

# CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



[www.greenwichrma.org](http://www.greenwichrma.org)

Chair/Editor: TIM BROOKS

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**SCRIBE: JOE ANGLAND**

November 29 Scribe: **JIM DEAN, [JHDEANCO@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JHDEANCO@GMAIL.COM)**

*"Old age ain't no place for sissies."* – Bette Davis (perhaps)

President **JACK WEIR** opened the meeting, and **STEVE MARINO** led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance. With **JIM SANTORA** accompanying on the piano, **JERRY SCHWENDEMAN** led members in singing "This Land Is Your Land," "Blueberry Hill," and "My Blue Heaven." **JACK** then thanked the many members who work to make these meetings possible.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Martha Awdziewicz of the Women's Club asked for RMA volunteers for the Holiday Boutique to be held on November 17 and 18. The volunteers would help direct traffic.

**JOHN FEBLES** announced that the newly formed Special Events Committee was hard at work and would give a two-part report – today and on November 29. Today's report would focus on a collaborative effort with St. Catherine's Social Seniors, and he introduced Roseann Benedict and Carol Weingold from that organization. The Social Seniors are thrilled to extend an invitation to RMA members to participate in their exciting lineup of trips for 2024! They have meticulously planned a variety of fun outings, including casino



day trips, a Frank Sinatra cover show with lunch, a play at the Kveskin Theater, and an overnight adventure in the Amish country, with many more in the works but not finalized. With a 50-person limit on most bus trips, they encourage early sign-ups on a first-come, first-serve basis to ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate in these memorable experiences. They believe that a collaboration between the Social Seniors and the RMA will foster a vibrant and enjoyable social environment, promoting camaraderie and shared entertainment. They look forward to the possibility of creating lasting memories together in 2024. The calendar of special events and fliers for the more imminent events are as follows:

**[CALENDAR AND LINKS TO FLIERS](#)**

**JACK WEIR** reminded members that there would be no meeting next week as the hall was being set up for a Thanksgiving event. The next meeting is on November 29.

**JOE MANCINELLI**, stepping in for Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** (who could participate only by Zoom because he had come down with COVID), shared some turnout statistics on the recent election. Thirty-three percent of registered Connecticut voters turned out, which was typical for an off-year election (Presidential elections often have turnouts in excess of 70%). Greenwich was one of only 17 towns in the state to have greater than a 50% turnout. The large cities generally had the lowest turnout, with Hartford bringing up the rear with only a 13% turnout. Statewide, 6% of voters submitted absentee ballots.

**JOE** provided a quick plug for the Avon Theater and Film Center in Stamford. It has just received a \$2 million grant from the state for renovations. This will be part of a larger \$10 million program to refurbish the entire facility. The Avon is the only theater in Fairfield County that shows independent films, documentaries, and special interactive programs. The theater has been showing films since 1939, when it presented *It's a Wonderful World*, starring Jimmy Stewart and Claudette Colbert. Check it out for a great movie experience in

a beautiful, historic theater. It's located on Bedford Street with plenty of parking across the street.

**JOE** then shared some of **ARNOLD's** musings about the oddities of the English language, including:

- "Why is a single pair of trousers called a 'pair' of pants?"
- "Why do we drive on parkways but park in driveways?"
- "Why do we yell 'heads up' when ducking is the better option?"
- "Why is sound sleep referred to as sleeping like a baby, when babies wake often?"

**JOE** concluded with the story (which by the way is true) about a linguistics lecturer noting that in no language does a double positive equal a negative, only to hear from the back of the hall "Yeah, right."

**TOM HEALY** continued the levity with an anecdote about God insisting on balance when he created the world, which required him to create California to compensate for his creation of the ideal Florida. He concluded with a story the moral of which was that one should never steal a drink from a man planning to commit suicide.

**WILL MORRISON** read the report that **ARNOLD GORDON** had prepared on the annual banquet, which was held on November 8 at the Tamarack Country Club for the eighth time. Out of a final sign-up count of 192, there were 183 in attendance; several widows of deceased RMA members were among them. There were nine no-shows for unknown reasons. We were able to capture 177 name tags at the end of the event for future use. Members interested in some details along with photos should refer to last week's CBB written for the affair by **MIKE LaGAMMA**; also included is a copy of the program brochure as well as comments by Banquet Chair **ARNOLD GORDON** and President **JACK WEIR**. **ARNOLD** expressed his thanks to the hard-working banquet committee and table hosts who were responsible for the event's success. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves over the four hours we spent at the club. There were some disappointment in a couple of menu items which have been called to the attention of the club's head of catering.

