

CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



www.greenwichrma.org

Chair/Editor: **TIM BROOKS**

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Next Meeting Scribe: JIM DEAN, JHDEANCO@GMAIL.COM

“Reason as opposed to faith, evidence as opposed to revelation, inquiry as opposed to obedience, truth as opposed to belief.” --Walter Lippmann

President **JACK WEIR** called the meeting to order. **TONY COCCHI** led the membership in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance; and then **TOM HEALY** led the group in singing three songs, “God Bless America” and two Italian favorites, “That’s Amore” and “Volare.” **BOB MORGAN** accompanied on the piano.

JACK then acknowledged the substantial contributions of the people who set up and run the Wednesday membership meetings, including CBB Editor **TIM BROOKS**; the scribe, **JOHN KAVANAGH**; formatter, **LEN CARUSI**; greeter, **TOM NACINOVICH**; mentor, **MICHAEL AMBROSINO**; refreshments, **BOB GIAQUINTO**; audio video, **ED PARKER, MARK GEIMER, PETER DODGE, HORST TEBBE, BARRY RICHELSON, STEVE MARINO,** and **JOHN FEBLES**; set up, **BOB BISHOP, JIM BUTLER** and **JOHN CRAINE**. Finally, **JACK** gave special thanks to **ED PARKER** for getting the microphone systems running so much more effectively than they have been in the past. Also, he gave another special thanks to **BOB BISHOP** for the new bulletin board.

JACK announced that **ED FARRELL** was not, for reasons of health, going to be able to continue as RMA secretary and that **MICHAEL LAGAMMA** would now assume that position for an indefinite time, until a new secretary and assistant secretary could be

identified to take over this winter. Anyone who would like to do either of these jobs should contact **JACK** or a member of the nominating committee.

JACK also indicated that he is attempting to arrange a meeting with the Town of Greenwich deputy police chief for early September to address the RMA parking issues on Wednesday mornings. **JACK** has asked **PETER STERN** to work with him on that issue and anyone with constructive suggestions for improving the parking to contact him or **PETER** by email.

STEVEN BOIES has now completed an informal audit of **JEFF JUNKER's** financial books and compared our bank records to IRS Form 990-EZ and found everything to be in order. **JACK** thanked both gentlemen for their hard work.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY'S REPORT

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON**, on behalf of **DICK FRANCK**, reminded everyone that volunteers are needed to help Abilis manage their 2023 Walk-Run event at Greenwich Point on Sunday, October 15th. Please see this site for details:

[Signup for Abilis Walk-Run Event](#)

or contact **DICK** at copasetick@icloud.com or 203-536-5217.

He reminded everyone that the annual banquet will be held on November 8. There are now 17 table captains (hosts) who are taking reservations. The cost is \$70 per person, and there are four menu choices. If you have not been approached, please contact one of the hosts; attached is a list with their e-mail addresses. Table assignments will be made in the order in which the completed sign-ups and full payments are received by **ARNOLD**. As usual, widows of former members will be invited directly by **ARNOLD** to attend at half-price. If any of the table hosts would like to invite one or more widows personally, please let him know who she/they are.

[List of Table Captains](#)

He recommended a program by the League of Women Voters of Greenwich on Tuesday, September 12th at 5:30 pm at Greenwich Library Theater: "Democracy vs. Autocracy: Russia, China and the Impact at Home." It will be a foreign policy discussion with Dr.

Evelyn Farkas, Executive Director of the McCain Institute, who will be interviewed by a member of the *New York Times* Editorial Board. Seating may be limited; for details see:

[League of Women Voters Program](#)

Members might want to take advantage of the Learning in Retirement Program (LIR) at Temple Beth El on Roxbury Road in Stamford:

www.lirstamford.org

Many interesting 1.5-2.0 hour programs are scheduled. For the September offerings see:

<https://lir.gosignmeup.com/Public/Course/Browse>

Although **AV RIVEL** was scheduled to be jokester for today, he has decided to retire from this renowned group. We will miss him. Before introducing **CARL WHITE** as his replacement for today, **ARNOLD** shared a few real signs seen in Japan as translated from Japanese into English for visitors, as well as a couple of groaners.

Tokyo Bar – “Special cocktails for the ladies with nuts.”

Hotel – “You are invited to take advantage of the chambermaid.”

