

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: KRIS BRATBERG

March 27 Scribe: **BOB GIAQUINTO, BGQ19@LIVE.COM**

"Never let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game." - Babe Ruth

RMA President **JACK WEIR** opened the meeting at 9:45 am. **MIKE HAYDEN** led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance and then also led the singing of three songs, "You're a Grand Old Flag," "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral" and "Side By Side." All were accompanied by **JIM SANTORA** on the piano.

JACK requested and received an extra round of applause for **MIKE** and **JIM** for being good, active and long-standing members of the RMA. **JACK** then acknowledged all those who helped make the meeting possible, as follows. CBB Editor **TIM BROOKS**, scribe **KRIS BRATBERG**, projectionists **LEN CARUSI** and **TONY COCCHI**, formatter **MARK GEIMER**, greeter **BILL FEATHERSTON**, mentor **ANDY HOLMES**, refreshments, **BOB GIAQUINTO**, audio/video team **ED PARKER, MARK GEIMER, PETER DODGE, HORST TEBBE, BARRY RICHELSON**, and **STEVE MARINO**, and set-up **BOB BISHOP, JIM BUTLER** and **JOHN CRAINE**.

Corresponding Secretary ARNOLD GORDON regretfully reported that long-time, beloved member **SAL D'ANGELO** died on Monday. His sons let us know that he was very touched by his 100th birthday event. They will address our

members about his RMA experience at a future meeting. **SAL** joined the RMA in July 1999. **ARNOLD** requested a volunteer to deliver a eulogy for **SAL**.

Sadly, there has been another passing to report. **MARTIN WAINE**, who joined the RMA in May 2007, died after a long illness on March 12 at the age of 91. **STEVE MEYERS** will deliver a eulogy for him at a future date. There is an obituary in the *Greenwich Time*.

[Martin Waine Obituary](#)

We have previously noted **ED FARRELL's** passing. His widow, Susan, would like everyone to know that a memorial service will be held at St. Catherine's Church in Riverside starting at 10 am on April 6. The Farrell Family invites you to join them for a buffet following the service, at Pellicci's Restaurant, 96 Stillwater Avenue, Stamford (203-323-2542). **JACK WEIR** will be delivering a eulogy for **ED** at next week's meeting.

ARNOLD then called everyone's attention to a momentous event that will take place on Monday, April 8, a total solar eclipse, something that will not occur again for Connecticut viewing until 2079 (mark your calendars!). Even though totality will not be seen in Connecticut on April 8, the sky will get notably darker around 3:30 pm, when 92% of the sun will be blocked by the moon, the peak of the eclipse from our vantage point. Totality can be seen further north in New York (Buffalo, Rochester, Niagara Falls) and elsewhere in New England. Remember to shield your eyes with the proper kind of sunglasses to avoid serious eye injury. For details, see this:

<https://www.ctinsider.com/projects/2024/total-solar-eclipse-ct/#:~:text=2020-,The%202024%20total%20solar%20eclipse%20manifests%20as%20a%20partial%20eclipse,in%20the%20path%20of%20totality.&text=Connecticut%20will%20be%20in%20the%20path%20of%20totality%20in%202079.,-2080>

Finally, **ARNOLD** reminded everyone to be cognizant of their civic duty during the primary election period. The presidential preference primary is on April 2. There is still time to register for a party if you are unaffiliated and early voting is an option. For details on all the upcoming primaries:

<https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Election-Services/Calendars/Election-Calendars>

ARNOLD filled in for Jokester **TOM HEALY**, and led off by feeding the group some of his typical bon mots... telling the group that he had started breeding racing deer, but was accused of merely trying to make a fast buck. He then shared some real signs from actual businesses:

At a gynecologist's office: "Dr. Jones, at your cervix"

On a septic tank truck: "Yesterday's Meals on Wheels"

On a plumber's truck: "Don't sleep with a drip - call your plumber"

On an electrician's truck: "Let us remove your shorts"

On a maternity room door: "Push Push Push"

In a veterinarian's waiting room: "Be back in 5 minutes: Sit! Stay!"

In a Chicago radiator shop: "Best place in town to take a leak"

For a special treat **ARNOLD** showed a short video about a despondent Irishman at a grave site, bemoaning the death of the interred – his wife's first husband.

[**SEE VIDEO HERE**](#)

JACK then gave a recap of the Greenwich St. Patrick's Day Parade on Sunday March 17 on Greenwich Avenue. The RMA had 21 members plus five or six guests marching behind the RMA banner. The weather cooperated and it was a beautiful day. Despite being relegated to the third division, it turned out that there were four divisions so we were far from the end of the parade.



