

# **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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Fellowship, Volunteerism, Service

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*"What is Truth? said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer."* - Francis Bacon, Essays, I, "Of Truth"

Log your volunteer hours at <u>www.greenwichrma.org/log</u>

President **JACK WEIR** called the meeting to order. **BOB BISHOP** led us in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by **MIKE HAYDEN** who led us in songs, accompanied by **BOB MORGAN** on piano. The group started with "America the Beautiful" followed by the RMA anthem, "We are the RMA." The third song was dedicated to retiring president **JACK WEIR** who was asked to come to the podium and sing along while the group sang: "So Long It's Been Good to Know You!"

JACK thanked those who made the meeting possible, including CBB Editor TIM BROOKS, scribe DAVID MICHONSKI, projectionists LEN CARUSI and TONY COCCHI, formatter LEN CARUSI, greeter BILL FEATHERSTON, mentor ANDY HOLMES, volunteer advocate TROY JOHNSON, refreshments MICHAEL AMBROSINO, audio-video team ED PARKER, MARK GEIMER,

# **PETER DODGE, HORST TEBBE, BARRY RICHELSOPH, STEVE MARINO, JOHN FEBLES,** and **ARN WELLES,** and set up **BOB BISHOP, JIM BUTLER** and **JOHN CRAINE.**

JACK offered special thanks to: TIM BROOKS, LEN CARUSI, ANDY HOLMES, STEVE MARINO, JEFF JUNKER, SPIKE LIPSCHUTZ, JOHN KAVANAGH, JIM DEAN, MIKE AMOROSO and ALAN WEYL.

The president then reconvened the Annual Meeting of the RMA with the following agenda:

1. *TREASURER'S REPORT FOR FISCAL 2024-2025.* **JEFF JUNKER** presented the proposed budget with the hope that it provides a small surplus or loss of no more than \$500. Because it is a tight budget, it requires keeping expenses down and trying to augment our income. The budget was approved and starts May 1. It includes a dues increase to \$125 and a Cigar Box fee of \$3.00, up from \$2.00. Dues will be collected starting at the next meeting. A \$125 check made out to RMA is due next week or immediately.

2. *ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF PAYMENT*. **JEFF JUNKER** and **TIM BROOKS** unveiled a new way to pay via Zelle. Go to <u>www.greenwichrma.org</u> and then the "Donate" tab, which contains instructions how to pay directly from your bank via Zelle. Otherwise, bring a check next Wednesday made out to "RMA." 3. *APPRECIATION*. President **WEIR** thanked members who are leaving the Board: **ARNOLD GORDON, MIKE AMBROSINO, DON CONWAY, MAURICE KROHN, BOB RIMMER** and **ANDY HOLMES**.

President **WEIR** then adjourned the Annual Meeting and returned to the weekly meeting's agenda.

## **CORRESPONDING SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** introduced **ALAN WEYL** who delivered a eulogy for **Dr. EARLE COTE**, who practiced in Greenwich for 57 years. **ALAN** called him a "small man with stature" and all people he touched spoke highly and warmly of him. He graduated from Fairfield Prep, attended Bonaventure University, then Georgetown Dental School and then graduated

from Columbia School of Orthodontics. He had two children, Guy and Daniel, and his wife was Mary Jane Schwab. Both had Jesuit educations. They were married in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York and had a reception at the Waldorf Astoria. **ALAN** and **EARLE** were neighbors on Rockwood Lane in Greenwich. **EARLE** loved sports coats, scotch, and good music in addition to golf. He will be sorely missed by all.

**ARNOLD** asked for a show of hands of members who are runners. He noted that this year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> running of the Greenwich Memorial Day races to be held on Monday, May 27. Registration is now open online for both the 5K and Kids 1/2-mile run. Register early as prices for each race will increase.

# **Registration for Greenwich Memorial Day Races**

These events are put on by Greenwich Parks and Recreation. Two of the volunteer organizations assisting in the event are, fittingly for RMA, the Greenwich Old Timers Association and the Greenwich Road Runners. The former organization, like the RMA, is dedicated to volunteering and service.

https://www.greenwicholdtimers.org/ https://www.greenwichroadrunners.org/

**ARNOLD** alerted everyone to the new rule that gasoline leaf blowers are prohibited in residential zones from 6:00 pm on the Friday before Memorial Day (May 24) through September 30. Commercial use of gas leaf blowers is prohibited on Sundays year-round. However, electric leaf blowers are permitted year-round. Greenwich is joining many other municipalities around the nation in transitioning away from gas leaf blower use due to their loud noise, high level of air pollution with associated health impacts and damage to the environment. Violations are subject to fines against contractors as well as homeowners. See the following article in the *Greenwich Time*.

