

P.O. Box 5035  
Marco Island, FL. 34146  
www.MarcoMensClub.com

The Marco Men's Club

# Newsletter

January 2024

Established 1992  
A non-profit organization

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings!

**Happy New Year! Welcome Back!**

If you still have not paid your dues – they are officially past due. By the end of January, we will be removing those remaining unpaid from our active roles.

Unfortunately, that will mean you will not be able to play golf, play bocce, go on cruises, go to theater events, go to dinners, and you will miss our signature event – the Sweetheart Ball.

Bocce started this week. Contact **Rick Johnson** with questions.

The flyer for the annual **Welcome Back Party** (Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>) is on the website. The team has put together what looks to be a great event at Rookery Bay.

**Ed Crane** has done another great job setting up the website for easy credit card payment.

Find a link to pay on the home page of our website. Despite all the inflation, we are able to hold the dues at the current \$60 per year thanks to the Board and Committee Chairs watching their spending!

Thanks to **Warren Uhl** for chairing the Nominating Committee for 2024 officers. The following are the list of nominees:

President: Mike Ballenger

VP: Mark Haynes

VP: Don Koppel

VP: Tom Kramer

VP: Rob Reiley

VP: Arne Sandberg  
Treasurer: Rudi Landwaard  
Secretary: Jerry Defibaugh

There will be an election during our regular January Meeting on Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>.

This is our anniversary meeting, so there will be a free lunch served afterward – you do need to register for the lunch. The flyer is posted.

The Speaker for January will be Melissa Blazier, Supervisor of Elections for Collier County.

### **Volunteers Needed.**

We are looking to fill the following roles:

#### **Program Director -**

We are looking for someone to take over the lead in scheduling the speakers for our regular monthly meetings. **John DeMado** has been doing a great job but will be stepping away from the role. He has speakers scheduled through February.

#### **Travel Discussion Group Leader -**

Leads the monthly co-ed discussion about travel. Meets the first Wednesday of each month – currently 10:30am at Ori's Bakery. Next meeting will be February 7<sup>th</sup>. The topic will be River Cruising.

#### **Hospitality Team Member -**

Helps set up coffee and donuts at our regular monthly meetings; helps with check-in.

The ***Sweetheart Ball*** is scheduled for Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at Naples Lakes Country Club. A great meal is planned along with dancing and of course, cocktails! Sign up now!

Theatre Update – Renovations at the Sugden Theatre (home of the Naples Players) are behind schedule. They are rescheduling their spring lineup. “The Producers” show is moving from March to Sunday, July 7<sup>th</sup>. Check with **Don Lally** about your tickets if you already ordered. There are additional seats available for the new date. (see the new flyer)

The May performance of “The Play that Goes Wrong” will move to January 2025. More updates on this show when we announce our 2025 theatre schedule.

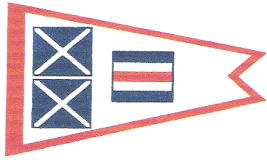
Cruise Update – **Bill Rogers** just announced the 57<sup>th</sup> Cruise: 11 Night BRITISH ISLE PASSAGE ABOARD OCEANIA CRUISE LINES “5.5” STAR SHIP “SIRENA” from Amsterdam October 22 - Nov 3, 2024

Sign-ups are still available for both the March Caribbean Cruise and the May/June Alaska Cruise.

The Travel Club has announced an 8-day trip aboard the Rocky Mountaineer Train including hotel overnights and visits to Arches and Canyonland National Parks, plus lots more.

It’s going to be a great New Year!

***Dave Tobiasz***



January 2024

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1992

## COMPUTER/TECHNOLOGY CLUB



Next meeting, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 10AM will be at Ori's. Spouses and significant others are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Need help with your new iPhone, Ring camera, iPad or other device? Having problems downloading a new App? Don't understand what this thing called WhatsApp is and how it can save you money on your next cruise trip? This is the place to get help! In September, we spoke about Chat GPT and AI tools; we will continue that discussion. Bring your topics to discuss!

Contact **Steve Furlong** at 309-662-9101

Or [stevenrichardfurlong@gmail.com](mailto:stevenrichardfurlong@gmail.com).

## INVESTMENT DISCUSSION CLUB

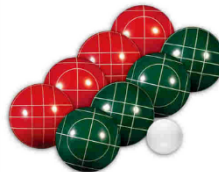


This is a gathering where opinions are valued, facts are appreciated and experience is not

necessary, but prized. An open and broad discussion of topics relating to investment raised by those present, is conducted. The Club meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1:30PM at the Marco Lutheran Church in the choir room, please enter through the administrative offices.