The 2023 Outstanding Service Award was given by **JOE MANCINELLI** and **MICHAEL AMBROSINO** to **BOB BISHOP** for his extraordinary, behind the scenes service for RMA over many years. Volunteer awards were given by **WILL MORRISON** to several members; the details will be provided elsewhere in today's CBB. The Melody Men once again provided spirited entertainment with five songs that delighted the audience.

There were a few last-minute cancellations for illness and other causes before the banquet. Although some reimbursements will be made, most drop-outs have generously donated their pre-paid fees to the RMA. There may be some proposed reimbursements that the Board has to approve. However, the banquet appears to have been slightly profitable for the RMA. **ARNOLD** will be preparing a detailed report for the Board that will contain some recommendations for improvements in the process. It is hoped that the report can be used as a reference for future banquet chairs. A full accounting of costs and proceeds will be prepared soon by Treasurer **JEFF JUNKER**.

**ALAN GUNZBURG**, on behalf of **ARNOLD**, suggested that if you like grapefruit and want to support a good cause, you should get yourself a case of delicious fruit from the Greenwich Lions Club. The time has come for their annual sale. Not only are these great, healthy grapefruits, but the sales help boost the Lions' great work in the community in aiding local health and human services programs. The sale started on November 13 and will continue for a couple of weeks or until they are sold out; supplies are limited. Members of the Greenwich Lions will be selling cases of the grapefruits at Greenwich Point, the corner of Arcadia Road and Sound Beach Avenue in Old Greenwich, the Perrot Memorial Library, the Cos Cob Fire Station, and Holly Hill.

**PETER STERN** advised that (per a count by **CARL WHITE**) 71 members were present and that six additional members participated by Zoom: **ARNOLD GORDON** and **JEFF JUNKER** who are recovering from COVID, **RUSS HARDEN** who is on the mend, **FRANK SCARPA** and **PETER TUNLEY** who are in Florida, and our most senior member, **WALT ANDERES**, who joined on August 24, 1994. **PETER** reported the following birthdays. Led by **JIM SANTORA** on the piano, the group celebrated the birthdays with the traditional tune.

LAWRENCE	MERL	82
DON	CONWAY	86
BILL	WIGGIN	96
BRUCE	PANTANO	84
PETER	DODGE	81
ROBBIE	REICH	73
BOB	SIMMS	62
BOB	SHULLMAN	77
STEVE	MYERS	87
PETE	ARTURI	97
CHARLEY	LAND	85
FRANK	LEE	93
ALAN	WEYL	78

**PETER** reported that Peter O'Neil was present as a guest of **JOE WAIDE** and **GERRY BOYLE**. Tony Parisi, a former RMA member, was a guest of **TOM HEALY**.

**HOLLISTER STURGES** previewed the presentation by today's speaker, Will Friedwald, who will discuss the music of Frank Sinatra. **SPIKE LIPSCHUTZ** reported that our speaker on November 29 will be Dr. Joseph Feuerstein, who will discuss the body's cannabinoid system and how foods can affect it. **SPIKE** also advised the group that the holiday party, limited to members and their families, would be on December 20.



**MICHAEL AMBROSINO** reported that, in large part due to the efforts of **LEN CARUSI**, we had an excellent turnout for the Veterans Day event, with 39 members and guests gathering for breakfast at Pasta Vera followed by the walk down Greenwich Avenue. **MICHAEL** thanked Pasta Vera for their support of our annual Veterans Day gathering, and he urged us to consider patronizing that restaurant when we can.

**JIM DEAN** reported that the annual Salvation Army drive had begun strongly, with \$850 raised online in the first ten days. Bell and kettle solicitation will begin shortly at Acme Riverside, Betteridge, and Richards. We will be using Sign Up Genius for scheduling so that RMA members and other volunteers can select convenient two-hour slots.

