



Darien Men's Association

Newsletter

www.DarienDMA.org

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President's Message

Two hundred and fifty years ago this spring, the Second Continental Congress was engaged in hearty and thoughtful debate about what the American colonies would choose to be. The Congress was made up of ordinary citizens, though some were involved in local elected politics. Yet it was largely an association of reasonable men — fewer than 60 — including lawyers, doctors, merchants, soldiers, farmers and plantation owners. This Congress, an association of citizens, grew from the Committees of Correspondence, an association that shared news of events among the colonies.

As we learned from **John Blankley's** presentation on November 12, 2025, Alexis de Tocqueville, an enthusiastic observer of this young democracy, would visit the United States in 1830-1831 to deepen his understanding of this marvel of representative democracy. Among the observations de Tocqueville made in his two-volume *Democracy in America* was his recognition of the unique role played by voluntary associations.

He viewed voluntary associations as essential to American democracy, describing them as "laboratories of democracy" that empower citizens and prevent "gentle despotism" by the state. In *Democracy in America*, he argued that because individuals are weak, they must collaborate to achieve common goals, making the "art of association" a vital "mother science" (i.e., the science of association is the mother science, upon which the progress of all the others depends).

He suggested that while European nations rely on the government or wealthy elites to act, Americans form voluntary groups to solve problems, limiting reliance on — and the power of — the state. He also felt that associations reduced individualism and fragmentation in democratic societies, bringing citizens together to address shared concerns, thereby enhancing equality among citizens.

The DMA is an example of a civic association. We aim to bring together a broad cross section of the local community to discuss, learn, debate and challenge understanding of issues large and small, and our experience is that we achieve that aim.

Twenty five years ago, Robert Putnam in his seminal work, *Bowling Alone*, argues that American civic engagement has plummeted since the 1960s, transitioning from a "joiner" society to an isolated one. He observes a sharp decline in face-to-face

participation in associations reducing "social capital — the trust, cooperation and social networks that strengthen democracy.

Putnam missed us. Fifty years ago this fall, Darien's senior men of all classes and experiences joined together to create an organization to strengthen social capital in our community to serve the interests of, and enhance the community for, all its members. We made it through the 1960s, during which Putnam was lamenting the loss of civic engagement; we have grown in membership, service, relevance and social engagement — and have even revived bowling together!

We shouldn't lose sight of our success within our fellowship of men and our contribution to the community. We get better every year in content, debate, good nature, collegiality and community service. And it still happens strictly as a volunteer effort — huge on spirit, light on structure.

So as we celebrate this semiquincentennial year, we should stand proud that we, on a local level, actually embody a precious role in the quest to build a more perfect union.

Ric Grefé
2025-2026 DMA President

Editor's Farewell Message

This issue of the *DMA Newsletter* is my last as editor. It has been a labor of love.

Every editor has left his personal stamp on this publication. It has evolved in the hands of the past few editors from a true newsletter to more of a magazine, focusing on informing members about past events and leaving announcements of coming attractions to the DMA website and to *This Week at DMA*, published admirably each week by **Bryan Hooper**.

The DMA's membership size and number of members actively participating in DMA events have grown significantly. Therefore, in my role as Director of Communications, I have worked with DMA President **Ric Grefé** and other members of the board to begin to devise a unified communications strategy utilizing the newsletter, the website, *This Week at DMA*, eblasts and announcements at general meetings. This work needs to continue, particularly as our active members are increasingly proficient with all forms of electronic communications.

As I leave, I want to thank a few people without whose help I could never have performed the role of editor. First, to my immediate predecessors **Tom Igoe** and **Mark Nunan**, thank you for giving me a strong platform to build from and for guidance when I needed it. Next, I thank former and current presidents **Frank DeLeo** and Ric Grefé, who responded to my suggestions, large and small, with great insight — and patience. Next, I extend appreciation to **Harry Bergen, Chet Cobb, Jerry Crowley, Jack Dearie, Frank DeLeo, Frank Gallagher, Lorry** and **Fred Given, Greg Glashan, Susan Helms, Tom Igoe, Bob McGroarty, Marilyn Parker, Charles Salmans, Jan Selkowitz, Joe Spain** and **Alec Wiggin**, who provided the lion's share of photographs — and Commish **Tom Lom** for news and photos of the Bowling Group — that I was able to include in the newsletter and website over the past two years. I thank the First Vice Presidents, **Doug Bora** this year and Ric Grefé before that, for providing content about speakers that I previously included in the newsletter but have more recently just posted to the website — and for their patience with my insistent nit edits and fact-checks. I appreciate Membership chair **Lee Morrison** and DMA Cares head **George Gilliam** for providing information included in the New Members and In Memoriam sections of the newsletter. Last and definitely not least, I extend my gratitude to our contributing editor, **Joyce Meurer**. As a professional editor, she assists major corporations with their shareholder communications but generously contributes her invaluable assistance to the DMA. Without it, there would have been less elegant phrasing and far more typographical, grammatical and factual errors, especially in my first issues after I took on the role.

