

DMA Newsletter

[DMA website is www.DarienDMA.org](http://www.DarienDMA.org)

Darien Men's Association	January–February 2022
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President's Message

COVID-19 had not really had any personal impact on me until five days before Christmas. Sure, my wife Carol and I had been as inconvenienced as everyone else by getting vaccinated and boosted, by having to keep our distances and wear masks in stores, by being cautious about going to restaurants and by complying with the panoply of other restraints we were all under and patiently endured. But we had not been touched by the virus until my youngest grandchild tested positive, and we had to scrap our plans for a festive, family Christmas lunch of roast rib of beef and Yorkshire pudding. However, Zoom came to the rescue and helped the family get together – Rowayton, Westport and Hawaii! – to open some presents and play silly fun games.

So, we had to change plans, but we coped – just like we did in the DMA. As **Gary Banks** wrote for the March newsletter, “With everyone vaccinated, it looks like we’ve turned the corner – medically, psychologically and regulation wise.” We began our year of meetings on Zoom in September, and in November went into a hybrid mode, meeting at the DCA in person and welcoming members who joined us on Zoom from nearby locales, as well as from exotic resorts in Slovenia, Florida and Italy. Gary and **Mike Wheeler** allied to cope with the technological challenges posed by the new audio-visual system at the DCA, with noble assistance from **Steve McGeachy** of the DCA. In December, we reintroduced pastries and much-needed coffee service, and by the last meeting of December our attendance was split equally between those online and those in-person. We were bold enough to hold our annual Christmas Party at The Country Club of Darien and were elated that almost 120 people managed to attend the wonderful event (thanks to the hard work of **Jan Selkowitz** and **Tom Lom**). When you look back at the activities of the book club, the bowlers, the bridge players, the current affairs and investment discussions, the money matters meetings, the hikers, the wanderers, the woodworkers, the picklers – and the cribbage aficionados – and the bell ringers at Palmer’s, plus the efforts required to fulfil our incredible speaker program, then you know the DMA is alive, assertive and accomplished.

All the activities cited above are described at greater length elsewhere in this newsletter, and I want to give kudos not only to the contributors who wrote articles and provided photographs, but also to the members of the DMA who give of their time to produce our communications for this production and the other missives we send to members as needed. **Tom Igoe** is the editor and publisher of the bi-monthly newsletter and the weekly bulletin; **Joyce Meurer**, widow of **Ray Meurer**, is a contributing editor; **Charles Salmans** provides the speaker notes and **Harry Bergen** writes and edits bios of new members; **Art Baron** blasts out the emails and maintains the membership data list; and **Gary Banks** somehow keeps the website under control.

To date in this membership year, we have coped by adapting – but, alas! so has the virus, and the Omicron variant is proving the Yogi-ism that “It ain’t over ‘til it’s over.” As a result of the increase in positive cases in the past few weeks, we will suspend in-person meetings until the situation improves. However, be assured we shall continue to adapt as necessary and endeavor to recover the momentum gained by our tremendous efforts so far this year. At any other time, the activities our members arrange and participate in would be considered laudable for a group with an average age of nearly 80, but I consider it a major triumph of willpower and determination under our current trying conditions. Let’s keep it going, and keep having fun!

And, by the way, our grandson proved to be asymptomatic, and Carol and I enjoyed our dinner together with a very pleasant cabernet sauvignon to complement the roast beef!

Happy New Year to everyone!

Bryan Hooper

DMA Speakers, January–February 2022

Wednesday, January 5, 2022

Basil Hero, “The Mission of a Lifetime: The Men Who Went to the Moon”



Basil Hero is an award-winning former investigative reporter with NBC News television stations. For his book *The Mission of a Lifetime: Lessons from the Men Who Went to the Moon*, he interviewed the 12 remaining lunar explorers. They talk at length about the real “right stuff,” the true source of courage and leadership and the quiet patriotism that it took for them to risk their lives going to the moon. Their voyages led them to the most incredible discovery of all: our home planet and its precious place in the universe. They fear for earth’s future and offer sensible solutions to its mounting crises and the path to future space exploration.

Arranged by Charles Salmans

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

Mamundi Subhas, “What I learned about Ulysses S. Grant by being a Guide at his Tomb”



Mamundi Subhas, a senior vice president at Neuberger Berman, became a volunteer guide at Grant’s Tomb on the west side of Manhattan, where he has now spent more than 500 hours interacting with visitors. In his talk, Mamundi will discuss 11 lessons he learned from studying the life of General Ulysses S. Grant. Additionally, his research casts doubt on biographies that claimed General Grant had problems with alcohol. This seemed incongruous with the character of the man and led Mamundi to research Grant’s symptoms and then to write an article in the August 2020 issue of *Civil War News*. What seemed to observers at the time to be

Grant’s “drunken behaviors” were probably instead symptoms characteristic of those

who suffer from migraine headaches. Mamundi will also provide a guide to the architecture of Grant's Tomb, which is a gem.

Arranged by Harry Bergen

Wednesday, January 19, 2022

Craig Flaherty, "Water Management and Flood Mitigation in Darien"



Darien experienced extensive flooding in 2021. **Craig Flaherty** has been an advisor to Darien government on water management, serving as chairman of Darien's Sewer Commission and advising on flood mitigation strategy.