**Greenwich Time Article about Leaf Blowers** 

Before introducing jokester for the day **TOM HEALY, ARNOLD** resorted to inducing some groans with a few puns:

- "What is Dijon vu? A. The same mustard as before."
- "What is dancing cheek to cheek? A form of floor play."
- "What's the definition of a will? A. A dead give-away."
- "Did you know that a chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion?"
- "Did you know that bakers trade bread recipes on a knead-to-know basis?"
- "And that acupuncture is a jab well done?"

Finally, he shared a video about a fantastic new technology that will excite engineers, scientists and technicians. It is short and remarkable. Don't miss it.

# https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ac7G7x0G2Ag

Jokester **TOM HEALY** offered up two jokes which he already told the RMA, but he figured that it being the RMA everyone had already forgotten them (!).

#1: Little Bruce and Jenny are only 10 years old, but they know they are in love. One day they decide they want to get married. So, Bruce goes to Jenny's father to ask him for her hand. Bruce bravely walks up to him and says, "Mr. Smith, me and Jenny are in love and I want to ask you for her hand in marriage." Thinking that this was just the cutest thing, Mr. Smith replies, "Well, Bruce, you are only 10. Where will you two live?" Without even taking a moment to think about it, Bruce replies: "In Jenny's room. It's bigger than mine and we can both fit in there nicely." Mr. Smith says with a huge grin, "Okay, but then how will you live? You're not old enough to get a job. You'll need to support Jenny." Again, Bruce instantly replies, "Our allowance! Jenny makes \$5 a week and I make \$10 a week. That's about \$60 a month. So that should do us just fine." Mr. Smith is impressed that Bruce has put so much thought into this. "Well, Bruce, it seems like you have everything figured out. I just have one more question. What will you do if the two of you should have little children of your own?" Bruce just shrugs his shoulders and says: "Well, we've been lucky so far."

# 2: Here I am, sitting in a bar, staring at my drink, when a fat, troublesome biker walks up to me, grabs my drink, and downs it in one gulp. "Well, what are you going to do about it?" he said, threateningly, as I burst into tears.

"Come on, man," the biker said, "I didn't think you were going to cry. I can't stand a man crying." "This is the worst day of my life," I said. "I am a complete loser. I was late for a meeting and my boss fired me. When I went to the parking lot, I found that my car had been stolen and I had no insurance. I left my wallet in the taxi that took me home. When I got home I found my wife with another man. Then, a dog bit me. So, I came to bar to find the courage to put an end to this. I buy a drink, drop the capsule and sit here watching the poison dissolve. Then, you show up and drink it all! But enough about me. How's your day going?"

**MICHAEL AMBROSINO** alerts us to what might be a fun event for free at the Greenwich Library on Friday, May 17 at 7 pm. It is a showing of "It Ain't Over," a tribute to Yogi Berra, the greatest baseball catcher ever (in **MIKE'S** opinion). **MIKE** will be in attendance if anyone would like to join him. It is sponsored by the Friends of the Greenwich Library.



Geimer, Kutzen, Phillips

#### **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

**PETER STERN** announced one induction. Tom Kutzen was nominated by **BOB PHILLIPS**. Tom was born in New York City and grew up in Purchase, NY. He holds a degree in Economics from Oberlin College and an MBA from the University of Chicago. He has had a career in finance, including fixed income trading, treasury functions, business development and money management. He lived

and worked in South Korea from 1981-1983. He has had community involvement with the Boy Scouts of America, is an emeritus board member of Oberlin College and is active with Greenwich Community Gardens. Tom has been married to Terri Browne Kutzen for 40 years. They have a son, Peter, who is an armor branch officer in the U.S. Army. Tom was formerly a member of the Chicago and Old Greenwich Yacht Clubs and currently belongs to the Milbrook Club and Equinox. He enjoys travelling with his wife, golf, boating on Long Island Sound and community activities. **MARK GEIMER** seconded his nomination and said he has known him for 20 years. Tom was approved by acclamation.

