

CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

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



www.greenwichrma.org

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Fellowship, Volunteerism, Service

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SCRIBE: KRIS BRATBERG

Next Meeting Scribe: June 19 – **BOB GIAQUINTO** (BGQ19@LIVE.COM)

Log your volunteer hours at www.greenwichrma.org/log

“An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile - hoping it will eat him last.” Winston Churchill

The meeting was called to order and led by 1st VP **DAVID MICHONSKI** who was filling in for **WILL MORRISON** who is in Oregon this week attending a wedding. **BOB BISHOP** led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Song leader **TOM HEALY** led the singing of three songs, supported by **JIM SANTORA** on the piano. The first song was “Yankee Doodle” for which Tom graded the group a C+. Next was “It’s a Grand Night for Singing” followed by “Volare.”

PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

DAVID began his announcements by recognizing those who volunteer to help make our meetings successful, as follows:

- Greeter, **CRAIG WATERS**

- Mentor, **HOLLISTER STURGIS**
 - Scribe, **KRIS BRATBERG**
 - Volunteer Advocate, **TROY JOHNSON**
 - Refreshments, **JOHN KNIGHT**
 - Recognition rotations, **DON ROTZIEN, FRED WU, SPIKE LIPSCHUTZ, CRAIG WALTERS, TOG PEARSON, BARRY RICHELSON, TROY JOHNSON**
- Additional important announcements were made by **DAVID**, assisted by **JOHN KAVANAGH** concerning the picnic:

- The 2024 RMA Banquet will be held on Wednesday November 13th at Innis Arden Country Club, from 10:30 until approximately 2:00 pm. The RMA is celebrating its 70th anniversary so this year's banquet will be a very special occasion. The venue is a newly renovated club in Old Greenwich and should be a big improvement, especially with plenty of parking available and a new sound system. Both spouses of RMA members and widows of deceased members are invited. Members are required to wear jacket and ties to this event.

- The 2024 RMA Picnic will be held **Thursday** (not Wednesday, the usual day), September 12th at Tod's Point. Members are invited to bring their spouses and friends. There will be a \$15.00 per person charge for all people attending. According to RMA tradition, the bar will open at 10:30 am, and according to **JIM DEAN** that is only because authorities will not allow it to open at 10:00 am. ☺

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY REPORT

ARNOLD GORDON, began his report by sharing some particularly sad news about **JACK WEIR**, who suffered a severe stroke on Monday. **JACK** will be transferred from Greenwich Hospital to the Yale Hospital Stroke Unit as soon as a room is available. He is paralyzed on his left side from head to toe and is unable to speak well. He will probably never be able to walk again. As more information becomes available, it will be shared with the group. **ARNOLD** is maintaining contact with his wife, Lucy.

ARNOLD then mentioned an opportunity to enjoy a day at Greenwich Point Beach while building a sand sculpture with your friends and family, or just to

view the creations of others! The annual Town Sandblast Festival is on Saturday, June 29th from 10am to 1pm. A valid park pass is required for entry if you want to participate; bring your own shovel, sculpting tools and equipment. Judges will circulate beginning at 12 p.m. to view sculptures.

June 1 through November 30 is the official hurricane season for this region and with extreme weather events becoming more of a concern, it pays to think about how to prepare for and handle a storm situation. The Town Emergency Management Department has created a very useful set of recommendations: <https://www.greenwichct.gov/2635/Hurricane-Preparedness>

There are serious shortages of blood faced by the American Red Cross and it affects us here in Greenwich. For those of you able to donate, there will be an annual Interfaith Blood Drive this coming Saturday, June 15th, at the same place we meet, here at the First Presbyterian Church. The drive is from 8 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. This effort can help save lives locally and is a volunteer opportunity of great importance and satisfaction.