Contact Don Koppel Ph:856-906-4318. Meeting status will be through an eBlast the week before the meeting.

## BOCCE BALL



The Bocce League kicked off on January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Eleven teams signed up to play on Tuesday and twelve teams on Thursdays. You can always find the latest Bocce

information from any page in the website by following the dropdown menu link shown in the image below.



Contact **Rick Johnson** at [MMC.BocceLeague@gmail.com](mailto:MMC.BocceLeague@gmail.com)

## TRAVEL DISCUSSION GROUP



Lively discussion planned regarding latest travel developments and favorite destinations. Plan your travels for the 2024 year.

Popular River Cruise destinations and tips from seasoned travelers. Spouses and significant others are encouraged to attend. Add your input, ask any questions. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month at 10:30AM. Next meeting will be February 7th. Location yet to be decided on.

## SPORTS UPDATE

Anyone interested in early season Everblades games or the Harlem Globetrotters in early May, please let me know. Information on baseball spring training games will be available soon.

**Contact, Jack Martin** at 347-837-2131 or [jjtpm11697@yahoo.com](mailto:jjtpm11697@yahoo.com)

## HOSPITALITY

Thanks to the guys who set up the room. Chairman, **DON KOPPEL, RICH CARLSEN, DON LALLY, LOU MAKRIS** and **DEREK MULLINDER**.

## MMC HATS AND SHIRTS

The order form for Hats and Shirts is available on-line on the MMC Website, under the **MISCELLANEOUS** header. Click on **CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES** to obtain Order Form and Instructions.

## MMC TRAVEL CLUB



2024 Men's Club Trip  
**8 Day Rocky Mountaineer Train with Arches, Canyonlands and Tetons**

September 14–September 21, 2024

### Itinerary:

Day 1 Arrive Denver, Dinner and Hotel included.

Day 2 Rocky Mountaineer Train to Glenwood Springs Hotel with Breakfast and Lunch.

Day 3 Rocky Mountaineer Train to Moab Hotel and Arches National Park. Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.

Day 4 Canyonlands National Park Breakfast. Evening boat tour on the Colorado River with Dinner.

Day 6 Travel to Jackson Wyoming Hotel with Breakfast.

Day 7 Grand Teton National Park, Breakfast.

Day 8 Return home from Cody Wyoming, breakfast included.

### Price:

Tour Land only \$4658 pp

Tour with air from RSW \$5197 pp

Deposit is \$300 pp

Guaranteed space for 29 passengers is being held for 30 days until February 5<sup>th</sup>. After that it is space available.

Airport transfers will be arranged and added at final payment.

Insurance is optional and is \$349 pp.

5% discount if paid by echeck or check at final payment. Arrangements are made through **Gate One Travel**.

Contact **Tim Clune** [tclune@gmail.com](mailto:tclune@gmail.com)  
248-980-6142 or Jerry Poulin 508-868-1716 [gpsp@aol.com](mailto:gpsp@aol.com) to sign up.

## **SICKNESS AND BEREAVEMENT**



Please telephone George  
Vitta at 586-942-8056 or  
email

[golflover3@yahoo.com](mailto:golflover3@yahoo.com)

regarding information of  
illness or death of

members, their spouse, and immediate  
family. George will notify the MMC  
board.

# CRUISES



**THE MMC “55<sup>th</sup>” CRUISE**  
**CRUISING SAN JUAN, ST. MARTIN,**  
**ST. THOMAS, DOMINICAN REP.**  
**MARCH 9 – MARCH 16, 2024**

SEVEN NIGHTS ABOARD CELEBRITY’S NEW “APEX” 5 STAR RATED SHIP. THE NEWEST SECOND SHIP IN CELEBRITY’S “EDGE” CLASS. IN ADDITION TO ALL THE AMENITIES MMC EXPERIENCED ON THE “EDGE”, MAGIC CARPET, BEAUTIFUL DESIGN, DÉCOR, INFINITE VERANDAH, BLU ROOM DINING EXCLUSIVE FOR (AQUA CLASS A2) THE NEW ICED MARTINI BAR, A CRAFTED SOCIAL BAR WHERE GUESTS CAN EXPERIENCE DRAFT BEERS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. THIS SHIP OFFERS FINEST ACCOMODATIONS, “4” CARIBBEAN PORTS OF CALL, EXCLUSIVE OF MEXICO PORTS IN VIEW OF COUNTRIES PRESENT PROBLEMS.

