

# 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: TIM BROOKS**

Next Week's Scribe: **FRED WU**, [FYWU.WU@GMAIL.COM](mailto:FYWU.WU@GMAIL.COM)

*"The only difference between me and General Custer is that I have to watch the films on Sunday"*  
- Rick Venturi, Northwestern football coach

President **JACK WEIR** opened the meeting right on time, followed by **PETER TUNLEY** who led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. Maestro **TOM HEALY** then stepped to the microphone and, accompanied by the ever-adaptable accompanist **BOB MORGAN**, launched into our three songs for the morning, "My Country Tis of Thee" (1831), "Side by Side" (1927) and "When You're Smiling" (1928).

**JACK** then thanked the hard-working members who make these meetings possible, projectionists **TONY COCCHI** and **LEN CARUSI**, volunteer advocate **ENRICO VISELLI**, greeter **JOHN KAVANAGH**, mentor **DON ROTZIEN**, A/V wizards **ED PARKER**, **MARK GEIMER**, **PETER DODGE**, **HORST TEBBE**, **BARRY RICHELSON** and **STEVE MARINO**, set-up **JIM BUTLER** and **BOB BISHOP**, and CBB editor and today's scribe (filling in for **AV RIVEL**), **TIM BROOKS**.

After last week's meeting **JACK** was advised by the FPC that the RMA would be unable to hold its meeting here in Fellowship Hall on July 19<sup>th</sup> due to funeral services on that date for a senior deacon of the Church. Although briefly considering moving our meeting to another date or location or holding it via Zoom, given the complicated logistics he decided

to simply cancel the meeting, reschedule the speaker, and use the saved rental payment for a future RMA event. Therefore, there will be NO MEETING ON JULY 19<sup>TH</sup>.

There will also be no meeting on August 2 due to unavailability of the hall. To make sure we don't waste our free Wednesdays, **JACK** and **BOB MORGAN** have tentatively scheduled a RMA golf outing at the course at Yale on Wednesday, August 2. Details are being worked out to accommodate up to 20 golfers, cost \$75 each, and transportation by carpool. A sign-up sheet will be available next week, or register your interest with **JACK** or **BOB**.

### **ADDITIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Hard working Treasurer **JEFF** "Pay Me Now!" **JUNKER** reported that 143 members have so far paid their 2023-2024 dues, leaving approximately 100 outstanding. Please bring **JEFF** a check for \$100 made out to the RMA, or send it to his home address which is given at the end of this CBB. If mailing, be careful; there has been an upswing in mail theft recently.

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** alerted members to a serious scam that cost 200,000 people \$2.6 billion last year. It is known as an imposter scam and is now the top fraud in the U.S. It involves the perpetrator impersonating an authority figure and using scare tactics to reel in victims. While these scams have been around for a long time, they've become more believable because con artists use real names of law enforcement officers that show up with caller ID from an actual office and even local accents. Unfortunately, a relatively large number of people are duped. "When people think the government is calling you, there's a very understandable reaction to be concerned." For the full story, see:

<https://www.npr.org/2023/06/19/1182464826/scammer-phone-calls-imposter-fraud>

Our Town's Conservation Commission wants to hear from residents as it works to develop its first Sustainability and Climate Resiliency Plan in order to make our community climate resilient and contribute to global efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change. A survey is online for residents to take:

<https://greenwichct.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d97600d8f53687c558836a341&id=a30a199740&e=2ce6acc755>

Our input will be vital as the commission works to gather information and identify priorities from the public and business sectors in Town. The goal is to make the initial 2023 plan a roadmap for future work, so the Town can apply for grants and secure funding to implement strategies that will benefit our coastal community.

On a lighter note, he showed the crowd a copy of last Sunday's *New York Times* Kids section, a monthly feature. The paper warns adults: "This paper should not be read by grown-ups." But it should be, says **ARNOLD**. It is very clever and though targeted at school children up to age 15 or so, it contains lots of interesting information and amusement. Some dad-jokes are also included. One section, "Speak Your Mind," quotes kids on any issue that concerns them (Out of the mouths of babes, etc.). This past issue features a guide to creating and operating a lemonade stand. A sample of the jokes:

"What do you get when you cross a cat and a lemon? A sourpuss."