I hope you enjoyed reading the newsletter during my two-year tenure. If not, please pass on your suggestions for improvement to my successor, **Chris Conley**, in whose capable hands I leave this role.

Mike Kadish
2025-2026 DMA Director of Communications

New Members

The DMA hosted a New Member Coffee event before the general meeting on April 15. New members were welcomed, introduced to the DMA's leadership, and informed about our activities and volunteer opportunities. Because the weather was perfect — at last — we met outdoors in the DCA's courtyard. Here are photos of the event.



More than a dozen new members mingle with DMA officers at the New Member Coffee. Photo by Sam Bridges



*Membership heads **Lee Morrison** and **Wim Jessup**, along with This Week at DMA editor **Bryan Hooper**, inform new members about the DMA. Photo by Mike Kadish*

Since the last issue, the following eight members have joined the DMA.

Colin Dunne



Colin Dunne spent most of his childhood just a few miles down I-95 in Rye, N.Y. Immediately upon graduating from Williams College in 1977, he tried out life as a teacher and coach at Saint Andrew's School, a boarding school in Delaware. However, it did not take long for him to move back north to New York City, where he pursued an M.B.A. at New York University at night while working in economic and financial research during the day. Eventually, he took research, trading and risk management stints at Becker Paribas, J.P. Morgan, Credit Suisse and post-crisis AIG.

While working in New York, Colin moved to Fairfield County, where he ultimately met his wife Meredith. The two married in 1988 and moved to the Noroton Bay area of Darien. In due course, they raised three children — Kevin, Thomas and Julia — moving two more times within town as more bedrooms were needed. Once their nest emptied, Colin and Meredith moved to Rowayton and adopted a now six-year-old Australian cattle dog, Gordon. Since then, they have also welcomed their two-year-old grandson Walter.

Colin is a racquets member at Wee Burn Country Club and plays on its 60+ Fairfield County Tennis Team in the summer. On many summer evenings, Colin and Meredith can be found picnicking on their powerboat or sneaking in nine holes at the Silvermine Golf Club. They also own a condominium in Vermont, which is the family rendezvous point for skiing in the winter and golf in the summer.

Gil Kernan



Gil Kernan is an executive and entrepreneur with a track record of building and leading financially disciplined, growth-oriented organizations. He brings deep experience in governance, risk management and strategic execution across corporate, nonprofit and family enterprises.

A four-time elected treasurer of Rowayton, he is responsible for financial oversight, governance and internal controls for the town. He was part of the core leadership team that scaled SoundView Technology Group from \$4 million to \$200 million in revenue, holding P&L responsibility while overseeing compliance, risk management and key institutional relationships. Today, he works with and advises organizations on strengthening their financial structure, governance and operational efficiency.

Gil and his wife Kim, who co-owned the House of Needlepoint store in Darien for 15 years, lived in Darien from 1992 to 2010 and now live in Rowayton. Gil coached his son Peter's Little League baseball and youth hockey teams and his daughter Avery's basketball team. Peter now lives in Hood River, Ore., with his wife and two young children and Avery lives in Seattle, Wash.

Gil was a longtime member of the Darien Boat Club. Even after moving from Darien, he has been a volunteer for the Darien Land Trust, chainsaw in hand to help with cleanups after storms.

Buddy Kretzman



Robert (Buddy) Kretzman and his wife Clare have been married for 43 years and recently moved from North Stamford to Darien. They have been Connecticut residents since the early 1980s, with a brief stint in Chicago for Buddy's career. They have two adult sons: Matthew, who lives in Darien with his wife and three children, ages nine, eight and four; and Christopher, who lives in New Canaan with his wife and daughter Bryce, age three.