Craig is president, senior engineer and principal at the firm of Redniss & Mead in Stamford. He graduated with a B.S. in civil engineering from Lehigh University.

Arranged by Gary Banks

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

Mark Albertson, "George Washington's 1796 Farewell Address"



Mark Albertson, who is well known to DMA members as an entertaining and informative speaker and historian, will talk about George Washington's farewell address delivered in 1796. It's one of the best by any departing president. Washington offers an array of prognostications along with his concerns, a number of which, unfortunately, have arisen over the course of our history. Washington himself, of course, is fascinating. He was a large landowner. He was also a slaveowner. But here is a man who had the opportunity to take control of the country as general of the Army and refused to do

so. Here is a man who served his two terms as president and then willingly vacated the highest political office in the land, setting the precedent of the two-term presidency. Well into the 20th century, all second term presidents willingly left office. That is American Exceptionalism. America was blessed from the historical perspective that George Washington was not another Julius Caesar, Oliver Cromwell or Napoleon Bonaparte.

Arranged by Charles Salmans

Wednesday, February 2, 2022

Professor Mark LeClair, “Connecticut’s Economy: Strengths and Weaknesses”



(2014).

Mark LeClair, Ph.D., professor of economics at Fairfield University, where he has taught for 33 years, will discuss the outlook for Connecticut’s economy, assessing our state’s strengths and weaknesses. His areas of specialization include international finance and trade, industrial organizations and regional economic development. In addition to nearly two dozen scholarly articles, Dr. LeClair has published four books, including *Regional Integration and Global Free Trade* (1997), *International Commodity Markets and the Role of Cartels* (2000), *Cartelization, Antitrust and Globalization in the U.S. and Europe* (2011), and *Philanthropy in Transition*

His current research centers on the regulatory environment in the not-for-profit sector. Dr. LeClair has taught courses for both the Lifelong Learners program in Fairfield and the Learning In Retirement program in Stamford for more than a decade.

Arranged by Charles Salmans

Wednesday, February 9, 2022

Marissa Gillett, “Connecticut’s Energy Issues and Planning”



Marissa Gillett is chair of Connecticut’s Public Utilities Regulatory Authority. She also serves as one of Connecticut’s representatives on the board of directors of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. In this role, she advises the governor and the state legislature on technical, legal and policy matters related to offshore wind procurement, statewide energy efficiency programs, advanced metering infrastructure, grid reliability issues and electric vehicles. Prior to her appointment, Marissa was vice president of external relations for the Energy Storage Association, the national trade association representing the energy storage industry. From 2011 to 2018 she worked at the Maryland Public Service Commission. She received a B.S. degree in

bioengineering from Clemson University and a J.D. degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law.

Arranged by Geoff Rezek

Wednesday, February 16, 2002

Monica McNally, Darien First Selectman, “Building on Quality of Life in Darien”



Monica McNally was elected Darien’s first selectman in the November 2021 election. Previously, for eight years, she was an elected member of the RTM, and for the last three years chaired the RTM Public Works Committee, which led to a ban on single-use plastic bags. She most recently served on the Board of Selectmen. Monica and her husband Mark Filanowski have been residents of Darien for 27 years and have two children: Helen (25) and Stephen (23). The first selectman graduated from the University of Wisconsin and spent nine years in the financial services sector as a financial consultant for Smith Barney. She has been a

volunteer in a number of local civic organizations, including OPUS for Person-to-Person, served as president of the YWCA Women's Club and the Tokeneke Association Women's Club, and worked on the Green's Farm Academy Fundraising Committee.

Arranged by Charles Salmans

Wednesday, February 23, 2002

Dr. Daniel Ksepka, "March of the Fossil Penguins"



Daniel Ksepka, Ph.D., curator of science at the Bruce Museum in Greenwich, will feature "March of the Fossil Penguins." He will detail the fossil record of these birds and the fieldwork he has done in Peru and New Zealand. Dr. Ksepka will also present slides showing the expansion of the new Bruce Museum, scheduled to open in about a year.

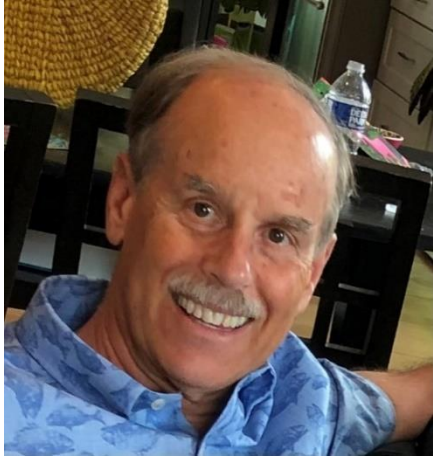
Prior to joining the Bruce Museum in 2014, Dr. Ksepka was on the staff of the Field Museum in Chicago for nine years and, prior to that, was with the Smithsonian Institution. He was a fellow with NESCent, a research center on the Duke University campus. He received a B.S. degree from Rutgers

University and a Ph.D. from Columbia University.

Arranged by Charles Salmans

New Members

Douglas Bora, Jr.



