

★ ★ ★ ★ SEPTEMBER 2026 ★ ★ ★ ★

FROM THE EDITOR



Hi all,

It's fall; chilly nights, but the days are still warm-ish. Some of our outdoor activities like biking and hiking will become more iffy before they cease altogether. But MEL still has great events coming up: the last miniature golf outing on October 9, the Pritzker Military Museum on 10/23, the Little City Halloween Volunteer activity on 10/29, and the Toys for Tots drive and luncheon on November 16. And all the regular activities continue: books, movies, lots of cards, Tai Chi, etc. ★

Lot's of articles this month: Mt. Sinai visit, Jimmy Thai's Ethnic Lunch, Come From Away recap, the Cubs game, a Member Bio and lots of pictures.

Enjoy! Gerry



Rock Cut State Park, Northern Illinois

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT - By Gerry Linda



This month we profile **Les Sgnilek**, the newest member of MEL's Board of Directors, who joined the Board just two years after becoming a Melman!

Many of you will remember Les' moving presentation about his family history at a MEL Monthly meeting. He was born in October of 1948 in the Foehrenwald DP Camp, one of

the largest Displaced Persons camps in postwar Germany. It existed from 1945 until 1957. His parents were Holocaust survivors, who came from the same small town in Poland before the war.

The family moved to Coney Island (NYC) in 1950, and his sister, Gloria, was born in 1957. She now lives in Davidson, North Carolina. Les graduated Abraham Lincoln High School and then attended City College of New York, from which he received a degree in accounting. In 1970 he began working at Grant Thornton and subsequently became a CPA. And he attended St. John's University (Queens) from which he received a graduate degree in International Finance.

In 1973 he left public accounting and began a long, distinguished career in corporate finance and general management, which did not end until 2023. "I liked working." His assignments, with increasing responsibilities, spanned several companies, various industries, required living in many different places, and involved lots of executive travel such as "flying to London one week each month for seven years." His career culminated as Corporate Vice President for Corporate Services at PCTEL, a global supplier of antennas, scanners and other communications equipment, with offices around the world and Headquarters in Bloomingdale, IL. His Corporate Services portfolio included: Accounting, Treasury, IT and HR.

Les' first marriage lasted from 1973 until 2013 (after a long separation) and produced two children: Matthew (47) and Janie (45). In 2011, the gods smiled on Les and he met Sheila Kidder and married her in 2014. That same year Sheila retired after 22 years in Marketing at Discover. They have settled in Buffalo Grove. She had two children, who produced four granddaughters, who Les has known and loved all their lives.

Les joined MEL in 2024 and since then he has been quite busy. He joined the MEL Board, manages Tai Chi and Feed The Children, and used to manage Bocci, which, alas, has to cease since Pin Stripes is closing their courts. He also is arranging for an upcoming Ethnic Lunch. Plus he is a regular attendee at The Adventure Walk, pickleball, the book club, hearts, canasta, current events, sports talk, and the photo club. Of course, he also attends many special events as well.

I pointed out that seems like a MEL activity every day. He corrected me: "Not on Mondays; on Monday I volunteer for my temple."

He has a message for fellow Melmen: "Try to engage in as many activities that MEL offers as possible. It is a tremendous organization and resource for all of us retired men. Use it to the fullest extent possible."

FLASH FROM THE PAST



Memory from the time when MEL played lineball. Courtesy: Steve Wasserman.

MELMEN WITNESS CUBS MELTDOWN AT GREAT OUTING - *By Bruce Edelson*

On September 8th, 27 Melmen took off to Milwaukee to see the Cubs-Brewers night game at American Family Field. First up was an early dinner at Kelly's Bleachers. A private dining area, great food, service, hospitality and the tables greeted us with big "reserved for Bruce" signage. Pretty cool! Kelly's is definitely our go to place to dine in Milwaukee.



Note the photo (above) of Steve Lurie attempting to eat the world's largest pretzel. John Simon ordered one as well. Yes, they shared them with not only fellow Melmen, but also with other diners, who were sitting nearby.



Kelly's then shuttled us to and (later) from the park. Wow, it doesn't get more convenient than that! We arrived at the park and had great seats. In the 3rd inning, our name was displayed on the jumbotron (see photo).



Unfortunately, the Cubs' 3-1 lead in the 9th was erased and they lost in the 10th 4-3. The best news is that we all made it home safely, although it was about midnight.



MEL's Margulies Movie Group

MEL CAME FROM NOT SO FAR AWAY - *By Walt Brown*

Fifty wives and Melmen enjoyed a smashing night at the Marriott Theater September 17 to see **Come From Away**. The emotions the multiple-award-winning musical created ranged from tragically sad to an uplifting response to the best of the human spirit. And, since the performance was local, MEL didn't have to come from so far away to catch it.

