



MONTHLY

MEN ENJOYING LEISURE

About MEL, Melmen and their activities



DECEMBER 2023

FROM THE PRESIDENT



I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season with family and friends and that you and your loved ones have made it safely and healthfully into 2024. For those of you dealing with health or family issues, may the new year bring you a ray of hope and renewal.

The year 2024 (I like those even-numbered years) brings several challenges and opportunities, both nationally, internationally and in our own MEL community. Nationally, of course, we will be having an election, which could be a game changer, a game preserver or something in-between. With state, federal, and local elections, our world could be turned upside down, right-side up or who knows?

On the international scene what's occurring in Israel and Gaza impacts several of our members with families there. Our hopes and prayers go out to all of them. We can only wish for a speedy resolution of the immediate crisis and a return to a semblance of normalcy. But I suspect it will take some time to settle on a new normal.

And for our little MEL community, we already have a few new events scheduled with others in the planning stage. We will be admitting new members in the Spring; we already have several Melmen who will be sponsors. If you know someone who has retired, is nearing retirement

or is only working part-time, and has expressed an interest in getting actively involved in a senior men's organization, become their sponsor, pass his name on to me and we'll get the process rolling with the help of Jerry Ezgur, our Director of New Members, and his team.

As I've suggested before, MEL only grows and flourishes to the extent we all get involved and engaged in existing activities and events and expand our reach. For example, in this past year Stan Ascher offered Rummikub as a potential MEL activity. It now is a permanent feature on our schedule. We need others to initiate new and diverse activities and events. If you have an idea, run it by Bruce Edelson, our Director of Activities, or just run with it. There are no limitations on what we can do.

Best,
Gary Salit



MEL HOLIDAY DINNER 2023

– By Larry Krupp



On Tuesday, December 5, 19 Melmen and their guests met at D'Agostino's on Milwaukee Rd. for the MEL Holiday party. Old friendships were renewed and strengthened, and new friendships were made. We even found a substitute player for the Wednesday women's Mahjong game that is played at D' Agostino's while the MELMEN play Hearts.

Everyone had a good time. It was a MEL event; so, of course, we ate: salad, pasta, three types of pizza and two dessert selections. No one went home hungry.

What a great start to the holiday season.



MEL VISITS THE ADLAI STEVENSON HOME

– By Walt Brown



Stevenson visits with David Ben Gurian. Photo by Jack Meyers.

On Nov. 28, the day after this season's 1st snowfall, a group of 23 hardy Melmen toured the Adlai Stevenson Home in Mettawa, IL. Despite the freezing temps, the group easily related to the warm and generous spirit on display at the family residence of one of Illinois' greatest statesmen.

The tour started with a video documenting Stevenson's long career in public service, as well as his illustrious family. Then we walked through the house – designated a National Historic Landmark – with its many political and personal artifacts,

including some very interesting materials from the 1952 and 1956 Presidential campaigns. Most of the guys had not been there before and appreciated the chance to see something historically significant practically in our backyard.

Highlights: Perhaps the oldest piece in the library was a now-fragile 1848 Family Bible, which our tour guide handled 'prayerfully.' Our curious crew, as usual, raised many questions. When a few of them appeared to stump her, other members, notably, Alan Esterman, impressively, produced the answers.



Portillo's Catering Photo Group 2023



YEAR END MEL PHOTO PARTY

– By Steve Wasserman

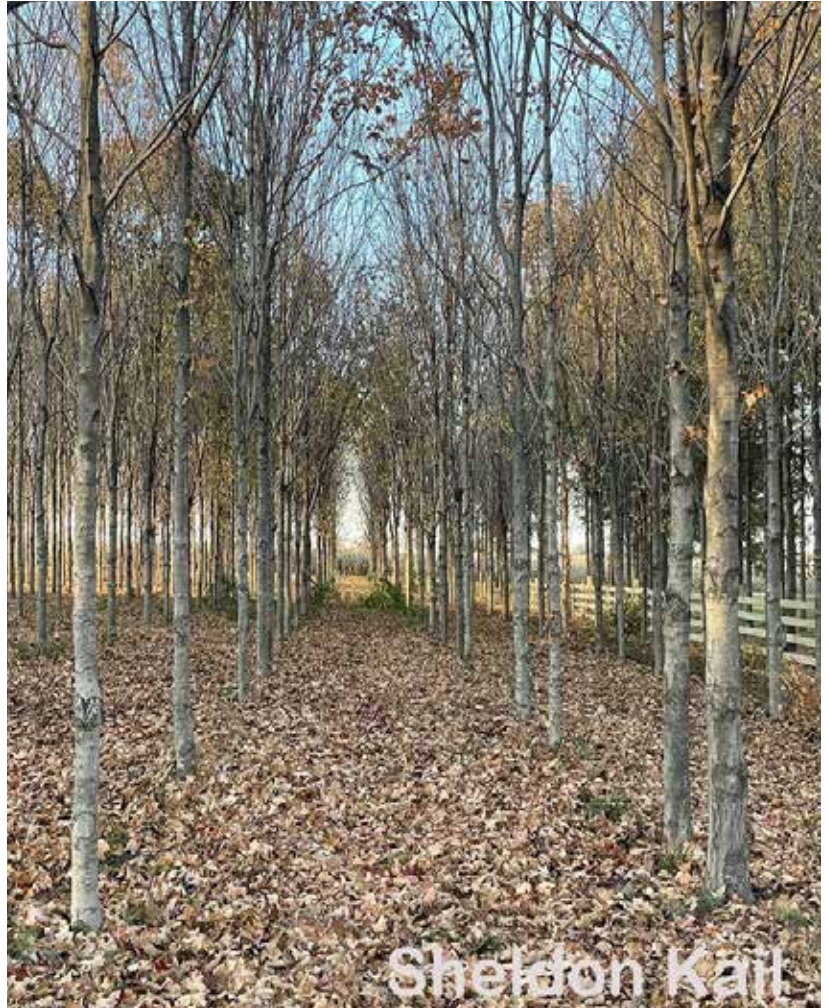
December 18, 2023. Portillo's On The Lake Cook. Generally we meet on Zoom. At the end of the year the photo group comes together to say goodbye to 2023 and look forward to 2024 as well as meeting new members in person.