Hotel – “Is forbidden to steal towels please. If you are not a person to do such thing, please not read this notice.”

Car rental firm brochure – “When passenger on foot heave in sight, tootle the horn.

Trumpet him melodiously at first but if he still obstacles your passage, tootle him with vigor.”

“I dated a zookeeper, but she turned out to be a cheetah.”

“How do Germans suffering from celiac disease greet each other? Gluten tag.”

CARL WHITE followed with some more jokes:

Q. What did the watermelon say to the cantaloupe? A. You are one in a melon.

Q. Have you heard the new record don't go bacon my heart? A. I could if I fried.

Q. What job did the frog have at the hotel? A. He was a bellhop.

Q. What do you call a lazy kangaroo? A. A pouch potato.

Q. What do you call an owl who does magic tricks? A. Hootini.

Q. What did one blade of grass say to another about the lack of rain? A. We'll just have to make "dew."

Q. Why did the banana go to the doctor? A. It wasn't peeling well.

Q. Why couldn't the sesame seed leave the poker table? A. Because he was on a roll.

Q. Why are owls considered apathetic? A. Because they don't give a hoot about anything.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ARTHUR STAMPLEMAN announced that there will be a tour of the PepsiCo Sculpture Garden for RMAers 10:15 am on Thursday Sept 28. It will be a one-and-a-half-hour tour to see 45 sculptures by major 20th century artists on PepsiCo's 152-acre landscaped headquarters site at 700 Anderson Hill Rd., Purchase NY. It will be limited to 20 members, spouses or friends. Members can sign up at the front of the meeting room or email their names and email addresses to **MAURICE KROHN** (krohnmaurice142@gmail.com). The first 20 signups will receive email acknowledgements. If you get an acknowledgement, attached is the Pepsico waiver form all visitors must sign and bring to the tour.

[Pepsico Waiver Form](#)

JOHN CRAINE announced that the Annual RMA Raftup is confirmed for noon tomorrow, August 31, at Great Captain's Island anchorage. Sea and wind forecasts are favorable. We have five boats in the fleet, three sailboats and two power boats. The fleet includes two boats from Old Greenwich Yacht Club, two boats from Riverside Yacht Club and one boat from Rye Marina. Twenty mariners are looking forward to a relaxing and enjoyable celebration.

WILL MORRISON asked that all members remember to log their volunteer hours in a timely fashion because when organizations seek grants, the grant evaluators want to know the level of volunteer commitment before awarding grant monies.

SPEAKERS

HOLLISTER STURGES stated that today's speaker would be art authority Page Knox on "Van Gogh's Cypresses."

GEORGE UBOGY announced that his wife Jo would be next week’s speaker. She will give a talk entitled "Raising Monarchs (Observations of a Would-Be Naturalist)." Jo is an artist, avid gardener and self-taught naturalist. She tells how she grew milkweed from seed and was rewarded to find tiny green and black caterpillars on the undersurface of their leaves. She harvested the caterpillars, kept them supplied with milkweed and with moisture and was able to teach herself how to keep them protected from predatory wasps, film them and observe their transition from the larval stage (caterpillars) to pupae (chrysalis) to adults (monarch butterflies). She also learned more about their migratory patterns, environmental threats, their endangered species status, how to distinguish male from female butterflies and how to place them on food (nectar) once they have hatched. She will share this knowledge and the films she has taken with the audience.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

PETER STERN started his membership report with the announcements of this week’s birthdays, which included several past RMA Presidents (*).

GARY	BERNER	85
MIKE	SMITH *	84
RUSS	HARDEN *	81
BOB	GIAQUINTO	83
SAM	MARASSO *	84
STEVE	SMALL	72
PETER	BERG	½ Birthday Ask Him

PETER then followed with the induction of **BRIAN O’CONNOR**. **BRIAN’S** sponsors **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** and **GERRY BOYLE** joined him at the podium.

MICHAEL provided nominating remarks. He indicated that he and **BRIAN** attended St. Michael’s Church for many years. He went on to say that **BRIAN** grew up in New Haven, graduated from Providence College in 1965 and the University of Connecticut Law School in 1968. He served as a law clerk for Justice John Thim of the Connecticut Supreme Court for one year.

After that, he moved to Greenwich in 1969 with his wife, Maura, and began working at the law firm of Ivey, Barnum and O'Mara. He became a partner in 1976. He left the Ivey firm in 1983 to help start a new law firm in Stamford called Diserio, Martin, and O'Connor. He is still affiliated with the firm but considers himself semi-retired.

