



THE MEGAPHONE

A Vestigial Organ of the Rascals, Rogues, and RapsCALLIONS



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DR. MOSCHEROSCH WINS 2020 MASS CHALLENGE WITH CHAIN OF DEAD ANIMAL PARTS

Dr. Michael Moscherosch won his first Landgraf Medal in 2003 and on March 13, 2021, in the thirty-third Mass Challenge competition, he chalked up his second victory and earned the right to a silver medal.

Though held this year, the March meeting was the COVID-delayed 2020 Mass Challenge, which was to produce a chain of an unusual substance.

Jordan Goretti was elected a member of the Lair that evening and entered the competition as a Postulate.

The winning entry was a hand-crafted chain consisting of 10 links of animal parts.

Three links were carved, using a Dremel tool, from a single piece of mammoth ivory.

Yes, the winning chain contained ivory from the extinct woolly mammoth of Ice Age fame.

Attached to that trio of prehistoric links were single links of the following animal substances: water buffalo horn, mammoth tusk bark, white-tailed deer antler, Steller's sea cow rib bone, pearl oyster mother-of-pearl, cow shin bone, and snapping turtle upper shell. The single links were joined to each other via



Dr. Michael Moscherosch holds up his chain of animal parts, each link dangling a label indicating its material. He won his second Landgraf Medal in the 2020 Mass Challenge competition of Lair No. 3.

knotted elephant tail hair using a Zeppelin bend knot fixed with super glue.

To each link, Moscherosch then attached a decorative and descriptive tag bearing the names of and pictures of the animal from which it was taken.

It was a frigid night when 14 men met under the hood of the Huntingdon Valley Presbyterian Church barn in a barren space wrapped in tarps and warmed by propane heaters.

Charles George, Hayes

Lewis, Bryan Loudermilk, and Peter Marino joined online from what surely were more comfortable and civilized quarters.

The other entrants were **Dan Bramer**, with a hastily-made, but surprisingly satisfying, oven-dried spaghetti chain; **Sam Clover**, friend of the Rascals and radio personality, with a chain of recording technology from an Edison cylinder to a CD; **Charles George**, zooming in from

Pittsburgh, with a chain of coffee cups that dangled and clanged like a Buddhist windchime; **Raymond Hull III** with a stylish LED bling chain sure to take the gangsta world by storm; **Roger Hull** with a mathematically mysterious chain of Mobius strips from which each attendee got his own strip as a souvenir of the evening; **Jordan Goretti**, the newest Rascal, with an appetizing oven-roasted orange chain; **Hayes Lewis**, calling in from Texas, with a chain of water ice; Director **Calvin Morrison** with a chain of 3D printed links; **Dan Morrison** with a chain of past Rascal personalities that he dubbed “Rascal Pantheonists;” **Leon Moscherosch** with a verbally clever but dangerous-looking saw chain; and **David Rowland**, RR&R visitor and president of the Old York Road Historical



David Rowland holds a chain of title reaching back to William Penn for the Alverthore Manor in Abington, Pennsylvania.

Society, with a chain of title reaching back to William Penn for Alverthorpe Manor, where the OYRHS keeps its offices and collection.

Present but not competing were **Jon Haines**, **George Hindley**, **Rascal Sean McVan**, and **Noel Wolfe**.

The night’s competition was perhaps the keenest seen in Rascal history and all 11 entries were worthy of a win.

But when votes were tallied, **Moscherosch** emerged the clear winner, which was a relief to him as Moscherosch has twice lost out on a Mass

Challenge win when tied votes were settled by brutish arm wrestling matches: first in 2008 against **Dan Morrison** and then in 2014 against **Roger Hull**.

Friends of the good doctor had suggested that he work on his biceps as well as his



Raymond Hull III sports his LED bling chain at the March 2021 running of the Rascal Mass Challenge.

research, but his strategy this year was to shock and awe the group with dead animal parts, including those harvested from an extinct species.

“The animal chain is the most obscure and elaborate contribution to a Mass Challenge I’ve ever made,” Moscherosch said with great satisfaction. “But it was worth it to win the Challenge the second time in 17 years.”

As a two-time winner of the Mass Challenge, Moscherosch’s Jon Landgraf medal will be silver plated and engraved with the date of his second win.

The 2021 Mass Challenge, which will be competed on December 11 of this year, is to write and declaim a poem. The entries to the competition will be gathered and published in a commercially-available volume.



Rascals Zoom Into the Twenty-First Century

Gathering Online Now an Option

The COVID-19 crisis knocked out the first two meetings of the 2020 Rascal calendar. Desperate to meet, the Lair gathered in a tent at Huntingdon Valley Presbyterian Church (HVPC) in September. Four COVID-cautious people joined that meeting via the internet.

