

CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



www.greenwichrma.org

Chair/Editor: Tim Brooks

Scribes: **Joe Angland, Paul Barbian, Jim Dean, Bob Giaquinto, Arnold Gordon, John Kavanagh, Michael LaGamma, David Michonski, John Reese, Av Rivel, Frank Scarpa, Bob Shullman, Fred Wu**
Archivist: **Tad Larrabee** Website: **Mark Geimer** Format: **Len Carusi, Mark Geimer**

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SCRIBE: JOE ANGLAND

"When you reach the end of your rope, tie a knot in it and hang on." – Franklin D. Roosevelt

President **JOE MANCINELLI** opened the meeting, and **DON CONWAY** led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance. With **JIM SANTORA** accompanying on the piano, **GRAN BURGESS** led members in singing "America the Beautiful," "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," and **GRAN's** own composition, "Listen to the Land."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOE MANCINELLI noted that there would be no meeting next Wednesday, December 21. **JOE** commended **MIKE HAYDEN** on being named Veteran of the Year.

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** mentioned that everyone should have received the announcement, sent out on December 12, with details about the RMA Holiday Party on December 21. Thus far, about 110 members and guests are planning to attend. He encouraged members and/or their wives to dress so as to compete in the contest for most stylish/fancy and most unusual/outrageous attire. Three secret judges will be roaming the Social Hall to identify the candidates and make the two choices. If there are questions about the event, he suggested that members see him, **JOE MANCINELLI, TAD LARRABEE,** or **HOLLISTER STURGES** during the break, or contact **ARNOLD** (203-340-9336, 203-273-

5779, ajgordo@verizon.net). **ARNOLD** also asked for a volunteer at the party to ensure that guests had their ID badges.

On an issue that will affect all our pocketbooks, he noted that Eversource has informed regulators that the supply portion of our electric bills will increase by nearly 100%, and as a result, customers' bills will increase by about 50% according to the Connecticut State Public Utilities Authority (PURA). However, the Energize CT organization enables residents to easily compare all their energy options. You can go to the following site to compare rates from third-party sources and choose a plan that is more affordable.

<https://www.powersetter.com/energize-ct/>

ARNOLD lauded the Greenwich Police Department and Riverside Service Inc. for their partnership this holiday season to make sure all Town of Greenwich residents make it home safely. From now until January 2, 2023, Riverside Service Inc. is offering all Greenwich residents a FREE safe ride home for you and your car so you don't drink and drive. To make arrangements for this service call the Greenwich Police Department non-emergency number: 203-622-8004. Riverside Service is a good auto repair location at the corner of West Putnam Avenue and Valley Drive. For details:

<https://www.facebook.com/Riverside-Service-Inc-833175293488322/>

Before introducing **CARL WHITE** as jokester for the day, **ARNOLD** shared some truisms about how most of us grew up as children, as expressed in the words of our parents, a form of home schooling, including:

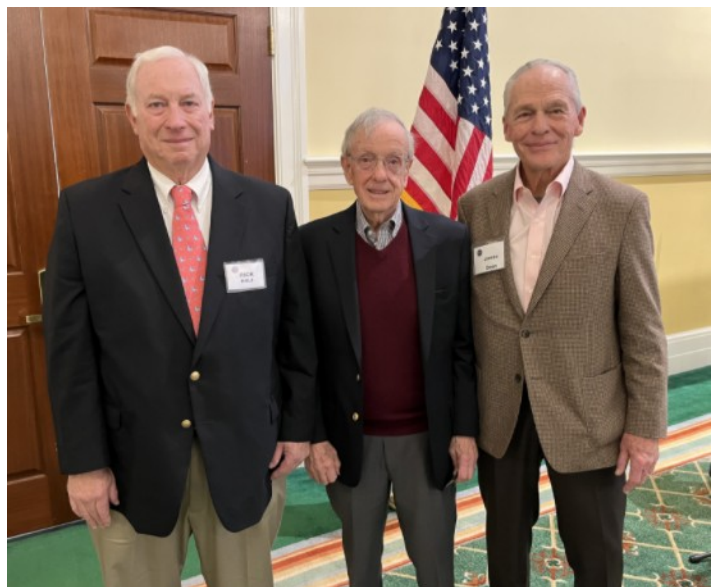
- My father taught me LOGIC. "Because I said so, that's why."
- My mother taught me about RECEIVING. "You are going to get it from your father when he gets home!"
- My father taught me HUMOR. "When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me."
- My father taught me about JUSTICE AND REVENGE. "One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you!"

