

CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



www.greenwichrma.org

Chair/Editor: Tim Brooks

Scribes: **Av Rivel, Arnold Gordon, Ed Farrell,
Joe Mancinelli, Frank Scarpa, Joe Angland, Bob Shullman,
Fred Wu**

Archivist: **Tad Larrabee** Website: **Mark Geimer** Format: **Len Carusi, Mark Geimer**

VOLUME 69 NUMBER 19 December 15, 2021

SCRIBE: JOE ANGLAND

"It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so."
- Mark Twain

President **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** opened the meeting, and **TOM HEALY** led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance. With **JIM SANTORA** accompanying on the piano, **GRAN BURGESS** led members in singing "Grand Old Flag," "Let it Snow," and "Winter Wonderland."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MICHAEL reminded those giving reports that they should email copies to the scribe for the particular meeting. (Scribe's note: handing the scribe a typed report is not as good, as the scribe has to retype it himself rather than cutting and pasting from an email. Next week **FRANK SCARPA** will be scribing remotely from Florida, so make *sure* you send your reports to him this way.) **MICHAEL** thanked the members for abiding by the Church's parking restrictions.

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** reported that sadly we have lost two more former members. **WILLIAM CLEWORTH** passed away at the age of 94 on November 16th in Vero Beach, Florida, where he and his wife had moved a few years ago. Bill joined the RMA in September 2003. You can read his obituary at

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/greenwichtime/name/william-cleworth-obituary?id=31662669>.

DAVE NOBLE passed away in Greenwich on December 13th at the age of 87. He joined the RMA in January 2012 and was a member until early 2020. As of this date, there is no obituary. If anyone knew **WILLIAM** or **DAVID** and would like to deliver a memorial at a future meeting, please contact **ARNOLD** at ajgordo@verizon.net; 203-340-9336.

ARNOLD pointed out that Covid-19 cases caused by the Omicron variant are now being reported in CT. The positivity rate for all variants is increasing sharply and we should not be complacent about the usual cautions involving vaccination and masks when appropriate. It is increasingly evident that it is particularly important to get the booster shot for either the mRNA or J&J vaccines.

ARNOLD then introduced himself to tell some jokes. He regaled the members with a series of Phyllis Diller one-liners and two anecdotes regarding doctors and their female patients.

Standing in for **PETER STERN** (who is sidelined with a shoulder injury), **ED FARRELL** reported that 65 members were present, including three on Zoom. Two candidates for RMA membership were also present. Candidate Alex Kosseim was sponsored by **JOHN TONER** and **JOHN FEBLES**. Alex is a chemical engineer who worked for many years for Union Carbide in Tarrytown. He and his wife moved to Greenwich in 2018 to be near his two daughters and six grandchildren. He has already been playing in our weekly bridge games, with some success. Candidate Jim Lockhart was sponsored by **JACK WEIR** and **RUSS HARDEN**. Jim and **JACK** were classmates at Yale, and Jim has had a distinguished career in both government and finance. He is a long-time Town resident and currently serves as Chairman of the Bruce Museum. Both **ALEX** and **JIM** were unanimously elected to membership.



Alex Kosseim (c) with John Febles (l) and
John Toner (r)

Jim Lockhart (c) with Jack Weir (l) and Russ Harden (r)

Today's birthday boys are **STEVE STEIN** (82), **CHARLIE ADAMS** (78), and **ARNOLD GORDON** (84).

PETER UHRY advised that there would be an "ugly tie contest" at the December 22 Festive Meeting, but he clarified that (1) he really meant "outrageous" rather than "ugly" and (2) items of seasonal clothing other than ties were eligible. A show of hands suggested that many will be vying for this honor.

TAD LARRABEE reported that this Saturday, December 18, at 4 pm the Greenwich Choral Society will present its first live concert in two years. Share the hope for a better tomorrow with candles, bells, and song. The seasonal music is excellent, with a number of reasonably short and challenging pieces that should delight. The venue will be 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/>.

TOM HEALY reported that the Melody Men, in conjunction with two other groups, will sing the national anthem during the opening ceremony of the May 28, 2022 Town Party. **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** suggested (not entirely in jest) that given the difficulty of securing tickets to the party – which often features very well-known performers such as the Eagles or the Beach Boys – members might consider joining the Melody Men to ensure themselves a seat.

HOLLISTER STURGES noted that today's speaker will be Andrew Woelflein, who will be speaking about Napoleon's 1812 invasion of, and retreat from, Russia. **PETER BERG** announced that next week's speaker will be Andrew Winston, a Greenwich resident, RTM member, and author of several books on business strategy. His presentation will be titled "Net Positive: Building businesses that profit in volatile times by solving the world's problems."

FUN AND GAMES

Walkers and Talkers: **TAD LARRABEE** reported that on Thursday, December 9th, the walkers enjoyed the fresh air and the view of Long Island Sound from the beaches of Cove Island in Stamford on the border of Darien. Some of the nine walkers had to leave early, while those

remaining walked a loop through the nearby preserved wetlands and then on a trail through the woods where they came upon three rather tame deer. On Thursday, December 16, weather permitting, the group will start its walk in Byram Park.

Bridge: **RON MURRAY** reported the week's bridge scores. **ANDRE MAZUREK** won with 3280, **ALEX KOSSEIM** placed second with 2830, and **RON** was third with 2330.

