

CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



www.greenwichrma.org

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SCRIBE: ARNOLD J. GORDON

"I always turn to the sports page first. The sports page records people's accomplishments; the front page has nothing but man's failures." - Earl Warren

The school bell began ringing with vigor at 9:41 as President **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** tried for the usual 9:45 start. **BOB BISHOP** led us in the pledge, followed by the usual spirited performance on the keyboard by **PHIL SANTORA** as we all sang, under the leadership of **DON CONWAY**, the lyrics projected on the wall for three songs: "Star Spangled Banner," "Enjoy Yourself," and Mel Torme's "The Christmas Song." President **AMBROSINO** then made several announcements:

- Unwrapped refreshments are now allowed (hurray!)
- On December 22nd, our business meeting will become a more festive occasion for the holiday season; members may bring vaccinated friends and relatives to share the special refreshments, see the Melody Men perform, hear some jokes and some special human-interest stories, and help choose a winner for the ugly tie contest (start looking in your closet now). There will be no membership meeting on December 29th. Following is important information about these dates.

Notice Regarding Year-end Meeting Schedules

Wednesday, December 22

There will be a membership meeting at the church at the regular time – 9:45. There will be a few brief holiday-related human interest presentations*. Friends and family can join you at the meeting to enjoy these presentations with you. Please send an email to **Len Carusi** at LENCARUSI@GMAIL.COM if you plan to bring guests and let us know how many guests will be joining you. We want to have sufficient treats and refreshments.

* We are looking for volunteers to make human interest presentations on Dec 22nd. Please contact **Michael Ambrosino** at brooklynoil@yahoo.com if you are interested in doing so.

There will be a speaker presentation on our regular schedule at 11:00.

Wednesday, December 29

There will not be a formal membership meeting at the church because the facility is not available to us that day. There will be an informal chat session starting at 9:45 on ZOOM; the link to join the chat session will be sent out prior to the 29th.

There will not be a speaker presentation.

- Covid-related restrictions remain in effect at the church: proof of vaccinations; masking throughout the church building; no gathering or lingering in the lobby; no front door entry before 9 am but entry before then is allowed via the elevator to the kitchen (entrance just behind the speaker parking spot in front of the church).
- Parking in the spots in front of the church continues to be an issue; we are allowed only three: two for the disabled and one for speaker of the day. If violated, you risk a ticket. It would be appreciated if those with a disabled pass would park on Lafayette Place (it's free with the pass).
- There has been a tendency for members to take too much time in their announcements, including nominations for inductees, human interest stories, and the usual agenda items. Please try to keep them as short as possible to allow for a full pre-speaker break period.

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** mentioned the ongoing hoop-di-doo about cryptocurrencies and the Blockchain system which are a mystery to most of us. He announced that we will have an expert speaker to educate us on January 12th, Professor David Yermack from NYU. **ARNOLD** will deliver a memorial for **CHET RISIO** at next week's meeting.

ARNOLD then introduced **PETER SCHIEFERDECKER** who delivered a memorial for past-member James Oliver Starkweather, who joined the RMA in November 1989. He died on October 22nd and was two weeks shy of his 98th birthday. He and his wife, Mary, had been married for 70 years. As an engineer, he spent most of his career in the paper industry, mostly with Great Northern Paper Company. Jim and his family lived in Riverside and Old Greenwich for more than 60 years, starting in 1957. He was an expert sailor and navigator, served as Commodore at the Riverside Yacht Club, and competed in many ocean-racing opportunities. A memorial service will be held for Jim on Wednesday, December 22nd at 11 am in the First Congregational Church, Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich.