# Birthdays: **TIM BROOKS** is 82, **JOE DOWLING** is turning 85, **GERRY BOYLE** is 86, and **RON WILSON** is 82. **JIM SANTORA** played Happy Birthday.

Attendance was 84 plus seven on Zoom, for a total of 91. (Count by LARRY ALLEN). JOHN KAVANAGH was on Zoom and on the mend from some leg issues. Returnees were STEVE JOHNSON from Naples, Florida, and GERHARD PETER from Antiqua. PAT MacCARTHY introduced a guest, Doug MacLaury.

#### **COMMUNITY INTEREST PRESENTATION**

RMA member **HARRY FISHER** is the chairman of the Greenwich Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET). He reported that the good news is that the BET passed a budget with a 2.8% increase in the mill rate, and which preserves current levels of services to residents. That is much better than many of our peer communities, some of which are facing increases of 4 - 5% or more. When looked at against the mill rate history since 2021 of an overall decrease in the mill rate of about 2.5% prior to fiscal year 2025, and inflation, that is a good accomplishment. Why choose 2021? In January of that year inflation was 1.4% and since then it has compounded at a total of about 19%. So, the performance of the BET has been exemplary.

**HARRY** informed us that he was able to work with the BET and get state funds for (1) about 95% of the cost of the Glenville Corridor improvement project, (2) a \$421,000 contribution to the Cos Cob Library renovation project, (3) a feasibility study for \$150,000 of Riverside School that is at capacity, and (4) funding for Old Greenwich School at its original budgeted amount. **HARRY** also indicated that he proposed a reduction of \$2 million in the school budget which is set to increase by 5.7%. That reduction would have been about 1%. His proposal was defeated. His reasoning for making the proposal was that the schools have had a serious management problem. As an example, absenteeism by teachers costs the town about \$880,000 per year in substitute teachers. Not all of that is unjustified, but there is a pattern of absences centered around weekends and holidays. On one Friday last fall, 120 teachers failed to show up for work. Then there is declining enrollment, which is a nationwide trend. Greenwich has more teachers, and less students. Yes, some of that is unfunded mandates from Hartford that have burdened the town with special education mandates, but that it not the only cause. One unfunded mandate requires the town to keep special education students in the system through the year of their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Another project rejected during budget deliberations likely will come back to the BET. It is referred to as SS4A, Safe Streets for All. A \$500,000 project funded to the extent of \$400,000 by the federal government will study Greenwich streets and roads for unsafe conditions. It is controversial to accept federal funds, because there is a risk that, having identified unsafe conditions, we have to fix them quickly.

**HARRY** ended his talk with: "I have learned a lot in the few months since I was elected as chairman in January, and intend to use those lessons to improve the budget process and reduce the discord that it creates in town."

# **SPEAKERS PROGRAM**

**BOB RIMMER** previewed today's speaker, B.H. Barry, a teacher, choreographer and director of staged "stunt fighting." **SPIKE LIPSCHUTZ** then described next week's speaker, Steve Gelbs, a reporter and studio host for SportsNet New York. Gelbs graduated from Syracuse University and in 2015 joined SNY, New York's Emmy Award-winning New York Mets broadcast team. He is a regular contributor to "Baseball Night in New York" and "Mets Hot Stove." In his presentation, Gelbs will tell us what it is like to "live the dream" and meet new ballplayers and be front and center in baseball. **SPIKE** noted that with baseball season here, May will have two baseball speakers and topics, on May 1 and May 29.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**MARK GEIMER** requested volunteers to help run the meetings and take care of support tasks to keep the RMA functioning. "You see people contributing from Len and Tony running the projector, to Bob and Joe on the piano, and

Horst running the Zoom session. Behind the scenes there are others taking care of mailings that you all get, running the website, and editing video tapes of speakers. Maybe you don't know to get started or what is needed that might be of interest to you. So here's how you can help. Some tasks will require a learning curve, but nothing anyone in this educated and successful group of guys can't handle. You'll be joining someone who is currently doing it to show you the ropes. I'll be the contact person for now." **MARK** assured everyone that these volunteer positions required just a few hours a week and training for them would be made available. Below are the positions needed:

Internal Jobs Openings

Wednesday Morning Tasks	
Projectionist	
Zoom Session Monitor	
Cameraman	
Sound Controller	

Done at home Video Editor Format and Send CBB Send Meeting Reminders

Other Key Positions Assistant Treasurer Assitant Membership Chair Volunteers Progrm Chair <u>Contact</u> mark.geimer@gmail.com mark.geimer@gmail.com mark.geimer@gmail.com mark.geimer@gmail.com

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#### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

**TOM HEALY** indicated that the payments for the trip to Aqueduct are due in the amount of \$115 pp with the check made out to "RMA." There are 31 sign ups and room for nine more. See **TOM HEALY** to get one of the few remaining tickets.