Buddy is blessed to be able to spend much of his time with family, enjoying their activities, watching Darien junior football, travel soccer, town basketball, baseball and cheerleading. Buddy and Clare have a small house on Long Island, where they spend much of their summer. They walked the Camino de Santiago, hiked in the national parks in Utah and Colorado, and made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, fortunately before the recent hostilities.

Prior to Buddy's retirement in 2013, he served as the chief legal and administrative officer of Revlon, with responsibility for global legal, human resources, compliance, security, real estate and facilities, and licensing areas. After retirement, he served on Revlon's board of directors. He graduated from St. John's University in 1974 and from St. John's University School of Law in 1977.

After retiring, Buddy took numerous courses at Fairfield University, focusing primarily on religious studies across numerous faith traditions. He is a certified spiritual director and supervisor serving at the Murphy Center for Ignatian Spirituality at Fairfield University and chairs the Murphy Center's advisory board.

Buddy also serves on the board of directors of Food Rescue US, a nonprofit organization that secures fresh food from restaurants and food stores and uses unique software applications to efficiently distribute it to food banks and homeless shelters nationally. Its dual mission is to address food insecurity and mitigate the environmental impact of food waste.

Tom MacDonald



Thomas (Tom) MacDonald was born and raised in Wisconsin. He obtained his undergraduate degree (B.S. in economics and mathematics) and law degree from the University of Wisconsin. Following his graduation from law school in 1981, Tom practiced corporate and securities law in Minneapolis for eight years and served on the board of directors of Golden American Life Insurance Company, an issuer of mutual fund-backed variable annuities. In 1989, Tom joined Seward & Kissel, a midsized law firm in New York City. He represented hedge funds, mutual funds and other clients in the money management industry. For health reasons, Tom retired from the firm and from the practice of law in 2002, although he continued to consult for the firm and former clients for some time after that.

After joining Seward & Kissel, Tom moved from Minnesota to Darien with his wife Debra and their two children, Kimberly and David, then ages 5 and 1, respectively. Tom was active in coaching youth basketball and football. He spent 10 years on the board of directors of the Darien Junior Football League. He helped to found the Fairfield County Football League and served on its board of directors. Tom also volunteered for At Home in Darien. He and his family were longtime members of the Middlesex Club and St. Thomas More Parish.

In 2017, Tom and Deb moved from Darien to a condominium in downtown Stamford. Tom had been an active squash player, runner, cyclist and downhill skier but now enjoys more sedate activities such as reading and spending time with his wife and their two grandchildren. With Deb having recently retired from Stamford Hospital, Tom and she now plan to spend time traveling.

Jim Sullivan



Jim Sullivan and his wife Michelle have lived in Darien for 35 years. They raised three sons, all of whom attended Darien public schools. Two of their sons are married, and Jim and Michelle have two grandchildren with another due in August. Their third son is single and lives in Palo Alto, Calif.

Jim coached numerous town baseball and basketball teams while his boys were in school. He and his family have been active parishioners at St. Thomas More Parish, where he served for many years on the Parish Finance Council and as its chair for his last three years on the Council. He was a member of the Church Building Committee during a two-year total renovation and expansion and assisted in budgeting, fundraising and oversight for the project. In addition, he served on earlier Building Committees overseeing the renovation of the parish school building and multipurpose building. Jim was active in the parish youth group, working on several Appalachia home building projects, where funds were

raised and high school students and parents would travel to Appalachia to build homes for needy families. He continues to volunteer with meal preparation for the needy at the New Covenant House in Stamford.

He graduated from Fairfield University with a degree in finance. His career began in 1980 at NBC News at 30 Rockefeller Plaza in Manhattan. His career continued at a variety of media companies, culminating at a private equity firm, Triumph Holdings, LLC, where the team acquired, operated and sold media companies. Jim is an avid golfer and skier, enjoys running and working out, and is a novice woodworker.

Bill Waters



William (Bill) Waters was born and raised in Glen Ridge, N.J., attended North Carolina State University and graduated with a double major in accounting and business administration. Bill is a CPA and retired partner of Berdon LLP in New York City, specializing in commercial real estate.

He and his wife Ginny, a former professor of Japanese studies, have one daughter, Jessica, and a six-year-old grandson.