Douglas (Doug) A. Bora, Jr. was born in 1953 and grew up in Rowayton. He graduated from St. Lawrence University and earned a B.A. in economics. After graduation, he worked in commercial real estate finance to develop major real estate projects throughout the nation, first working broadly as a lender, then as an intermediary and thereafter as a principal. Doug started his career working at the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York (now AXA) where he was in charge of real estate lending and acquisitions for the northeastern United States. He then worked in Citicorp's Investment

Bank where he ran institutional finance and acquisitions in the Midwest. Following that engagement, he worked as an intermediary at the nation's largest commercial mortgage banking company, Holliday Fenoglio Fowler (now Jones Lang LaSalle) and subsequently as managing director of Spinnaker Real Estate Partners, a major commercial and residential real estate development firm.

Doug and his wife have lived in Darien since 1989 and have two adult children and two grandchildren. He has served as chairman or president of several real estate industry trade associations in New York and Connecticut and is currently chairman of SoundWaters, a nonprofit organization that teaches 35,000+ young people each year and connects them with Long Island Sound to protect and preserve the Sound through education.

Doug is an avid boater and a member of Noroton Yacht Club. He enjoys skiing and gardening and is believed to be the longest continuous seasonal paddle tennis player in Darien (30+ years).

Chet Cobb



Chester (Chet) L. Cobb was born in New York City in 1952 and grew up in the suburb of Pelham Manor, N.Y. He graduated from Pelham Memorial High School in 1970, where he served as co-editor-in-chief of the school newspaper and played varsity soccer and tennis. He graduated magna cum laude from Yale University in 1974 with a B.A. in economics and was editorial editor of the *Yale Daily News*. He received his J.D. from Yale Law School in 1977. After graduation, Chet began his legal career as an associate at Milbank Tweed in New York City. Thereafter he was an associate and then a partner at Winstead McGuire in Dallas between 1984 and 1990. Chet moved to Darien in 1990 when he joined Phillips Lytle as a partner in the firm's New York City office, where practiced law until retiring at the end of 2021. Chet served as partner-in-charge of the firm's New York City office between 1992 and 2007 and as a member of the firm's governing committee.

Chet and his wife Mary Kay have three daughters and three grandchildren. Chet is a member of The Country Club of Darien. His interests include reading, travel, skiing, golf, racquet sports and spending time with his family.

Stephen Liguori



Stephen (Steve) Liguori was born in Brooklyn, moved to upstate New York and after college lived in Wisconsin, California (twice) and Texas, before settling in Darien. He has a bachelor's degree from Cornell University and an M.B.A. from the University of Southern California. He served as executive director-global innovation of General Electric (GE) when the company was headquartered in Connecticut. He was instrumental in GE's then highly regarded innovation efforts such as the digital "Industrial Internet" transformation. Also, he was a marketing vice president at GE Capital. Prior to GE, Steve held senior advertising, marketing and strategy roles at Morgan Stanley, Citigroup and Kraft Foods. He even ran a cookie company for a short time.

Steve is the founder and chief executive officer of Liguori Innovation, a boutique consulting firm that helps large firms transform their leadership to enable new sources of growth. Steve is also co-founder of the Corporate Entrepreneur Community (CEC) with Eric Ries, best-selling author of *The Lean Startup*. The CEC is a private peer-to-peer network of large enterprises. Steve's distinctions include being named Marketer of the Year, having an article published in the *Harvard Business Review* and winning the Chairman's Award at both Citigroup and GE. He also launched the original Super Bowl halftime show with none other than Michael Jackson!

Steve and his wife Susan have lived in Darien for more than 20 years. They have three children: a daughter and two grandchildren in Washington, D.C., a son in Chicago and a daughter in Oakland, Cal. Steve is a longtime member of the St. John Church of Darien. For fun Steve enjoys tennis, golf, skiing and soon pickleball. Together, he and Susan love traveling to see their children and friends and finding far-flung adventures.

Activities

Book Group

Harris Hester, who, together with **Tom Igoe**, leads our highly engaged book discussion group, provided the following report on our past and present interesting reads.

Books discussed in November and December. At its **November** meeting, the group discussed Jonathan Lee's historical novel *The Great Mistake*, an engaging story about the early 20th century in New York City and the portrait of a self-made man who rose from farm boy to urban visionary and the intriguing account of his brutal murder on Park Avenue and the ensuing investigation. In **December**, we shared our thoughts and perspective on Amor Towles' picaresque novel *The Lincoln Highway*, a superbly written narrative, with surprising twists and turns, chronicling the adventures of four boys who navigate across America over a 10-day period in 1954.

Books selected for discussion in midwinter. In **January**, we will take up a newly published memoir entitled *Red Roulette: An Insider's Story of Wealth, Power, Corruption and Vengeance in Today's China* by Desmond Shum, a work that describes in detail his personal experiences as an entrepreneur operating in the China theater. The overriding picture painted by the author is one where the path to success on major development projects lies in cultivated relationships with relevant governmental and political leaders. Business acumen was a necessary component of the path to a successful outcome, but that alone was not sufficient. Access to attractive opportunities and completion of successful deals depended in large part upon productive, fruitful relationships with a variety of local junior, middle-level and senior party and government officials, without which nothing got done. Shum presents a disturbing picture of a country very much under control of a repressive Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime whose leaders are corrupt and intensely focused on the acquisition and preservation of their own power and wealth. He asserts that China's laws are vaguely written and applied by the CCP in ways that suit their needs. According to the author, business ethics, fairness, transparency and morality, all values that are foundational or at least aspirational in the West, have no significant place in modern China.

