



# CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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

[www.greenwichrma.org](http://www.greenwichrma.org)  
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**SCRIBE: ARNOLD GORDON**

January 3 Scribe: **BOB GIAQUINTO**, [BGQ19@LIVE.COM](mailto:BGQ19@LIVE.COM)

*"We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office." - Aesop*

President **JACK WEIR** began the business meeting at 9:47 am. **DON CONWAY** led us in the pledge and **GRAN BURGESS**, using his Melody Men's voice, with **BOB MORGAN** at the Steinway, led us in singing "My Country 'Tis of Thee," "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" and "The Christmas Song."

**JACK** thanked all the many men who do yeomen's work in organizing and supporting our meetings: scribe, formatter, CBB editor, projectionists, volunteer advocate, greeter, mentor, audio/video, set-up and refreshments. He pointed out that next week, December 20, is the RMA Annual Holiday Party and no members' meeting. There will also be no meeting on December 27; the Church will be closed. Finally, he asked for volunteers to present a human-interest story. Please let him know what is your topic and desired date(s), and try to keep within 10 minutes.

## **CORRESPONDING SECRETARY REPORT**

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** reported the sad news that one of our oldest members, **DR. PETER ARTURI**, died on December 7 at the age of 97. He had been a

member since August 2000. He asked for a volunteer to deliver an RMA memorial for **PETER**. His obituary can be found here.

*For Peter Arturi obituary, [Click Here](#)*

A second reminder about the December 20 RMA holiday party was sent on December 11. **ARNOLD** invited those in attendance who had not yet signed up but wished to, to see **LEN CARUSI** who would sign them up on site. Otherwise, use the online poll by December 16. As of December 13, 87 members with 41 guests had registered to attend (total 128).

A very interesting web site that describes those of us who were born between 1930 and 1946, described as a very special group, will bring back lots of memories. E.g., you saved tin foil and poured fried meat fat into tin cans. You are the last generation who spent childhood without television; instead, you "imagined" what you heard on the radio and you read library books. <https://pendletontimes.com/special-group-one-percent-born-between-1930-1946/>

Apologizing for sounding like a nagging mother, **ARNOLD** urged that if you have not had your flu shot and the latest Covid vaccine, do so. They are both starting to spread. He finished with some usual groaners, in this case some of the worst:

- The guy who invented the door knocker got a no-bell prize.
- What did the grape say when it got stepped on? Nothing - but it let out a little whine.
- Vincent van Gogh had an interesting family. The brother who ate prunes was named Gotta Gogh; His Mexican cousin went by A Mee Gogh.

To the relief (but only temporary) of the members, he introduced **CARL WHITE** who told some Christmas and Chanukah quips, such as: What did the beaver say to the Xmas tree? "Nice gnawing you." How much did Santa pay for his sleigh? "Nothing. It was on the house." Sarah went to the post office and asked for 50 stamps to send her Chanukah cards. The postal clerk asked what denominations? "Six Orthodox, 12 Conservative and 32 Reform."

## **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

**PETER STERN** began with the induction of **KRIS BRATBERG**, who was nominated by **PETER UHRY**. **KRIS** was born in South Salem, NY (Westchester County), was raised in that



area and attended college at SUNY Fredonia and then graduated from NYU's Stern School. He began his business career in New York in investment banking with a focus on healthcare services. His work on an IPO for the Pediatrix Medical Group in Florida led to his joining that company and moving to Fort Lauderdale, FL. Following that, he helped found Sound Physicians, the nation's largest group of hospitalist physicians, which serves as an administrative arm for doctors seeking an alternative approach to managing their business

independent of large groups, like those operated by a hospital or insurance company. His forming similar physician groups resulted in one representing over 6,000 anesthesia providers. **KRIS** is fully retired now and lives in the back country with his curly coated retriever, William. He has children who are living in NYC, Washington DC, and Fort Lauderdale. An active gardener and athletically inclined, he plans to join the pickleball and paddle tennis RMAers. He is also a skier, and enjoys cooking and travel, and is an avid reader of both fiction and non-fiction.

