



Springfield, Illinois, downtown city skyline

★ ★ APRIL 2026 ★ ★

## FROM THE EDITOR



This month's issue features an article about the movie, **Project Hail Mary**, the tale of how Walt Brown's grandson met his namesake and a squib about this year's first miniature golf outing. Of course, we have lots of photos of MEL in action plus birthdays and the always impressive forecast of upcoming events.

Enjoy!

Gerry

## WALT'S CUP RUNNETH OVER

- As told to Gerry Linda, nearly word-for-word, by Walt Brown.

While it's true the 2026 World Cup is coming to America this summer, and some US cities will host matches, the international event will bypass the Windy City. But for the family of MEL member, Walt Brown, there will be a significant connection to it.

Walt's grandson, Landon, will be featured in a series of commercials for one of the event's major sponsors – Kia Motors of America. The spots will air during the Cup telecasts. As the tie-in with the quadrennial soccer tournament, the 10-year-old was filmed playing soccer, as well as talking with soccer stars from all over the globe.

How did all this happen? Landon and his older sister, Mallory, appeared in a TV commercial several years ago, and had a talent agent. A few months ago Walt's son in LA, Jon, received notice of an unusual gig from the agent. Their client wanted a soccer-playing boy who met certain requirements – age, high soccer interest and skill, ease in front of the camera, lived in LA, (one of the host cities) and, of course, available during the school year. Landon, who regularly plays in a top-tier kids' league, fulfilled them all. After a series of auditions with Kia's production company, Landon was chosen for the part.

Much of the filming was done locally in LA, but for economic reasons, the whole crew had to fly to Capetown, South Africa, to shoot other scenes. What an adventure for a fifth grader! Not surprisingly, the whole family decided to pursue this opportunity and pitch in with the necessary arrangements.

Walt's Cup runneth over. He's very proud of Landon and can't wait to see the commercials.



Jon named his son after the most famous US soccer player. -- Landon Donovan, and Landon Brown was finally able to meet his namesake at an LA filming site.



## IT MUST BE SPRING - By Bruce Edelson

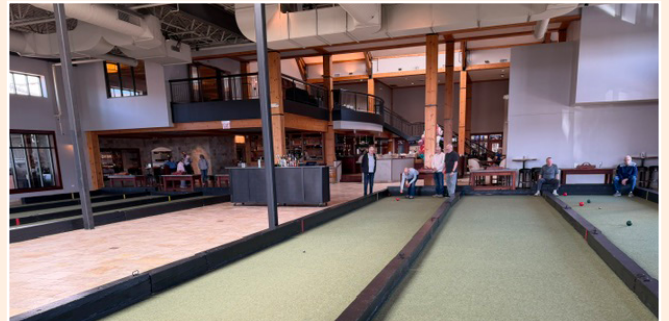
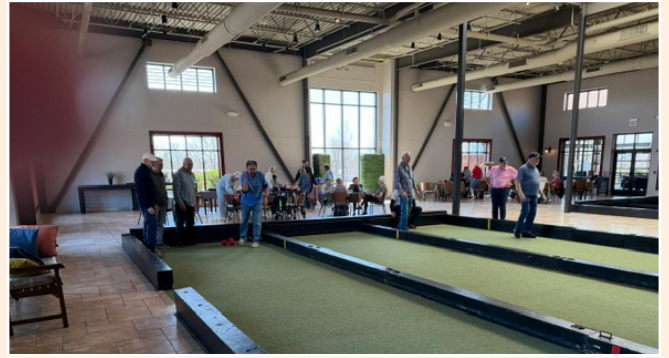
On Monday, April 20th, 19 MELMEN participated in the 1st Mini Golf tournament of the season held at The Highland Park Golf Learning Center.

The winner with a score of 50 was Bruce Edelson. Three MELMEN had a hole in one: David Marcus, Alan Esterman and Bruce Edelson.

Lunch was at Portillo's before the game.

Come join us for a somewhat challenging, fun time when we play again on Friday, June 26!