"Why were the lemon and lime fighting? They were bitter rivals."

"What do you call lemons that get along well? Zest friends forever."

**ARNOLD** also mentioned an upcoming excursion to the Goodspeed Opera House, on Thursday, August 24, to see the musical comedy "Summer Stock," based on the 1950 Judy Garland-Gene Kelly film. Attendees will meet at St. Paul's Riverside Church, travel by bus to Goodspeed, and be treated to lunch. Tickets are \$125, payable by check made out to the RMA, and collected by **MAURICE KROHN**. Deadline for sign-ups is July 26 and seating is limited, so don't delay! He also sent best wishes to **AV RIVEL**, who was in the hospital.

He then introduced **TOM HEALY**, jokester for the day, who related a series of "blonde jokes" which will not be repeated here. This was followed by a yarn about a woman who, told she was dying of cancer, contrived a way to ensure that none of her female friends would sleep with her husband when she was gone.

Our inimitable Membership Chairman **PETER STERN** reported that 89 members were in attendance, including six on Zoom. Birthdays were being celebrated by the following.

AK	Kassabian	78
Pete	Uhry	84
Tom	Nacinovich	83
Cro	Martin	70

Guests today were Rusty Parker and Frank Hegeman, guests of **DAVID MICHONSKI**; Jim Finn, guest of **PETER BERG**; John Follis, guest of **JOHN REESE**; Charlie Shapiro, guest of **DAVID MICHONSKI** and **ANDY HOLMES**; and Larry Furst, guest of **STEPHEN MARINO**.

**JOHN** and Carol **SANTORA** are celebrating their 59<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. **GRANT PERKINS**, who usually signs on to our Zoom feed under the mysterious moniker “iPad,” is with us today on Zoom.

**PETER** yielded the microphone to **JEROME COLEMAN**, who nominated Jim Buckley to be our newest member. Jim is a graduate of Princeton and John Carroll University, and spent many years as an executive at big four accounting firms KPMG and Price Waterhouse. He now lives in Rye. **JEROME’s** nominating remarks are attached. The nomination was seconded by **PAT MacCARTHY**, followed by unanimous acceptance by the members present.

[CLICK HERE](#) for Jim Buckley nomination



Coleman, Buckley, MacCarthy

**DON ROTZIEN** announced that the **ROMEO Lunch** is scheduled for tomorrow, June 29, at Greenwich Point (over by the time you read this). **LOU RUPNIK** added that the Bob Button Band was scheduled to perform tonight (June 28), with a rain date of June 29. Again, past.

On the other hand, there is plenty of time to get ready for the pinnacle of the Greenwich social season, the **RMA Picnic**, scheduled for September 13. Organizer **DAVID MICHONSKI** asked for volunteers to help with preparations; he can be contacted at [david@quigler.com](mailto:david@quigler.com)

or 203-570-5477. It's easy, fun, and a way to participate in one of the RMA's signature events. Please sign up to attend, indicating number of guests, on the bulletin board at the back of the hall, so that we can get an approximate count. Last time we had about 150.

**JOHN REESE** announced the formation of a "Technology/AI/ChatGPT interest group," which will meet to discuss in plain language current trends in the field, including sharing tips and our discoveries of interesting and useful products and websites. The first meeting is at 8:45 am on Wednesday, July 26, in Fellowship Hall (our regular meeting place). If interested, send him an email at [jreese@validea.com](mailto:jreese@validea.com) or sign up on the bulletin board at the next RMA meeting.

**WILL MORRISON** reported on volunteer programs. "We are always on the lookout for interesting new volunteer opportunities. While we have a set of 13 NPOs that members have identified as needing volunteers, including our own RMA with its operational needs, we are always keen to find a mission with the roles and flexibility in commitment that matches ours. Don't hesitate to share with me at [wdmorrison@gmail.com](mailto:wdmorrison@gmail.com). Also, please log your hours at [greenwichrma.org/log](http://greenwichrma.org/log).

