

CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

Retired Men's Association of Greenwich, Inc.
1 West Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830



www.greenwichrma.org

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SCRIBE: FRANK SCARPA

Next Meeting Scribe: BOB GIAQUINTO, BGQ19@LIVE.COM

"What a drag it is getting old" - Mick Jagger and Keith Richards

President **JACK WEIR** was able to ring the conversing and caffeinated membership to order at 9:47 and introduced **ANDY HOLMES** to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. **BOB MORGAN** then led us in a resounding "Marine's Hymn (From the Halls of Montezuma)," followed by "You Are My Sunshine" and "I'm Looking Over a Four-Leaf Clover," accompanied by **JIM SANTORA** on piano.

JACK WEIR thanked the acolyte members on duty: CBB Editor **TIM BROOKS**, formatter **LEN CARUSI**, scribe **FRANK SCARPA**, projectionists **LEN CARUSI** and **TONY COCCHI**, volunteer advocate **DAVID MICHONSKI**, greeter **JOHN KAVANAGH**, mentor **ANDY HOLMES**, the audio-video team of **ED PARKER, MARK GEIMER, PETER DODGE, HORST TEBBE, BARRY RICHELSON, STEVE MARINO** and **JOHN FEBLES**, and the set-up duo of **BOB BISHOP** and **JIM BUTLER**. Refreshments were provided by **SPIKE LIPSCHUTZ**.

President's Comments: **JACK WEIR** expressed some satisfaction about the updated dues collection, but he requested membership (and the newly-formed Technology Group under **JOHN REESE**) to offer input with ideas that might improve dues collection going forward.

The Yale/Columbia football game (at Yale) and tailgate is scheduled for October 28. Helping him on this project are **KEATING HAGMANN, DAVE RICHARDS** and **SKIP AUCH**. Tickets will be \$15-\$20 pp, plus \$10 per car for parking.

Sign up and marketing for the Pepsi Sculpture Gardens tour (limited to 20 persons) will begin next week, August 23.

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** recommended that members take advantage of Connecticut's 2023 Sales Tax Free Week that begins on Sunday, August 20 and runs through Saturday, August 26. Many retailers in Connecticut offer additional discounts on clothing and footwear during that week (see [Department of Revenue Services](#)).

Last week, he mentioned without details that member **MARSHALL TOPPO** had died. He passed away on August 1st at the age of 89. **MARSHALL** joined the RMA in August 2017. **ARNOLD** would like someone to volunteer to deliver a eulogy for **MARSHALL**; contact him at ajgordo@verizon.net or 203-340-9336.

ARNOLD suggested that you might want to mark your calendars for an outdoor musical event sponsored by the Greenwich Historical Society at the Bush-Holley House, August 31 from 6:30 to 8 pm, a Beatles Tribute by the Sun Kings (see <https://greenwichhistory.org/event/the-sun-kings-a-beatles-tribute/>).

ARNOLD then made special mention of the Bowman Observatory on the grounds of the Julian Curtis School. This facility is open to the public at no charge on the first and third Wednesdays of each month (provided the skies are clear). See astrogreenwich.org for the schedule.

ARNOLD then foisted more of his puns on the audience and introduced **JERRY SCHWENDEMAN** (jokester of the day), who provided us with a "shaggy poultry story" about Randy the rooster and his polyamorous adventures.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

PETER STERN started his report with the following birthdays: **ALAN GUNZBURG**, 64, **ART DELMHORST**, 85, **BRUNO SCHRAGE**, 85, **BART BARTHOLOMEW**, 86, **GRANT PERKINS**, 80, **ED BERMAN**, 89, **RON MURRAY**, 89, **TOM WEST**, 83, **TOM McGUIRE**, 96,

and **ED BLOOM**, 93. The members serenaded this group of celebrants with a rousing chorus of the Birthday Song.

Attendance today, counted by **DAVID MICHONSKI**, was 92 members in person and six on Zoom. Guests were:

Brian O'Connor, guest of **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** and **GERRY BOYLE**

George Macri, guest of **JAMES DEAN** and **DICK FRANCK**

Mike Abrahams, guest of **DON BREISMEISTER** and **BOB MENDELSON**

John Martin, guest of **FRANK SCARPA**

Fernando Carranzo, guest of **ANDRE MAZUREK**

Returnees were **DON CONWAY** from Point Pleasant Beach, NJ, **TOM HEALY** from Salt Lake City, UT, and **ANDRE MAZUREK** from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Chechnya, Slovakia, Austria, and Hungary.