In **February**, we will revert to one of the literary classics, Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. A quintessential novel of the Lost Generation, the work is one of Hemingway's masterpieces and a notable example of his spare but powerful writing style. A poignant look at the disillusionment and angst of the post-World War I generation, the novel introduces two of Hemingway's most unforgettable characters: Jake Barnes and Lady Brett Ashley. The story follows the hapless Jake and flamboyant Brett as they journey

from the wild nightlife of 1920s Paris to the brutal bullfighting rings of Spain with a motley group of expatriates. It is an age of moral bankruptcy, spiritual dissolution, unrealized love and vanishing illusions. First published in 1926, *The Sun Also Rises* helped to establish Hemingway as one of the greatest writers of the 20th century.

All who may be intrigued by our January and February book selections are heartily encouraged to join our group for what will assuredly yield some entertaining and fascinating insights and exchanges of views.

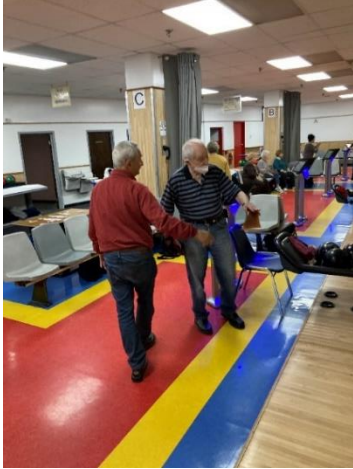
Bowling

November and December were very busy times for the DMA Bowling Group. Especially noteworthy was that attendance picked up dramatically thanks to several bowlers returning from injury, travel or caution regarding COVID-19. With more bowlers, the camaraderie and fun were terrific as were the performances of many participants described in the following weekly recaps.

Group leader **Tom Lom** (aka the "Commish") reports that the 14 DMA'ers who have participated this year range in skill level with average scores from 109 to 190, but that all skill levels share equally in the competition, fun and laughter.

November 2. Perhaps inspired by Election Day, this day's turnout was the best of the year to date. **Ben Briggs** was in the house for his first appearance of the season (following hip surgery three months ago) as was **John Kammerman** who'd been absent since the pandemic began. **Frank DeLeo** was back after a month in Florida and **Frank Gallagher** returned after spending most October Tuesdays on the golf course. After many handshakes and greetings among the gang, it was time for the games to begin.

Which brings us to the headliner. Ben, averaging 110 after two games, said to The Professor, **Ed Schechter**, "What am I doing wrong?" Ed, who is an excellent bowler and regarded by all of us as a good "teacher," replied, "Where do I begin?" and got to work. Things improved for Ben. The same is true for John who started to fade in Game Three. He, too, turned to Ed for help and feels ready to roll (pun intended) next week. You can see The Professor at Work in the photos below.



November 9. It seems as though every week we have another "Catch lightning in a bottle" story to report. We reported four series of 500 or better (DeLeo, Schechter, Brown, Lom) plus another at 492 (Gallagher), so the scores were good all around. In fact, only one guy bowled below his season average. We also had five games over 200 including a 214 by **Gehr Brown** and a 201 by Frank DeLeo. Shots of the Day were two splits converted: a 4-5-7 by Ben and a 3-6-7-10 by Ed.

Okay, so you noticed that there were three 200 games unaccounted for ... which brings me to today's "lightning" story. This day belonged to the Commish as he rolled games of 234/227/216 for a 677 series. Tom's day included seven strikes in each game. His average for the day was 225 and his total was +107 in relation to his season average. Quite a day.

November 16. Today belonged to The Professor, Ed Schechter. Perhaps it was because his "students" left him alone, perhaps it was a practice session late last week, perhaps it was simply that "he was due." Whatever the reason, Ed bowled games of 215/213/239 for a 667 series ... without a single split or missed spare. Fair to say that The Professor recertified his credential as a student of the game and an excellent bowler at the tender age of 88. Inspiring!

November 23. Today brought the return of the much anticipated Game Three Bowl Off between Ben Briggs and **George Gilliam**. You'll recall the fun and excitement of these games during last season. The Commish walked over to the two combatants during warm-up and asked if it was time to resume the action. Ben and George looked at one another and smiled, and it was Game On! After Game One, with George rolling a 182 to Ben's 112, the Commish said to Ben, "I like George's chances," to which Ben replied, "Want to put a quarter where your mouth is?" You know what's coming, right? In Game Three Ben rolled a 159 to George's 103. Collecting a quarter from George was not nearly as

rewarding for Ben as the one he pocketed from yours truly. To quote Ben: "I think I'll frame this one!"

The Commish was able to salvage something on the day by reaching a milestone for the group I don't think we've seen before. Today Tom rolled a nice 590 series, raising his average for the last 21 games to 201, a DMA record. He'll enjoy it while it lasts knowing that we always revert to the mean.

December 7. Today was a lot of fun – good scores (six games over 200 and five series over 500), good banter AND perhaps the best line of the year.

In the team game, let's just say that the Commish's team took a thrashing in Game One as Gehr and Frank D. bowled 216 and 213. In Game Two, despite Tom's 214, the beating was even worse as Frank bowled a 204 and Gehr a 197. So, when the opportunity came for Team Lom to accept "double or nothing" in Game Three, that team quickly and emphatically declined. In fact, the results were so one-sided that the Commish even approached Frank and Gehr with encouragement to record at least one, if not two, 600 series (something Ben considered not as words of encouragement but rather as the kiss of death). Wouldn't you know then that Gehr hit a speed bump (but still had high series of 573), and Frank fell off a cliff while their opponents coasted to an easy Game Three win.