CRUISE “7” NIGHTS ABOARD NEW APEX, REQUIRING NO AIR, ONLY ENJOY A MMC ROUND TRIP MARCO COACH TO SHIPS FT. LAUDERDALE, FL, PORT. THIS MMC CRUISE PACKAGE, INCLUDES ROUND TRIP

COACH FROM MARCO ISLAND TO SHIPS FT. LAUDERDALE, FL. PORT., “7” NIGHTS ABOARD CELEBRITY’S LUXURIOUS NEW SHIP, “THE APEX”, CLUB’S STATEROOMS HAVE THE INFINITY BALCONY, “3” FREE PERKS. 1-CLASSIC BEVERAGE PACKAGE. 2. GRATUITIES. 3. WI-FI, ALL TAXES, FEES, & PORT CHARGES. MMC HAS A SECURED EXCELLENT DISCOUNTS WITH OUR “GROUP RATE”. CURRENTLY “33” PEOPLE BOOKED. SAILING ABOARD A NEW CELEBRITY SHIP IS A WONDERFUL TREAT.

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**THE MMC “56<sup>TH</sup>” CRUISE**  
**ALASKA “8” NIGHT PRE-HOTEL/**  
**CRUISE ABOARD CELEBRITY**  
**“SUMMIT” WITH “6” NIGHT PRE-**  
**LAND OPTION.**  
**MAY 25 – JUNE 7, 2024**

“8” PORTS OF CALL...ANCHORAGE, TALKEETNA, DENALI, SEWARD, JUNEAU, SKAGWAY, ICY STRAIT, KETCHIKAN, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA.

PACKAGE INCLUDES: AIR (\$1200 ALLOWANCE) 1 NIGHT PRE-HOTEL (EMBASSY SUITES ANCHORAGE), 7 NIGHT CRUISE, TAXES, PORT CHARGES, TRANSFERS, UNLIMITED DRINK PACKAGE, GRATUITIES, WIFI. AQUA CLASS PASSENGERS DINE IN THE SHIP’S BLU DINING ROOM, AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY TO AQUA CLASS GUESTS. BLU REQUIRES NO ADVANCE RESERVATIONS FOR BREAKFAST OR DINNER.

**OPTIONAL “6” NIGHT PRE LAND TOUR:** ARRIVE IN ANCHORAGE WITH AN OVERNIGHT AT ANCHORAGE MARRIOTT. LATER, EMBARK ON A LUXURIOUS RIDE ABOARD THE

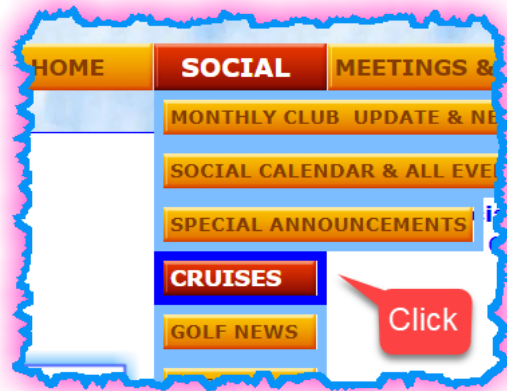
WILDERNESS EXPRESS GLASS-DOMED RAILCAR FOR A SCENIC RIDE TO ONE OF THE MOST PICTURESQUE TOWNS IN ALASKA – TALKEETNA; YOURS TO EXPLORE. FROM THERE YOU WILL BOARD YOUR DELUXE MOTOR COACH FOR THE RIDE TO DENALI AND YOURS TO DISCOVER. 2 NIGHT STAY AT DENALI PARK VILLAGE. THEN EMBARK ON A SCENIC RIDE ABOARD A DELUXE MOTOR COACH TO ANCHORAGE, OVERNIGHT AT HOTEL ALYESKA (GIRDWOOD) AND THEN ON TO SEWARD WHERE YOU JOIN THE CELEBRITY SUMMIT FOR YOUR 7 NIGHT CRUISE TO VANCOUVER.

AT DINING VENUES OR IN ROOM\*\*\*, AND SPECIALTY DINING.

