

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2025

# MONTHLY

## MEN ENJOYING LEISURE

About MEL, Melmen and their activities



### FROM THE EDITOR



This issue's feature article, by Rich Spitzer, is about the MEL Photo Group. We also have a story about MEL's first foray into the world of Bocce. And there is a gem of a piece by Webmaster, Sheldon Kail, on how to create a one-click, direct link to the MEL website. This is something you are all going to want to do. And take a look at all the great special events and semi-regular

activities that lie ahead—including *three* things we've never done before. Plus, we've pictures and birthdays. Enjoy! Gerry

### MEL TRIES BOCCÉ . . . AND LIKED IT!

By Gerry Linda

On January 16, 19 Melmen played Bocce and then had lunch at Pinstripes on Waukegan Rd. in Glenview. About half the guys had never played before. The cost to play was \$9.00. We were divided into six teams and played for an hour on three courts. The rules are simple, the play is not physically arduous, and the game is fun. In fact, the most physically demanding aspect of the game for your fellow Melmen was bending over to pick up the ball, which weighed about 14 ounces! The problem was not the weight of the ball, but the bending and straightening.

According to research provided by Les Sgnilek, our planner and leader for this outing, Bocce is the third most popular sport in the world based on the number of players after soccer and golf. In the US alone, more than 25 million people play Bocce, now 25,000,019. Bocce in its current form was played as early as 264 BC in Rome; then and now it was spread all over the world by Italian immigrants. The Roman emperor, Augustus, played, as did Hippocrates and Galileo. And George Washington built a Bocce court at Mount Vernon in the 1780s.

It turned out we had a ringer in our midst. Ansel Edidin. When he summers in Connecticut, he plays for a couple of hours every Friday afternoon and has been doing so for about 10 years. Fortunately for the rest of us, based on the quality of his play and his knowledge of the rules, this made no difference in his performance.

After the game, we ate lunch in a private room, thank you very much. The cream of tomato soup was fabulous!

We all agreed we had a lot of fun and would like to play again. Les, stepped up and offered to lead us once a quarter. Thank you, Sir; well done!



Melman on the Bocce courts. Photo courtesy John Simon.

MEL Longboat Key courtesy Jerry Lasin.

## MEL GETS THE PICTURE – By Rich Spitzer

Are all Melmen in the photography group? It's possible.

MEL has long had an active photography group, which was one of the attractions when I recently joined. If you're not a member or familiar with the group, here's a quick review.

1. The current photo group started about six years ago.
2. There are currently 34 members--about 20% of Melmen.
3. There are nonstop activities throughout the year:
  - a. There are monthly photo topics and members submit pictures to the group for discussion via Zoom. Steve often takes an extra step and applies enhancements to members' pics to demonstrate what can be done with modern photo software.
  - b. My favorite — there are six scheduled photo outings from April through October, from downtown Chicago to the Milwaukee Zoo.
4. The photo group is about the art and process of taking pictures and people sharing a common interest. It's not about the intricacies of expensive photo equipment. In fact, a high percentage of the photos submitted are taken with cell phones. Steve emphasizes that most photography has a common toolbox. However, photos can have various purposes: photography as an art form, to tell a story, document a subject or event, or to record memories for the future.

The point is that all Melmen may be part of a photo group; if not the MEL group, then certainly the universal photo group.

Here are a few facts that highlight how modern photography is the offshoot of an entirely different method of communication — our cell phones:

1. The addition of cameras to cell phones came from several sources in the late 1990s. The first commercial camera phone was introduced by Samsung in 2000.
2. In the United States, 98% of adults own a smartphone; globally, it's in the 55% to 60% range. Virtually every smartphone has a camera. There are almost eight billion smartphones in service today.
3. We are taking more pictures than ever! At the height of the film age, in the late 1990s, according to Kodak, 80 billion photos were taken annually. Today, the annual photo crop is over 2 trillion. What does this mean every day?
  - a. 5.3 billion photos are taken daily.
  - b. 60,000 photos per second.
  - c. What are the most common subjects of cell phone photography? Selfies, other people, pets, scenery.
  - d. The analysis is clear: we use cell phones to talk with people and to take pictures of people.