He has two daughters, both of whom attended Greenwich schools before college. They are both married. He and his wife have five grandsons.

His wife, Maura, is a retired certified reading teacher and taught in Greenwich public



Boyle, O'Connor, Ambrosino

schools after their children reached school age. They have been members of the Greenwich Field Club since 1980. He has been active in several organizations over the years including, on the board and an officer of the Fairfield Business Council, chairman of the Stamford United Way, on the board and a vice president of the Puccini Foundation in NYC, and a board member of Kolbe Cathedral High School in Bridgeport. He loves to read history books, work in his garden, and have lunch with friends.

GERRY BOYLE seconded Brian's nomination and **PETER** asked for show of hands vote on accepting **BRIAN** to membership. The vote was unanimous in favor. **BRIAN** made some brief acceptance remarks.

PETER announced that attendance at the meeting was 101 members in the church and seven people on Zoom. (Count courtesy of **CARL WHITE**) Further, he indicated that there were three guests present:

George Macri who is the guest of **JAMES DEAN** and **DICK FRANCK**

Fernando Carranza who is the guest of **ANDRE MAZUREK**

Mike Abrahams who is the guest of **DON BREISMEISTER** and **BOB MENDELSON**

There were two returnees, **LEE LUNDY** from Maine and **MAURICE KROHN** from Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

ACTIVITIES REPORTS

Bridge, by **RON MURRAY**. The results for Wednesday, August 23, with 11 players.

1. **BRUNO SCHRAGE** 4400
2. **STEVE SHAPIRO** 3800
3. **CAROL FEBLES** 3100

Bridge is played every Wednesday afternoon in the Cafe on the ground floor of the Greenwich Library. Lunch is available. The Bridge Group welcomes all members and guests, whether experts or beginners, who are interested in bridge to join our group. Do not worry if you are new to the game or a long-term player who is a bit rusty. We have several excellent players who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Hearts: **TOM HEALY** provided the results from last week's hearts game. There were three tables and 12 Players. At table 1, **JIM DEAN** won two games and shot the moon once and **JACK SWEGER** won one game and shot the moon once. At table 2, **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** won two games and shot the moon once, while **BOB SHULLMAN** won one game, and **TOM HEALY** won a game and shot the moon once. At table 3, **JOHN STANKUNAS** won one game, as did **PETER BERG**, while **DON CONWAY** won a game and shot the moon once.

Walkers and Talkers, TAD LARRABEE.

Last Thursday at 9 am, the RMA Walkers met in Bruce Park and walked around the various ponds and then continued past the Bruce Museum and down Steamboat Road to the town fishing pier at Indian Harbor Yacht Club for a view of the Sound. They returned by a different route through local neighborhoods back to where they started. It was a nice, though overcast day, and they got a very minor sprinkle which didn't interrupt their walk at all.



Pickleball, by **PAT MACCARTHY**. RMA pickleball is usually played, weather permitting, from 9 am until 11 am on Mondays and from 10 am until 12 pm on Thursdays at

Christiano Field. There is a change for this Thursday with the games being shifted to Byram Park from 9 am until 11 am. During the past week, we've had great turnouts at Christiano, filling both dedicated PB courts and even spilling over to the tennis/PB court. If you want to join the pickleball contact list, please email **PAT MACCARTHY** at pmacCarthy415@gmail.com.

Golf: MIKE RYAN reported that there were 19 golfers at the golf outing yesterday. **TOM HEALY** was the winner on holes 5 and 8, **GRAN BURGESS** on the 7th hole, and **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** on hole 15. Low scores were **JIM SANTORA**, 99, **PAT YUEN**, 96, **JOE MANCINELLI**, 91, **GRAN BURGESS**, 88. **MIKE** will be captain for the next two weeks. On Tuesday, September 12, there will be a best ball tournament followed by a luncheon at the Griff.