The Rascals had entered the Zoom Age!

Then at the fourth quarter meeting, which marked the twentieth anniversary of Lair No. 3, a whole slew of people joined virtually. Sixteen gathered under a tent at HVPC, but seven people joined the celebration online. Some were local, but others hailed from as far away as Texas and Georgia.

Calvin Morrison handled the technology: a laptop, separate webcam and speakers, a large screen television, and cellular internet connection. It was a lot of gear to manage but we saw many long-lost Rascals, some for the first time in more

than a decade.

In light of the Zoom revolution, Lair No. 3 amended its bylaws to accommodate non-resident members. **Tim Esaias**, of Pittsburgh, and **Hayes Lewis**, of Fort Worth, were the first two to take advantage of this option.

Running a hybrid live-virtual meeting is a challenge. Managing the online technology while trying to be part of the in-person gathering is demanding. And virtual participants are more peripheral to the meeting than those at the table.

But bad is better than nothing.

It would be good if we had a dedicated Zoom jockey responsible for the technology and the online experience of the distant Rascals. Certainly Zoom is here to stay and in the future we may do well to conduct our business meetings via Zoom.

The View from Pittsburgh

Having attended the November 2000 meeting of Lair no. 3, I had been intending to come to a twentieth anniversary meeting. Then, alas, pandemic. So I appreciate all the efforts that allowed several of us (including **Charles George**, who also attended that long-ago event) to attend the December 2020 meeting virtually, if not (being Rascals) virtuously.

The fun of Rascal meetings is always the wide-ranging discussions. That makes a Research Report session an especially rich experience. How often do you get the high points of so many personal quests by people who are actively in search of the Interesting Thing?

I benefitted from this event by getting a name for a fictional character: Tori (or perhaps it will be Tory) Gates.

Given the Temüjinic/Tamerlanoid setting for the meeting, it's no surprise that the sound was sometimes a bit faint, or that the online cohort wasn't always audible to the incarnate participants. Being Rascals, the online group did, occasionally, spin off into our own meeting. We shared the secrets for cheaply turning base metals into gold and platinum. One of the members (in response to the exhibition of the Ark) displayed the Grail (currently in their possession). Gal Gadot's burner cell phone number was shared. We're sorry that the rest of the meeting missed this, but any Rascal meeting has fragmented conversational periods involving only parts of the group.

Despite such details, it was wonderful to be able to participate, to see old friends, and to renew ties. I had a good time, and my spirits were elevated for some days.

I do want to finish by saying that it was good to share stories of **Ray Hull Secundus**, and to participate in the rituals of remembrance. What a life, and what a Rascal. – Timons Esaias

Rascal Poetry: The Good, the Bad, and the Regrettable

Cowboy poetry, with many annual gatherings and robust book sales – **Baxter Black** alone has 2 million volumes sold – is a literary form that perplexes dainty aesthetes who cannot imagine poetry written by men with callouses.

Rascal poetry might be an equally unexpected genre. Yet through the years, there has always been a steady trickle of Rascal verse.

Pride of place surely goes to “When the Evening Gets Down to Cigars,” an occasional poem written for the Rascals in 1993 by **Prof. Dr. Samuel Hazo**, then Pennsylvania Poet Laureate.

The most recent bit of Rascal verse was heard at the fourth quarter 2020 meeting. Attached here, the poem was read (a good poem, it must read well) by **Peter Marino**, via Zoom, all the way from Atlanta, as part of the twentieth anniversary celebration.

Bill Baierl contributed some spicy lines to a past issue of *The Megaphone*.

Tim Esaias actually makes money writing poems. Hard to believe, but people pay for the stuff. He has read poems at Rascal meetings and wrote a few lines in response to a past Mass Challenge. His verses are always erudite and amusing.

At the June 2019 meeting, which focused on the composer of *My Last Cigar*, **Rick Bruce**

“A Man of Strong Convictions”
by
Peter Marino
July 2012

<p>A cleaver boy ...his parents joy. You're funny bone he'll tickle.</p> <p>A boy scout true, Red, white and blue. You'd never call him fickle.</p> <p>Two kids, a wife ...the perfect life He works hard to earn a nickel.</p> <p>Yet for all he's done - through all the fun, he's never had a pickle!</p> <p>At five foot ten (or thereabouts) He's quite a manly figure.</p> <p>But no matter how ...you beg or plead He just won't pull the trigger</p> <p>A side dish, condiment or meal, they are made both sour and sweetly.</p> <p>But put them down in front of him, he may skip the meal completely.</p>	<p>Now he's eaten many sandwiches, and some, considered classics.</p> <p>But no matter what the combo, he just will not touch a Vlasic!</p> <p>I can't tell you why or how it is, this phobia has blossomed.</p> <p>Maybe it's tales of whipped pork fat foretold by his mother ...who was awesome!</p> <p>So if I truly know my friend, and I sorta think I do.</p> <p>This attitude will likely stay until his life is through.</p> <p>So when he's finished doing things and his life force starts to trickle.</p> <p>He'll raise his head and smile and say, “I STILL have never had a pickle!”</p>
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extemporized a few anti-cigar lines and was shouted down by an angry mob.