CARL then treated us to some of the witticisms of the great Henny Youngman, the "king of the one-liners." **CARL** noted that Youngman was born in England but raised in Bay Ridge New York. (**MICHAEL AMBROSINO** later corrected the record, noting that Bay Ridge is not in New York, but in Brooklyn!) Among the Youngman classics he shared were:

- “I’ve been married and in love with the same woman for 34 years. If my wife ever finds out about her, she’ll kill me.”
- The patient asks his doctor, “how do I stand?” The doctor replies, “that’s what puzzles me.”

Membership Chair **PETER STERN** began his report by recognizing **RICK HOLZ**, who nominated Peter Joyce for membership. **RICK** noted that he and Peter had been friends for over 40 years and that their wives have shared a long friendship. Peter and Kathleen have three sons and three grandchildren.

Peter graduated from the N.Y. Maritime College at Fort Schuyler, and then spent four years sailing oil tankers out of the Port of Houston. He received his MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, and following that worked for Bristol Myers in their pharmaceutical business. Thereafter he worked in several capacities for International Paper. Among his responsibilities was the start up and operation of the company’s Minority Enterprise Small Business Investment Company. While working at International Paper’s New York City headquarters, Peter moved to Greenwich, where he became active on the Planning and Zoning Commission. He served on the Commission for 19 years, 14 as Commissioner. Peter left the corporate world 25 years ago, deciding to enter the real estate profession. He is still active but working on a reduced schedule. **RICK** strongly recommended that Peter be voted into the RMA, and **JIM DEAN** seconded the nomination. **PETER** was unanimously elected, and after being presented with the accoutrements of membership said he looked forward to his time in the RMA.



Holz, Joyce, Dean

PETER STERN reported that 84 members were in attendance, including 10 by Zoom. In addition, Peter Cruikshank was present as a guest of **JOHN KAVANAGH**. **PETER** acknowledged the following birthdays for this week, and for the remainder of 2022 when we will not be meeting:

Alex	Kosseim	87
Charlie	Adams	79
Arnold	Gordon	85
Tog	Pearson	74
John	Stankunas	82
Lyn	Kaufman	96
Steve	Boies	81
Eric	Zitzmann	87
John	Craine	86
Keating	Hagmann	77

PETER acknowledged two returnees: **JOHN FEBLES** from Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, and **BILL HOWLAND** from Vermont.

HOLLISTER STURGES reminded the group that today’s speaker would be **TIM BROOKS**, who would speak on “How Jazz and Blues Revolutionized American Culture in the 1920s.” **PETER BERG** announced that the speakers at our next meeting (January 4, 2023) will be Margarita Alban, the Greenwich commissioner of planning and zoning, and Patrick LaRow, the new town planner. The topic will be “Issues in Greenwich Land Use.”

TOM HEALY spoke about the Melody Men. They are 19 strong, but they could use additional singers and, especially, a backup pianist. In the past year they gave 22 one-hour performances at 14 locations in New York and Connecticut. They also sang the national anthem at three events. Rehearsals will begin for the Spring season in mid-March, with performances in April and May. Fall rehearsals will begin in mid-September, with performances in October and November. If you are interested, please contact **TOM** (retiredtjh@gmail.com).

DON CONWAY announced that there would be a trip to the carrier Intrepid on January 17. Participants will be bussed down and there will be lunch on the ship. The cost is \$90, except that veterans have free admission to the ship. If you would like to participate, contact **DON**.



The final ROMEO lunch of the year was held on December 8, at Tengda Asian Bistro in Greenwich, hosted by **DON ROTZIEN**. A fine time was had by all.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

MICHAEL AMBROSINO announced that the food drive would be in January this year, to minimize the overlap with similar seasonal efforts. See the list in the back of the hall for the most desired items – the three most desired being pasta, pasta, and pasta. Food will be collected at the January 18 meeting, and monetary contributions are happily accepted.

ARNOLD GORDON reminded members about the American Red Cross sponsored Veterans Clothing Drive. It is not too late to help out veterans in need of basic clothing and other items.