Now for the line of the year told by two of our bowlers who are also golfers: "The problem with bowling and golfing when you are a senior is that the scores of both sports seem to get closer together!" And that pretty much said it all.

December 21. Today was the final day of bowling before Christmas and Santa left lots of presents. First, we again had 11 bowlers. And after much discussion over the past few days, we all decided to bowl on the same four lanes. That way, we could chit chat and kibitz together. Second, Frank DeLeo was nice enough to bring a platter of delicious holiday cookies. I know I had more than one (some called me "Cookie Monster").

Third, Santa brought an above-average performance for all 11 of us, some by a little and some by a lot, but we all bowled well. Notably, there were six series of 500 or better (Gallagher, **Alex Garnett**, DeLeo, Schechter, Lom and Brown). Fourth, Santa brought six games of 200 or better, one by Ed, two by Tom, and three(!) by Gehr. So all you math wizards can see that Santa also brought a series of 600 or better. Gehr had high series of 635 (219, 212, 204). We'd been saying that Gehr was due to roll a 600+ one of these days, having been close the prior two weeks. Today was his turn to catch lightning in a

bottle. Santa also gave us more lightning in Game Two as Tom rolled the high game of the year at 272, including eight strikes in a row.

In addition, Santa gave us three Shots of the Day. Frank DeLeo converted a 5-7 split. Gehr made a 2-7-10 split. But THE shot of the day has to go to Ben who rolled a "Yezzi"... Ben made a strike without hitting the headpin which we hadn't seen in at least three seasons when Tony last did it. This came a while after Ben made a "Ben Briggs spare," which consists of wasting a gutter ball followed by knocking down all 10 pins with the second ball. We have seen a few of those recently from several of us. And finally (see the group photo below), Santa has given us time with each other week after week during which we've had more than our share of camaraderie and competition and a whole lot of laughs. It is this for which we thank Santa the most.



Bridge Group

John Podkowsky heads the **DMA Bridge Group**, which meets online every Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. using the Bridge Base Online website. There is no cost to join. We play 24 hands, changing partners after every eight hands. We are usually finished after two hours. John sends out an invitation weekly. Based on the responses, he assigns each player to a table and nominates a table coordinator. The table coordinator, in turn, seats the players at the table and initiates a four-way conference call so the players can chat, kibitz and/or praise or critique the play of the hand (all in fun). We regularly have eight players at two separate

tables. In the past month, we had two additional players join the group. John is hoping to add a couple more regulars and organize three tables weekly.

More recently tables started having post-mortem discussions to review errors in bidding or play and enable everyone to improve their game. For the time being, given the COVID-19 upsurge, we will continue playing online. It has also been suggested that we separately organize bridge lessons for those who would like to play but may be shy about the strength of their bridge skills. Anyone interested in joining or just trying us out should contact John Podkowsky. We are a welcoming group.

Current Affairs

At the Current Affairs meeting held on November 19, Bert von Stuelpnagel expertly led us in a discussion of “Europe’s War on US Technology.” As always, Bert *nailed it*. While *The New York Times* writes of “surveillance capitalism” manipulated by a few huge, elite tech companies used by billions, Bert adeptly took us through the nitty-gritty of the European Union (EU) government’s concerns in regulating these large U.S.-headquartered but global companies.

Bert also emphasized the relative speed of EU regulators in implementing new regulations, including targeted taxation, versus the slower pace of U.S. regulation.

This might best be explained by Bert’s final slide photo of Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission President, standing next to President Joe Biden. The latter had to convince more than 80 million U.S. voters to tick off his name; Madame von der Leyen, not so; she was appointed, not elected. Central planning dictates are so much easier to implement – especially on foreign entities.

One consequence highlighted by Bert: the ever-increasing fines levied by EU regulators on U.S. tech giants (most notably, € 2.4 billion on Google-Alphabet – real money, even for this cash machine). And then there’s poor Ireland, having to finally agree to *raise* its minimum corporate tax rate from 12.5% to 15% in compliance with the new EU and global norm. The Irish Tiger “deFAANGed?” Only time will tell or the gift of the blarney will at least put a good spin on it!

Thank you Bert for engaging our members in a lively and well-informed discussion and thank you Current Affairs attendees for your serious and insightful comments and questions.

On December 16, our Current Affairs discussion was ably led by Don Loomis, who took us through a series of slides providing an overview of the genesis and further

development of our voting rights, from the U.S. Constitution, including its pertinent amendments, through the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Don also reviewed the U.S. Supreme Court's 2013 decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*. Shelby County, Ala. argued that Sections 4 and 5 of the Voting Rights Act no longer applied, as affected groups, with very low voter registration levels pre-1965, now have very high registration levels in the named states. This is well above the 50% legally mandated threshold – from 61% to more than 80% depending on the district, mainly due to the success of the Voting Rights Act itself – and the affected states are not turning back. Nevertheless, the costs of compliance are onerous and only placed on a few states. The Court ruled for Shelby County, citing its holding in *Northwest Austin Municipal Utility District No. 1 v. Holder* (2009) in which the court unanimously found for the Utility District in its request for a "bail-out" from the provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

Don then discussed H.R. 1 and H.R. 4, two pieces of federal legislation being considered that would introduce greater federal mandates regarding election processes and voting. Critics say such laws will federalize elections and are unconstitutional as election processes are left to state legislative bodies in the Constitution. Supporters say not so: that the Constitution provides for the right of Congress to override state laws in certain conditions. As of this writing neither bill has yet to pass, though there is still much ongoing Congressional activity, especially regarding H.R. 4.