When 7,000 airline passengers had their flights disrupted on September 11, there was no place for them to go. As a last resort, all the trans-Atlantic flights on that horrific day were re-routed to Gander, a tiny town in Newfoundland. The townspeople opened their homes, wallets and hearts to take care of them, and relayed their individual stories for dramatic effect.

To an American audience, and the Melmen, too, the timing of the production held a special meaning. First, the Marriott scheduled it to

coincide with the exact date of the event. Second, the show highlighted the generosity of the Canadian townspeople while our government is fighting a trade war with our northern neighbor.

A number of our members had seen the play one or more times before but still attended our event. Bob Schlossberg, for instance, said: "It was great."

As usual, we dined before the performance. Marriott decided to create a dinner that related to the subject of the play. Accordingly, our package included a choice of something called "Bangers and Mash," a Newfoundland staple, for the main course. Our group eyed their plates with some trepidation 'till they tasted it – it was a kind of sausage with mashed potatoes, which most of us enjoyed.



MEL VISITS MT. SINAI - *By Buddy Kalish*



In August, led by Buddy Kalish, MEL visited Mt. Sinai Medical Center for a tour of the ER and NICU departments. We met with Dr Ngozi Ezike, MD, the President & CEO, Abraham Morgan, Board Member, Rebecca Garrett, Chief Development Officer, and Taylor Morell, Manager of Major Gifts. Dr Ezike related the history of Mt Sinai Hospital, founded in 1919 by Morris Kurtzon. She also described the current status of the hospital.

Mount Sinai Medical Center is a non-profit institution, which provides charity care to 59% of its patients and is a teaching hospital affiliated with Ross University School of Medicine, Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science and the University of Illinois at Chicago. The hospital is an adult Level 1 trauma center, chest pain center, and stroke center. Sinai Chicago has five ACGME (Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education) accredited residency training programs in General Surgery, Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Afterwards, we had a healthy, low-calorie, low-salt and low-fat lunch (NOT!) at the famous Manny's Cafeteria & Delicatessen. Attendees included: Burt Zis (born there and worked in the pharmacy), Harold Versten, Les Sgnilek, Larry Krupp, Dave Marcus, Paul Chestler, Marv Topel (born there), Jerry Schechter, Art Callistein, Mort Blieberg (guest) and Buddy Kalish (born there).

Another outstanding MEL event enjoyed by all.



MEL Adventure Walk--Near Northwestern University

MEL ETHNIC LUNCH - JIMMY THAI - *By Gerry Linda*



On Friday, September 25, 48 Melmen had the pleasure of dining at the well-known and popular restaurant, Jimmy Thai (205 Lake Cook Rd, Deerfield). Jimmy Thai has won several awards for excellence, including: "2025 Best Restaurant in Deerfield" (Restaurant Guru), "2023 Top 25 Places to Eat on the NorthShore" (Yelp), and "2021 Top Choice Asian Restaurant" (Chicago Food To Go). We were not disappointed and we ordered from all over the large menu. What's more, the food was plentiful, came out fairly quickly, and it was hot.

Thanks are due Bob Shuman for making the arrangements—a bottle of water, plus a large, delicious lunch for a flat \$20 (which included the tip).



UPCOMING SPECIAL AND SEMI-REGULAR EVENTS

- October 9** Miniature Golf at The Highland Park Golf Learning Center on RT41 (*Bruce*)
- October 23** Pritzker Military Museum Tour in Kenosha- Lunch at Brat Stop (*Bob Shuman*)
- October 29** Little City Halloween Volunteer event (*Alan Esterman*)
- November 16** Toys for Tots Luncheon Max and Benny's (*Larry Krupp*)



THE FLYING FICKLE PLUNGER OF FATE

- By Mike Stricker

To the left is a picture of the proudly displayed MEL Traveling Mini Golf Trophy (below the TV screen). It's in the TV room of our current champion, Jack Meyers. Jack is hoping to remain champion this month so he can display it all winter!



SEPTEMBER

1	Sarge Hoteko	79
3	William Goldman	88
4	Mark Busch	76
6	Fred Elman	89
6	Len Zacks	82
7	Phil Fine	82
8	John Belvisi	72
9	Alana Magit	83
12	Sheldon Kail	72
13	Howard Weisbart	76
16	Marvin Feinberg	83
16	Norman Maskin	74
25	Rick Gurolnick	72
27	Paul Chesler	79
27	Loren Hutter	72

OCTOBER

2	Ralph Samuel	85
6	Jeffrey Wadle	86
9	Arnie Cohen	77
10	Len Becker	83
11	Mark Garber	79
11	Les Sgnilek	78
12	Marvin H Berman	91
12	Ulfur Thors	74
13	Steven Wasserman	81
22	Jack Myers	83
24	David Marcus	84
24	Jay Weintraub	80
26	Joel Goldberg	89
28	Larry Kominsk	80
31	Jack Marks	89
31	John Wolfson	74