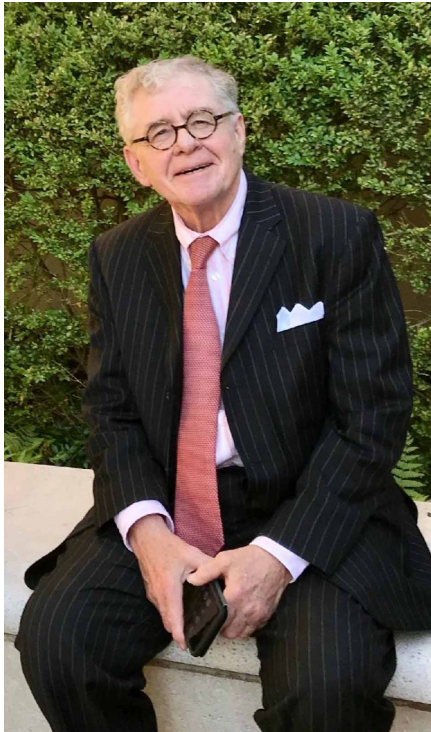
BOB LUCE then told us a story about four golfers who connived to play on Christmas morning, three of whom had to bribe their wives with expensive gifts; the fourth, however, told the others he asked his wife that morning if they should have fun in bed or he should play golf; she told him not to forget his hat.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership: In **PETER STERN's** absence, **ED FARRELL** announced the birthday boys of the week: **DON HAMILTON**, 78, **WILL MORRISON**, 72, **ROBERT WHITBY**, 81, **BART STEINFELD**, 66, **GEORGE CHELWICK**, 96, **CARL VAN AKEN**, 99, **ROGER CLARKE**, 75, and **HAROLD KUPLESKY**, 83. There were 87 members and four guests at the meeting with another six watching on Zoom. The guests were: George Catlett g/o **HORST TEBBE** and **BILLY LONDON**, Jim Lockhart g/o **JACK WEIR** and **RUSS HARDEN**, Bill Fishman g/o **BOB SAMUELS**, and Robert Mendelsohn g/o ????. Returnees from far and wide were **RUSS HARDEN** from New Orleans, **JIM DEAN** from the Florida Keys, **TOM HEALY** from his cruise to Bermuda, and **RON MURRAY** from Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia (Olé!).

Induction ceremonies were held for two of the guests. **HORST TEBBE** nominated George Catlett, who received undergraduate, MBA, and law degrees from Rutgers University. He worked as a prosecutor and Assistant Attorney General but spent most of his career as a litigator with a NY law firm representing corporations. George enjoys travelling, classical music and baroque paintings. **BOB SAMUELS** nominated Bill Fishman, an avid road cyclist and competitive runner. He has degrees in accounting and law, with an LLM in Taxation degree from the NYU School of Law. Bill worked for the IRS for 5 years, representing the U.S. in court.

He then went into private practice, handling tax issues and estate planning. **ED FARRELL** seconded both nominations and the members unanimously welcomed them as new members.



George Catlett



Bill Fishman

TAD LARRABEE informed us that the Greenwich Choral Society will present its first live concert in two years. It will be a program of interesting seasonal music on Saturday, December 18 at 4 pm. The venue is the Performing Arts Center at Greenwich High School, 10 Hillside Road, Greenwich, CT. Tickets may be purchased on-line at <https://www.gcs-ct.org/>

Today's talk was described by **PETER UHRY**. Superintendent of Parks and Trees and Tree Warden for the Town of Greenwich, Dr. Gregory Kramer, will talk about the management of public spaces in Town. His department is responsible for the protection and management of some 65,000 trees on 1,500 acres of town property. **HOLLISTER STURGES** described next week's program featuring Mark Contreras, President and CEO of Connecticut Public Broadcasting, the only state-wide, community supported public media service. Its radio and three TV stations are members of national NPR and PBS. He will cover "The Growing Role of Public Media in Serving Local Communities."

FUN AND GAMES

Pickleball: **PATRICK MacCARTHY** reminded members that games will continue from 11 am until 1 pm at Christiano Field. If you would like to be put on the mailing list announcing the weekly schedule, contact **MARK GEIMER** (mark.geimer@gmail.com).

Walkers: **TAD LARRABEE** described the November 18th hike in Mianus River Park starting from the Stamford entrance. They did not get lost and all returned safe and sound. With winter weather approaching, the focus will be on safe walks away from ice and snow, which means that a bit more caution will be needed and many of the walks will be in more urban settings. To join the stalwart group, and send ideas for walk locations, contact **TAD** (tadlarra@optonline.net).