**MICHAEL** advised that **ARNOLD GORDON** and **JEFF JUNKER** are recovering from COVID, **RUSS HARDEN** is making progress in his recuperation, and **PETER BERG** just broke his collarbone in a fall.

### **VOLUNTEERISM**

**WILL MORRISON** reported on the size and scope of RMA volunteerism for the 12 months ending September 30. He noted that at the annual banquet the top three internal and external volunteers were recognized. The Call-A-Ride supporters and the Melody Men were called out for their support of seniors in the Town of Greenwich, and they were asked to stand, to the applause of the members.

A total of 101 members, 43% of the membership, volunteered and recorded their hours during the 12 months ending in September. This came to a total of 15,225 hours. Many more gave their time but didn't record their hours. Fifty-six percent of our volunteers supported internal activities, 93% supported external programs.

The following ten members logged the most overall hours and were presented certificates and applauded by the members in recognition of their exceptionally dedicated service.

1	Junker, Jeff – top external	978
2	Gunzburg, Alan	684
	The late Av Rivel	588
3	Rimmer, Bob	519
4	Hayden, Mike	494



5	Larrabee, Tad	493
6	Wu, Fred	450
7	Peter, Gerhard	448
8	Brooks, Tim – top internal	441
9	Bishop, Bob	428
10	Fisher, Harry	415

## FUN AND GAMES

**Pickleball:** RMA pickleball is played, weather permitting, from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Mondays and from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. on Thursdays at Christiano Field. We have had ideal pickleball weather recently and have had great turnouts utilizing both Christiano courts on both Monday and Thursday. If you want to join the pickleball contact list, please email **PAT MacCARTHY** at [pmaccarthy415@gmail.com](mailto:pmaccarthy415@gmail.com).

### Walkers and Talkers: TAD

**LARRABEE** reported that Thursday, November 2, was a beautiful, cool Fall Day for a walk, this time at Pear Tree Point in Darien. The group visited a bit of Darien's recent \$100 million investment in a large parcel of land called Great Island that juts into Long Island Sound, but it is not yet fully open to the public. We hope that will become another public park walking area, but it remains to be seen. Pear Tree Point itself is basically a residential area with many very expensive homes,



*Walkers on November 2*

which makes for an interesting walk. The group also visited Pear Tree Point Beach,

Darien's public beach with nice views of the harbor from the gazebo. Thursday, November 9, was also a good cool day for a walk. Although possible rain was predicted, there was not a drop. The group went to the Meyer Nature Preserve in Armonk NY, a 247-acre park with some rugged forest paths that offered some nice views across the valley. The group will walk through the winter, but only on safe roads and sidewalks to avoid icy and unsafe conditions. So come join us for some brisk late fall and winter walks and stay healthy!

**Tennis:** **ANDRE MAZUREK** announced that in the opening round **JEROME COLEMAN** and **ANDRE** won on Court 1 while **PETER ORBANOWSKI** and **MARK PRUNER** won on Court 2. In the final round **PETER** and **JEROME** won on Court 1 while **ANDY HOLMES** and **LAWRENCE MERL** won on Court 2. **LAWRENCE** will serve as captain this week.

**Bridge:** **RON MURRAY** reported that the top scorers among this week's eight players were **RON FRIEDMAN** (4490), **JOHN FEBLES** (2970), and **ALEX KOSSEIM** (2940). The group meets on Wednesdays at 12:30 at the lower level of the main library. Newcomers are welcome. For more information, email [jfebles13@gmail.com](mailto:jfebles13@gmail.com).

**Platform tennis:** A nice photo from the November 14 matches. LR - **Geimer, Morrison, Mazurek, Coleman, Ambrosino, Dean, Mancinelli, Frishman.**





**Hearts:** **DON CONWAY** reported that **JOE DOWLING** won two-and-a-half games and **DON** won one game. **JOE** and **JOHN STANKUNAS** had moonshots.

### TODAY'S SPEAKER

**TIM BROOKS** introduced Will Friedwald, the author of *Sinatra! The Song is You*. Mr. Friedwald writes about music and popular culture for *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Sun*, *The New York Stage Review*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Playboy*, and he hosts the radio show "Sing, Sing, Sing." He has written ten books, including the award-winning *A Biographical Guide to the Great Jazz and Pop Singers*. Drawing upon interviews of hundreds of Sinatra collaborators, and of "The Voice" himself, *Sinatra! The Song is You* chronicles Sinatra's five-decade career focusing on his singing, rather than other well-publicized aspects of his life, such as his romantic liaisons.