There are the lyrics of *My Last Cigar*, probably by **Joseph Warren Fabens**. Rascals can certainly claim those lines.

Oh, and we cannot forget **Greg Scheer** who penned the words of *Interesting Thing*. That little ditty has to be the most used Rascal poem of all.

That's a lot of poetry for a

lowbrow cigar club. And here's the shocker: upon the advice of Director **Calvin Morrison**, the Mass Challenge for 2021, set for December 11, is to write a poem!

We'd invite Calliope, Thalia, Erato, and Polyhymnia to help us sing, but we Rascals are not so easily amused.



Jim Barr is retired but intimately involved in the many details of launching a new brewpub in Perkasie, Penna. The Van Lieus Brewing Company website is up, but the structure housing the brewery needs work before the first customer is served. One day soon Rascals will meet and drink beer at the Barr bar.

Eric Erb has been selling a lot of stuff, cleaning out his treasure rooms, it seems.

Timons Esaias' story, "Mr. Gibson Goes to Work" was published by DreamForge, an online science and fantasy fiction magazine. This is only the latest item in Tim's lengthy bibliography.

David McFadden died on May 7, 2021. His first Rascal



meeting was in September 1995, as **Bill Baierl** presented on James M. Hubbard of *My Last Cigar* fame. He remained active until 2004 when his eyesight failed and traveling to meetings became too difficult. He started professional life as an ad man, but later become a counselor and hypnotherapist. He was a funny man, perhaps the funniest Rascal yet. His

contribution to American literature is his *McFadden's Funnies*, adult comic books full of hilarious and true stories.

Jordan Goretti continues to play the congas in the HVPC band. He will take over the leadership of the Presbyterian Stogie Society in July.

Karl Halter is at Neshaminy Manor in Bucks County, having suffered a stroke.

Ray Hull III was seen in a blue, late-model Porsche.

Roger Hull has been gathering bees to increase his hive count and bricks to

add to **Dan Morrison's** collection.

Hayes Lewis reports the summer doldrums have arrived in Fort Worth, Texas.

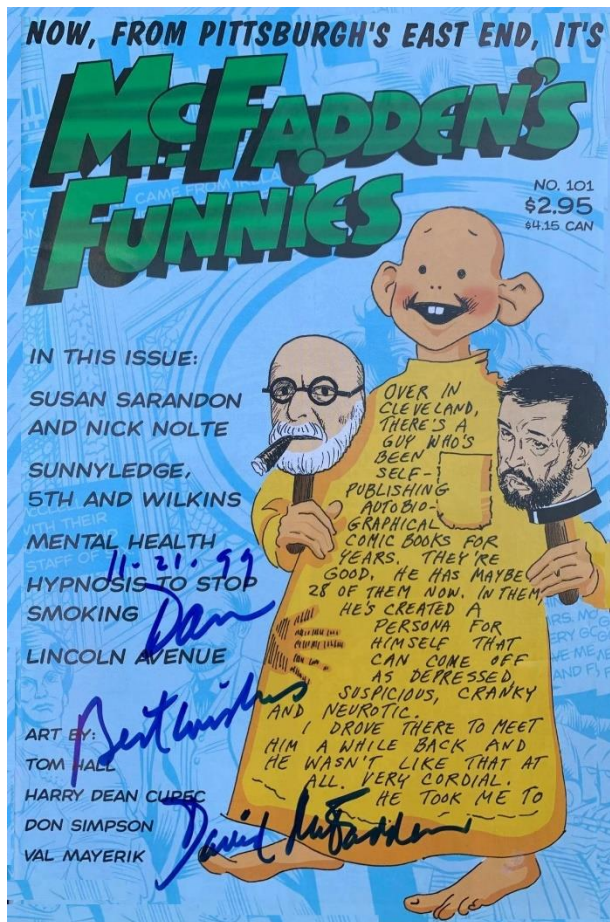
Peter Marino is hoping to buy a house in Todi, Italy.

Sean McVan has thrown his hat into the political ring. He writes, "I received word today that I am officially the Republican candidate for Mayor in Doylestown Borough! My family has lived in the Borough since the 1800s when they came here from Ireland ... The Borough is a great place to live and I want to help keep it that way!"