Prior to introducing **LARRY DeVAN**, today's jokester, **ARNOLD** inflicted some of his usual verbal pain. Examples of some modern units of measurement:

1. 2000 Pounds of Chinese soup = Won ton
2. Time between slipping on a peel and smacking the pavement = 1 bananosecond
3. Half of a large intestine = 1 semicolon

And some clever put downs by a couple of famous politicians:

- Lady Astor to Churchill: "Winston, if you were my husband, I should flavor your coffee with poison." His reply: "Madam, if I were your husband, I should drink it."
- Lyndon Johnson on Gerald Ford: "Jerry Ford is a nice guy, but he played too much football with his helmet off. He is so dumb he can't fart and chew gum at the same time."

DAVID then added his own quip, recalling a story about Lady Astor telling Churchill that he was drunk. Churchill responded by saying, "Yes madam, I am, but in the morning I will wake up sober.....and you will still be ugly!"

This week's Jokester **LARRY DEVAN** shared the following:

- The police came by our house last week to complain that our dogs were chasing people on bikes, I told the officer there had to be a mistake; our dogs don't even have bikes!
- The other evening, I returned home from the office and told my wife that I had seen a deer on the way to work. Without missing a beat, she asked me how I could tell where the deer was heading!
- The girl I have been seeing lately said she missed me. Normally that would be good news. Unfortunately, she was reloading when she said it!
- A woman calls this guy on the phone and reams him out because she suspects that he's the unnamed person her boyfriend says has been trash talking about her. The guy professes his innocence and say he wants to ask her a few questions: Did your boyfriend say I told him that you are dumber than dirt? She replies - no, I don't think he said anything like that. Well then, did he say that I told him you were an insufferable bitch? She said - no, I'm pretty sure he didn't mention the person using the "B" word. Then, I'm sure he must have said I called you a gold-digging bimbo. Once again, the woman demurred. The guy says to the woman, "well, if what you just told me is true, the person you are looking for couldn't have been me!"
- Which knight invented King Arthur's round table? Sir Cumference!
- What do sprinters eat before a race? Nothing...they fast!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer **JEFF JUNKER** gave a brief update on annual dues collection. There are still 98 members who have yet to pay. Emails will go out to them this week as a reminder.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: **PETER STERN**, Membership Chairman, gave the head count: 79 in person and 5 attending via Zoom, as counted by **TOG PEARSON**. **PETER** announced four birthdays for the week. They are **GEORGE DIPPY**, 90; **MICHAEL AMBROSINO**, 79; **PETER JOYCE**, 85; and **PAUL KEELER**, 80. The group sang a lively rendition of "Happy Birthday" to all four fellows with **JIM SANTORA** on the piano. **PETER** announced that **HORST TEBBE** has returned from a trip to Denver.

VISITING: PAT MacCARTHY informed the group that that fellow RMA member **BOB PHILLIPS** had a recent fall and broke three ribs. Although **BOB** is ambulatory, he will likely attend the next few meetings via Zoom. **BOB'S** email for those who would like to wish him a speedy recovery is phillipsro2@aol.com. **PAT** will provide additional information as he learns more.

SPEAKER PROGRAM

STEVE BOIES provided an overview of this week's program. The format will be an interview of veteran sportswriter Gary Myers by Jim Campbell, the host of Business Talk, with Jim Campbell on WGCH 1490 AM, Greenwich, CT. Many of you will remember Jim's talk three years ago when he discussed "Madoff Talks," his well-researched book about Bernie Madoff. Jim will interview Gary Myers about his most recent book: "Once a Giant: A Story of Victory, Tragedy and Life After Football," the story of the NY Giants team that won the Super Bowl in 1986. In his book, Myers reveals the impact that playing football has had on the post-career lives of the 1986 Giants, who are now in their 50s, 60s, and 70s. Many of these stories are funny and heartwarming, but some are heart breaking. If you want to know more about Bill Parcells, Lawrence Taylor and Phil Simms, **STEVE** told us to be sure to stick around for this program.