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**GO TO THE CLUBS WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EACH CRUISE. USE THE DROPDOWN MENU (See Image Below) ON ANY WEBPAGE TO GO TO THE CRUISE WEBPAGE FOR THE LATEST FLYER, TRAVELEX INSURANCE, COVID UPDATE AND MUCH MORE.**

**...OR FOLLOW THIS LINK:**

<https://marcomensclub.com/Cruises.htm>



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**THE MMC “57<sup>TH</sup>” CRUISE  
CRUISING BRITISH ISLE PASSAGE  
VISITING AMSTERDAM AND “10”  
PORTS OF CALL  
OCTOBER 22 – NOVEMBER 3, 2024**

“10” PORTS OF CALL... AMSTERDAM,  
NETHERLANDS...EDINBURGH,  
SCOTLAND...KIRKWALL,  
SCOTLAND...ULLAPOOL,  
SCOTLAND...BELFAST, NORTHERN  
IRELAND...HOLYHEAD,  
WALES...CORNWALL,  
ENGLAND...PORTSMOUTH,  
ENGLAND...HON FLEUR (PARIS)  
FRANCE...BRUGES, BELGIUM.  
CRUISE PACKAGE INCLUDES: 11NTS  
ABOARD OCEANIA’S “5.5” STAR SHIP  
“SIRENA”, TAXES, PORT CHARGES,  
GRATUITIES, TRANSFERS, \$1000 AIR  
ALLOWANCE, \$400 PER PERSON  
EXCURSION CREDIT, UNLIMITED  
“HOUSE SELECT” BEVERAGE  
PACKAGE WHICH INCLUDES  
UNLIMITED CHAMPAGNE, WINE AND  
BEER DURING LUNCH AND DINNER

**Contact Bill Rogers at:**

239-259-8945

973-978-8884



January 2024

The Marco Men's Club  
**Speakers Calendar**  
Program Director "OPEN"

**January 10, 2024**

**Melissa Blazier**

**Supervisor of Elections**

**Collier County, FL**

**Securing the Integrity of the  
Collier County Voting Process**

Melissa Blazier was appointed as Collier County Supervisor of Elections by Governor DeSantis in May 2023. She has worked for the Supervisor of Elections office since 2006 most recently serving as Chief Deputy Supervisor of Elections under Jennifer J. Edwards.

Blazier holds a bachelor's degree in business administration, magna cum laude, from Hodges University. She received her designation as a Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA) from the National Association of Election Officials (Election Center) and is a Master Florida Certified Elections Professional (MFCEP) through the Florida Supervisors of Elections (FSE).

She is a graduate of the Associate Leadership Collier program spring class of 2010, Leadership Collier class of 2014 and Leadership Marco class of 2019. Melissa was named one of Gulf

Shore Business's Top Forty under 40 in 2014, Distinguished Fundraising Volunteer via the Association of Fundraising Professionals in 2018, the Leadership Collier Foundation's Volunteer of the Year in 2020 and was most recently named Kiwanian of the Year by the Kiwanis Club of Naples in 2022.

Blazier is a member of the American Legion Auxiliary Post 135, Election Center, Kiwanis Club of Naples, Leadership Collier Alumni Association, League of Women Voters, Men's Republican Club of Collier County, Naples Republican Club, Republican Club of South Collier County, Republican Women of Southwest Florida Federated, and the Women's Republican Club. She currently serves on the Leadership Collier Foundation Advisory Council and is President of the Kiwanis Club of Naples.

*In an age where the legitimacy of the voting process has repeatedly been called into question, it is important to know what is done in Collier County to secure the integrity of the vote.*

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**February 14, 2024**  
**Brittany Piersma**  
**Field Biologist**  
**Audubon Western Everglades (AWE)**

I am pleased to present our Valentine’s Day speaker, Ms. Brittany Piersma! Brittany will speak to the membership regarding the 3 critical conservation projects here on Marco: Burrowing Owls, Gopher Tortoises and Shorebirds.

Brittany has a BS in Environmental Science and previously worked as a zookeeper at the Naples Zoo for 4 years. She has a wide range of experience with Southwest Florida's wildlife from volunteering with FWC (Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission), Rookery Bay, Panther Refuge, and Audubon.

Ms. Piersma worked as FWC's Critical Wildlife Area Shorebird Biologist for the last three summers on Marco Island, where she monitored nesting shorebirds out on Sand Dollar. The last two winters she worked as a Shorebird Steward for Audubon Western Everglades surveying the migratory flocks, training volunteers, and doing outreach with the public.