<https://www.greenwichct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/33774/Holiday-for-Heroes-Veterans-Clothing-Drive-2022>

JIM DEAN asked for additional volunteers for the Salvation Army Christmas drive. He said that RMA volunteers were already collecting about \$1,000 per weekend at their location outside the ACME supermarket. We need volunteers for two-hour shifts on December 16, 17, 23, and 24.



John Febles

FUN AND GAMES

Hearts: **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** reported that the winners at Table 1 were **JOHN KNIGHT** (twice) and **DON CONWAY**, with **JOHN** and **DON** each scoring a moon shot. Winners at Table 2 were **BOB SCHULLMAN** and **JACK SWEGER**, with no moon shots. The group meets at 1:00 pm at the library, and all are welcome.

Pickleball: **PAT MacCARTHY** reported that Monday's games were cancelled because of rain and frigid weather, but that there were spirited games on both courts on Thursday, with temperatures in the 50's. **PAT** reminded members that pickleball is played, weather permitting, on Monday and Thursday mornings from 10:00 a.m. until noon at Christiano Field. If you would like to participate, contact **PAT** (pmaccarthy415@gmail.com).

Walkers and Talkers: **TAD LARRABEE** reported that last Thursday the group met at the Greenwich YWCA and wandered through some neighborhoods to the south, returning up a few blocks of Greenwich Avenue and back to the "Y". Several of us commented that we saw many interesting details of these neighborhoods that they had not noticed before as they whizzed by in their cars. Altogether a very pleasant and interesting walk. See the picture of our gang in front of the 1910 Armory Building on Mason Street in downtown Greenwich.



Tai Chi: **WILL MORRISON** reminded members that the Tai Chi group meets on Mondays at 9:30 a.m.

Bridge: **RON MURRAY** reported that this week's top scorers were **ALEX KOSSEIM** (6130), **ANDRE MAZUREK** (3390), and **RON** (3310). Slams were recorded by **ALEX** and **RON** and by **ALEX** and **FRANK LEE**. New players are welcome.

Paddle Tennis: **JOE MANCINELLI** noted that there was finally good paddle weather – 38 degrees at 10:00 am. **ARNE WELLES**, **ANDRE MAZUREK**, **FRED WU**, **JIM DEAN**, **MICHAEL AMBROSINO**, **JERRY COLEMAN**, **JOHN REESE**, and **JOE** played 12 games before their court time ran out. There was great play, great banter, and much fun.

Indoor Tennis: **JOHN REESE** announced the week's results. Opening round winners were **ANDRE MAZUREK** and **PETER DODGE** on Court 1 and **PAT MacCARTHY** and **DON BREISMEISTER** on Court 2. The final round winners were **ANDRE MAZUREK** and **PAT MacCARTHY** on Court 1 and **JOHN** and **RANDY MOTLAND** on Court 2. This week's captain is **ANDY HOLMES**.

TODAY'S SPEAKER

HOLLISTER STURGES introduced today's speaker, RMA member **TIM BROOKS**, who will



speak on "How Jazz and Blues Revolutionized American Culture in the 1920s." **TIM** is the author of nine books on media history, including *Lost Sounds: Blacks and the Birth of the Recording Industry: 1890-1919*, which lays the groundwork for this era, and *The Blackface Minstrel Show in Mass Media: 20th Century Performances on Radio, Records, Film and Television*. His books have won many awards, including the American Book Award and the ASCAP Deems Taylor Award for best book on music. He has also produced a number of reissue CDs, is a three-time Grammy nominee, and won a

Grammy Award for Best Historical Reissue for the companion CD to *Lost Sounds*. He is the current president of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections, a national organization of recording scholars and archivists.

TIM explained that at one time African-Americans had been mostly barred from the stage. Their first widespread exposure to white audiences was when they staged their own

minstrel shows in the late 1800s. Black ragtime music broke through in the 1890's, but it was performed primarily by white musicians. The rich music of Black Americans had not gone completely unnoticed, however. Famed Czech composer Antonin Dvorak observed in 1893, "In the Negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music."