BOB RIMMER provided an overview of next week's speaker, Larry Kantor, who will talk on "Prospects for the Economy and Inflation, and What it means for the Fed and Financial Markets." Larry has presented to the RMA on eight previous occasions and has received widespread praise for his clear, concise and comprehensive views on national issues from an economist's perspective. He is currently an operating partner at Atlas Merchant Capital, a private equity firm. He was a 2016 Advanced Leadership Institute fellow at Harvard University following his retirement as managing director and global head of research at Barclays.

SPECIAL EVENTS

ALAN WEYL provided an overview of upcoming Special Events, beginning with the Aqueduct Race Track trip. It is scheduled for June 27th, 2024.

Transportation by bus has been arranged. The bus should be boarded at the St. Paul's Church parking lot in Riverside by 11:00 am. The bus will return to Riverside after the day's last race at approximately 5:00 pm. The cost of the trip is \$115.00 payable by check to the RMA. Coordinator for the trip is **TOM HEALY** (retiredtjh@gmail.com). The price includes a three-and-a-half-hour buffet, excluding beverages. Food may not be brought into Aqueduct. The Resorts World Casino is adjacent to the track (walk through) and has slot and electronic gaming machines, but does not have live gaming tables. Dress code is neat casual attire, no cargo shorts, T-shirts, halter/midriff tops, athletic wear, frayed or torn jeans or sneakers/tennis shoes.

Caramoor Jazz Day is June 27th and begins at 12:30 pm and runs all afternoon. There will be a fellowship picnic lunch (cost paid by member). Food and drink will be available for purchase at the event but attendees are allowed to bring their own food and beverages. The live performances throughout the afternoon are presented in collaboration with Jazz at Lincoln Center. The headliner for the evening's performance (additional ticket required) is Matthew Whitaker. Daytime-only general admission tickets are available for purchase for \$65.00. Look for more information to be posted soon.

Attending Grand Slam Tennis at the US Open will take place on Thursday August 22nd at the National Tennis Center in Flushing Queens. The event is free if you sign up for a FREE FAN WEEK PASS @usopen.org. More information will be provided at future meetings.

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

RMA TECH DISCUSSION GROUP: JOHN REESE, the leader, announced that a Zoom meeting will be held next Wednesday, June 19th from 2:00 - 3:00 pm. John maintains an email address list of all those who have participated in the past. Those members who would like to be added to the list and participate should email **JOHN** at jreese@validea.com. The discussions cover many topics on the use of computers and technology with a particular focus on Generative AI.

GOLF: ANDRE MAZUREK provided the details of the golf outing which occurred this past Tuesday at Griffith E. Harris Golf Course in Greenwich,

teeing off at 8:00 am. Longest drive on #8 was **JIM BOARDMAN**. Closest to the pin: on #5 **TOM HEALY**, on #7 **TONY FITZPATRICK**, on #15 **RICH BARTHOLOMEW**

Lowest scores:

90 - **PETER TUNLEY** and **RICH BARTHOLOMEW**

91 - **TONY FITZPATRICK**

94 - **TOM HEALY**

Special achievement: **TONY COCCHI** birdied hole #9 with a 50-foot putt.

BRIDGE: **ANDRE MAZUREK** provided details on the games that were played on Wednesday, June 5th at the Greenwich Library at 12:30 pm. For information on future games please reach out to **ANDRE** at azurek.a.j@gmail.com.

1. **JOHN FEBLES** 4,080
2. **STEVE SHAPIRO** 2,793
3. **ANDRE MAZUREK** 2,588
4. **BRUNO SCHRAGE** 2,520
5. **ED MASTOLONI** 2,340
6. **CHARLIE LAND** 2,320
7. **TONY COCCHI** 2,220
8. **RON FRIEDMAN** 2,010
9. **JOHN RYAN** 1,936

There were 2 slams bid and made. **ANDRE MAZUREK** and **JOHN FEBLES** made a doubled slam in 6 hearts worth 1,540 points. **ANDRE** and **BRUNO SCHRAGE** made a slam in 6 spades worth 1010 points. There were 9 players, 4 at one table and 5 at the other. The table for 5 played 20 boards, with some of the players playing 20 boards. The table for 4 played 18 boards. Their score was increased to reflect the smaller number of boards played, but this did not affect the standings. **JOHN FEBLES** played only 15 boards and still managed to get the highest score. **ANDRE** and **STEVE** played 20 boards and their scores were reduced by 25%. Next time the table with 5 players will play 4 decks with each player.

