

# CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



[www.greenwichrma.org](http://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: FRED WU

Next Week's Scribe: MICHAEL LAGAMMA, [MDLAGAMMA@OPTONLINE.NET](mailto:MDLAGAMMA@OPTONLINE.NET)

New RMA President **JACK WEIR** opened the meeting at 9:46 am. **BOB BISHOP** led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. **TOM HEALY** led the songs, starting with the "Star-Spangled Banner," followed by "Walkin' My Baby Back Home" and "We Are the RMA," accompanied on piano by the composer of the latter song, **BOB MORGAN**.

President **WEIR** thanked the members on duty today: scribe **FRED WU**, projectionists **LEN CARUSI** and **TONY COCCHI**, volunteer advocate **JOHN DENNE**, greeter **JOHN KAVANAGH**, refreshments provider **MIKE AMBROSINO**, audio/video **ED PARKER, MARK GEIMER, PETER DODGE, HORST TEBBE, BARRY RICHELSON**, set up **BOB BISHOP, JIM BUTLER**, and **JOHN CRAINE**.

**JACK** announced that it being the start of a new fiscal year, the RMA dues are now due. The dues remain \$100 this year. Checks can be hand delivered at a member meeting or mailed to Treasurer **JEFF JUNKER**, 9 Tree Top Terrace, Greenwich 06831. Please remit ASAP as dues are the principal source of income for RMA. The Cigar Box is another important source of funding for the weekly refreshments; please contribute regularly.

**JACK** mentioned that he would like to reinstitute human interest stories to be presented by members at the end of the meeting when time allows. It will be called the "Five and Dime Presentation" because it should be between five and 10 minutes long.

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** reported that sadly we have recently lost two former members. **PETER CRUMBINE**, long-time luminary in town politics, passed away on April 27<sup>th</sup> at the age of 84. An RMA memorial will be delivered at the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting by **HARRY FISHER**. His obituary can be found [here](#) and [here](#). **JIM STEEN**, a member from 2017 to 2020, passed away on April 17<sup>th</sup> at the age of 83. His obituary can be found [here](#). **ARNOLD** asked if anyone knew him well and would be willing to deliver a memorial. Contact **ARNOLD** at [ajgordo@verizon.net](mailto:ajgordo@verizon.net).

He then mentioned that the town is holding a special ceremony to honor Vietnam era veterans from Greenwich on Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm at the Arch Street Teen Center. If you served during that time, you can register with [Ken.Borsuk@greenwichct.org](mailto:Ken.Borsuk@greenwichct.org) or call 203-622-7702. Spouses are welcome to attend as well.

A recent survey has revealed that much of the divisiveness and rancor between Republicans and Democrats may largely be due to serious perception gaps in understanding one another. The very interesting data and a quiz from the League of Women Voters is recommended [reading](#).

While the RMA has the best speaker program in our larger community, members might like to take advantage of another free speaker opportunity that has been operating for many years in Stamford, the Learning in Retirement (LIR) program. All their classes are held at Temple Beth-El in Stamford. An example of their programs can be found at [www.lirstamford.org](http://www.lirstamford.org). Their new schedule will be available in August.

**ARNOLD** then tried to educate the group about some new measurement conversions used by engineers:

1 millionth of a mouthwash = 1 microscope  
2000 pounds of Chinese soup = 1 Won Ton  
Basic laryngitis unit = 1 hoarsepower  
1000 cubic centimeters of wet socks = 1 literhosen

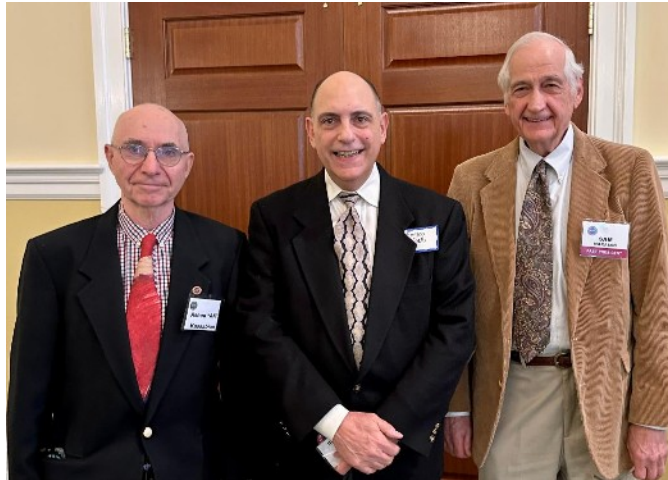
Trying to save the day after this, he introduced **PAUL CAMPION**, jokester for the day. **PAUL** started with a pop quiz about the 50 states in the USA: California has five syllables; which state has just one syllable? Maine.

