

# MONTHLY

## MEN ENJOYING LEISURE

About MEL, Melmen and their activities



OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2023

### FROM THE PRESIDENT



My heart goes out to all our members and families impacted emotionally, spiritually, religiously and ethnically by the October 7 atrocities in Israel, and most especially to members with family and loved ones in Israel. "Never Again" should mean NEVER AGAIN!

Even as I recently returned from a trip to the Far East, many of our members have begun embarking for the warmth of other suns. I wish all of you safe travels, good health, fun times and a return re-energized and maybe with some ideas for new MEL activities.

I understand that 18 Melmen had a great time touring and dining at the Harley-Davidson Museum in Wisconsin last month. (Didn't know Hell's Angels were recruiting septuagenarians and octogenarians.)

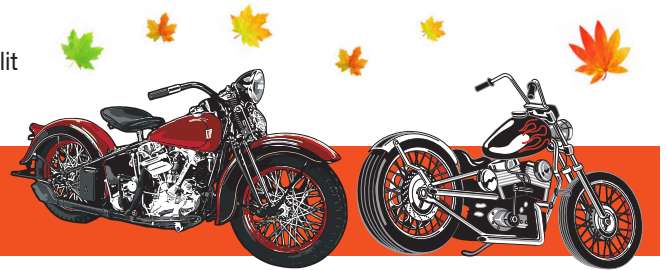
As a result of significant disruptions at a recent monthly meeting, your Board of Directors is considering adopting a Code of Conduct, which amplifies and is ancillary to the Bylaw dealing with the discipline

of members (which, if enacted, will be presented at the November meeting). The Code of Conduct has been adapted from similar codes in effect at some of the other "Five Families" men's groups and is intended to be a fair and reasonable procedure for dealing with inappropriate behavior.

Recently, several members have objected to what they consider to be required clearance from the Board before initiating an activity or event. That clearly is not the Board's intent. However, to avoid conflicts and competing activities and events, members looking to initiate an activity or event should first look at the MEL calendar and are encouraged to speak to the Board's Director of Activities, currently Bruce Edelson, to minimize overlapping activities and events. I think we all want to encourage maximum participation in all of our activities and events.

Best,

Gary Salit



### VROOM VROOM! MEL EATS UP HOGS

- By Gerry Linda



On October 16 Melmen traveled north to visit the Harley-Davidson Museum in Milwaukee. The beautiful, industrial tech building houses both the history of this most American motorcycle and cultural icon — termed "sculptures in metal" — and the history of the company that produced them. The firm began in a 10' x 15' shed in 1903, when childhood friends, Bill Harley and Arthur Davidson, became partners to design and produce gasoline powered engines that could be fitted to a bicycle frame. Hence the name, Harley-Davidson Motor Company.



Their sense of purpose can clearly be seen in the early models like the one from 1907 pictured here. It's a bicycle under which a primitive engine has been hung—not nearly the beautiful, integrated, purpose-designed motorcycles that took nearly 50 years to evolve.

What was amazing was the pristine condition of the hundreds of models and variations on display — all labelled "unrestored." We saw regular bikes, miniature bikes, bikes for women, outdoor/off-road/hunting/camping/fishing bikes, police versions, delivery versions, army versions, a navy version and amazing 21st Century bikes that we could sit on and dream of riding.

Over 120 years the company has survived numerous ownership arrangements, subsidiary arrangements, periods of poor economic health and product quality, and intense global competition. For example, the emphasis on motors led them into unsuccessful forays into leisure boats, golfcarts and skimobiles, as if these product categories had anything to do with the H-D brand personality. Nevertheless, Harley-Davidson has become one of the world's largest motorcycle manufacturers and an iconic American brand widely known for its loyal following. Globally, Harley-Davidson annually sells in the vicinity of 200,000 vehicles worth about \$4 Billion.

Bruce Harris looked at the display below and quipped: "Tanks for the memories."