PICKLEBALL: **PAT MacCARTHY** reminded the group that RMA pickleball takes place twice a week at Christiano Park off Holly Hill Lane on Mondays from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm and on Thursdays from 9:00 - 11:00 am, weather

permitting. To find the park input, 28 Lyon Avenue, Greenwich into your GPS. Email **PAT** at pmacCarthy415@gmail.com for further details.

SPEAKER PROGRAM

STEVE BOIES introduced today's speaker, Gary Myers, author of "Once a Giant: A Story of Victory, Tragedy, and Life After Football." **STEVE** also introduced local radio host Jim Campbell who interviewed Gary Myers during the presentation. Jim is the host of *Business Talk with Jim Campbell* on WGCH, 1490 AM, Greenwich, CT. Myers's book details the brotherhood formed by the 1986 Giants during the season that culminated in their winning Super Bowl XXI. What makes this brotherhood unique, is that nearly 40 years later the bond remains as strong as ever. The presentation began with a video showing highlights from Super Bowl XXI in which the Giants overcame a 10-9 halftime deficit and scored 30 second-half points while allowing the Denver Broncos to score only 10 more. In addition to strong defense, Giants' QB Phil Simms had an 88% pass completion percentage allowing the Giants to defeat the Broncos by a final score of 39-20.

Myers began by explaining why he decided to write the book now, so many years later. It wasn't about the game but about the players and their relationships over time since the '86 season. Many of the stories in the book are tragic with some players suffering from injuries, including traumatic head injury, drug addiction and depression. But many of the stories are also heart-warming and uplifting. Ironically, Myers was covering the Dallas Cowboys during the 1986 season, but before moving to Dallas he had covered the Giants while a reporter for the Daily News in New York. During those years he had developed close relationships with a number of the Giants players, including quarterback Phil Simms. Myers has written a total of six books, but the latest is his favorite and the one he feels is the most important. Jim Campbell commented that the book was really more of a human-interest story than a football story and asked Myers to elaborate on that theme. Myers answered by first talking about Giants tight end Mark Bavaro who played with the team from 1985-1990 before moving to the Browns and Eagles. Bavaro was known to be a very tough guy even by NFL standards. He once stayed in a game after breaking his jaw. During the Covid pandemic he contracted Long Covid, was very sick and was hospitalized. His personal view is that the

traumatic head injuries he suffered as a football player caused the virus to attack his brain more than it would have otherwise and he suffered because of it. He became anxious, paranoid and depressed and considered suicide. Several of his friends from football had committed suicide including Junior Seau. Myers explained how Bavaro knew intellectually that he could recover from COVID, but emotionally he wasn't so sure. Ultimately, he did recover but only with the help and support of his teammates, physicians, the right medicine and psychiatric help.

A highlight of Myers's presentation was talking about head coach Bill Parcells who has provided a total of approximately \$4 million of his own money to help players in need, including those from the 1986 team. Parcells believes that there are many factors why players suffered more head injuries back then, including less advanced protective helmets, and the culture of practicing, sometimes twice a day, with full speed contact and hard hitting, encouraged by him and the other coaches during practice. This culture created a winning team and was embraced by the players, but Parcells believes he also played a role in creating it, which contributed to the injuries suffered by his players. He has been very generous in providing financial support to those players who have not had the financial success that he has enjoyed, many of whom lost their health insurance just a couple of years after leaving the NFL.