PETER gave a special welcome to **JIM BUCKLEY** and **STEVE GLASSER**.

HUMAN INTEREST ACCOUNT

GRANVILLE BURGESS provided us with a special insight into the creative efforts involved in the creation of his musical *Common Ground*. Beginning in the fall of 2012, **GRANVILLE** started his journey into the composition of a work involving Abraham Lincoln. He outlined the process of developing the protagonist (and the "antagonist") and the Major Dramatic Question (MDQ). "Connecting" with Lincoln fit in with the desire to leave a legacy of good and meaningful art. This involved reading some 50 books and deeply following the characters of Walt Whitman, Mary Lincoln and Frederick Douglass and their interactions. Writing and rewriting, trial and error led to thirteen drafts of the work (so far). Over these years, **GRANVILLE** conducted many readings with professional actors and playwrights (Arthur Kopit and Jeffrey Sweet) at the Theater Arts Workshop in Norwalk and the Lark Theater in New York. Ultimately, Frederick Douglass replaced Lincoln in the role of protagonist. The first full production of *Common Ground* may take place in Atlanta next February. **GRANVILLE's** detailed exposition provided the RMA audience with some appreciation of the hard work and artistic drive required to bring a work of serious theater to fruition. Brother **BURGESS** has acquired a new "fan-base," and we are proud of his meticulous endeavor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOLLISTER STURGIS previewed today's speaker, Susan Herbst, Ph.D., past president of the University of Connecticut and current University Professor of Political Science at the University of Connecticut, Stamford Campus. Dr. Herbst will discuss "How Public Sentiment is Formed" based on her recent book *A Troubled Birth: The 1930's and American Public Opinion*.

PETER BERG previewed next week's speaker, Caroline Simmons, mayor of Stamford (and a Greenwich Native), who will discuss "What's Next for Connecticut's Fastest Growing City?" He invites RMA members to submit questions in advance for this interactive format.

AHOY mates! **JOHN CRAINE** reminds us that the RMA Raftup is Thursday, August 31 on an anticipated beautiful day. If you have a boat or would like a ride, sign-up using the sheet on the bulletin board in the back or send him a note at johncraine123@hotmail.com

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

WILL MORRISON reminded everyone that to sign up to help with 18th Annual Abilis Walk/Run on Sunday, October 15 at Tods Point, drop **DICK FRANCK** an email at copasetick@icloud.com or pfranck@optonline.net.

He also said that it is time to log any outstanding volunteer hours. The RMA volunteer year ends September 30. Log your hours at greenwichrma.org/log. The leader board to-date is as follows.

Members

- top three for July: **MIKE RYAN, TAD LARRABEE, JEFF JUNKER**
- top three for the year: **JEFF JUNKER, ALAN GUNZBERG, BOB RIMMER**

Non-profits supported

- top three for July: RMA internal, Call-A-Ride, Book Swap
- top three for the year: RMA internal, Melody Men, Call-A-Ride

Internal vs External hours year to date: 2,537 (21%) vs 9,361 (79%)

GAMES MEMBERS PLAY

Tai Chi: **WILL MORRISON** noted that the Tai Chi program is "going strong." A new progressive program in tai chi choreography will be started in early October. Regular sessions are now held in Old Greenwich at 9:30 on Mondays. The new program will be held at 10:30 on Mondays and 8:30 on Thursday. Weekly attendance is requested. Advance registration is required. wdmorrison@gmail.com

Walkers and Talkers: **JEFF JUNKER** reported on a brisk walk from Putnam Avenue to Bruce Park that continued up Greenwich Avenue. **JOHN DENNE** will be this Thursday's leader.



Walkers at the Bruce Museum



Happy Walkers on Greenwich Avenue

Bridge: **RON MURRAY** reported on nine players. Top scorers were:

1. **RON FRIEDMAN** 3970
2. **TONY COCCHI** 3870
3. **ALEX KOSSEIM** 3790

We play Wednesday afternoon in the cafe on the ground floor of the Greenwich Library. Lunch is available. We invite members and guests, whether experts or beginners, who may be interested in bridge to join our group. If you are a new player or a bit out of touch, not to worry. We have several very good players who will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Pickleball: PAT MacCARTHY. RMA 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. With temperate summer weather, we continue to have fine turnouts for pickleball utilizing both Christiano courts on both Monday and Thursday. If you want to join the pickleball contact list, please email **PAT** at pmacCarthy415@gmail.com.