Friedwald began by commending the RMA's **TIM BROOKS**, noting that his books are a "treasure" in the eyes of other writers about music such as himself. He then observed that Sinatra did more than anyone else to establish the Great American Songbook, the loosely defined canon of early twentieth century jazz, pop, and show-tune hits from composers such as Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, George Gershwin, and Rodgers & Hart. Early in the twentieth century such songs were viewed as ephemeral; people would be shocked to learn that a song popular at one time would remain popular a decade later. In fact, on Lucky Strike's "Hit Parade," which featured the ten most popular songs of the week, it was rare for a song to make

the list two weeks in a row. Sinatra turned this around by including great decades-old songs on his albums and in his concerts. He helped cement the view that rather than ephemera these works were America's contribution to music – our Bach and Mozart.

Friedwald used video clips of Sinatra performances to illustrate many of the points that he made about Sinatra's singing and career, beginning with "Luck Be a Lady" from *Guys and Dolls*. Sinatra played Nathan Detroit in the 1955 movie, although he later lamented that he had not played Sky Masterson, the romantic lead who sang this particular song. He joked that he had been beaten out for that role by the renowned singer Marlon Brando.

Sinatra, however, sang "Luck Be a Lady" on the 1963 studio cast album of the show, and he made the song his own. Popular songs at the time fell into two categories: upbeat, "swing" songs and romantic ballads. In Sinatra's rendition, "Luck Be a Lady" was both. It begins with staccato singing and a distinctive swing mood as the singer basically gives orders to Lady Luck, but then, without a tempo change, sharply pivots to a wistful, romantic mood as he beseeches her to take pity on him.

Friedwald also played a video of Sinatra singing "My Funny Valentine," from the play *Babes in Arms*. Sinatra left his artistic imprint on the song. While it was originally in four time throughout, he switched a middle section to three – i.e., waltz time. In addition, he introduced a countermelody taken from *Porgy and Bess* at the end of the song. The song was virtually ignored after its release in 1937, but after Sinatra's 1953 rendition, it was recorded and performed by numerous artists. Friedwald also played a Sinatra performance of Cole Porter's "I've Got You Under My Skin." The song was included in Sinatra's 1956 album *Songs for Swinging Lovers*, which took old love songs and added a beat, making them danceable. The contrast between Sinatra's version of the song and the original was striking.

Much of Sinatra's best work grew out of his collaboration with composer and bandleader Nelson Riddle. The fact that Sinatra wanted to collaborate distinguished him from almost all his contemporaries. It was traditional for singers to show up the day of a performance and be handed a list of the songs they should sing and the keys in which to sing them. Sinatra, however, would choose his songs and their keys months in advance, and then collaborate with the bandleader on the orchestration. His model of the singer shaping the performance, rather than just singing, became the norm in the generation that followed him.

Friedwald ended by noting some other characteristics of Sinatra's singing. In contrast to many contemporaries, he did not belt or shout – he left that to the orchestra. And he rarely ended a song loudly and dramatically. That part would come shortly before the conclusion, but he would end with a whisper rather than a bang.

The talk can be viewed by going to the RMA website at <https://greenwichrma.org>, and clicking on "Speakers."

Note: The views expressed in RMA presentations are those of the speakers. 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 →**JIM DEAN**←. Please make sure you give a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB to him, *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**, Nancy Lundy, Cynthia MacKay, **TROY JOHNSON**, **PETE UHRY**.

Retired Men's Association of Greenwich, Inc. • 1 West Putnam Avenue • Greenwich, CT 06830 • USA. Visit our website at <https://greenwichrma.org>

### RMA 2023 CALENDAR

Weekly Repetitive Activities*
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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	11:00 am	Pickleball	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	10 am-12 pm	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	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	Contact Holmes	Indoor Tennis	Andy Holmes - <a href="mailto:Andyholmes56@gmail.com">Andyholmes56@gmail.com</a>

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