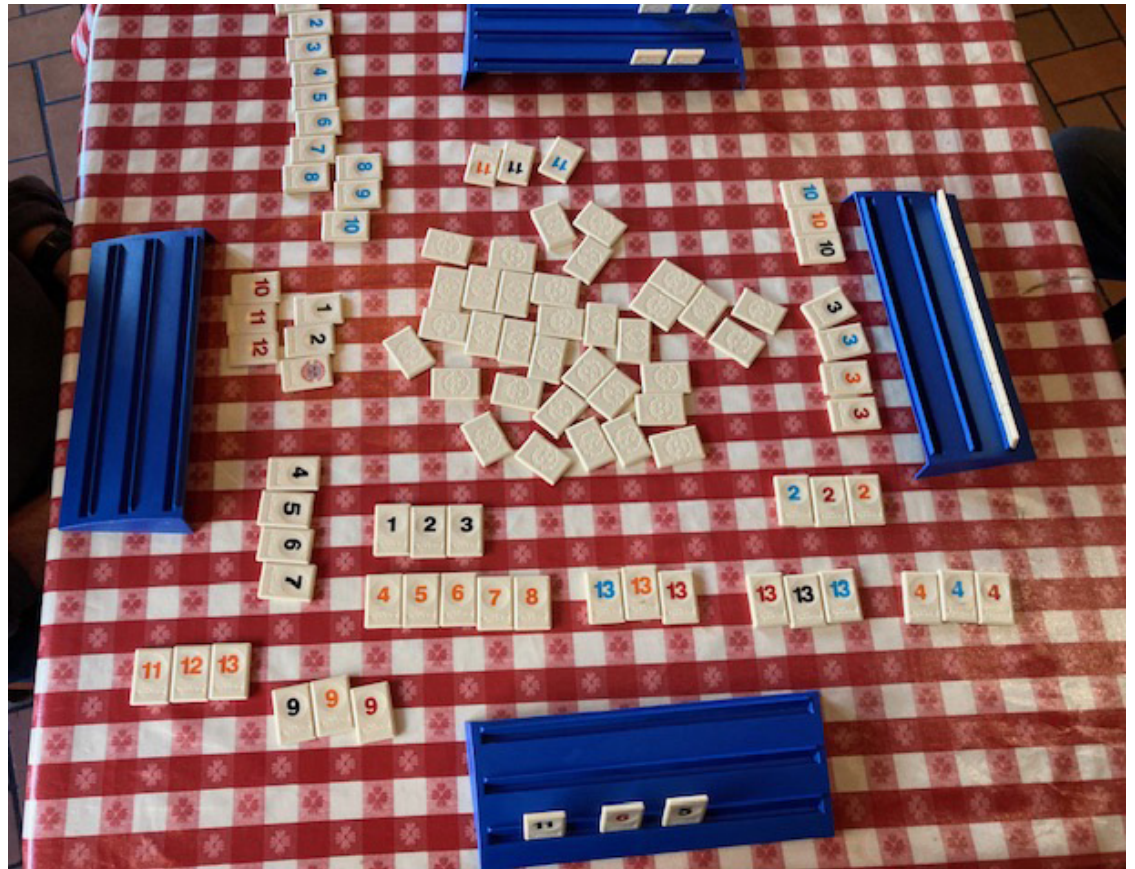


# MORE ABOUT MEL'S NEWEST REGULAR ACTIVITY - RUMMIKUB

- By Stan Ascher

Take a look at this picture. You'll see four place settings – the blue tile holders. And you'll see a whole bunch of played tiles in the center – arranged as multiples of a number, e.g., 13, or as runs, e.g., 4, 5, 6, 7. Sounds a lot like gin, right. However, in Rummikub you not only play the tiles you have, but also can use the tiles already played by others.

The object of the game is to be the first one to get rid of all your tiles by placing them on the board. You start out with 14 tiles randomly picked and then, after "going down" by putting down matched tiles equaling 30 points, you either play one or more or take a new tile from the middle. Being able to creatively employ and manipulate the tiles on the board is the heart of what makes the game fun. At first there are few options, but as more and more tiles are played, the options multiply and strategy starts to come into play. The winner gets zero points and the losers' scores are the values of their remaining tiles.