Campbell then shifted the discussion to coach Bill Belichick, who was the Giants' defensive coordinator under head coach Parcells before heading to New England and winning six Super Bowls with the Patriots, the most ever for a head coach. Campbell asked Myers who he felt helped the other more, Parcells or Belichick. Myers acknowledged it was a tough question to answer and said Belichick was in a difficult position while with the Giants because Parcells also was a defensive coordinator before becoming a head coach. He also often gets asked a similar question: did Brady help Belichick win more than he helped Brady during their years together in New England. Myers felt certain that Brady's seventh Super Bowl win in Tampa without Belichick is a huge motivator for Belichick in deciding whether he will ever coach again in the NFL. Myers is confident that Belichick will be an NFL head coach next season. Additionally, Belichick is only 15 victories shy of Don Shulas' record

of winningest coach in NFL history and that motivates him to come back as well.

Here are highlights on some additional questions.

Campbell: The Giants and Jets are both in transitional years. What's your perspective? Myers: The key to the Giants season will be QB Jones. If he has a good year the Giants will do well and he will remain with the Giants. If not, he will be gone by the end of the season. The key to the Jets season is Aaron Rogers. If he is healthy and plays like the Rogers we know, the Jets have a good roster and they will win a lot of games and make a playoff run. If Rogers is not healthy, it won't be good for the Jets.

Campbell: Who is your favorite player from the Giants 1986 team?

Myers: Lawrence Taylor is the most "mystifying," because who knows how good he could have been if only he had taken better care of himself. He is already widely considered to be the best defensive player ever and perhaps he could have been even better. Phil Simms has been a close friend of Myers since he began covering the Giants so he is biased when answering the question of his favorite player.

Question from the audience: Please share your view of Belichick's departure from New England. Myers: Belichick was both head coach and general manager at New England. That's a lot of control over the team and owner Kraft wanted some of that control back. While it is hard for a coach to give up all that control Belichick has said he is willing to be just head coach. That was probably more of a signal to other potential franchises considering him for the head coach job than it was directed at the Patriots and Kraft.

Question from audience: How has the money in the NFL changed since 1986?

Myers: The change has been dramatic. In 1993, Lawrence Taylor's last year, his salary was \$2.3 million. Today, a player of his caliber would make many times that amount and might even have the stadium named after him!

Another data point cited was that in 1991, Tim Mara sold 50% of the NY Giants franchise for \$75 million. Today the franchise is worth about \$6 billion.

Question from the audience: How is the NFL doing to protect players from traumatic head injury? Myers: A lot of progress has been made and a lot has been learned, including how dangerous it is for players to sustain successive concussions. Player awareness has also improved dramatically. Before players

didn't even think about how football could injure their brains with consequences long after they stopped playing, but today they do. Practice has changed significantly and today players don't have full contact during practice, so the number of hard hits they sustain during their careers has been significantly reduced. Some players even wear extra padding on the outside of their already improved helmets during practice and this year we may see some wearing this additional padding during games. Football is inherently a violent sport and that can't change. Players are aware of the dangers and choose to play the sport. No one forces them to play.

The full presentation can be viewed by going to the RMA website at <https://greenwichtma.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.greenwichtma.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**.

Retired Men’s Association of Greenwich, Inc. · 1 West Putnam Avenue ·
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-1:00 pm	Pickleball	Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com Michael LaGamma– mdlgamma@optonline.net
Tuesdays	9:30 am	RMA Golf, the Griff Golf Course, Greenwich	Joe Mancinelli - jlmanc@optonline.net
Tuesdays	Resumes in Fall	Platform (paddle) tennis	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	Ron Murray - mitmurray@aol.com
Thursdays	9:00 am	RMA Walking	Tad Larrabee - tadlarra@optonline.net Jeff Junker - jjunker@optonline.net
Thursdays	9:00-11:00 am	Pickleball	Pat MacCarthy – pmacCarthy415@gmail.com Michael LaGamma – mdlgamma@optonline.net
Friday	1:30-3:00 pm	Indoor Tennis	Andre Mazurek - Mazurek.a.j@gmail.com

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