RMAers Gather for the Parade



We Do Our Famous "Spin" on the Avenue

Many thanks to the Greenwich Hibernians for facilitating our participation, to **BOB BISHOP** (banner), Florrie Dean (shamrocks), **ANDY HOLMES** (photography), our front row banner holders, **JACK's** fellow officers **ARNOLD GORDON, WILL MORRISON, JEFF JUNKER** and all the other RMA members who marched. It was a great event and we look forward to being invited next year as well!

JOE MANCINELLI gave the Nominating Committee report. "The Nominating Committee has been working hard over the past several months and we are excited to present the proposed 2024 slate of officers, board members, nomination committee members as well as committee chairman and assistants. First let me say that **ARNOLD GORDON** has decided, for personal reasons, that he will not be able to move into his scheduled position as president beginning May 1, 2024. However, he will continue to be an active RMA member and to all our chagrin, he will continue to entertain us as corresponding secretary and humorist. We are, however, very fortunate to have **WILL MORRISON** stepping up to become our 2024 president and **DAVID MICHONSKI** will move up to First VP."

Proposed RMA Slate, effective May 1, 2024

Board of Directors: 2024

President:	Will Morrison
1 st Vice President:	David Michonski
2 nd Vice President:	Mark Geimer
3rd Vice President:	John Kavanagh
Secretary:	Michael LaGamma
Treasurer:	Jeff Junker
Past President #1:	Jack Weir
Past President #2:	Joe Mancinelli
Member at Large:	James Dean (exp 5/2025)
Member at Large:	John Reese (exp 5/2026)

Standing Committees (Only the Chairmen are Board Members)

Membership Chairman: Peter Stern
Program Chairman: Bob Meaney
 Vice Chair: Bob Rimmer
Publicity Chairman: Skip Auch
 Assistants: Jack Weir, Tim Brooks, Fred Wu
Sp. Events Chair: **Alan Weyl**
 Assistant: **John Febles**

Nominating Committee

Chairman: Jack Weir (exp 5/2026)
Joe Mancinelli (exp 5/2025)
Jay Schondorf (exp 5/2025)
Tim Brooks (exp 5/2026)
Jerome Coleman (exp 5/2027)

Standing Committees (Non- Board Members)

Cigar Box Bulletin Chairman: Tim Brooks
Volunteer Chairman: Will Morrison
Financial Review: Steve Boies
Financial Committee Chair: Jeff Junker
 Assistants: Tim Brooks, Michael Ambrosino, Steve Boies

[Full List with Activity Chairs](#)

JOE concluded, “Let me thank everyone who has come forward to enable us to produce a robust list for 2024. Volunteerism is the heart and soul of this great organization. All positions are posted in the back on the bulletin board for your review. Voting will occur in two weeks. If anyone has additional nominees, please contact me so they can be included in our elections.”

JACK reminded all that RMA elections voting will be in two weeks. He then announced an RMA history project that **DAVE RICHARDS** is leading, to create a history book or booklet with a collection of vignettes from RMA members. Please share your RMA stories with **DAVE** in the form of one or two pages sent via email for his review. His email is darichards322@gmail.com

Electronic Payment System. **JEFF JUNKER** and **TIM BROOKS** announced that there will be a new way for members to pay their \$125 annual dues. Beginning on May 1 the RMA will accept payment from members via Zelle, an electronic bank-to-bank form of payment. Instructions on how to initiate payment via Zelle will be posted on the RMA website under “Dues and Donations.” Remember to write your name and “dues” in the memo section of the transfer to ensure that you are credited for paying your annual dues! This new form of electronic payment is optional, checks will also still be accepted.

Membership Report. **JACK WEIR** delivered this report due to **PETER STERN** and **JOHN KAVANAGH** both being away on vacation. There were 73 attendees in person and seven participating via Zoom. There were two guests at the meeting, Rich White, guest of **KRIS BRATBERG** was at his second RMA meeting, and Rob Goldie was the guest of **BRIAN MAHONEY**.

Two birthdays were announced this week. **REINHARD AUGUSTIN** turned 85 and **MICHAEL ROSS** turned 81. The group sang to them a spirited rendition of Happy Birthday, accompanied by **JIM SANTORA** on the piano.

Special Events. **TROY JOHNSON** gave the report, providing updates for several upcoming events:

- The **New York Botanical Garden** trip, scheduled for Friday, April 12, includes a tour of the orchid show and lunch. The deadline to sign up is March 30. The TAG bus transportation is full, but if additional members would like to join, an effort will be made for carpooling or possibly securing another smaller bus or van, depending on interest. If interested please email **TROY** at troyjohnson@hotmail.com or **ANDRE MAZUREK** at mazurek.a.j@gmail.com.