As Field Biologist for AWE, Brittany maintains continuing wintering bird surveys, assists with the burrowing owl program as well as our new Gopher Tortoise land study.

**Come learn more about the creatures that share Marco Island with you!**

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**Please contact your Program Director, with any speaker recommendations or topics that you would like to have presented at the monthly meeting.**  
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**Program Director “Open”**

January 2024

# Golf News



John Laird, Golf Chairman

Cell: 920-366-4652

Email: [jglaird64@gmail.com](mailto:jglaird64@gmail.com)

## January Golf News

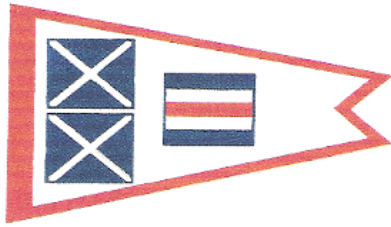
The newly renovated Hibiscus golf course opened December 1<sup>st</sup>. The frequent player card will cost \$325+tax and will cover December through April 2024. Green Fees for our group in December will be \$98 plus tax w/o the FPC and \$76 plus tax with the FPC. Green Fees January through March will be \$125 plus tax w/o the FPC and \$98 plus tax with the card. April fees will be comparable to December and will be finalized at a later date.

### MMC GOLF COORDINATORS WINTER 2023-2024

January	Monday	<b>Roger Smith</b>	<a href="mailto:rsmith186@aol.com">rsmith186@aol.com</a>	910-975-5221
February	Monday	<b>Ron Bales</b>	<a href="mailto:rpbmi@comcast.net">rpbmi@comcast.net</a>	239-389-5587
March	Monday	<b>George Vitta</b>	<a href="mailto:golflover3@yahoo.com">golflover3@yahoo.com</a>	586-942-8056
April	Monday	<b>Bob Bart</b>	<a href="mailto:bobbart1@gmail.com">bobbart1@gmail.com</a>	416-520-2798

Thank you to all of the coordinators! Our group would not function without you.

**John Laird**



# THE MARCO MEN'S CLUB

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*The Newsletter is published by the Marco Men's Club.*

*The Board of Directors is the Editorial Board.*

**January 2024**

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Dave Tobiasz  
**President Emeritus:** Warren Uhl  
**Senior Vice President:** Mike Ballenger  
**Vice President:** Steve Furlong  
**Vice President:** Tom Kramer  
**Vice President:** Rob Reiley  
**Vice President:** Arne Sandberg  
**Secretary:** Jerry Defibaugh  
**Treasurer:** Rudi Landwaard

### APPOINTED COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

**Membership Chair:** Byron Farrell  
**Hospitality:** Don Koppel  
**Public Relations:** Dave Walsh  
**Theater Chair:** "Open"  
**Golf Chair:** John Laird  
**Sports Chair:** Jack Martin  
**Bocce Coordinator:** Rick Johnson  
**Program Director:** "Open"  
**Cruise Chair:** Bill Rogers  
**Sergeant-At-Arms:** Mike Levine  
**Sickness/Bereavement Chair:** George Vitta  
**Newsletter Editor:** Lou Makris  
**Constant Contact eBlasts:** Les Konkoly  
**Investment Discussion Club:** Don Koppel  
**Computer/Technology Club:** Steve Furlong  
**Travel Discussion Group:** "Open"  
**MMC Travel Club:** Tim Clune  
**Webmaster:** Ed Crane

[www.marcomensclub.com](http://www.marcomensclub.com)

### Past Presidents (\*indicates deceased):

1992: Paul Kurtzman	1993: Bill Perdichizzi	1994: Harold Penn*	1995: Bob Marks
1996: George Kuntz*	1997: Alan Wetjen*	1998: George Godfrey	1999: Jerry Stought*
2000: Jerry Stought*	2001: Ned Wright	2002: Al Bozzo	2003: Ken Molander
2004: Bob Gaffney	2005: Wayne Boose	2006: Tom Traeger*	2007: Joe Cassidy*
2008: Fred Stavola	2009: Joe Varano	2010: Bill Sullivan	2011: Sam Miloro
2012: Randle Grossman	2013: Jack DeHanas	2014: John Superits	2015: Warren Dettinger*
2016: Dan Flynn	2017: Silky Sullivan	2018: Bill Rogers	2019: Jeff Dywan
2020: Jerry Swiacki	2021: Jerry Swiacki	2022: Warren Uhl	