Bill and Ginny seem to have made a hobby of moving from house to house in the New York metropolitan area — from New Jersey to Rye, Manhattan, Greenwich and, since 2020, Rowayton. The Rowayton/Darien/Norwalk location is by far his favorite due to the proximity and easy access to shopping, restaurants, parks, the seaside and Silvermine Golf Club, where he loves to meet up with people and enjoy a round of golf.

Mark Wright



Mark Wright has lived in the Noroton Bay area of Darien since 1997. He received a B.A. degree from Northwestern University and an M.B.A. from Vanderbilt University.

He describes himself as a serial venture capital-backed software-as-a-service technology entrepreneur. He served as CEO of public and private companies. Mark is one of a handful of entrepreneurs who put together the essential technical and data analytics framework to enable digital media and online shopping and retailing. Immediately before retiring in the fall of

2025, he headed up the digital technology and Media M&A strategic advisory practice of a digital consulting firm.

His wife Heather is a pastor at Stanwich Church in Greenwich. Mark and Heather have three adult children, all of whom attended elementary, middle and high school in Darien. Mark's interests include hiking, current events and next-generation digital/data analytics technology.

Steve Yavner



After 20 years in Darien — where two of his four children came up through the public schools — **Steve Yavner** recently made the short move to Norwalk, staying deeply rooted in the community he loves. He remains an active member of both the Darien Chamber of Commerce, the Darien Community Association and the Darien YMCA.

Steve is the founder of Spark Your College Story, Inc., where he is a college advisor, essay coach and SAT/ACT tutor, helping students find and tell the stories that get them into college. Three afternoons a week, you'll find him at the Boys & Girls Club of Greenwich, working one-on-one with middle and high school students across a wide range of subjects — because he believes every student deserves a great mentor.

Before launching Spark Your College Story, Steve built a remarkable career in media and education. He spent nine years as a sports anchor and reporter in West Palm Beach and at CNN in Atlanta, ran the CBS newsroom in Miami for eight years, and was an executive producer in Boston and Philadelphia. He later brought that real-world experience into the classroom, teaching journalism and communications for 12 years at the University of Miami, Fairfield University and Central Connecticut State University.

Steve and his wife Phyllis — a psychotherapist with a private practice in Darien — are the proud parents of Christopher, Emily, Caroline and Evan and grandparents to grandson Jack. A native of Brookline, Mass., Steve spends his downtime on the golf course or out on the water on board his boat, Phyllisity.

In Memoriam

Peter Anker



Peter Louis Anker (born May 14, 1935) passed away at his home in Darien on February 23, surrounded by family. As his name suggests, Peter was a strong and sturdy support for all who knew him. For his family, he was a warm, loving and supportive rock on which multiple generations grew and prospered. Professionally, his wise counsel and advice in the metals and mining industry helped build one of America's premier investment banks.

A woodworker all his life, he knew the importance of a sturdy base and strong connections. Like the best cabinetmakers, he made joints to give a piece of furniture or cabinet beauty and function and joined its parts for life. With family, friends and colleagues, his wisdom, decency, and humor were the mortices that held them together.

He was born into an extended Jewish family in Königsberg, Germany, in 1935. He and his parents Dorothea and Hans were forced to flee their home and family in 1939 for safety in England first and then to the United States in 1940. He grew up in Springfield, Ill., where he, his parents and his sister Carole Jean built a new life.

Peter graduated from Springfield High School in 1953 and was one of very few members of his high school class to come East for college, attending Columbia University in New York City and graduating in 1957. While at Columbia, he studied English literature, skied in Canada and Vermont, and stood to see all the great Broadway musicals.

He never lost his love for reading, theater and New England, filling his bookshelves and Kindle, attending performances at and supporting Encores and the Goodspeed Opera House, and skiing and vacationing at his home in Vermont. Music and the arts were also constant throughout his life — classical music and the Great American Songbook always played in his house, car and workshop. Following in the footsteps of his father, who helped found the Springfield (now Illinois) Symphony, Peter was an active board member of the Stamford Symphony (now Orchestra Lumos) in Connecticut.

He received an M.B.A. from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 1961. He served in the U.S. Air Force on active duty between college and graduate school and in the reserves in France after being called up during the Berlin Wall crisis. He had a long and successful Wall Street career as a securities analyst in the metals industry, including at Smith Barney and First Boston, ultimately retiring as director of Equity Research at First Boston, before unretiring multiple times.