He then added, "During the long rainy weekend, my wife told me I have only two faults: one is that I don't listen, and the other one was...something else. I told her that she should embrace her mistakes, so she gave me a hug. Our war in Afghanistan took 20 years and four US Presidents to replace the Taliban with... the Taliban. About the benefits of becoming very old, a 104-year-old woman told me that there is no more peer pressure.

What is the difference between men and government bonds? The bonds mature! Man said to God, thank you for creating woman, but why did you make her so beautiful? So you would love her. But why did you make her so dumb? So she would love you. What do you call a woman who knows where her husband is every minute of the day? A widow!"

**PETER STERN** gave the membership report, starting with birthdays: **RICK HOLZ** turns 75; **ANDREW LOEBELSON** turns 77; **MIKE WARNER** turns 80; **JOHN DENNE** turns 84. **SPIKE LIPSCHUTZ** counted 93 attendees in person and 11 on zoom, for a total of 104, plus two guests. The guests are Sonny Chan, guest of **FRANK SALEM** and **JOERG BLASER**, and Pete Hamilton, a guest of **TOG PEARSON**. Returnees are **LEE LUNDY** from Santa Fe, NM, **JOE WATTS** from Naples, FL, and **GERHARD PETER** from Antigua.

There were no inductions this week, but the picture of last week's inductee was omitted from the CBB. Here it is, with a welcome to new member **ENRICO VISELLI**!



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On Saturday, May 13, at 1:00 pm the Boy Scouts will hold a Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Ernest Thompson Seton Scout Reservation, 363 Riversville Road, Greenwich. RMA members, spouses, and guests are encouraged to participate. Also, Post 29 of the American Legion will be sponsoring a Memorial Day Veteran's Flag Placement at St. Mary's Cemetery, 399 North Street, Greenwich on Wednesday, May 24 at 5:00 pm.

**JACK** introduced **BOB MEANEY** as the new head of the Speaker Program committee, and thanked **HOLLISTER STURGES** for his many years of service as head of the speaker program.

**HOLLISTER** told us about today's speaker, Andrew Woelflein, and then about next week's speaker, **JOHN BLANKLEY**, whose talk is titled "What Would Alexis D'Toqueville Say

About Democracy in America Today?" **JOHN**, an RMA member, businessman, entrepreneur, and local politician (now retired), will offer thoughts based on his lifelong affinity with the earliest, and still foremost, interpreter of the American experiment in democracy.



**DON ROTZIEN** told us that at the Thursday, April 20 ROMEO (Retired Old Men Eating Out) lunch at Cobber North at The Griff, 11 members had a good time. The next one will be sometime in June at Greenwich Point, date to be determined.

**JACK** reminded us that the RMA is reviving the special events program. **TOM HEALY** described the first one, a trip to Belmont Racetrack on Thursday, June 15. Thirty-six have signed up, but eight still have not paid. Please give **TOM** a check made out to RMA

(\$110 per person) today. Plans for trips to the new Bruce Museum (late May/June) and the Sculpture Gardens at Pepsico (September) are in the works.

**DON CONWAY** announced a miniature golf opportunity at Parsonage Cottage on June 4, from 11:30 to 1:30 pm. It costs \$100 per foursome, and includes coffee and a hot dog lunch.

In the Visiting Report, **MIKE AMBROSINO** welcomed back **JOHN STANKUNAS** from a stay at Greenwich Hospital. **TAD LARRABEE** has recovered from a case of bronchitis.

### GAMES MEMBERS PLAY

The hearts report was given by **MIKE AMBROSINO** (for **JACK SWEGER**). The session had three tables and 12 players. Table #1 played three games. **PETER BERG** and **JACK SWEGER** each won one. The third was a partial game ending in a tie with **PETER** and **ANDY HOLMES**. Moon shots were made by **BERG** (2), **SWEGER** and **JOHN STANKUNAS**. At Table #2, **JOHN KNIGHT** won the first two games and **DON CONWAY** won a third partial game. **JOHN** was the lone moon shooter. Table #3 completed two games. **RICK HOLZ** and **BOB SHULLMAN** were the winners. **TOM HEALY** successfully shot the moon twice. Come join us.