- **SKIP AUCH** is the team captain for the **Yale University Walking Tour** scheduled for May 4, with lunch following at Morey's. **SKIP's** email is skipauch@netscape.net. RMA member **DAVE RICHARDS**, Yale Class of '64, is leading the tour.

- **MIKE RYAN** is the team captain for the Met Opera Live event at the New Rochelle IMAX theater on Saturday May 11. The opera is *Madame Butterfly* and tickets are \$24. **MIKE's** email is ryantomac@netscape.net

- **TOM HEALY** is the team captain for the Aqueduct Race Track trip scheduled for mid-June. Exact date and details to come. **TOM's** email is retiredtjh@gmail.com.

- **MIKE RYAN** is team captain for two potential RMA events in June and July at Caramoor in Katonah. Both are live jazz performances, the first featuring Wynton Marsalis scheduled for Saturday June 22 at 7:30 pm and the second the Annual Jazz Fest starts at noon on July 27, features multiple performances and goes all day. **MIKE's** email is above.

- **ALAN WEYL** is team captain for a third potential RMA event to be held at Citi Field in July or August where the RMA Melody Men will sing the national anthem before a Mets home game. **ALAN's** email is aweyl@outlook.com.

Speaker Program. **TIM BROOKS** previewed today's speaker, Dr. Peter Muir, an expert on American vernacular music, on ragtime music. Next week's speaker, **DAVID RICHARDS**, will be introduced by **HOLLISTER STURGES**. Richards is a recently retired chair of the Yale Library Associates, the alumni support group for the University's Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, and is the author of seven books. Mr. Richards talk is titled "Collecting Shakespeare's First Folio in America." The RMA guest speaker in two weeks, on April 3, will be Fred Camillo, First Selectman, Town of Greenwich, on "Greenwich: Knowing the Way, Showing the Way, Leading the Way."

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Bridge report submitted by **RON MURRAY**. Here are the results for Wednesday, May 13. We had seven players. Top scores were **ANDRE MAZUREK**, 4750, **RON MURRAY**, 4000, **ED MASTOLONI**, 3850. **ANDRE** made two small slams, six hearts and six no-trump. He also made a small slam last week. **ANDRE** is on a roll! **ED** and I also made a small slam, six hearts. We play Wednesday afternoon in the cafe on the ground floor of the Greenwich

Library. Lunch is available. We invite all members and guests, whether beginners or experienced players, to join our group. Not to worry if you're a newcomer or a long-time player who's a bit rusty; we have a number of excellent players who would be glad to offer advice.

Hearts Report submitted by **ANDY HOLMES**. Last Wednesday, 12 players gathered at the Greenwich Library for an afternoon of playing hearts. We filled three tables of four players who played a total of ten games. At table 1, four games were played with **DON CONWAY** winning three games and **JOE DOWLING** winning one. There were four moonshots at table 1 with **JOE** and **TOM HEALY** each getting two. At table 2, three games were played with **ANDY HOLMES** winning two games and **JOHN KNIGHT** winning one. There was just one moonshot at table 2 with that being achieved by **JOHN KNIGHT**. At table 3, three games were played with **JACK WEIR** winning two games and **BILL FAKUNDINY** winning one. There were two moonshots at table 3 with **JOHN STANKUNAS** and **JACK WEIR** each getting one.

Paddle report submitted by **JIM DEAN**. Players on March 19 included **MIKE AMBROSINO, JIM DEAN, BOB FRISHMAN, TROY JOHNSON, JOE MANCINELLI, ANDRE MAZUREK, WILL MORRISON, FRED WU** and **ARN WELLES**. It was a great conclusion to a season that started way back in October. We lost only three days to weather and played on some very cold days. At our next meeting, March 27, there will be a group photo taken and Captain **JIM DEAN** will present the team traveling trophy.

Walkers and Talkers submitted by **TAD LARRABEE**. Last Thursday, the RMA Walkers car pooled to Pear Tree Point Beach in Darien and walked about a mile to the newly opened 60-acre Great Island, which is more like a peninsula that extends into Long Island Sound. It was opened to the public on March 1 after it was purchased last year for \$85 million from the Steinkraus family which had owned it for more than 100 years. The island features 1.5 miles of shoreline, mature woodland, four homes, an equestrian building and a boat house. The new park will probably close April 1 when Darien begins widening the entrance road and building a parking lot and some safety features. Darien anticipates preserving Great Island's natural experience and

environment. We can attest that it is a real gem of a park and a most enjoyable walk on a nice spring day.



Great Island - Photography by Jerry Pollack

Tai Chi report given by **WILL MORRISON**. Emphasis is being put on a gentle warm up and Tai Chi fundamental form and movements...these have been popular requests and help to keep people coming back. Remember...Tai Chi enhances your golf game!