Tad's Walkers and Talkers at Mianus River Park

Tai Chi: **WILL MORRISON** reminded everyone that class is now held at First Congregational Church of Old Greenwich on Thursdays at 4 pm. **WILL** proudly mentioned that the tuition charged his students, \$5,200 to date, is all donated to Abilis, Neighbor-to-Neighbor, and the First Congregational Church of Old Greenwich which provides the space for his sessions. They donate through this site: experiencetaichi.org/tuition. Saturday, December 4th Beijing time, is World Tai Chi Science Day when 45 researchers will report on proven benefits of practicing tai chi. He will report on the event at next week's meeting. For more information about Tai Chi visit: www.experiencetaichi.org.

Bridge: On November 17th, **RON FRIEDMAN** had high score (3290), followed by Carol Febles (**JOHN's** wife) with 2400 points and **ED MASTOLONI** (2260).

Hearts: There were three tables on November 17th. At Table one was **PETER BERG, GRANT PERKINS, CHARLIE GRAVES** and **JOHN STANKUNAS**. **GRANT, PETER** and **CHARLIE** won one game each; **PETER**, the whiz, had three moonshots, while the others had one each. At Table two were **JIM DEAN, JOE DOWLING, JACK WEIR** and **MIKE AMBROSINO** who played three games. **JIM, JACK** and **JOE** (The Three J's) each won a game; **JOE** and **MIKE** had one moonshot each. At Table three, **JOHN KAVANAGH** won two out of three games and shot the moon once. Play continues to be held at 12:45 pm on Wednesdays at the Woman's Club of Greenwich, 89 Maple Avenue.

Tennis: **PAT MacCARTHY** served up the results from November 26th. The opening round players on court one were **PETER DODGE** and **BOB FISHMAN** vs **BRIAN MAHONEY** and **DON BREISMEISTER**; **BRIAN** and **DON** won. On court two, **RON FRIEDMAN** and **PAT** battled George Hamilton and **BILL HOWLAND**, with George and **BILL** the winners. For the "final round," court one saw **BILL** and **DON** against **BRIAN** and George; the winners were **BRIAN** and George. On court two, **PAT** and **BOB** played **PETER** and **RON**, with the latter victorious. Next week's captain is **JOHN KNIGHT**.

Platform (aka Paddle) Tennis: **JOHN DEAN** reported that on November 30th seven players rotated to complete four sets. The next session is on Tuesday, December 7th at Loughlin Field at 10 am as usual.

HUMAN INTEREST TALES AND OTHER DIVERSIONS

JIM FISHBEIN continued his tutorial on the solar system that he began in September by describing asteroids, rocky remnants from our solar system's formation about 4.6 billion years ago. He focused on those that might pose a danger to Earth. Over one million asteroids have been identified within our solar system with 27,000 in worrisome orbits. Asteroids greater than 80 feet in diameter could cause widespread catastrophic damage to the Earth (and us) should they leave their orbits and crash into our planet. An example is a 6-mile-wide asteroid that hit Earth 66 million years ago in the Yucatan Peninsula whose debris blocked sunshine globally for years; about 75% of plant and animal species became extinct.

NASA has embarked on a 100 million dollar a year “planetary defense program.” Under the Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART), a satellite was launched on November 24th aimed at Dimorphus, an object 500 feet in diameter (not a threat to Earth) to determine whether the asteroid can be nudged out of its orbit. It is a daunting challenge, since the asteroid is moving at 15,000 mph and will be 6.5 million miles away when the satellite is expected to reach it in one year. Trying to bump an asteroid out of an Earth-threatening orbit is not the only possibility. Theoretically, it might be possible to use a nuclear bomb to blast such an asteroid into pieces but one or more of those pieces could still find their way to Earth. Astronomers do not believe we will be in danger from an asteroid for many moons! Copies of **JIM’s** excellent slides for Parts 1 and 2 of his presentations can be obtained from him (jim.fishbein1@verizon.net).