But Peter was much more than his impressive resume. His greatest achievements and joy were his family — his two sons, Philip, of Keston, England, and Kent of Pleasantville, N.Y., their wives Elizabeth and Patty, and his grandchildren Samuel, Lucy, G and Roan. He was a constant loving presence providing advice, encouragement and wisdom with distance never being an obstacle, regularly providing typed letters and phone calls. His home was a center of celebration, wine and chocolate (which he could not live without). He was a devoted brother to his sister Carole Jean Sternstein and her husband Jerry, and uncle to his nephew Matthew Sternstein, his niece Alexis Schwartz, and their families.

His great love was his wife Billie. Married for 33 years and best friends for years before that, they built a life together of family, joy, laughter, food and travel, and were constant companions. He became a beloved stepfather, grandfather and great-grandfather to Billie's four children, John, Chris, Tom and Karen, who brought them 11 grandchildren and their ever-growing number of great-grandchildren (now at seven). Peter is survived by his wife, children, grandchildren, great-children and his sister, brother-in-law, niece and nephew.

Craig Ferguson



Craig Marlow Ferguson, 88, a lifelong Darien resident, died peacefully on March 28, 2026, from complications related to Parkinson's disease. He was surrounded by his wife Linda and three children.

Born in Stamford on September 15, 1937, to James and Jessie Ferguson, Craig was the youngest of three sons. He was predeceased by his parents and his older brothers Bruce Lyons Ferguson and Thomas Donaldson Ferguson, his foster brother Peter Bodick, his nephew Bruce Wayne Ferguson and his nephew's wife Barbara Ferguson. Craig attended Stamford schools and graduated from Darien High School in 1955 and Colgate University in 1959. Craig began his insurance career with Childs & Wood in Chicago and New York before starting Craig M. Ferguson & Company in the early 1970s in New York. He was known among his clients and employees as an excellent problem solver and a generous and caring business owner. Craig and Linda raised their children in Darien.

Craig had a lot of hobbies and interests. He was an exceptional cook and loved nothing more than cooking at family holidays and gatherings, presenting guests with traditional English dishes. Favorites included standing rib roast, popovers and butter tarts. Craig was also an accomplished pianist and organist, self-taught as a youngster. He learned to play the pipe organ in his youth by dropping by St. John's Episcopal Church in Stamford after school and learning on the church organ. A real highlight was playing the organ at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. He managed the organ keyboards, pedalboard and stops with ease well into his 70s. Craig loved the natural world and backpacking in the White Mountains of New Hampshire with his children. He was a rosarian and could often be found tending to his 70 roses. It was a rare weekend that Craig wasn't on his tractor buzzing around his property. He also enjoyed playing squash and backgammon,

skiing and reading spy novels. He was a Lionel Train enthusiast who spent many years perfecting his O-gauge layout, which was western-themed with rustic scenery, steam locomotives, bridges and rugged terrain spanning an entire room in his basement. A new level was achieved the day he broke through a cement interior basement wall so that the train could have a proper tunnel. The "train room" was an enchanting place for the many children who visited.

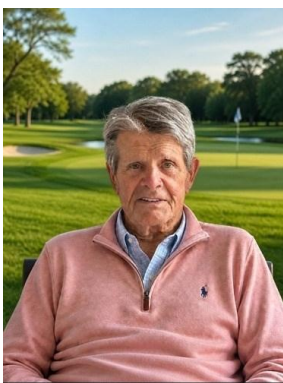
He was an active volunteer for most of his adult life. He volunteered at his alma mater, Colgate, in many capacities over the years and was awarded a Maroon Citation, an honor recognizing his record of service. Craig also served as chairman of the board of Miss Hall's School in Pittsfield, Mass. He served on the board of Wee Burn Country Club. He was on the vestry at St. John's Episcopal Church in Stamford, involved in the 1980s Canterbury Green project, which continues to benefit the church and the St. John's Community Foundation. He also served on Darien's Zoning Board of Appeals. He was a member of Saint Luke's Parish, Wee Burn Country Club and Lake Sunapee Yacht Club.