The nomination was seconded by **PAT MacCARTHY**. Guess what? The vote for **KRIS** was unanimous!

**PETER** reminded us that the new, yellow, numbered parking passes can be obtained at the greeter desk from 9:00 – 9:45 on December 20. Attendance: 86 in person and 10 via Zoom (count by **CARL WHITE**). With **BOB MORGAN** at the piano, birthday congratulations to:

<b>PETER STERN</b>	79
<b>STEVE STEIN</b>	84
<b>ALEX KOSSEIM</b>	89
<b>CHARLIE ADAMS</b>	80
<b>ARNOLD GORDON</b>	86

There were two guests: Jamie O'Connor, guest of **GERRY BOYLE** and Kory Breitel, guest of **FRANK SALEM** and **JOERG BLASER**. There was one returnee, **BOB MEANEY** from Germany

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**SPEAKER PROGRAM: BOB MEANY** encouraged us to stay for today's talk by State Senator Ryan Fazio who will address the future of the electric power grid in CT and New England, and what will happen to our costs. There is no meeting or speaker on December 20 or December 27, but on January 3, 2024, our speaker will be Dr. Susan Masino, Vernon D. Roosa Professor of Applied Science at Trinity College in Hartford. Her laboratory-based research focuses on mechanisms of brain health and disease including a focus on the effect of nature and brain health. She will talk on "Why Our Brains Need Wildlands."

**SCRIBES PROGRAM: TIM BROOKS**, chief editor for the CBB, asked how many read the CBB after each meeting. Nearly everyone present indicated that they did so. He then reported that the CBB is produced by a small team, and a few scribes have had to step down recently due to personal matters. The program could use some new volunteers. It is a great way to interact with other members. Scribes are scheduled according to their availability, and if possible scheduled only once every two or three months. A new development with the help of **JOHN REESE** and the Tech Group involves experimenting with using artificial intelligence (AI) to assist the scribes. They would receive a transcript and an AI-generated summary of the meeting shortly after it concluded. Using this input would be entirely voluntary--if you run away screaming when you hear the term "AI" you can ignore it--but if you are interested in working with AI output, with the help of **JOHN** and our other experts, it could be an interesting learning experience. If you are willing to become a scribe, please see **TIM**.

**MENTOR PROGRAM: JOHN KAVANAGH** mentioned that those involved with the mentor program, including Messieurs **UHRY, MARASSO, MANCINELLI, AMBROSINO, LARRABEE, SANTORA, ROTZIEN, HOLMES, MacCARTHY, DEAN, STURGES**, and **DeVAN**, have felt that there was an opportunity to improve it. Accordingly, they met to discuss and identify opportunities to make it even more successful. Some of the issues that needed to be addressed were:

- There is an enormous amount of variability in how the mentor or candidate proposer does his job.
- Candidates are sometimes left on their own during the meetings, either sitting or drinking coffee by themselves.
- There is little follow-up after the induction to see how the integration of a new member is going.

- We need to develop better leave-behind materials or take actions to make sure what we have is being used to its maximum.

Proposed are several recommendations for improvement:

- The greeter and mentor roles and responsibilities should be more clearly defined and tested with mentors to see if they are applicable for proposers as well.
- All RMA members should view ourselves as mentors and contribute to start making certain that candidates are not left alone at meetings and are made to feel welcome at all times.
- Mentors and proposers alike should endeavor to follow-up with candidates after they are inducted, to make sure they are active, getting involved in their areas of interest, and are coming to meetings regularly.
- We need to develop materials for prospects to help them understand all the RMA has to offer, and make sure they are disseminated to prospects and members alike.

**SPECIAL EVENTS: JOHN FEBLES** reminded us that attempts are being made to participate in the special trip programs organized by St. Catherine's Church. There are six trips already scheduled and RMA members are invited to go along. However, each one has a cut-off date for signing up; a flier is attached for each date shown below.

Spelling Bee, the musical (on Jan. 28). The cutoff to sign up is 12/28.

Villa Italia luncheon (Feb. 21) cutoff is 1/17.