The presentation was wrapped up with reviews of some states' recent efforts to reform their own election laws in light of the 2020 election, focusing particularly on Georgia and Texas. Though critics say these laws create greater voting restrictions, others say such laws are actually an advance over previous law. For example, Georgia now allows a multi-week voting period (early voting) and ballot drop boxes are permanently authorized by the legislation (though critics say the law allows too few), neither of which were in the state election laws pre-pandemic (though emergency ballot drop boxes were allowed in 2020 due to the pandemic). However, the law also extends voter ID requirements to all voters, not just absentee ballot voters, which some claim is restrictive but others see as a necessary defense against ballot fraud. According to Don, the most contentious element of this law is that the State Election Board will have new powers and won't be chaired by the secretary of state, raising fears in some quarters that the state government could propose an alternate slate of electors in presidential elections.

Don's slides are available for your review on the DMA website. Some members asked that we share the Heritage Foundation's Election Integrity map, which also can be found on the DMA website.

We thank Don for his excellent research and presentation. It generated much lively discussion, which still continues ... at least one of our members is ready to "storm the Bastille" (figuratively as it were). So, stay tuned!

On January 21, Tom Igoe will lead a Current Affairs discussion on the latest quadrennial report of The National Intelligence Council entitled "Global Trends 2040: A More Contested World." This report is typically released at the start of each new administration with the intent of providing guidance as to the key trends and uncertainties that will shape the strategic environment for the United States during the next two decades. The goal in this report is not to offer a specific prediction of the world in 2040 but rather to help policymakers and citizens see what may lie beyond the horizon and prepare for an array of possible futures.

As the report notes in its sobering introductory passages, during the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has reminded the world of its fragility and demonstrated the inherent risks of high levels of interdependence. In coming years and decades, the world will face more intense and cascading global challenges ranging from disease to climate change to disruptions from new technologies and financial crises. These challenges will repeatedly test the resilience and adaptability of communities, states and the international system, often exceeding the capacity of existing systems and models. This looming disequilibrium between existing and future challenges and the ability of institutions and systems to respond is likely to grow and produce greater contestation at every level.

In this more contested world, communities are increasingly fractured as people seek security with like-minded groups based on established and newly prominent identities; states of all types and in all regions are struggling to meet the needs and expectations of more connected, more urban, and more empowered populations; and the international system is more competitive – shaped in part by challenges from a rising China – and at greater risk of conflict as states and nonstate actors exploit new sources of power and erode longstanding norms and institutions that have provided some stability in past decades.

The National Intelligence Council asserts that these dynamics are not fixed in perpetuity, however, and envisions a variety of plausible scenarios for the world of 2040 – from a democratic renaissance to a transformation in global cooperation spurred by shared tragedy – depending on how these dynamics interact and human choices along the way.

Happy Wanderers



South of Grand Central – December 2. On Thursday, 12-02-2021, a numeric-palindromic and mild cloudy day, eight stalwarts boarded the morning train for the final Wandering of the calendar year. Our walk took us south on Park Avenue from Grand Central Terminal, with the first stop being 27th Street, where the building occupies the full block over to Madison Avenue on a parcel of land that was the first home of Madison Square Garden. The Garden moved to 49th Street and 9th Avenue in 1925 and the stately New York Life Insurance Building was erected. Walking west and then south on Madison Avenue, the group passed the marble New York Appellate Division courthouse at 25th Street. We crossed Madison and entered Madison Park to get a better view of the New York Life Insurance Building and of the original Metropolitan Life Insurance Building at 24th Street and its adjacent Met Life clock tower building, which was the tallest in the City and in the United States for a short time before the Woolworth Building was completed. We came out on the other side of the park onto Fifth Avenue where the General Worth Monument now stands next to the site of the Admiral Dewey Arch, which towered over Fifth Avenue for about a year in 1899. We walked from there down Broadway, past the Flatiron Building, and then east on 20th Street and past the Theodore Roosevelt Homestead, birthplace of our 26th president. At the corner, we turned south, again

along Park Avenue, to 16th Street and the north end of Union Square, through which we walked down to cross 14th Street and continued south on University Place, crossing Fifth Avenue and over to Sixth Avenue and 10th Street to get a marvelous view of the Jefferson Market Courthouse, built in 1875 and now a branch of the New York Public Library. Across from this red brick Victorian gothic revival courthouse building, we had our lunch at a bright Italian cuisine restaurant called Rosemary's, near the beginning of Greenwich Avenue.

After lunch, we walked east again to Fifth Avenue and to the Salmagundi Club, a private nonprofit organization that supports the arts from its brownstone at No. 47 Fifth Avenue. There was a featured display of small-sized paintings and photos in the main floor gallery, along with a colorful collection of seasonal marionettes in the parlor. After enjoying this magnificent display, we turned on our heels and walked north to Union Square again and took the Lexington Avenue IRT Subway from 14th Street back to Grand Central to catch the train home.