Hearts: **JACK SWEGER** reported that this week we had three tables with 12 players and played a total of 10 games. Table one played three games, and the winners were **MICHAEL AMBROSINO, TOM HEALY,** and **JACK.** **JACK** had two moon shots, and **MIKE** and **TOM** had one each. Table two played three games, with **RICK HOLZ, JOHN STANKUNAS,** and **PETER BERG** winning one each. **JOHN** had two moonshots, and **RICK** had one. Table three managed four games, with **JOE DOWLING** winning two and **JOHN KAVANAGH** and **JOHN NIGHT** winning one each. **BOB SHULLMAN** (a new player) had two moonshots, and **DOWLING, KAVANAGH,** and **KNIGHT** had one each. This week's captain is **PETER BERG,** and we again have 12 men scheduled to play. If you would like to join future games, contact **JOHN KAVANAGH,** our manager.

Pickleball: **PAT MacCARTHY** reminded members that games will continue from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm on Mondays and Thursdays at Christiano Field. If you would like to be added to the email list announcing the weekly schedule, contact **MARK GEIMER** (mark.geimer@gmail.com).



The Pickleballers in action

Tennis: **ANDY HOLMES** reported that four matches were played at the Old Greenwich Tennis Academy. Opening round winners were **DON BREISMEISTER** and **ANDRE MAZUREK** on court one and **RANDY MOTLAND** and **PETER ORBANOWSKI** on court two. In the finals round, **ANDRE** and **PETER** prevailed on court one while **JOE MANCINELLI** and **BRUCE SOCKET** won on court two. This week's captain for the final date of the Fall season will be **PETER UHRY**

Human Interest: **GRAN BURGESS**, in a highly animated presentation that cannot be fairly captured by the printed word, engaged us with a story from his outlaw days: driving at night in South Carolina in his early teens when his license permitted only daytime driving. The principal lessons to be gleaned were (1) one should not run afoul of a father who is both a Baptist and a lawyer, (2) **GRAN** is not cut out for the stress of an outlaw life, and (3) there was a teenage girl who made an indelible impression on **GRAN**.

TODAY'S SPEAKER

HOLLISTER STURGES introduced today's speaker, Andrew Woelflein, a Greenwich High School and Brown University graduate who serves as Presiding Trustee of the Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection at Brown. Mr. Woelflein fondly remembered our late member **JOHN deCSEPEL** and dedicated this presentation to his memory. Mr. Woelflein explained that his presentation would revolve around the illustrated diary of Faber du Faur, a German artillery officer who served in Napoleon's army during the 1812 invasion of Russia. While his is one of several diaries kept during the campaign, it is unique in that the author was also a professional illustrator and the diary contained sketches in addition to words. Today's presentation revolved around about 30 of them.

Using the sketches for emphasis, Mr. Woelflein told the story of the invasion and retreat – a saga that involved the death of 500,000 of Napoleon's 600,000 soldiers and 180,000 of their 250,000 horses. He explained that problems were manifest even before the invasion, as soldiers found themselves short of food even while encamped in France preparing to invade. While Napoleon had stored some supplies in advance along his army's route, they proved inadequate given that the picked-over land made it difficult to supplement those supplies by foraging and the muddy roads made resupply a challenge. In addition, some of Napoleon's

victories on the way into Russia were too successful, as some cities were consumed by fire and thus were not sources of food or shelter during his retreat.

Some of du Faur's sketches depicted the battle of Borodino. While the French won the battle, it was a Pyrrhic victory given the losses they sustained. They had beaten the Russian army, but not destroyed it, meaning that they faced the daunting prospect of enduring a Russian winter. The sketches depicting the seizure of Moscow in late September were less martial, as the Russian army had abandoned the city. Ironically, that spelled defeat for Napoleon given that it meant any large engagement with the Russians would be delayed and that spending the winter in Russia – with inadequate food and clothing – would be required unless the Russians surrendered promptly. When the Russians did not surrender, Napoleon was forced to retreat. du Faur's sketches detailed the privation and perils of the retreat: stronger soldiers stealing the boots of weaker ones, attacks on French soldiers by Cossacks, relying on dead horses as a food source, and unforgiving weather with temperatures plunging to as low as 30-below. (That's cold, and roughly the same, in both Fahrenheit and Celsius.)

Mr. Woelflein concluded with a slide that showed the striking similarities of the Russian campaigns of Napoleon and Hitler. Among other things, both were launched too late in the year (given the need to get out before winter), were a second front in a larger war, were pursued without adequate winter clothing, and were plagued by extended supply lines. The video of Mr. Woelflein'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. At left: from last week, that's **JOHN** and Ann **CARON** arriving at the 2017 RMA banquet at Tamarack. **JOHN** helped build Notre Dame University to academic excellence. At right: in what year did the Melody Men sing at this Mets game? And who are the two RMA representatives in this picture?



More blasts from the past next issue. Do you have any pictures of past RMA activities?

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS: Scribe for the next meeting, on December 22, will be →**FRANK SCARPA**←. Please send a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB promptly to **FRANK** at frankjscarpa@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.

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.

Retired Men's Association of Greenwich, Inc. · 37 Lafayette Place · Greenwich, CT 06830 · USA.
Visit our website at <https://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	12:30 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	1:30-3:00 pm	Tennis	Andy Holmes - andyholmes56@gmail.com)

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