Craig was, above all, a family man. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Linda Stiles Ferguson, and his three children, Anne Foster (Dave), Bruce Ferguson (Pam) and Lynne Somerville (Scott), all of Darien. Also surviving are his nine grandchildren Elizabeth, Wells, Ellen, Katharine, Bruce, Peter, Doug, Andrew and Mimi and two sisters-in-law Barbara and Joanne Ferguson, as well as many nieces and nephews and their children. Some of Craig's happiest times were spent sharing family time at his beloved Lake Sunapee before a roaring fire or sitting on the deck surrounded by laughter and love. In Craig's passing, his family has lost a most remarkable and loved patriarch.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Craig's memory to Colgate University, P.O. Box 313, Canajoharie, NY 13317-0313. Donations will be directed to the Jessie Ferguson Endowed Scholarship Fund, created by Craig in honor of his mother.

The family wishes to thank Craig's caregivers, Joseph, Gina, Diane, Maria and Debbie.

James J. Fletcher



James J. Fletcher, a resident of Darien, passed away at age 88 on April 30, 2026, at Stamford Hospital. He was born to the late Maynard Fletcher and Clara Whalen Fletcher on June 28, 1937.

James graduated from St. Anselm's College in New Hampshire, earning his bachelor's degree. He then began his career by starting his own business, J.J. Fletcher Company, working as an insurance investigations agent. He was a longtime parishioner at St. Thomas More Parish in Darien as well as a member of the Darien Men's Association. James enjoyed golfing, playing handball, boating, country music, motorcycles and cars.

He is survived by his wife Barbara; one daughter, Jennifer Fletcher of Stamford; two brothers, David Fletcher and Paul Fletcher; two sisters, Clara Quintal and Patsy Jackson; and one cousin, William Morrison. He was predeceased by two brothers, Peter Fletcher and Thomas Fletcher.

Services will be private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Bridge of Life (<https://bridgeoflifeinternational.org>) in memory of James.

Chip Raymond



Charles V. Raymond, or Chip to his friends, passed away in Stamford Connecticut early Saturday morning, April 11, just shy of his 84th birthday. He is survived by his wife Jan; his sons Joshua and his wife Lisa, from Washington D.C., and Luke and his wife Briony, from Darien; and four grandchildren, Henry and Lucy (21), Rhys (12) and Vaughn (9).

Chip led an extraordinarily active life. He had a dynamic career of service to New York City and the world in government, non-profit management and foundations. He worked in senior positions for four New York City mayors including Mayors Lindsay, Beam, Koch and Dinkins. Early in his career he ran some of the first methadone maintenance programs in the country and helped reform the Willowbrook Psychiatric Hospital after a famous exposé was done by a young Geraldo Rivera on its abhorrent conditions. He finished his government career as the first ever Commissioner of the New York City Department of Homeless Services, addressing the City's homeless crisis.

After leaving government, he became the first managing director of the New York City Ballet. He remained an active patron of the Ballet right up to the end of his life. In the last 10 years of his career, he ran the Citigroup Foundation, where he helped provide seed funding for the first large-scale microfinance projects in some of the world's poorest countries. Outside of work, Chip was an avid sailor and competed in the Newport Bermuda race, the Marblehead Bermuda race, the Halifax race and multiple Vineyard races. He competed nationally in the Soling and Tempest classes. He spent years racing at Noroton Yacht Club in J-24s and Sonars with his family and friends. In later years, he served on New York Yacht Club's Model Committee, helping to maintain and restore the Club's world-famous ship model collection. He also cruised his own boat with Jan between Noroton and Newport almost every summer. Through all of that, during the last 21 years, Chip remained primarily focused on his family and especially his four grandchildren.

Donations in his honor can be made to Bowery Residents' Committee (BRC) (BRC.org). BRC is one of New York's most effective providers of services to unhoused people, and Chip served on its board of directors.

DMA Speakers Program

The following speakers made presentations to the DMA since the last issue of the newsletter:

- March 4 — **Jon Zagrodzky**, “New Developments: Managing Change in Darien’s Social Fabric”
- March 11 — **Gunnar Edelstein**, “The Tip of the Spear: What’s It Like to Be a Fighter Pilot on an Aircraft Carrier?”
- March 18 — **Brian Rolapp**, “Leading Golf into Its Next Chapter”
- March 25 — **Austin McChord**, “Transforming Norwalk’s Decommissioned Power Plant into One of the Northeast’s Most Creative Parks: Manresa Wilds”
- April 1 — **Jennifer Carcieri**, “Strengthening Our Community Together: The Impact of the Darien YMCA”
- April 8 — **Gov. Ned Lamont**, “The Challenges and Opportunities to Growing Connecticut’s Economy”
- April 15 — **Kostya Kennedy**, “The Ride: Paul Revere and the Night That Saved America”
- April 22 — **Greg Steinmetz**, “An American Rascal: How Jay Gould Built America’s Biggest Fortune”
- April 29 — **Ralph White**, “Getting Out of Saigon: How a 27-Year-Old Banker Saved 113 Vietnamese Civilians”
- May 6 — **Mike Chinoy**, “Taiwan: The World’s Most Dangerous Next Flashpoint?”