Hikers

Mianus River Park, November 18. On a spectacular mid-November day, 10 DMA'ers and two spouses hiked for 3.8 miles in a little over two hours through the beautiful trails at Mianus River Park, a 391-acre nature reserve on the Stamford/Greenwich border. The combination of some still colorful leaves, glacial rock outcroppings and a forest floor largely free of low foliage made for a very scenic hike. Alas, again we spotted no wildlife, but we did encounter many other hikers and their dogs on such a glorious day. No injuries or other mishaps occurred extending our safety record!

The beauty of these hikes is the opportunity to converse with each other in a quiet setting and to get to talk with every hiker at some point during the walk. After the hike, 10 of us enjoyed a delicious and well-served lunch at Zody's 19th Hole at the E. Gaynor Brennan Golf Course in Stamford.

The following photo display reflects an enjoyable day in the woods.





Ironman Bert Von Stuelpnagel puts his shoulder into it as he clears safe passage for the rest of us mortals



Greenwich Point, December 9. An enthusiastic group of 16 braved cold and windy, but bright, conditions over a little more than three miles at Greenwich Point. This was our first chance to tour the spectacular peninsula after a two-year absence due to weather

and COVID-19. The wait was worth it, as it always is at Greenwich Point. We had a fairly good view of Manhattan and a very good look at the Greenwich shoreline on our way around the point. Except for a stretch of about 400 yards, the trail is hard packed or paved and very flat. We attracted four guests and the group was the largest since Sherwood Island last year.

J. Kennedy Tod picked a beautiful place to site his mansion more than 130 years ago and, like many of the places we hike, a municipal, state or charitable entity had the foresight to acquire the property for the benefit of future generations. Wildlife report – various birds; nonlife report – one dead fish.

The group transferred to Louie’s Italian Restaurant & Bar in Cos Cob for a great lunch after the outing. This was the eighth and final hike of 2021, an activity well-suited to the unusual conditions of the year. Thanks to all who participated! We hope to schedule some hikes over the winter months.



The Ice Walkers Cometh



Friendly Gathering at Louie's

Investment Discussion Group

The Investment Discussion Group (IDG), led by **Jim Phillips**, generally meets the first Monday of every month via Zoom. The format is an open forum to explore whatever issues members consider important. We usually start with the macro outlook, followed by current macro themes and then move to specific stocks to play out the various themes. We also discuss any stock/company that someone may own in his portfolio upon which he would appreciate a second opinion from the various attending industry experts embedded in our DMA membership.

At its **November** and **December** meetings, the IDG continued discussions around changing Fed policies, timing for increases in interest rates, inflation issues, labor participation rates and the related effects of COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, global energy shortages and the rising cost of fossil fuels, supply chain constraints, liquidity, spending and pent-up consumer demand for travel, hospitality and entertainment, and the diverse views of financial and investment strategists on projections for stock market performance through 2023, including the possibility of a major correction at some point.

For its January 3 discussion, commencing at 10 a.m., the IDG plans to cover the latest developments in streaming/entertainment companies (with input from **Dennis Leibowitz**). **Jim Phillips** will also lead a discussion on the increased interest in alternative investment managers. As usual, members should feel free to present companies they view as "conviction buys" or long-term holds following a correction.

Money Matters Group

On November 8, Colin Campbell talked about urban vertical farming and his company **Fifth Season**. This is a rapidly growing industry that has numerous benefits (for example, no pesticides, fresher food, 95%-99% less water) and is changing and improving many lives worldwide.

On December 13, Jon Winkel (<https://stamfordpartnership.org>) presented on many topics, including: Stamford as a "smart city," attraction and development of talent, and ecosystem evolution. Jon reported that there are many new exciting companies and initiatives that are taking place in the city of Stamford, which are positioning it on the international map.

Looking ahead to the midwinter months, the group will take a pause in January but resume meeting in February, with the discussion on Valentine's Day (the 14th) focusing on building a successful brewery and the impact on the community.

Pickleball

Pickleball competition continues like clockwork every Tuesday and Thursday at Cherry Lawn Park. In this midwinter season, play will remain outside as members add an extra layer or two of clothing and adapt to windy, chilly conditions. **Jan Selkowitz** reports that certain strokes and strategies must be reworked in light of the season but, except in inclement weather (rain, snow, high winds), the group hopes to continue playing in the fresh air during January and February. The DMA participants comprise an enthusiastic group enjoying the fastest growing sport in the United States.



Darien Community Service

Bell Ringing at Palmer's for Darien Human Services

Raising funds to help needy Darienites by soliciting donations from Palmer's shoppers at Christmas has been a long-standing DMA tradition. Due to COVID-19, we couldn't perform this important service in 2020. Fortunately, owing to the capable leadership of **Frank DeLeo**, we were able to re-start this activity this year with teams of two (and one team of three) ringing a handbell and greeting shoppers on their way in and out of the market on Sunday, December 12, and Monday, December 20. We had 25 people participate, including three members who rang on both days as well as a wife and granddaughter who joined their respective DMA members. Thanks to all who helped and to Palmer's for letting us use their space and leverage their shoppers.