Just like any card game, winning is a combination of skill and luck. A round lasts between 15 and 30 minutes. We play multiple rounds so a score card is needed. He with the lowest number of points wins—just

bragging rights currently. While not an official determination, it seems like Burt Harris is currently the man to beat.

We meet at 11:00 AM at Portillo's on Lake Cook Road the third or fourth Monday of every month. After an hour or so, we break for lunch and then play until 2:30 or 3:00. Oh yeah, the conversation during the game only adds to the fun.



# MEL PHOTOS OF THE MONTH



Bob Stein

**BLACK AND WHITE ARCHITECTURE**  
Sun Life Center, Toronto Ontario. Bob Stein.



Carl Rosenthal

**SR. REGIS CHICAGO**  
Vista Tower Skycraper - Carl Rosenthal

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## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- NOV. 1 GARY SALIT
- 2 FRANK FLORENCE
- 3 ALAN REINBERG
- 5 GENE LTWIN
- 7 JERRY EZGUR
- 12 DON BROOKS
- 13 ZEV STEIGER
- 16 ARNIE SLUTSKY
- 17 NEIL KAPLAN
- 19 MOE EHRLICH
- 21 JERRY FISHER.
- 22 STEVEN MARSHAL
- 25 CHUCK KAFENSTOK
- 27 DICK SILVER
- 30 RICH HERBSTMAN

## MORE THAN A RECIPE FOR THE PERFECT MARTINI

- By Gerry Linda



The first sip of a properly made and properly chilled martini in a correct glass is like no other cocktail ever invented. It's like a playful challenge from a familiar friend of the desired gender, a promise of fun, a hint of naughtiness. If you're like me, that sounds appealing. If not, stop reading now and grab a Michelob Ultra. On the other hand, if you're intrigued, read on.

I'm well-known among friends for being a martini fan; I even have a collection of martini glasses, and several books on the subject. The Gibson was my father's drink (a martini w/cocktail onions instead of olives) so I started on martinis as soon as I was legal. In my dad's time,

the early days of the drink's popularity, the martini was a short drink ~ 1 ½- 2 ounces, which was one-third, that's right one-third, dry vermouth. (If you're not careful about your order, they still serve them exactly that way in Canada.) Today, of course, it is a large drink, at about 4 ounces (that's why they are expensive in bars) and usually "dry," meaning very little vermouth, e.g., drops, splash, or in extreme cases, pour some in the glass, swirl and then dump it out. Some bartenders even joke by opening the vermouth bottle and just letting the martini glass "sniff" the contents.

As a purist, to me a martini has to be made with gin. Period. Vodka martinis, made very dry, are little different than vodka on the rocks, an anonymous, tasteless drink that is simply a means of putting alcohol into the body, not that I am against that per se. Gin is an interesting spirit because, apart from being required to have some flavor from juniper berries, there is no fixed formula. Every brand is a unique blend of botanicals (plants, flowers, etc.) and flavorings and methods of distilling. So some are fruity and on the sweet side, some are very smooth, some are grassy, some taste a lot like cucumber, and some are assertive. You must make a choice. And you might change that choice for a martini or a gin and tonic or a gin ricky, etc.

My choice for a martini is Beefeater's, a stringent, forceful option filled with sharp juniper notes. For me the martini has to have, in the words of the song, ". . . that slam, bang, tang, reminiscent of gin and vermouth." You just can't get there with a smooth or heavy on the botanicals blend.

Now I'm going to share a secret about proportions. You can measure 4 ounces of gin and whatever amount of vermouth you like and then transfer

to a shaker, but this wastes gin on the sides of the measure (unless the measure is part of the shaker). I've found it much easier to pour the gin and vermouth into the glass and then add it to the shaker. Be sure to leave room for the volume the olives or onions will take plus a tiny bit more. You'll see why in a moment. In this fashion you'll always have the correct proportions regardless of the size and shape of the glass you use.