A summary of each of these presentations is available on the DMA website at [Speaker Announcements – Darien Men’s Association](#).



Doug Bora introduces First Selectman Jon Zagrodzky (left) and Gov. Ned Lamont (middle) at the April 8 meeting.

Social Events

The Social Events Committee plans and executes various activities from September through June, including the annual Holiday Party in December and picnic at Weed Beach in June.

The Social Events Committee hosted DMA's sixth annual concert of the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra's Brass Quintet at Saint Luke's Parish on April 14. Photographs of that event follow below.



*Social Events chair **Ted Helms** introduces the Quintet's leader. Photo by Susan Helms*



*DMA event coordinator **Jerry Crowley** furnished this photo of himself tending bar for DMA attendees.*



Lorry Given captured this shot of the Brass Quintet in full "swing."



Attendees line up to partake in the feast prepared by caterer **Carolyn Eddie**. Photo by Susan Helms



Photo by Jerry Crowley



The audience digs into dinner. Photo by Lorry Given



Norwalk Symphony Orchestra Executive Director **Sandra Miklave** congratulates DMA member **John Parker** for winning orchestra tickets for the 2026-2027 season. Photo by Marilyn Parker

ACTIVITIES

Updated information about Activity Groups' meeting times and events can be found by using the following links to the Activities section on the DMA website, [Activities – Darien Men's Association](#), or the DMA Calendar at dariendma@gmail.com.

Groups that will be active in May and June are:

- Book Group
- Bowling Group
- Community Service
- Cribbage Group
- Current Affairs Discussion Group
- Golf Group
- Happy Wanderers
- Hiking Group
- Investment Discussion Group
- New Wave Singers
- Pickleball Group
- Table Tennis Group
- TechTalk
- Woodworking

Photographs and reports of activities of the Bowling Group, Happy Wanderers and Hiking Group are included below. Additional information about other groups, including reports of the Bowling Group's weekly outings, is available on the website.

Bowling

Weekly reports of the Bowling Group's exploits are available on the DMA website at [Bowling – Darien Men's Association](#).

Commish **Tom Lom** took this photo of **Dave Smith** celebrating his personal best DMA game on April 3.



Happy Wanderers

March Madness Pool

New member **Dan Bumgardner** ran away with the top prize in the March Madness contest.

Here are the winners with their point totals and prize winnings:

| Place | Name | Points | Prize |
|-------|------------------------|--------|-------|
| 1 | Dan Bumgardner | 96 | \$100 |
| 2 | Fred Given | 85 | \$50 |
| 3 | Frank Gallagher | 78 | \$50 |
| 4 | John Parker | 76 | \$50 |
| 5 | Rick Agresta | 75 | \$50 |
| 5 | Jack Brewer | 75 | \$50 |
| 7 | Frank DeLeo | 72 | \$35 |

Here is a photo of contest winner Dan Bumgardner flanked by second place winner Fred Given (left) and contest manager **Greg Glashan** (right), with First Selectman **Jon Zagrodzky** and Gov. **Ned Lamont** photobombing in the background.



Roosevelt Island

On March 25, eighteen Wanderers were happy to experience comfortable and sunny weather during a wandering from one end of Roosevelt Island to the other. They enjoyed overhead views of the East River and Roosevelt Island from the tramway, as well as unique views of Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx from the island.

A highlight of the day was a memorable visit to the well-designed Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park at the southern end of Roosevelt Island. The well-landscaped park encompasses numerous open spaces culminating in an enormous plaza surrounded by large granite blocks. The park contains an impressive bust of President Roosevelt and a wall inscribed with excerpts from Roosevelt's famous Four Freedoms speech.