Golf report given by **JOE MANCINELLI**. A reminder for the RMA Golf Season... sign-up sheets are in the back, please sign up for Tuesday April 2, as we kick off our golf season. Dues are \$25 pp and we hope to see the return of all of our previous golfers as well as many new golfers. To clarify my announcement from last week, if you sign up for the Greenwich senior rate prior to April 30, it costs \$110. After April 30 the cost is \$130. Any questions please see me, **JIM SANTORA** or **JOHN CRAINE**.

Pickleball report submitted by **MICHAEL LaGAMMA**. The weather has not been cooperative for RMA pickleballers, but with spring around the corner that is expected to improve. Pickleball is played at Christiano Park, 28 Lyons Ave. in Greenwich on Mondays from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm and on Thursdays from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm.

JOHN REESE then invited all RMA members to join the discussion group he hosts on **Technology and AI**. This group shares and discusses your experiences, your interests and your questions about using technology in your life and has been focusing recently on ChatGPT and many breakthrough products in AI. It covers questions ranging from how to best do something using AI to existential societal implications of ChatGPT and AI.

TODAY'S SPEAKER

"Pioneers of Ragtime," presented by Dr. Peter Muir

TIM BROOKS introduced Dr. Peter Muir, an acknowledged authority on American vernacular music with a PhD in musicology. He teaches and performs actively in Manhattan as well as in Westchester and Fairfield counties.



Dr. Muir began his presentation by stating that he was a huge fan of ragtime music. He shared a brief history of ragtime, stating while the exact origins of Ragtime were unknown, it was believed to have originated in the 1880s from within the African American community in the Midwestern states, and became widely popular

in the 1890s. Ragtime is an artform that can be found/heard in all vernacular forms of music that have come since, including jazz and country music, with the origins of ragtime coming from African music.

Muir first played the very famous “Maple Leaf Rag” by Scott Joplin, considered the greatest ragtime composer and well known as the “King of Ragtime.” He then played and discussed a selection by Tom Turpin, a saloon owner in St. Louis who was the first African American ragtime songwriter to be published, and composer of over 40 rags. The one played by Muir was called “Harlem Rag.”

After discussing ragtime's history Muir turned to what exactly ragtime was, and how it was the first American music to use syncopation, "an anticipation of the beat." The third ragtime song played by Muir is perhaps the most famous and popular of all time, and was composed by Scott Joplin. "The Entertainer" is familiar from its use in the movie *The Sting*. Muir began by playing just its most famous part.

Dr. Muir also demonstrated how ragtime would sound if syncopation was not used, in order to underscore its importance to ragtime's sound. He demonstrated how the piano player's right hand played the melody, including the syncopation, while the left hand played the "boring" part with no syncopation. The left hand provides the "ground beat" which highlights the melody and the syncopation. Muir then played an entire version of "The Entertainer."

Next Muir discussed how the music establishment rejected ragtime as an art form, even long after it was clearly established as the leading vernacular music of its day. He quoted music scholars describing ragtime as "...pernicious, evil and an enemy of true art." He then discussed different forms of Ragtime including folk ragtime and popular ragtime which was more light and fast and showy for the performer.

Muir then played an example of popular rag called "Dill Pickle Rag" by Charles Johnson. Next he played an example of a lesser known piece that was nonetheless "magnificent," written by Jay Scott, another African American composer from the Midwest, called "Grace and Beauty." Muir discussed how ragtime has become known as piano music, but originally that was not the case. Early on it was played by many different instruments, including the banjo, piccolo and even military bands. The most important instrument early on, however, was the voice, and he demonstrated by playing and singing several rags, inviting the audience to sing along. These included "Hello My Baby" and "Alexander's Ragtime Band."

Muir discussed how ragtime never really ended but instead morphed into jazz around the time of the First World War. He described how ragtime was more

structured and rigid, and jazz became freer flowing. To illustrate he played a late ragtime piece by Jelly Roll Morton called "Perfect Rag."

To wrap up his discussion and performance Muir talked about how ragtime enjoyed a major revival during the 1970s and explained how ragtime music is still being written today. He performed a delightful ragtime song that he composed himself, called "Arcady Rag" and then finished up with a fun ragtime song that used the first three notes of a Rachmaninov composition and turned them into a rag called "Russian Rag."

The performance and talk ended with an informative question & answer period.

The full presentation 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 please!*

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 **ANDY HOLMES** and **JERRY POLLACK**.

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Greenwich, CT 06830 · USA. Visit our website at <https://greenwichrma.org>

RMA 2024 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	11:00 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	10 am-12 pm	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	Contact Holmes	Indoor Tennis	Andy Holmes - Andyholmes56@gmail.com

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