**WILL MORRISON** on Tai Chi. If you are walking through the forest and see a lot of trees, you probably won't see the Tai Chi players because they aren't moving either. We meet Mondays at 9:30 am; get in touch with me if you want to join us.

**RON MURRAY** gave the bridge results for April 26. There were nine players, led by **RON FRIEDMAN**, 3000 points, **RON MURRAY**, 2960 points, **JOHN FEBLES**, 2290 points. We play Wednesday afternoons at 1 pm in the Cafe on the ground floor of the Greenwich Library, where lunch is available. We welcome all members and guests who are interested in bridge, whether beginners or experts, to join our group.

**PAT MACCARTHY** said pickleball was cancelled this week due to rain. But the weather is getting better for pickleball; contact **PAT** if you want to join.

**MIKE RYAN** gave the golf report. The sign-up sheet from last week for May 9 was lost, so please sign up again.

**ANDRE MAZUREK** gave the tennis results. Winners on Court 1 were **PETER ORBANOWSKI** and **JOHN REESE**. On Court 2 winners were **RALPH NEWITTER** and **JEREMY COLEMAN**. In the finals round, the winners on Court 1 were **PETER** and **RALPH** and on Court 2, **ANDY HOLMES** and **ANDRE MAZUREK**. This week's captain is **JIM FISHBEIN**.

### **SPEAKER PROGRAM**

**HOLLISTER STURGES** opened the program by introducing Andrew Woelflein, who spoke about the World War II experiences of John Cullen Murphy, the American illustrator best known for his three decades of work on the Prince Valiant comic strip. Woelflein is a financial services executive, serving as the chief strategy officer at Monex, a global financial company. For many years he has been a trustee of the Ann SK Brown Military Collection at Brown University. He holds BA from Brown University in European History and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He is also a graduate of Greenwich High School.



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Presenting in Greenwich about John Cullen Murphy is appropriate because Murphy lived and worked in Greenwich for many decades after the end of WWII. Before he began his

talk Woelflein recognized three special guests in the audience: Lennie DeCsepel, a longtime Woelflein family friend, whose husband **JOHN** served the RMA speaker program for many years; Esther Bushell, Woelflein's 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher; and Kate Murphy, daughter of John Cullen Murphy.

In 1994, in anticipation of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWII, a group of about 100 of Murphy's letters were donated to Brown. Then, in 2012, Woelflein serendipitously met Meg Murphy, sister of Kate, at a high school reunion. She told him that she had John's diary – it was actually a collection of 1000 letters which included about 50 very detailed sketches that in themselves are works of art. This primary source information is valuable to historians, researchers, documentarians, writers, and museums. Ms. Murphy also donated a set of posters drawn by John Cullen Murphy that illustrated the atrocities of the Japanese military toward American POWs.

John Cullen Murphy was born in 1919 in New York, moved to Chicago, and then to New Rochelle in 1930. While he was playing baseball in New Rochelle, he was spotted by Norman Rockwell, who used him a model when the scheduled model did not show up. The image was used for a cover of the Saturday Evening Post, and Murphy's acquaintance with Rockwell was to prove invaluable.

Murphy's father had died prior to the start of WWII. His dying wish was that his sons would all serve in the military. After art school, John went to basic training in 1941, a year before Pearl Harbor; he was posted to the Philippines, New Guinea, and Australia. In the next four years Murphy advanced from buck private to major.

Murphy wrote a letter home every couple of days. The letters had 16 big themes, and each letter touched on two to five themes. Some were about administration, making money from painting, needing art supplies. Next was news of his friends or brothers and his own action in the war. Another theme was the art he was doing, painting enlisted people, then officers. He wrote about pranks, like chasing jackrabbits in a Jeep. He wrote about books that he read and wanted to read. He requested a wide variety of books be sent to him. He wrote about collaborating with Norman Rockwell on covers for the *Saturday Evening Post*.