The wandering included viewings of the Cornell Tech Center buildings and historic structures such as the Smallpox Hospital ruins, the Strecker Memorial Laboratory, the Blackwell House and the Octagon Tower. The Wanderers also stopped at the cafe at the Bloomberg Center and enjoyed a well-deserved lunch at Granny Annie's Bar & Kitchen. They made a final stop at the lighthouse on the northern end of the island before taking the subway and Metro-North home.



Wanderers, led by **Lorry Given**, disembark from the tram. Photo by Fred Given



Wanderers enjoy another view from the tram station. Photo by Joe Spain



Photo by Lorry Given



Wanderers pose at the base of the lighthouse on the northern end of Roosevelt Island. Photo by Tom Igoe



Photo by Lorry Given



The Wanderers enjoy the view from the plaza. Photo by Lorry Given



Chet Cobb, David Mace, Tom Igoe and Joe Spain (left to right) at Four Freedoms State Park, standing in front of the wall containing excerpts from Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech. Photo furnished by Chet Cobb



Bill Waters, Chet Cobb, Tom Igoe and Charles Powis (left to right) pose to give photographer Joe Spain a great shot with Manhattan in the background.



*The Wanderers stroll on a path on Roosevelt Island.
Photo by Lorry Given*



Here is another view of the Wanderers in front of the lighthouse on Roosevelt Island. Photo by Chet Cobb

Manresa Wilds

On Thursday, April 23, 48 DMA members enjoyed a well-orchestrated tour of Manresa Wilds park described by **Austin McChord**, the park's founder, in his presentation to the DMA on March 25, 2026. The tour included the pristinely preserved interior of the former Norwalk Harbor Station power plant and a motorized wandering on ATVs through the forest and marsh on the waterfront property.

Highlights of the tour included a hands-on viewing of the plant's huge original turbines and other machinery on different levels of the plant and a steep climb on metal stairways to the roof of the plant to enjoy magnificent views of Long Island Sound and nearby islands and coastline. **Alex Muniz** of Manresa Wilds ably led the tour with assistance from DMA members **Doug Bora**, **Chet Cobb** and **Harry Bergen**.

The wandering also afforded the Wanderers the opportunity to walk along and enjoy picturesque views from the Manresa Wilds waterfront, where a beach is planned, and to explore on all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) the island's marsh and birch tree forests. DMA members **Peter Ritchey** and **Robin Hogen** ably guided the caravan of ATVs.

Many Wanderers met for lunch at the Silver Star Diner in Norwalk following the tour and happily shared observations about Manresa Wilds.

Photos of the wandering are shown below.



Wanderers tour the park in an ATV. Photo by Chet Cobb



The Wanderers pose in front of the power plant building. Photo by Chet Cobb



Wanderers traverse the park coastline. Photo by Chet Cobb



Tom Igoe grimaces as he guesses which switch to activate. 😊 Photo by Harry Bergen



Wanderers marvel at the control room. Photo by Harry Bergen



Tom Igoe's photo captures the view of the Sound from the plant's rooftop.



Harry Bergen seeks inspiration for humor in the plant's wiring closet. 😊 Photo by Tom Igoe

Hiking

The Hale and Hearty Hikers, emboldened by a pleasant sunny day, explored the sprawling grounds of Rockwood Hall in Pleasantville, N.Y., on April 9. This truly spectacular property, now a state park, was owned and improved at one point by William Rockefeller. The estate borders the Hudson River, affording sweeping views of the river, the Tappan Zee Bridge and the Palisades. The group topped off a wonderful morning with lunch at the Bridge View Tavern in Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. The following photographs were furnished by **Mike Kadish** except as otherwise noted.



The Hale and Hearty relax on the barren site of the razed former mansion.



The property offers a commanding view of the Tappan Zee Bridge.



The hikers admire a sprawling old sycamore.



*Hikers admire the view of the Hudson and the Palisades.
Photo by Lorry Given*



Eighteen trekkers enjoy a post-hike lunch at the Bridge View Tavern.

Pickleball

The photograph below, provided by **Tom Mullaney**, came in too late for the January-February issue of the *Newsletter*. With the advent of spring, it seems appropriate to include it in this issue. It shows **Jan Selkowitz** demonstrating that pickleball is not a non-contact sport by smashing the fence while chasing a **Bob Hughes** cross-court winner.



Jan Selkowitz joins the "Darien Parks and Wrecks Department."

Darien Men's Association Newsletter

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