## MEL DOES BOCCE



### TEXAS HOLD 'EM—AGAIN - *By Bruce Edelson*

The Winter Texas Hold 'Em tournament was held at D'Agostino's on Monday, March 30, 2026. The big winner was Bruce Edelson, John Simon was second. The game is seemingly simple. Everyone gets two private hole cards and shares five community cards. There are four rounds of betting. The best hand (if multiple bettors stay in) or the last remaining bettor wins.

Come join us for our summer renewal on Monday, June 29.



Taken March 10, 2026, by Terry Steczo in Tromso, Norway, on an iPhone.



## MEL BELIEVES IN THE HAIL MARY PLAY

- By Gerry Linda



MEL's Tai Chi program adds two: Ron Meibach's grandkids Phillip (9) and Loryea (8) Greenberg.



On the last day in March, 11 Melmen had the pleasure of viewing **Project Hail Mary** in the IMAX format at the AMC Crossroads Theater. This exciting and heart-warming science fiction movie, filmed with dramatic special effects, is based on the current NYT Best Seller of the same name by Andy Weir, the hard-science author of the highly regarded **Martian**.

The plot makes the stakes terrifyingly high—nothing less than the fate of all humanity. And who is going to carry this load? Why it's none other than a reluctant Ryan Gosling, using his talent for ironic humor and his open-minded and open-hearted acceptance of help from a very unusual alien.

We loved this movie as did most critics. Rotten Tomatoes has given the film a remarkable 96% rating. It already qualifies as a blockbuster and, even though we are still in the beginning of the year, it has begun to be mentioned as an Oscar candidate for acting, special effects and picture. It's not too late to see this movie on the "big screen" and I'm sure it will kill when it gets streamed. It's an audience pleaser—even among those who typically don't care for Sci-Fi.

After the lengthy (two hours and 26 minutes) movie, we were ready for dinner at the nearby Red Robin. It turns out that this will be the last time we get unlimited fries, as the entire chain is closing.

MEL's Margulies Movie Group's next event, set for May 29, is a review of the career of the great Robert Duvall, who died this past February at age 95. And we'll take a close look at the highly regarded (19 Emmy nominations and seven wins), four-part series, **Lonesome Dove**.

Join us; won't you!



First day of pickleball outside.

### UPCOMING SPECIAL AND SEMI-REGULAR EVENTS

- May 14** Couples Bridge at Spears (*Gary Salit*)
- May 28** Men who have lost a Spouse breakfast at Scrambled (*Larry Williams*)
- June 3** Amazon Tour Oak Creek, WI. Brunch at Maple Table Racine (*Bruce*)
- June 19** Cubs/Blue Jays at Wrigley Field (*Bruce and Bob Shuman*)
- June 25** Ethnic Lunch restaurant TBD (*Alan Esterman*)
- June 26** Mini Golf at The Highland Park Golf Learning Center (*Bruce*)
- June 29** Texas Hold Em tournament Summer edition at D'Agostino's (*Bruce*)
- July 10** Bocce at Pinstripes (*Les Sgnilek*)
- July 22** Annual Dinner at Chevy Chase (*Bruce-Ron Meibach-Harris Cohen*)
- July 30** Annual Spa day (*Buddy Kalish*)
- Aug. 14** Air Classics Museum Tour in Sugar Grove- Details TBD (*Alan Esterman*)
- Sept. 8** Cubs/Brewers at American Family Field (*Bruce and Bob Shuman*)
- Sept.17** Couples night at the Marriott "Come from Away" (*Bruce and Walt Brown*)



First golf outing.



#### APRIL

#### MAY

2	Ansel Edidin	87	3	Donald Gaule	76
4	Jack Solwa	75	5	Larry Krupp	72
7	Richard Horwood	86	8	Ed Cohen	74
14	Jerry Schwartz	79	9	George Giddens	9
14	Marv Topel	88	13	Jerry Berk	98
16	Steven Wolf	73	15	Richard Ferdman	79
19	Fred Nathan	88	17	Steven Stern	71
2	Al Simon	90	22	Aaron Hershinow	82
27	Richard Delevitt	79	23	Bruce Hershman	90
27	Ron Sandler	86	23	Louis Rosen	89
28	Bill Keroff	83	31	Mike Karsen	80
29	Stan Ascher	86			
29	Lonnie Klein	82			



American Family Field