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<sup>1</sup> If the Scribe recalls his physics correctly, the intuition behind the math is roughly as follows. A star fairly close to the earth will shed some very small amount of light on the earth. An equally bright star that is farther from the earth will shed less light, because light fades over distance. But there will be a larger number of stars at that greater distance, because the size of the sphere around the earth increases as the diameter of the sphere increases, and if the universe is homogeneous the number of stars per square mile (or lightyear) should be the same everywhere. These two effects perfectly offset mathematically, as brightness *decreases* with the square of distance and the surface area of the sphere around the earth *increases* with the square of distance. That means that at every distance from the earth stars shed the same amount of light on the earth. If the universe is infinite, that means that the light from all distances will be infinity times the faint light shone by that one nearby star. Infinity times even that faint light is infinite brightness, meaning that the night sky should be a blinding light.

farther from us. This work, combined with the work of Georges Lemaitre, meant that the universe was expanding – and thus wasn't static or infinite. Lemaitre also noted that if everything was getting farther apart over time, if one looked back far enough in time there should be a point where everything was in one place. He coined the term “big bang” for the moment when that one point with everything in it started expanding to create the universe we see today. The big bang remained merely theoretical until 1964 when Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, scientists at Bell Labs, provided empirical evidence by detecting the cosmic microwave background radiation left over from the big bang. Cosmologists currently date the big bang at about 13.8 billion years ago.

Dr. Holmes also talked about a possible “big crunch.” Depending on various parameters that we can't yet determine with certainty, the universe may continue expanding forever, or it may collapse back in on itself, with everything eventually existing at just one point – a phenomenon referred to as the big crunch. The good news is that if it happens it will be billions of years from now, so it's not our problem!

Dr. Holmes noted many fascinating facts regarding the universe, and the scientists who helped unravel its mysteries. For example, he talked about Einstein's 1917 introduction of the cosmological constant into his equation for gravity – an adjustment that Einstein recognized was needed to make the equation work but that he could not justify theoretically. Einstein later called the cosmological constant his greatest error. In the 1990s, however, cosmologists concluded that the cosmological constant was the proper way to adjust for dark energy – something that no one knew existed when Einstein was doing his work. For Einstein, even his “mistakes” turned out to be brilliant.

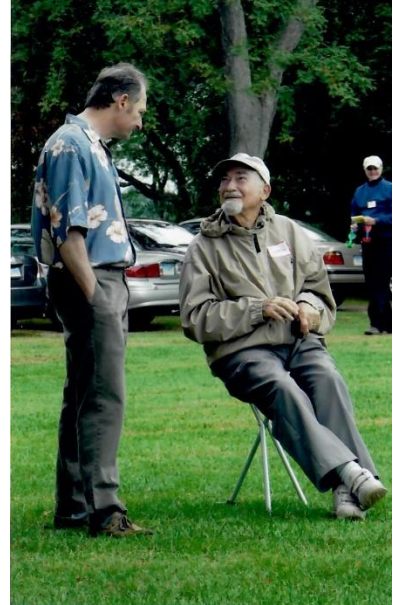
Dr. Holmes also talked about the fate of the universe. Assuming that there is no big crunch, and that the universe instead keeps expanding, it will one day be “a cold, dark mush.” Basically, if everything keeps getting farther apart, at some point earth would have no stars near it in space – not even the sun.

In response to a question from the audience about what existed or happened before the big bang, Dr. Holmes acknowledged that the question, in a sense, was more philosophical than scientific, as from a scientific point of view the big bang itself created time. That makes it meaningless, scientifically, to talk about a time before the big bang. The video of Dr. Holmes's talk may be accessed through the RMA website.

## SPECIAL FEATURE

Past President **PETE UHRY** has asked that we include a few “historical” RMA pictures, with a question of the week. Who are these two, at the RMA picnic 12 years ago?

If you have any aging pictures (or daguerreotypes) of RMA activities that we might use, contact the Editor.



## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

**TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS:** Scribe for the next meeting will be →**ARNOLD GORDON**←. Please send a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB promptly to **ARNOLD** at [ajgordo@verizon.net](mailto:ajgordo@verizon.net).

**TO YOU-KNOW-WHO-YOU-ARE:** 2021-22 dues are overdue! Those few laggards who have not paid, please deliver a check for \$100, made out to RMA, to **JEFF JUNKER**. Now! You can deliver your check to **JEFF** at the next meeting, or mail it to him at 9 Tree Top Terrace, Greenwich, CT 06831.

**TO ALL 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 **TIM BROOKS** at [tbroo@aol.com](mailto:tbroo@aol.com) if you are interested in being part of this continuing effort.

**TO ALL RMA MEMBERS:** Don’t forget to report your inside and outside volunteer hours to **JOHN FEBLES** on his new form: <https://forms.gle/bsUUdVgzMk3GJrKAA>.

**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.

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### RMA 2021 CALENDAR

Weekly Repetitive Activities*			
Day	Time	Activity	Contact
Mondays	9:00 am	Outdoor Pickle Ball at Christiano Park	Tony Cocchi - <a href="mailto:anthony.cocchi@lehman.cuny.edu">anthony.cocchi@lehman.cuny.edu</a>
Mondays	2:00 pm	Hearts	Andy Holmes – <a href="mailto:andyholmes56@gmail.com">andyholmes56@gmail.com</a> Don Conway – <a href="mailto:spiderduck4@gmail.com">spiderduck4@gmail.com</a>
Various	various	Hearts	Michael Ambrosino – <a href="mailto:brooklynoil@yahoo.com">brooklynoil@yahoo.com</a>
Tuesdays	Various tee times	RMA Golf, “The Griff Golf Course,” Greenwich	Paul Campion – <a href="mailto:paulcampion1@optonline.net">paulcampion1@optonline.net</a>
Wednesdays	9:45 to 10:30 am	RMA Weekly Zoom Meeting	Horst Tebbe - <a href="mailto:onehorst@optimum.net">onehorst@optimum.net</a> or Len Carusi at <a href="mailto:lencarusi@gmail.com">lencarusi@gmail.com</a>
Wednesdays	1:00 to 3:00 pm	On-Line Bridge	Andre Mazurek - <a href="mailto:mazurek.a.j@gmail.com">mazurek.a.j@gmail.com</a>
Wednesdays	4:00 to 5:00 pm	“Tai Chi New Joiners” – Greenwich Commons	Will Morrison - <a href="mailto:wdmorrison@gmail.com">wdmorrison@gmail.com</a>
Thursdays	9:00 am	RMA Walking	Tad Larrabee - <a href="mailto:tadlarra@optonline.net">tadlarra@optonline.net</a>
Thursdays	9:00 am	Pickleball and/or Tennis at Christiano Park	Tony Cocchi - <a href="mailto:anthony.cocchi@lehman.cuny.edu">anthony.cocchi@lehman.cuny.edu</a>

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