Nelson theater trip (March 1) has a 2/15 cutoff.

Arthur Avenue trip (April 10) cutoff is 2/15.

Neil Diamond (May 14) cutoff is 3/1.

Sinatra imitator (June 18) cutoff is 3/1.

For questions contact **JOHN** (203-550-5049; [jfebles13@gmail.com](mailto:jfebles13@gmail.com)).

***FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE TRIPS, [CLICK HERE](#)***

**SPECIAL COMPASSION REQUEST: JOHN FEBLES** asked for a few volunteers who would be willing to sing Christmas carols to a client at Agnes Morley, the senior low-income residence. This is probably the man's last Christmas and he has asked if he could hear carolers one last time. If you are willing and able, please contact **JOHN** (203-550-5049; [jfebles13@gmail.com](mailto:jfebles13@gmail.com)).

**SALVATION ARMY KETTLE PROGRAM: JIM DEAN** congratulated RMA on its excellent work by reaching half-way toward the goal of \$10,000. We are apparently one of the leading groups in the northeast. **JIM** needs seven volunteers for two-hour slots on Thursday, Friday and Saturday this week. Please contact him to sign up at 203-550-0657 or go to the online site: <https://give.salvationarmy.org/Retired-Mens-Association>.

**VOLUNTEER PROGRAM: WILL MORRISON** requested input from members on potential volunteer programs similar to the Salvation Army effort which is a good model. Contact **WILL** at 203-912-8695 or [wdmorrison@gmail.com](mailto:wdmorrison@gmail.com).

**CALL-A-RIDE: DON CONWAY** made a plea for volunteers to serve on the board of the organization to help strengthen it with new ideas and expansion. They hold Zoom meetings on the second Monday of each month at 9 am. Contact him at 203-869-3448, 203-962-4844 or [spiderduck4@gmail.com](mailto:spiderduck4@gmail.com).

### **GAMES PEOPLE PLAY**

**Pickleball: PAT MacCARTHY** reminded us that RMA pickleball is played, weather permitting, from 11 am until 1 pm on Mondays and from 10 am until 12 pm on Thursdays at Christiano Field. Unfortunately, rainouts were experienced last week. If you want to join the pickleball contact list, please email **PAT** at [pmaccarthy415@gmail.com](mailto:pmaccarthy415@gmail.com). Although we currently plan to continue playing pickleball throughout the winter, moving the games indoors to "Pickleball America" in Stamford is being investigated. If interested, let **PAT** know.

**Tennis: JOHN KNIGHT's** report for play at the Old Greenwich Tennis Academy: court 1 winners were **RON FRIEDMAN** and **PAT MacCARTHY**; court 2, **JOHN KNIGHT** and **MARK PRUNER**. For the final round: court 1, **MARK PRUNER** and **PAT MacCARTHY**; court 2, **BOB FRISHMAN** and **STEVE JOHNSON**. Next week's captain is **BRIAN MAHONEY**.

**Hearts: RICK HOLZ** reported that on December 6 there were four men playing three games. **JOE DOWLING**, **JAY SCHONDORF** and **RICK** each won one game and there were no moon shots. There was a lack of holiday spirit in the way the players treated **JOHN KNIGHT**.

**Bridge:** **TONY COCCHI** gave the results for eight players at two tables. **ALEX KOSSEIM** 5,260 points, **STEVE SHAPIRO** 4,090, **ED MASTOLONI** 3,900. Play takes place every Wednesday at 1 pm in the Library Cafeteria of Greenwich Library.

**Paddle Tennis:** **JIM DEAN** reported that on December 12, six members played, changing partners, for a total of 12 sets. Courts have been reserved for Tuesday mornings, 10 to noon, at Loughlin Avenue Park, Cos Cob. Play will continue until March 22, 2024. For weather playing information, call 203-861-6100. Each week, a sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board for the following week. Or, call or text **JIM** at 203-550-0657.