#### GAMES

**Golf. JIM SANTORA** gave the golf report. 18 players were part of the outing with nine playing 18 holes and nine playing nine holes. The Par 3's winners were five for **TOM HEALY**, seven for **MIKE SMITH**, 15 for **MIKE AMBROSINO**. The person with the longest drive was **AMBROSINO**. Scoring below 100 were

JIM SANTORA at 99, BART BARTHOLOMEW at 98, TOM HEALY at 93 and PAT YUEN at 92. RON MURRAY birdied hole #7. Of note, YUEN and BILL GRAD played with two outsiders, one of whom scored a hole in one. Signup sheets for next week are on the back board and also a sheet for those who can be a captain. Next week's start time is 8:30 am and it will be the last week that the men will be in front of the women.

**Tennis. TROY JOHNSON** gave the report. Last Friday, eight players gathered at Old Greenwich Tennis Academy to each play two doubles matches. In the opening round, the winning double team on Court #1 was **ART DELMHORST** and **PAT MacCARTHY** and over on Court #2 the winning team was **BILL HOWLAND** and **STEVE JOHNSON** (up from Naples FL). In the finals round, the winning doubles team was **MacCARTHY** and **HOWLAND**, and over on Court #2 the winning team was **PETER DODGE** and **RANDY MOTLAND**. This week's captain will be **BILL HOWLAND**.

Hearts. ANDY HOLMES. Last Wednesday, 12 players filled three tables at the Greenwich Library for an afternoon of hearts. At Table 1, four games were played with MICHAEL AMBROSINO winning three games and ANDY HOLMES winning one. There were four moonshots, two by JOHN KNIGHT one by MICHAEL AMBROSINO and one by JACK SWEGER. At Table 2, four games were also played. JIM DEAN won three games and JOE DOWLING won one. There were six moonshots at Table 2, with three by JIM DEAN, two by JOE DOWLING and one by DON CONWAY. And at Table 3, a total of three games were played with BILL FAKUNDINY winning two games and JACK WEIR winning one. There were four moonshots, two by TOM HEALY and one each by JOHN STANKUNIS and BILL FAKUNDINY.

**Pickleball. PAT MacCARTHY** reported that they play Mondays and Thursdays. Contact **PAT** to sign up.

**Bridge. RON MURRAY** reported the results for Wednesday April 17. There were eight players. **ED MASTOLONI** scored the highest with 5710 points, **ALEX KOSSEIM** scored 3980 points and **BRUNO SCHRAGE** scored 3040 points. Congratulations to **ALEX** and **ED** for bidding and making a grand slam (seven hearts), which is a very rare occurrence in bridge. Also, congratulations

to **ED** for the highest score that has been seen in a long time. Bridge is played on Wednesday afternoons in the café on the ground floor of the Greenwich Library. Lunch is available for purchase. **RON** invited all members and guests who are interested in bridge to join the group. He assured everyone not to worry if new to the game or if an experienced, but rusty player. The group sports several excellent players and each is happy to discuss questions and help learn.

Walkers & Talkers will explore Bruce Park on Thursday. To sign up contact JEFF JUNKER.

At next week's **Tai Chi** session **WILL MORRISON** will show us how to put our pants on without having to sit down.

*FINAL COMMENTS*: **JACK WEIR** adjourned not only the meeting, but also his year as president to loud cheers and applause

#### **TODAY'S SPEAKER**

**BOB RIMMER** introduced B.H. Barry, who for 60 years has been a teacher, choreographer and director of staged "stunt fighting." Barry has been responsible for the staged stunt fighting in dozens of shows for the Royal Shakespeare Theater, over 40 Broadway shows, opera, film and ballet. During his career Barry has been awarded with an Obie for Sustained and Consistent Excellence in Stage Combat. He also received a Tony for Lifetime Achievement, a Drama Desk for his fights in *Camelot*, and an award from the Outer Critics Circle in recognition of his six decades career. Barry has been at The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Julliard, Yale, Temple University and New York University. Barry notes that, "A fight director helps create the illusion of violence, but must make the actors feel secure."