Hearts: MICHAEL AMBROSINO reporting. At table 1, **BILL FAKUNDINY** won two games, **JOE DOWLING** won one. **JOHN KNIGHT** had two moonshots. At table 2, **JAY SCHONDORF** and **JACK SWEGER** won one game each; **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** won two games. **JAY SCHONDORF** and **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** each had three moonshots.

TODAY'S SPEAKER

Susan Herbst, Ph.D. was the 15th President of the University of Connecticut, serving from December, 2010 until stepping down on July 1, 2019. She then returned to the faculty, where she is now University Professor of Political Science and President Emeritus, teaching at the Stamford campus. She received her B.A. in Political Science from Duke University and her Ph.D. in Communications Theory from the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communication.



Today marks the second time Dr. Herbst has addressed the RMA. Her most recent book *A Troubled Birth: the 1930's and American Public Opinion*, provides the framework for today's lecture "How Public Sentiment is Formed--the 1930s and Our Current Politics." The period in American history from the stock market crash of 1929 up to our entry into World Two provided the early roots for much of what we are witnessing today in terms of racism, incivility and attacks on the rule of law. Moreover, the current concept of "public opinion" was born in the 1930s. The preceding decade had been affected by an overproduction of consumer goods, the expansion of buying on credit, 25% unemployment, drought in the Dust Bowl and the brutal

tariff policies of Herbert Hoover, as well as increasing immigration and urbanization. When FDR won the 1932 presidential election, the country seemed covered by a cloud of

shame. Roosevelt was prescient in using the power of radio to address America as a coherent body, in an effort to elevate the national spirit.

Dr. Herbst provided thumbnail sketches of two of FDR's foremost antagonists, the popular strongman Huey Long of Louisiana and the antisemitic Father Coughlin, both of whom used radio to their advantage. Radio itself was instrumental in the development of the science of polling. The concept of a "public" capable of opinion was novel. Pioneers like Eric Helm (in the White House) and George Gallup, Sr. and Elmo Roper developed this science, and their work is still influential. Surveys and polls were able to "quantitate" the voice of the people. Some early polling techniques were heavy-handed and self-serving. They were occasionally used to form public opinion as well as to measure it.

Advertising boomed in the 1930s. There was an emphasis on "hygiene" and self-help-- deriving from the idea that we were a "coherent American public." Conspiracy theories also blossomed. Not unlike today, a strain of anti-intellectualism began to flourish, and there were attacks on universities. Populism and authoritarianism began to fuse. (But in today's climate of incivility, coarseness and cruelty, it would be difficult to imagine "American unity" now.)

A question for America today is "What does democracy mean?" How do we get back to some sort of solidarity? Dr. Herbst speculates on issues like electoral college reform. She comes down more strongly on the side of educating our citizenry and teaching how to have civil debate.

A lively Q and A followed, touching upon issues such as social media, threats of violence, the concept of "civil war." Dr. Herbst ended on a note of optimism derived from the idealism she sees radiating from her students.

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

Note: The views expressed in RMA presentations 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. Get your checks to **JEFF** in person or by mail to 9 Tree Top Terrace, Greenwich CT 06831.

TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS: Scribe for the next meeting, on August 16, will be →**BOB GIAQUINTO**←. 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.

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 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 **JEFF JUNKER, TIM BROOKS** and **PETER UHRY**.

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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 – wdmorrison@gmail.com |
| Mondays | 9:00 am | Pickleball | Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com Michael LaGamma – mdlgamma@optonline.net |
| Tuesdays | 9:30 am | RMA Golf, the Griff Golf Course, Greenwich | Mike Ryan – ryantomac@netscape.net |

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|------------|------------------|---|--|
| Tuesdays | Resumes in fall | Platform (paddle) tennis at Loughlin Field, Cos Cob | James 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 | 1:00 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 | Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com Michael LaGamma – mdlagamma@optonline.net |
| Friday | Resumes in Fall | Indoor Tennis | Andy Holmes - Andyholmes56@gmail.com |

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