**JOHN FEBLES** chimed in with a book report on *Your Best Brain Ever: A Complete Guide and Workout*, by Michael Sweeney and Cynthia Green. It contains practical ways to keep your brain at its peak, through "elasticity." This includes brain workouts, exercises, word games, nutrition and even sociability. Another device is juggling (try it!). **JOHN** demonstrated another, holding out your arm, focusing on one finger, then looking "beyond it." Tai Chi master **WILL MORRISON** approved.

## UPCOMING SPEAKERS

**TAD LARRABEE** came to the podium to announce today's speaker, our own State Representative **STEVE MESKERS**, who will speak on "Economic Growth and the Structure of the Connecticut Economy."

**TIM BROOKS** then bounded to the mic to preview next week's speaker, also an RMA member, **JOHN (CHICK) DONOHUE**. He will relate tales from his book *The Greatest Beer Run Ever: A Memoir of Friendship, Loyalty and War*, which has recently been made into a major motion picture starring Zac Efron and Russell Crowe. It is the true story of a remarkable adventure in Vietnam, at the height of the war, by a civilian who wanted to

show is support for the troops. President **JACK** suggested we wear red, white and blue for this presentation!

**RMA Member Recommendation**

"Spin". A French TV series about a pair of spin doctors—a European hybrid between PR guys, political advisors and press secretaries—and political leaders in France. Political procedural/thriller. Excellent. We rented or bought it via Prime. [2012 French series, aka *Les Hommes de l'ombre*. Available from MHz Choice via Amazon Prime.]

"Borgen": A Danish TV series about the first Danish female prime minister, coalition politics, maneuver and change in political positions. Excellent political procedural/thriller. This may have been Netflix. [Acclaimed 2010 Danish series. Available on Netflix, DVDs from Amazon] – *George Ubogy*, 6/28/23

**FUN AND GAMES**

**Pickleball** is played, weather permitting, from 9 am until 11 am on Mondays and from 10 am until 12 pm on Thursdays at Christiano Field. **PAT MacCARTHY** reports that “although there are 41 members on the RMA pickleball list, only five or six picklers have typically played. Other groups, especially the senior women, have complained about our reserving two courts but only using one. Please try to play on a more frequent basis since the games are best when we have at least 8 players and utilize both reserved courts. If you want to join the pickleball contact list, please email **PAT** at [pmaccarthy415@gmail.com](mailto:pmaccarthy415@gmail.com).

**Golf.** **MIKE RYAN** related that “We only had 12 golfers yesterday, which started off with iffy weather but turned out fine.” Closest to hole winners were, Hole 5, **TOM HEALY**, Hole 7, **JIM SANTORA**, Holes 8 and 15, **JIM BOARDMAN**. Notable scores were **JIM** with a 99, **TOM** with a 93, and **GRAN BURGESS** with an 89. There will be no golf next Tuesday because of the holiday. Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board for July 11 and July 18.

**Bridge.** **RON MURRAY** shuffled the bridge results for June 21. There were four players, top scores being **CHARLEY LAND**, 2,220, **BRUNO SCHRAGE**, 1,880, and **ED MASTOLONI**, 930. Play is on Wednesday afternoon in the café on the ground floor of the Greenwich Library. Lunch is available. We invite all members and guests, whether experts or beginners, to join the group. If you haven’t played for a while or are a beginner, no worries, mate. We have several players who are happy to answer your questions or provide advice.

**Hearts. TOM HEALY** read the scoreboard, also for June 21. There were two tables and eight players, with eight games completed. Table 1 winners were **TOM HEALY (1), BILL FAKUNDINY (2)** and **JOE DOWLING (1)**. Table 2 winners were **JAY SCHONDORF (1), JOHN STANKUNAS (1), BOB SHULLMAN (1)** and **DON CONWAY (1)**. Moon shots on table 1 were **HEALY (1), DOWLING (3)** and **JOHN KNIGHT (1)**. On table 2, they were **SCHONDORF (1), STANKUNAS (1),** and **SHULLMAN (1)**. Next week's captain will be **MICHAEL AMBROSINO**.