MEL PHOTOS OF THE MONTH



Day of the Dead Watching Dead Actors. Taken on an iPhone 13 at Zentli Restaurant Halloween Weekend. This picture was behind the bar; it was a must.



Cemetery Autumn Calm. Taken with a cell phone at Graceland Cemetery. The combination of the mausoleum, the sun, the autumn tree and the leaves in the water.



Autumn on the Farm. Taken in Sycamore, IL on an iPhone 12. The lovely fall colors as sunset was approaching and the interesting geometric shapes with the triangle of light in the background.

MEL BOOK GROUP – By Gary Salit



The MEL Book Group continues to meet every five or six weeks, usually on a Tuesday morning, most recently at the Deerfield Public Library. The books we read are either fiction or non-fiction, but what they have in common is that they teach us something.

Sometimes the books are controversial like the most recently selected, *Searching for Fatima*, but we're always hoping for a good discussion among Melmen in attendance.

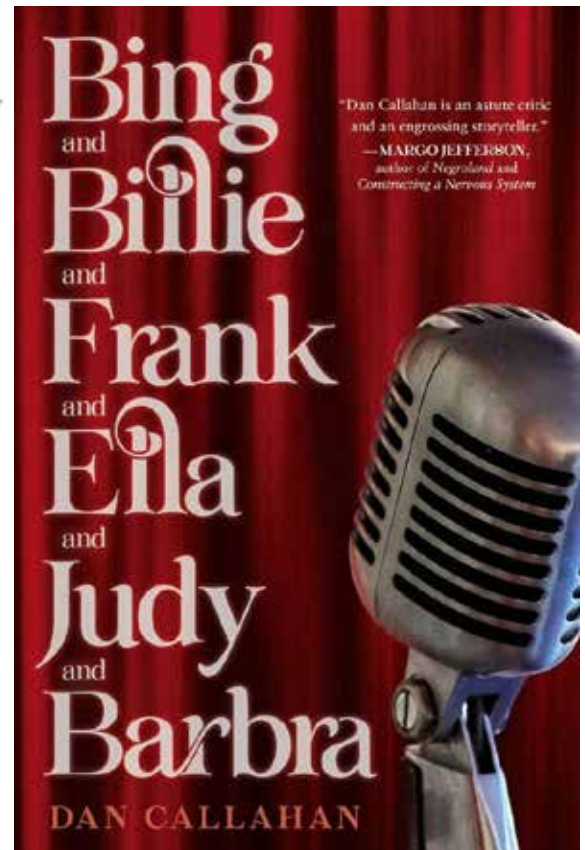
It turns out that many of the selected books have been turned into movies (although none has measured up to the book). Notable among those have been *Killers of the Flower Moon*, *Where the Crawdads Sing*, *Leave the World Behind*, *Lessons in Chemistry* and the recently released, *Boys in the Boat*.

Other books under consideration for becoming movies include *Gentleman in Moscow* and *Horse*. Our books have ranged from *Code Breaker* by Walter Isaacson, a non-fiction story of the Nobel Prize-winning developer of CRISPR which has been used in the treatment of Covid-19 and is on the threshold of treating, maybe eradicating, other illnesses, to *The Warmth of Other Suns*, *The Emperor of Pain*, and *American Dirt*.

Our next book is *Bing and Billie and Frank and Ella and Judy and Barbra*—mini-biographies of these great interpreters of the Great American Songbook—, by Dan Callahan. Gerry Linda will lead the discussion. Try to read the book and join us for the discussion on January 10th (a Wednesday morning) or just join us to see us in action.



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RESPONSIVE WEBSITE**
www.menenjoyingleisure.org



EVENT SCHEDULE - JANUARY 2024

- Jan 2 MEL monthly breakfast 9am Demetri's restaurant on Lake Cook Rd. (Moved to Tuesday because of the holiday) (Contact Jack Meyers)
- 2 Canasta 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
- 5 MEL monthly meeting 10am at the temple
- 8 Gin Rummy 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
- 15 Rummikub 11am Portillo's Deerfield
- 16 Canasta 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
- 18 Cernan Earth and Space Center
- 19 Movie Discussion (Contact Gerry Linda)
- 22 Poker 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling
- 25 Current Events on Zoom 9:30 (Contact Joel Karlinsky)
- 25 MEL monthly lunch 11:30 McAlister's Deli Deerfield
- 30 Canasta 11am D'Agostino's in Wheeling



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

January	3	Ron Chess
	3	Carl Rosenthal
	9	Ron Zweig
	10	Jay Weintraub
	10	Bernie Turk
	13	Ron Emmerman
	13	Mike Kafenstok
	13	Len Weiskirch
	19	Neil London
	20	Joel Meisles
	20	Mitch Weiss
	25	Burt Harris
	27	Elliot Young
	28	Ron Borden
	30	Allen Krissberg