In 1915, African-American artist Freddie Keppard was asked to record a jazz record, but he declined to do so, fearing that other musicians would steal his music. Shortly thereafter, in 1917, the Original Dixieland Band, a white group, recorded the first jazz record, and it became a huge hit. Up to this time three companies had controlled the recording industry because of their patents, and they had little interest in promoting African-American music. When those patents expired new recording companies emerged (some of which focused on Black music) and the opportunities for African-American musicians exploded. During the 1920s jazz recordings were made by both Black and white artists, and African-American culture became part of the mainstream in America. Before long, several genres of jazz were widely available.

One genre was Dixieland jazz, which typically involved an ensemble of five to seven musicians, featuring a trumpet, a clarinet, and a trombone. Some of this music was played by whites, such as Ted Lewis. But African-American artists such as Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton had a large impact.

Another genre was commercial dance band jazz. These bands, which were quite large, played African-American-style music, but the musicians were generally white. Paul Whiteman, a white bandleader who became known as the King of Jazz, played the most prominent role. In 1924 he staged an elaborate concert at New York's Aeolian Hall that featured George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue," a "symphonic jazz" piece that Whiteman had commissioned. Sophisticated big band jazz was another variant, with Duke Ellington and Fletcher Henderson perhaps being the leading practitioners.



Duke Ellington

Boogie-woogie, a mix of jazz and blues, was first popularized by Pinetop Smith, whose untimely death in a barroom fight limited his contributions. This style became very popular in the late 1930's and 1940's, being embraced by white performers such as Tommy Dorsey and the Andrews Sisters.

Jazz, an African-American creation, was thus embraced by and performed by both races. The leading jazz personalities of the 1920's included both Black (e.g., Fats Waller) and white (e.g., Ted Lewis) musicians. And many songs sung by singers of both races were identified with jazz, including "Sweet Georgia Brown" and "Stardust."

Meanwhile, blues music was evolving in parallel with jazz. The first hit blues record by a black performer was released in 1920, "Crazy Blues" written by Perry Bradford and performed by Mamie Smith and Her Jazz Hounds. Soon thereafter several genres of blues appeared, including delta blues, urban blues, and country blues.

By the 1930's, jazz and blues had become a core part of American music, and over time they would continue to evolve into forms at the heart of American music. Roughly speaking, jazz evolved into big band swing, which spawned bebop, which led to the smooth jazz of the 1950's. The blues, in turn, led to jump blues and jive, which evolved into rhythm & blues, which gave birth to rock-and-roll. Thus, African-American music, which first gained widespread exposure in the 1920's, has become part of the mainstream of American culture.

The talk included many recorded examples, and was followed by a lively Q&A session. To see the full presentation, go to <https://greenwichrma.org/> and click on "Speakers."

Note: The views expressed in this presentation are those of the speaker. They are not intended to represent the views of the RMA or its members.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS: Scribe for the next meeting, on January 4, 2023, will be →**PAUL BARBIAN**←. Please send a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB to **PAUL** at barbian3015@gmail.com.

ALL MEMBERS: The CBB team works every week to write and publish an informative and concise bulletin for our members' enjoyment. We can always use new members to join the Scribe Tribe. Please contact **TIM BROOKS** at tbroo@aol.com if you can support this effort.

ALL MEMBERS: Do not forget to report all your inside and outside volunteer hours at www.greenwichrma.org/log.

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 2022 CALENDAR

Weekly Repetitive Activities*			
Day	Time	Activity	Contact
Mondays	9:30 am	QiGong and Tai Chi Workout	Register in advance with Will Morrison – wdmorrison@gmail.com
Mondays	10:00 am	Pickleball at Christiano Park	Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com Mark Geimer – mark.geimer@gmail.com
Tuesdays	Resumes in Spring	RMA Golf, the Griff Golf Course, Greenwich	Mike Ryan – ryantomac@netscape.net
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	1:00 pm	Hearts	Bob Shullman – bob.shullman@gmail.com
Wednesdays	12:30 pm	Bridge	Andre Mazurek - Mazurek.a.j@gmail.com
Thursdays	9:00 am	RMA Walking	Tad Larrabee - tadlarra@optonline.net

Thursdays	10:00 am	Pickleball at Christiano Park	Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com Mark Geimer – mark.geimer@gmail.com
Friday	Resumes in Spring	Outdoor Tennis, Bruce Park	John Knight - johnknight7@gmail.com
Friday	1:30-3:00 pm	Indoor Tennis	Andy Holmes - Andyholmes56@gmail.com

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