**Tai Chi. WILL MORRISON** remarked, "Thank you, **JOHN FEBLES**, for sharing what seems to be a very insightful and useful book on what we can do to keep as youthful as possible. I would guess that members would be interested in snippets from time to time. Details on doing the eye exercise or leading us through the steps would be valuable, at least to me. The "Well" section of the *The New York Times* ran a long article in its "Why Not Try" section, "[Tai Chi is a Workout for the Brain and Body](#)". It states that the mental and physical benefits span cultures and generations. I had the fortune of studying with Peter Wayne of the Harvard medical school who is quoted at the beginning of the article. You can get started Monday mornings at 9:30 in Old Greenwich. Contact [wdmorrison@gmail.com](mailto:wdmorrison@gmail.com) to get on the mailing list used to confirm the session. For instance, it will happen this Monday at a place TBD if it's not raining."

**Walkers, TAD LARRABEE**. Rained out.

### **TODAY'S SPEAKER**

**TAD LARRABEE** introduced today's speaker, **STEVE MESKERS**, Connecticut State Representative, speaking on "Economic Growth and the Structure of the Connecticut Economy." A Democrat, **STEVE** represents the 150<sup>th</sup> District, which covers communities along the coastline from Byram to Old Greenwich. He serves on four committees, Commerce Committee (chair), Energy and Technology Committee, Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, and Insurance and Real Estate Committee, which makes him well positioned to address issues regarding the state's economy. He has served in the legislature since 2019 and is an RMA member.

Rep. **MESKERS**, who described himself as a moderate Democrat, began by listing some of the economic accomplishments of the current administration. These include closing fiscal year 2022 with a budget surplus for the fourth consecutive year, amounting to \$1.3 billion; enacting the largest tax cut in state history; a “Rainy Day Fund” of \$3.3 billion, the maximum permitted by law; using an additional \$5.8 billion to pay down unfunded pension liabilities, saving taxpayers \$500 million per year; and seeing all four major credit agencies upgrade Connecticut’s ratings. The tax bill includes a continued suspension of the gas tax (to December 31), increased child tax rebate for lower- and middle-income homes, lowering car taxes in many cities; an increase in the property tax credit, an increase in the Earned Income Tax Credit, and elimination of income taxes on pensions and annuities up to \$75,000 for a single filer and \$100,000 for a married couple, as well as removing the “fiscal cliff” which taxed a person’s entire income if they exceeded those amounts.



In terms of personal accomplishments, he said the single bill he was most proud of was one that provided an additional \$20 million for brownfield soil remediation, which he spearheaded.

Other topics covered included strategic investments in workforce development, technology and childcare; the decline in Connecticut’s unemployment rate, which is now on par with the region at about 4%; the state’s high labor force participation rate; the surge in job openings; the sharp upswing in business formation (highest since before 2008); and Department of Economic Community Development (DECD) priorities going forward. These include promoting tourism (\$15.4 billion economic impact per year) and returning land across the state to productive residential and commercial re-use through brownfield remediation.

Rep. **MESKERS** then responded to a wide range of questions from the audience. Among them were his views on affordable housing (he believes in local solutions rather than state mandates); on the state’s long-term and historically high pension liabilities (manageable, although previous administrations were sometimes not prudent); whether the state has an equivalent of the Congressional Budget Office, a non-partisan office that costs out



initiatives (no, and Connecticut should have a Ways and Means Committee to address this); traffic issues, especially along I-95; and the importance of school lunch programs and other social safety net protections.

Rep. **MESKERS** has a BA from Fordham University in economics and Spanish, and an MBA in finance from the Lubin School at Pace University. Prior to his election he had a 35-year career in emerging markets at Irving Trust, Chemical Bank and Banco Santander.

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**

**JEFF JUNKER** reminded the membership that annual dues are now past due. Please get your checks to **JEFF** in person or by mail to 9 Tree Top Terrace, Greenwich CT 06831. More than one hundred members have paid their dues on time. Please don't burden our leaders with having to make individual calls to delinquents. Thanks.

**TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS:** Scribe for the next meeting will be →**FRED WU**←. 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.

Pictures by **TIM BROOKS** this time.

Retired Men’s Association of Greenwich, Inc. · 37 Lafayette Place · Greenwich, CT 06830 · USA. Visit our website at <https://greenwichrma.org>

### 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	9:00 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>
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 Fall	Indoor Tennis	Andy Holmes - <a href="mailto:Andyholmes56@gmail.com">Andyholmes56@gmail.com</a>

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