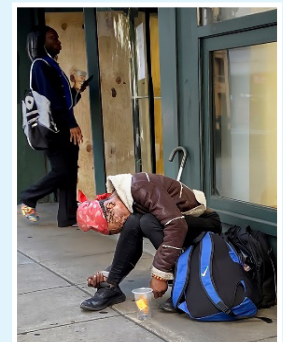
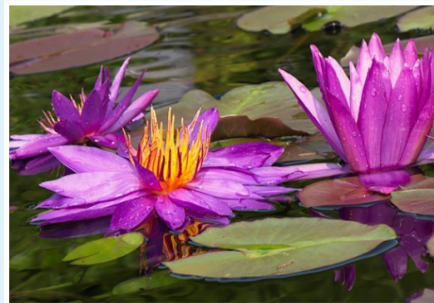
One last fact I can identify with, according to one report: *54% of smartphone users find it overwhelming to search their phone's memory for specific photos from the past.*

So, even if you do not officially belong to the MEL photo group, if you own a cell phone, we'll consider you an honorary member because you clearly belong to the global cell phone society.

### It wouldn't be right to do a story about a photo group without photos!

Steve emphasizes that the purpose of photos is varied: art, documentation, recording, and telling a story. It's not just what we see, but how we see it and how we want to convey it. The composition, exposure, use of color or not, and a myriad of other elements contribute to the final presentation.

And, of course, a photo can fulfill more than one purpose at a time. Steve provided several photos to illustrate each theme; look below and then decide which are stories, which are memories, and which are art or documentation.



Next photo stop for me: our first outing in April--downtown Chicago.

Check out the MEL photo group; you'll have a chance to display your work and learn how to take better photos through the general discussion and suggestions.

## MARCH SPEAKER

Our March speaker is new member, **Scott Steinberg**, who will discuss **A Career in Sports**.

Scott has spent his entire career as an editor, director and creator/producer of film, video and digital media, whose content mostly focused on sports. He has worked for CBS Sports, NFL Films, Major League Baseball Productions, and the Big Ten Network to mention a few of his sports-related clients. His non-sports work included such clients as McDonalds, Coca-Cola, Facebook, The Lincoln Project, and Senator Raphael Warnock's Senatorial campaign.

MEL's membership is loaded with sports fans and this will not be a speaker to miss.



# PHOTOS OF THE MONTH



Photograph By Sheldon Kail

## BEST IMAGE

Come Light The Menorah by Sheldon Kail, taken 12/31/24.

“This photo was taken during a family Hanukkah celebration at my house. The two subjects are my grandkids, whose facial expressions captured the wonder of the moment.”

## BEST COMPOSITION

Tasty Menorah by Jerry Fisher, taken 1/1/25.

“My wife and granddaughter created this menorah from hot dogs, twisty dough and everything bagel seasoning for Hanukkah. Clever and tasty . . . and those are Kosher hot dogs.”



Photograph By Jerry Fisher

# MEL ACTIVITIES PHOTOS

MEL Pool Hustlers, photo courtesy Gene Chaiken.



Melmen with hearts.



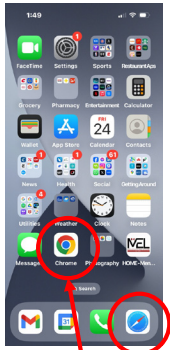
Melmen and others play bridge.



The MEL book group after discussing **The Age of the Strongmen: How the Cult of the Leader Threatens Democracy Around the World**, by Gideon Rachman.