Tai Chi did not take place last week but will happen next week on Monday, Labor Day, 9:30 by the Field House on Arch Street south of the tennis courts.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY

ANDRE MAZUREK gave us a wonderful presentation, including beautiful pictures of the six week, 10,000 km trip that he and his beautiful wife, Carolina, and their stalwart dog, Rocky, took through Europe. They visited 13 cities in 12 countries, including Warsaw and Krakow in Poland; Vilnius, Lithuania; Riga, Latvia; Tallinn, Estonia; Helsinki, Finland; Stockholm, Sweden; Copenhagen, Denmark; Berlin, Germany; Prague, Czech Republic; Vienna, Austria; Budapest, Hungary; and Bratislava, Slovakia. They met great people, ate delicious food, saw some wonderful sights, took in beautiful scenery, and visited some remarkable cultural sites. The cities they visited were rich in history. They visited medieval and restored cities, mixed with modern business centers and high rises. And they did all this with just one suitcase.

FEATURED SPEAKER PRESENTATION

HOLLISTER STURGES introduced this week's speaker, Dr. Page Knox, who is both a contractual adjunct professor in the Art History Department of Columbia University as well as a contractual lecturer and educator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She earned her BA in Art History from Yale University and her Ph.D. in Art History from Columbia University in 2012. She works in a variety of capacities at the Met, teaching classes, and

giving public gallery talks and lectures on special exhibitions and the permanent collection. She is also highly active leading trips for “Travel with the Met,” including the following tours:

- “Raphael, Defining Beauty in Renaissance Italy,” from Florence to Rome.
- “Met Classics,” Rome.
- “Met Classics,” Madrid.
- “Great Artists-Caravaggio, Master of Light & Shadow,” from Rome to Malta.

Dr. Knox’s presentation to the RMA was entitled “Van Gogh’s Cypresses.” Her talk centered around a sample of his work that was explored in a recent exhibition at the Met, which featured his paintings of these ancient trees, including classics such as *Starry Night* and *Wheat Fields with Cypresses*. Vincent Van Gogh created some of the most iconic images of the south of France, capturing the region's distinctive landscape which both inspired and astonished him, leading him to paint an exceptional body of work devoted to its golden wheatfields and colorful gardens, as well as its stately cypress trees.



Dr. Knox provided the RMA membership with a detailed review of Van Gogh’s life, paintings, drawings, and letters. Her presentation integrated the specifics of his life, his early failures, his battle with mental illness and his eventual triumph as an artist. We know a great deal about his life from the letters he and his brother, Theo, exchanged throughout their lives. The letters give us an insight into what he was thinking and what was influencing his life and life decisions. We know that his mother pushed him to draw

and spend time outside appreciating natural beauty. We also know that he had a difficult relationship with his father, who was a preacher. Van Gogh clearly lacked direction and focus in his early adult life, which dismayed his family. He returned from boarding school without graduating; he was fired by his uncle from his art dealership; his effort to be a teacher and also a preacher failed as he was again fired. But in time, he gradually became interested in painting and began developing a body of work that he would build on over time.

His brother, Theo, became a player in the art world. He exposed Vincent to contemporary, Dutch, and Japanese art, all of which eventually influenced his work. He eventually moved to the south of France in Arles and continued his work painting, partnering for a brief time with Gauguin, who criticized him for not being more imaginative in his work. It was at this point that Van Gogh's loneliness and mental illness deteriorated to the point that he put himself into a sanatorium.

Ironically, during this time in the hospital in Saint Remy, he did some of his most famous work. He painted natural scenes that he could see outside his room window, in the courtyards, and the surrounding fields. During his recovery, he also developed the ability to paint from images in his mind and became more creative in his use of color. Van Gogh was drawn particularly to the cypress as a symbol of the natural world and the spiritual realm. Many of his most famous paintings depicted the landscapes of Arles and Saint Rémy during the final years of his life.

In 1890, he was recognized by Albert Aurier, a French poet, art critic and painter, who took an interest in his landscape paintings and began to write articles about him. This publicity got him recognized as an artist and led to his finally having an exhibition of his work.

In the final months of his life, while he was living in Auvers-sur-oise near his psychiatrist, he entered his most creative and energetic period. He painted 70 paintings in 70 days and some of his most famous work. How Van Gogh died, whether by his own hand or a shotgun accident, is a matter of much debate. But, nonetheless, it is a sad reality, that his life ended too early and that he never had a chance to fully realize the fruits of his tremendous artistic accomplishments.

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 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 will be →**JIM DEAN**←. 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 **TIM BROOKS**.

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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 – 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
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 – mdlgamma@optonline.net
Friday	Resumes in Fall	Indoor Tennis	Andy Holmes - Andyholmes56@gmail.com

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