What brings the Beefeater martini to perfection is proper chilling. James Bond had it right, "shaken not stirred." If you don't have a cocktail shaker (or some substitute), you can't make a perfect martini. Fill it about two-thirds with ice, pour the contents of the glass into the shaker, cover and shake vigorously for 10 full seconds—this is longer than you think. The act of shaking is part of the ritual of preparing and serving a proper martini. It also makes it very cold. Then strain it back into the glass, add the garnish, olives, olives, twist. You need to strain it because the act of shaking will break tiny ice crystals off and you don't want them to water the drink. This, by the way, is why shaking is preferred to stirring. When a martini is stirred, more water melts into the beverage and dilutes it. (Those who argue that stirring is preferred because shaking "bruises the juniper" are simply being stupid.) This by the way is the reason that it is prohibited to ever serve a martini on the rocks; it is a non-sequitur. The "tiny bit more" I referred to is for the small amount of water that makes its way into the drink even when shaken.

You must serve the martini immediately. It is supposed to be very cold, icy clear except perhaps for a tendril of lemon oil or curl of olive or onion juice that adhered to the garnish floating on top. That's why I, personally, am not a fan of "dirty" martinis, which contain a few drops of the liquid that the olives came in. This changes the color from crystal clear to something "dirtier." If you need to make another for a friend or a second for yourself, dump out the ice and start over; water will have melted already, and this is a no-no. By the way, two of these martinis is the limit for an evening. There will never be a need for more and you'll only regret any such attempt.

Serve the drink in a martini glass, for Pete's sake. The martini glass is a perfect form; it is stylish and sophisticated and again is part of the ritual, so it adds cultural and historical heft to the act of imbibing. Therefore, it enhances the experience of the drink and I recommend them highly.

About the garnish. In order of preference, I like hand-stuffed anchovy olives, hand-stuffed gorgonzola olives, hand-stuffed blue cheese olives, (these three are all available in bars in Chicago), bottled anchovy olives, bottled jalapeño olives, bottled jalapeño/garlic olives, cocktail onions (they must be large and fresh; they actually age and become soft; if so dump 'em), and finally the standard pimento olives. If all else fails, in a pinch I can tolerate a lemon twist.

L'chaim!

### EVENT SCHEDULE NOVEMBER - DECEMBER

- Nov**
- 3 MEL monthly meeting 10am at the temple
  - 6 MEL monthly breakfast 9am Demetri's restaurant on Lake Cook Rd. (Contact Jack Meyers)
  - 7 Canasta 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
  - 13 Gin Rummy 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
  - 16 Current Events on Zoom 9:30 (contact Joel Karlinsky)
  - 17 Movie Discussion (contact Gerry Linda)
  - 20 Rummikub 11am Portillo's Deerfield (Contact Stan Ascher)
  - 21 Canasta 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
  - 27 Poker 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
  - 28 Adlai Stevenson home tour and lunch 10am (contact George Giddens)
  - 30 MEL monthly lunch 11:30 McAlister's Deli Deerfield

- Dec**
- 1 MEL monthly meeting 10am at the temple
  - 4 MEL monthly breakfast 9am Demetri's restaurant on Lake Cook Rd. (Contact Jack Meyers)
  - 5 Canasta 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
  - 5 MEL informal couples holiday dinner 5:30 D'Agostino's in Wheeling (Contact Bruce Edelson)
  - 11 Gin Rummy 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
  - 15 Movie Discussion (Contact Gerry Linda)
  - 18 Rummikub 11am Portillo's Deerfield
  - 18 Poker 11am D'Agostino's Wheeling (Special date because of the holiday)
  - 19 Canasta 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
  - 21 MEL monthly lunch 11:30 McAlister's Deli Deerfield
  - 28 Current Events on Zoom 9:30 (Contact Joel Karlinsky)