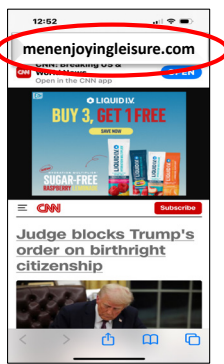
# HOW TO ADD A MEL WEBSITE LINK TO YOUR PHONE'S HOME SCREEN

Step 1: Open your internet browser

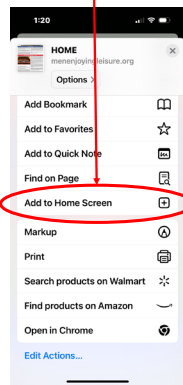


Tap on browser (e.g. Safari or Google Chrome)

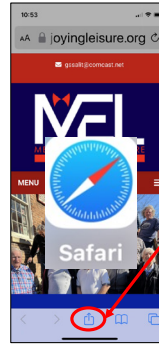
Step 2: Once your browser opens, type [menenjoyingleisure.org](http://menenjoyingleisure.org) in address bar at top and press Enter/Go



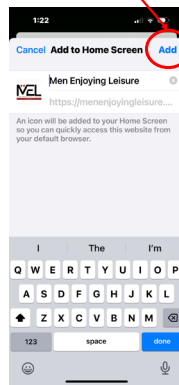
Step 4: Scroll down the save options menu to click on "Add to Home Screen"



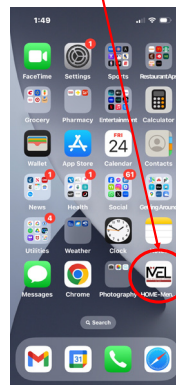
Step 3: MEL Website will open



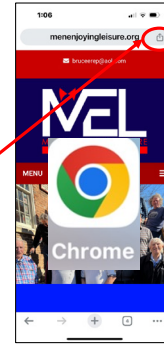
Step 5: Click on the "Add" button



Step 6: A link to the MEL website will appear on your home screen as an app-like icon. Tap the icon to open the website directly.



Click on Save Options Button (Note: Location of Save Options button is different for Safari and Chrome)



## UPCOMING SPECIAL AND SEMI-REGULAR EVENTS

- Feb. 28 Great Lakes Sailor Museum tour (Bruce)
- Mar. 27 Fermi Lab tour (Nick Brown)
- Mar. 31 Texas Hold 'Em Tourney (Bruce)
- Apr. 10 Bocce at Pinstripes (Les Sgnilek)
- Apr. 18 Roadster event/tour (Mickey Baim)
- Apr. 21 Mini golf weather permitting (Bruce)
- May 15 Marriott Theater - Titanic (Bruce/Walter Brown)
- May 20 McCormick Place Food Depository event (Bill Gurolnick)
- May 30 Annual Cubs game (Bruce/Bob Shuman)
- July 23 Annual MEL Dinner (Bruce/Bob Greenberg, Dave Marcus)
- July 30 American Family Field Cubs/Brewers (Bruce/Bob Shuman)
- Oct. 8 Casino night at Beth El Temple (Bob Stein, John Simon/Bruce)



## JANUARY - FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



### JANUARY

3	Ron Chess	76
3	Carl Rosenthal	72
9	Ron Zweig	78
10	Vic Weisskopf	82
13	Ron Emmerman	86
13	Micheal Kafenstock	76
20	Joel Meisles	91
20	Mitch Weiss	84
22	Alan Schwartzberg	85
23	Peter Clark	73
25	Burt Harris	84
27	Elliot Young	77
28	Ron Borden	82
30	Allen Krissberg	73

### FEBRUARY

1	Walt Brown	83
1	Larry Fradin	86
2	Bruce Harris	81
2	Joel Stein	74
2	Harold Versten	85
4	Barry Edelstein	72
5	Mickey Baim	77
10	Howard Katz	89
17	Robert Greenberg	73
17	Marshall Romanz	87
17	Neil Stein	78
18	Herb Roskin	87
19	Arthur Noparstak	74
20	Bob Schlossberg	84
20	Marshall White	72