**Walkers and Talkers:** **TAD LARRABEE** reported that last Thursday, they had an enjoyable walk starting at Crawford Park in Rye. **JIM FISHBEIN**, who lives nearby, was their guide around many neighborhood streets. Again, they didn't get lost! It was unusual that several of the stalwart walkers had conflicting schedules, so we were a smaller group than usual. We try to walk every week even during the winter months in more urban areas to avoid any issues with the weather and to stay safe. So please feel free to join – and dress warmly. It's good exercise and they always have enjoyable discussions along the way.

**ARNOLD GORDON** closed the business meeting with an impassioned plea for members with reports to ***please send them to the scribe by email in a form to allow cut-and-paste (e.g., Word document or in the e-mail message)***; this will greatly facilitate the scribe's work in compiling the CBB.

## **SPEAKER PROGRAM**

Program Committee Chairman **BOB MEANY** introduced State Senator Ryan Fazio, whose topic deals with the difficult position of New England and Connecticut regarding electricity prices and supply under the title, "Will the Lights Go Out in New England? The Future of the Electric Grid – And Your Electric Bill." Senator Fazio was elected State Senator in August 2021, and he was re-elected in 2022. He represents Connecticut's 36<sup>th</sup> District, which includes Greenwich, Stamford and New Canaan. He grew up in Greenwich and attended public schools here. After studying economics at Northwestern University, he chose to return to Connecticut to live and work. Ryan is the Ranking Senator on the legislature's Energy & Technology Committee and Planning and Development Committee. He also serves on the Transportation Committee and the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee.





He and his committee's overall objective is to ensure that over the next 10 years and beyond, we are able to "keep the lights on," prevent major price hikes, and protect the environment. As of now, the forecast for the next 20 years appears dim without substantive policy and infrastructure changes. There are worries of potential rolling blackouts or shortages if capacity is not adequately expanded. CT ranks second in the continental U.S. for highest electricity costs to consumers;

most of New England is above average. The high electricity costs in Connecticut hamper economic growth and disproportionately impact lower income residents. However, the shift to much more expensive renewables like offshore wind could sharply increase rates further, by Fazio's estimate around \$500-1000 more per household per year.

The source of power throughout New England today is as follows: natural gas 40%, nuclear 23%, imports (mostly hydropower from Canada) 14%, coal and oil 9%. As a result of conversion to natural gas from oil and coal over the past 15 years, heat trapping emissions have been reduced by 56%. However, while greenhouse gas emissions have fallen, Connecticut's grid still relies heavily on fossil fuel plants for backup when renewables such as wind and solar cannot deliver. Germany's experience in closing its nuclear power plants shows that heavy renewable investments do not reduce emissions without reliable clean alternatives such as nuclear energy. Although there are always concerns around nuclear plant safety and waste storage that can last for generations, new plant designs and waste management technologies add confidence toward their acceptance.

Demand for energy is expected to increase 70% by 2040 and there will be a conflict between home heating needs and the use of energy sources to generate electricity. Overall, New England probably has to double electricity generation over the next 20 years. Eversource estimates that \$1.5 to 2.9 billion dollars will be needed for substation upgrades.



Fazio promotes an “all-of-the-above” clean energy policy, treating sources like nuclear, hydro, solar and wind equally. While Connecticut has made some progress in lowering emissions, he paints a picture of an energy grid facing deeply worrying reliability, affordability, and even lingering environmental challenges without major policy changes. He believes substantial reforms are needed to Connecticut's energy system. As a result, he and a colleague have proposed a bipartisan bill that would include fair and equal treatment for hydro and nuclear along with wind and solar sources as part of all inclusive “Renewable Energy Portfolios.” This allows market competition while meeting environmental and reliability goals. Renewables like offshore wind are expected to provide much of the new capacity but face issues around weather-dependent intermittency and higher costs compared to traditional methods of generation. He also proposes to eliminate certain federal and local fees that are included in our electricity bills that have no relation to generation and transmission of energy to homes and businesses; he regards them as a form of taxation. Their elimination would reduce our bills by 10-12%.

The talk was followed by a lengthy Q&A period. It 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 →**BOB GIAQUINTO**←. Please send 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 **ANDY HOLMES**.

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*			
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