Barry took us through his early childhood in England where he was an only child. His father left the family when Barry was two. Because they had no means of support, his mother and he moved in with his grandparents where he was raised. With no TV, radio or other means of entertaining himself, he used his imagination. From the day he played Alladin in school, he wanted to be an actor. But he had to leave school at 15 to help support his family. In 1958 he was supposed to go into the armed forces, but they ended conscription which gave him two years. He went to become an actor, but after two years he returned to engineering. Nonetheless, he returned to drama school where he met Errol Flynn's double and his teacher, and he started teaching how to do stunt fighting for all the drama schools in England.

He met someone who taught sword fighting and they worked together to make sword fights more realistic. He made up all the fights for 64 productions of *Romeo and Juliet*. He formed the society of British Fight Directors and they started work on making fights much more realistic. He taught at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and he was then invited to teach at drama schools in America. He ended up getting hired for Broadway shows and did over 40 shows. He taught Richard Burton how to strangle Cleopatra (Elizabeth Taylor).

How does he approach a staged fight? First, he reads the script. Then he asks "why does the playwright give it this name?" He then asks the actors what they want to display in their characters. Then, he takes this information and turns it into a choreographed fight. Interestingly, Shakespeare's works only say "there is a fight." He noted that the safety of the actors is also paramount. Barry did the fight scenes in *West Side Story* and he noted that in that play you have to choreograph the fight to the music versus to the story. Interestingly, he auditioned to act in *West Side Story*, but didn't make it.

He also had three fight scenes where things went wrong. He noted they can be dangerous. Barry closed by showing an amusing video with Conan O'Brien who took a course on staged stunt fighting with Barry. Barry coached him on how to kick with his legs, kick in the crotch, hit in the face and get a kick back. And the video showed them sword fighting with theatrical swords. He also showed a video of "Showdown at Chi Chi's" in which he staged a fight and how to slam a head into a chair and blow through a wall.

In the Q&A portion, he was asked his opinion of the events surrounding the recent movie *Rust*, in which a crew member was killed. He explained in great detail what he goes through whenever guns are on a set. He also surmised that

in *Rust*, the stage hands did target practice before they started filming and failed to take the ammunition out of the gun. He thought the armorer, who was just convicted and sentenced to prison, did not do her job.

He ended with a demonstration on two chairs using **BOB BISHOP** and **BOB RIMMER**. He showed them how to defend oneself and attack another. He tried to show them "objectives that he always had to teach actors first. Then, he gave them each a sword with which to practice and separated the two so no one would be hit by the sword. See the Video on <u>www.GreenwichRMA.org</u>.



The full presentation can be viewed by going to the RMA website at <u>https://greenwichrma.org</u>, 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  $\rightarrow$ **FRANK SCARPA** $\leftarrow$ . 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 <u>www.greenwichrma.org/log</u>.

**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 <u>tbroo@aol.com</u> 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 <u>https://greenwichrma.org</u>

#### 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 – <u>pmaccarthy415@gmail.com</u> Michael LaGamma– <u>mdlagamma@optonline.net</u>	
Tuesdays	9:30 am	RMA Golf, the Griff Golf Course, Greenwich	Mike Ryan – <u>ryantomac@netscape.net</u>	
Tuesdays	10 am-12 pm	Platform (paddle) tennis at Loughlin Field, Cos Cob	James Dean - <u>Jhdeanco@gmail.com</u>	
Wednesdays	9:45 to 10:30 am	RMA Weekly Meeting	Horst Tebbe – <u>onehorst@optimum.net</u> or Len Carusi at <u>lencarusi@gmail.com</u>	
Wednesdays	1:00 pm	Hearts	Bob Shullman – <u>bob.shullman@gmail.com</u>	
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 – <u>pmaccarthy415@gmail.com</u> Michael LaGamma – <u>mdlagamma@optonline.net</u>	
Friday	Contact Holmes	Indoor Tennis	Andy Holmes - <u>Andyholmes56@gmail.com</u>	

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