For several reasons, our historical relationship with The Salvation Army for this activity was no longer an option. So, we partnered directly with the Darien Human Services (DHS) Department (that had been our historical benefactor and go-between with The Salvation Army), focusing on its direct funding activities related to housing, energy, food and clothing assistance. We also had brochures about DHS at our table to help publicize the breadth of services it provides. By partnering directly with DHS, we were able to ensure that 100% of the funds raised would go to Darien residents.



We were blessed with good weather on both days (sunny and not too chilly). Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Darien residents/Palmer's shoppers (and the warmth and engaging demeanor of our bell ringers – many of whom enhanced the spirit of the season by wearing Santa hats), we raised \$1,350 on the 12th and \$1,125 on the 20th, for a grand total of \$2,475. The DHS director was thrilled and extremely appreciative since past years' daily donations were typically in the \$400-\$800 range. What a great way to reinstitute one of our traditional Community Service activities. We not only made a significant contribution to our neighbors, but we also raised the bar for

future holiday fund raising at Palmer's.

Several photos of our DMA community volunteers are posted below, and you can view the entire photo gallery of the holiday bell ringing on the DMA website under the caption Community Service.



DMA Social Activities

DMA Christmas Party

A group of nearly 120 happy DMA'ers, wives, guests and widows gathered on **December 16** at The **Country Club of Darien** to celebrate the season and what a wonderful gathering it was: enjoying cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, mingling and catching up with old friends in a festive setting. We were treated to a delicious banquet buffet followed by the performance of the evening – a stirring rendition of traditional carols and varied holiday numbers sung by the highly talented and musically precise **Tudor Singers**. A huge shout-out to **Tom Lom** and **Jan Selkowitz** for their leadership in arranging this grand celebration!







The Darien High School's Tudor Singers, an orchestra of voices with a marvelous blend, entertained us with a stirring mix of carols and spirituals, including the Catalan carol "Fum! Fum! Fum!", lively arrangements from the repertoire of the famous vocal ensemble Chanticleer – "Mary and the Baby & Jerusalem in the Morning" and "Rise Up Shepherd and Follow" – and the inspiring piece "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day," a carol based on the 1863 poem written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow at a time when he had just lost his wife and his son was crippled by the Civil War. He wrote the poem about how, every year, when these Christmas bells rang, it reminded him that there was peace on earth, good will toward men.



Plans for 2022

The Social Committee had scheduled several activities for DMA members for the midwinter period, including a musical event on January 27 featuring the Melissa Newman Quartet. The quartet, which has been together since 2012, performs standards from The Great American Songbook. Given the current spread of the Omicron variant across the state, Melissa, daughter of Joanne Woodward and Paul Newman, expressed the desire to delay the event to a later date. In addition, we had a hockey game/dinner event scheduled for February 19 which most likely will be delayed. As plans are revised and events rescheduled, **Jan Selkowitz** will advise our members. Stay tuned.

Mark Your Calendar – Details on DMA Website

A Google calendar providing scheduled dates and times for the many and varied DMA events and activities planned over the next several months may be viewed by accessing the DMA's website, DarienDMA.org, and clicking on the caption [Event and Activity Calendar](#) on the right side of each page.

Activity Representatives

For those activities over Zoom, dates and times apply unless otherwise amended. Locations refer to venues when resumption of in-person meetings is possible.

Book Club, Harris Hester, 655.2309, and Tom Igoe, 655.6170
2nd Wednesday, 2 p.m., Lillian Gade Conference Room at the DCA

Bowling, Tom Lom, 655.0686, and Gehr Brown, 655.3713
Tuesdays, 9 a.m., Nutmeg Lanes, Fairfield

Bridge, John Podkowsky, 329.8181
Tuesdays, 1 p.m., St. Luke's Church, 1864 Post Road at Ring's End Road

Cribbage, Geoff Rezek, 820.7077
As announced from time to time

Current Affairs, Mark Nunan, 655.0443, and Mike Wheeler, 856.8414
3rd Thursday, 11:00 a.m., in-person at the DCA and on Zoom (January meeting, however, to be on 3rd Friday, January 21, 11:00 a.m.)

Golf, Peter Carnes, 655.9518
As announced at meetings and through eblasts

Happy Wanderers, David Mace, 655.7555, and Joe Spain, 655.1264
As announced at meetings and through eblasts

Hiking, Dave McCollum, 853.7080, and Bob Plunkett, 246.2898
As announced at meetings and through eblasts

Investment Discussion Group, Jim Phillips, 722.2787
1st Monday, 9 a.m., 30 Old King's Highway South, 1st Floor

Money Matters, Doug Campbell, 975.0320
3rd Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. prior to the weekly DMA meeting at DCA in Lillian Gade Room, 2nd Floor

Pickleball, Jan Selkowitz, 655.0441
Tuesdays, Thursdays, 9 a.m. at Cherry Lawn Park

Songsters, Joe Holmes, 838.8744
As announced, Wednesdays, 8:45 a.m., DCA

Woodworking, Tom Williams, 943.9715
Mondays, Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m., Mather Senior Center

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Darien Men's Association Newsletter</h2>
<p>Editor and Publisher, <i>Tom Igoe</i>. Contributing Editor, <i>Joyce Meurer</i>. Speaker write-ups, Charles Salmans. New member bios, <i>Harry Bergen</i>. Mailing list and e-communications, <i>Art Baron</i>. This Week at DMA, <i>Tom Igoe</i>. Webmaster, <i>Gary Banks</i>.</p>