SPECIAL EVENTS

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

SPEAKER PROGRAM

PETER UHRY introduced Gregory Kramer, PhD, Superintendent of Parks and Trees and Tree Warden for the Town of Greenwich. Dr. Kramer has over 25 years of professional experience in horticulture. Prior to coming to Greenwich, he was Director of Horticulture at Bok Tower Gardens in Florida. He has a B.A. degree in biology from the University of Miami, an M.S. in Environmental Horticulture, and a DMP in Plant Medicine from the University of Florida. He is responsible for the protection and management of trees as well as the maintenance of other public spaces throughout town. With his staff of 52 and the latest equipment technology (including some e-vehicles), his remit covers parks, playgrounds and athletic fields, in addition to about 65,000 trees on 1,500 acres of Town property.

Dr. Kramer explained some of the major ongoing and new projects: (1) Binney Park improvement and upgrade with the Department of Public Works; (2) Using an outside contractor, an inventory by Town section of all trees over a 5-year period to determine their health status; (3) improvement of athletic fields, many of which were not built originally for sports (irrigation, proper use, etc.); (4) Enhancement of Montgomery Pinetum with new plantings; helping with the renovations of a Colonial Cemetery in Byram. For some projects, his

group partners with the Greenwich Tree Conservancy and its cadre of volunteers. Examples of the challenges the Tree Warden faces is the replacement of many trees lost in 2019 due to heat and insufficient rain, dealing with a new disease carried by nematodes that are endangering our beechnut trees, and ensuring that the trails through the Pomerance Park in Cos Cob are properly maintained.

NEXT WEEK’S SPEAKER

Mark Contreras, President and CEO of Connecticut Public Broadcasting will discuss “The Growing Role of Public Media in Serving Local Communities.”

SPECIAL FEATURE

Past President **PETE UHRY** has asked that we include a few “historical” RMA pictures, with a question of the week. From the 2021 summer picnic, who is trying to figure out “how does this game work?”



More blasts from the past next issue. If you have any pictures of past RMA activities, contact the Editor.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS: Scribe for the next meeting, on December 8, will be →ED FARRELL←. Please send a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB promptly to ED at ejf1038r@gmail.com.

ALL MEMBERS: Do not forget to report all your inside and outside volunteer hours to JOHN FEBLES at jfebles13@gmail.com.

ALL MEMBERS: The CBB Team works every week to write and publish an informative and concise bulletin for our members' enjoyment. We welcome new members to join the CBB Team. Please contact TIM BROOKS at tbroo@aol.com if you are interested. Activity chairs should review the Calendar at the end of the CBB to make sure it is up to date.

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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Visit our website at www.greenwichrma.org.

RMA 2021 CALENDAR

Weekly Repetitive Activities*			
Day	Time	Activity	Contact
Mondays	11:00 am to 1:00 pm	Pickleball at Christiano Park	Pat MacCarthy – pmaccarthy415@gmail.com Mark Geimer – mark.geimer@gmail.com
Tuesdays	10:00 to 11:00 am	Platform (paddle) tennis at Loughlin Field, Cos Cob	John Dean - jhdeanco@gmail.com
Wednesdays	9:45 to 10:30 am	RMA Weekly Meeting	Horst Tebbe - onehorst@optimum.net or Len Carusi at lencarusi@gmail.com
Wednesdays	12:45 to 3:30 pm	Hearts at the Women's Club	John Kavanagh - jjkct176@gmail.com

Wednesdays	12:45 to 3:30 pm	Bridge at The Women's Club	Andre Mazurek - mazurek.a.j@gmail.com
Thursdays	4:00 to 5:00 pm	"Tai Chi New Joiners" – First Congregational Church, Old Greenwich	Will Morrison - wdmorrison@gmail.com
Thursdays	9:00 am	RMA Walking	Tad Larrabee - tadlarra@optonline.net
Thursdays	11:00 am to 1:00 pm	Pickleball at Christiano Park	Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com Mark Geimer – mark.geimer@gmail.com
Friday		Tennis	Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com

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