Murphy was a soldier first, but was able to practice his art in his spare time. With his art school training, he was able to supplement his salary; as a private he would get \$30 a month, but he made at least that much from his art. His reputation as an artist preceded his arrival in the Pacific. As a result, he was assigned as an aide to General Marquat. He helped host visiting generals and enjoyed the amenities. On off days he hiked in the jungle and sketched native villages and people. He painted scenes of boxing matches, card games,

Filipino guerrilla soldiers, soldiers relaxing. He sketched Australian generals, kangaroos, New Guinea natives, and expatriated Japanese soldiers.

Woelflein explained that there were five ways that Murphy's art contributed to the war effort. First were his portraits, over 60 of Allied generals starting with pencil sketches, adding water colors later. He would send the originals home, and then make a second copy for the generals. Officers wrote him letters of appreciation for the portraits. He painted MacArthur but only from photos, not in person, perhaps because MacArthur didn't want anyone to think he had enough time on his hands to sit for a portrait. He also painted Mrs. MacArthur and their son, Arthur. He also composed training posters, creating Benny the Bungler as a character who always messed up, to warn soldiers not to be like that. The third area was communications. *Newsmag* was printed weekly to update soldiers on the progress of the war. Fourth were posters about Japanese atrocities toward POWs, like beheadings. Fifth was morale; his caricatures of ordinary soldiers were popular and raised morale.

After the war, Murphy was awarded a Bronze Star. He married Joan Byrne in 1951, settled in Cos Cob, and had eight children.

After Q&A, Woelflein presented **HOLLISTER** with a copy of his book about the Murphy collection.

To see the full presentation, go to <https://greenwichrma.org>, cursor to "Speakers" and click on "Speaker Videos."

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 will be →**MICHAEL LAGAMMA**←. Please make sure you give a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB to him, *preferably via email*.

**ALL MEMBERS:** Do not forget to report all your inside and outside volunteer hours at [www.greenwichrma.org/log](http://www.greenwichrma.org/log).

**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](mailto:tbroo@aol.com) if you can support this effort.

**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.

Thanks to **ANDY HOLMES** and **DON ROTZIEN** for pictures this time.

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### RMA 2023 CALENDAR

Weekly Repetitive Activities*			
Day	Time	Activity	Contact
Mondays	9:30 am	QiGong and Tai Chi Workout	Register in advance with Will Morrison – <a href="mailto:wdmorrison@gmail.com">wdmorrison@gmail.com</a>
Mondays	10:00 am	Pickleball at Christiano Park	Pat MacCarthy – <a href="mailto:pmacCarthy415@gmail.com">pmacCarthy415@gmail.com</a> Mark Geimer – <a href="mailto:mark.geimer@gmail.com">mark.geimer@gmail.com</a>
Tuesdays	9:30 am	RMA Golf, the Griff Golf Course, Greenwich	Mike Ryan – <a href="mailto:ryantomac@netscape.net">ryantomac@netscape.net</a>
Tuesdays	Resumes in fall	Platform (paddle) tennis at Loughlin Field, Cos Cob	James Dean - <a href="mailto:Jhdeanco@gmail.com">Jhdeanco@gmail.com</a>
Wednesdays	9:45 to 10:30 am	RMA Weekly 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 pm	Hearts	Bob Shullman – <a href="mailto:bob.shullman@gmail.com">bob.shullman@gmail.com</a>
Wednesdays	1:00 pm	Bridge	Andre Mazurek - <a href="mailto:Mazurek.a.j@gmail.com">Mazurek.a.j@gmail.com</a>
Thursdays	9:00 am	RMA Walking	Tad Larrabee - <a href="mailto:tadlarra@optonline.net">tadlarra@optonline.net</a>
Thursdays	10:00 am	Pickleball at Christiano Park	Pat MacCarthy – <a href="mailto:pmacCarthy415@gmail.com">pmacCarthy415@gmail.com</a> Michael LaGamma – <a href="mailto:mdlgamma@optonline.net">mdlgamma@optonline.net</a>



Friday	Resumes in Spring	Outdoor Tennis, Bruce Park	John Knight - <a href="mailto:johnknight7@gmail.com">johnknight7@gmail.com</a>
Friday	1:30-3:00 pm	Indoor Tennis	Andy Holmes - <a href="mailto:Andyholmes56@gmail.com">Andyholmes56@gmail.com</a>

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