Calvin Morrison has a new dog named Kona. She joins a cat named James Bond at his house on South Mole Street.

Dan Morrison will give a lecture in Neosho, Missouri, on artist James Duard Marshall, a student of Thomas Hart Benton, on June 26. A fuller version of his research will be published later this year in *Occasional Papers*.

Leon Moscherosch cut his hair. The man-bun interfered with his sleep.



Rascals in the Press Again: Long PR Dry Spell Finally Broken

The Enterprise, the weekly newspaper from Burgettstown, Penna., has the distinction of being the first publication to mention the Rascals, Rogues, and RapsCALLIONS. The date was June 8, 1994 and the occasion was the screening of a film by **Greg Scheer**. That made-for-community-television video documentary featured a heavily tattooed wino, who died just after the film was finished, and a pot-bellied pig living in the

story in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* by **Mike Pelligrini**. Front page of the features section, with a large photo of **Jeff Campbell** and **Bill Baierl** engaged in an arm-wrestling contest, the article captured the spirit and genius of the group. Pelligrini later joined the Rascals.

In 1997, the *Roanoke Times* ran a column about an attempt by **Peter Fosl** and others to raise the Rascal flag over

And then came the dry spell, a decade without any notice in the press.

In 2019, the Rascals had a near miss when *Bucks County Courier-Times* mentioned work done by a Rascal in connection with the 2019 Mass Challenge but failed to name the group.

The twentieth anniversary of Lair No. 3 was newsworthy so **Dan Morrison** sent word to the *Intelligencer* and *Bucks County Courier-Times*

newspapers hoping they would cover the event.

Neither paper bit, but *Bucks County Magazine* did! A glossy, quarterly lifestyle magazine, it ran an 1800-word article and 11 color photos splashed across six pages in the Spring 2021 issue.

The headline is from **Greg Scheer's** Rascal ditty and **Ray Hull II**, who died shortly before the article appeared, is featured.

Pictured in the article are **Jim Barr**, **Dan Bramer**, **Eric Erb**, **Dave Hamalian**, **George Hindley**, **Ray Hull II**, **Ray Hull III**, **Roger Hull**, **Mark McDowell**, **Calvin Morrison**, **Dan Morrison**, **Leon Moscherosch**, **Michael Moscherosch**, **Greg Scheer**, and **Sam Wood**.



town's hardware store and the center of a legal brouhaha that occupied the front page of the Burgettstown newspaper for many issues.

Surely the most impressive newspaper appearance of the Rascals was a March 11, 1996

Mount Roger, Virginia.

The RR&R was mentioned in a January 7, 1999 article in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* about **Dan Morrison** trying to get the Empress of Mexico, buried in Philadelphia, canonized by the Roman Catholic Church.

NEWEST ROGUE CREATED: Sean McVan Digs into Irish Roots



Sean McVan holds a hurley, an ash wood stick used in the Irish game of hurling. McVan was elevated to the rank of Rogue following his Rascal Challenge presentation at the June 12, 2021 meeting of Lair No. 3.

The Republican candidate for mayor of Doylestown, **Sean McVan**, was elevated to the rank of Rogue at the second quarter meeting of Lair No. 3.

Dinner, as elegant as ever, consisted of a hoagie tray and pizzas. **Michael Landis**, Manor College philosopher, made his second appearance at an RR&R meeting.

McVan, who joined the Rascals in 2019, was offered the opportunity to present on animal husbandry but opted to dig into his genealogy. Mostly he spoke of sports and goats.

There are many McVans in Doylestown. Indeed, in the 1990s, **Calvin Morrison** and **Dan Morrison** lived in the 1873 Hugh McVan house next door to **Jerry McVan**, Sean's uncle.

In the 1970s, Sean's father, **Robert McVan**, was on the Doylestown Borough Council.

McVan's family, on both his mother's and his father's side, hail from Ireland and Sean visits his relatives in emerald isle on an annual basis. "I've been to Ireland more often than New York," McVan observed.

The Lair was instructed on two manly Irish sports: Gaelic football and hurling. We also learned about the rural area where McVan's relatives farm.

The most surprising result of his research was that the McVan's are Irish transplants, having begun in Scotland near Loch Ness.

This fact did not incline McVan to call himself a Scot, however.

Along with his computer slide show, which suffered from a non-cooperative projector, Sean brought a slew of historic papers and photos connected with his family.

Following his presentation, Sean absented himself from the table while the Lair considered whether he successfully met his Challenge.

When the vote was taken, all were in favor of advancing the young Hibernian, but with one caveat: that he give a fuller explanation of the goat which sits atop a tower during a certain fair in Ireland. As an explanation was forthcoming, Sean was welcomed to the ranks of Rogues.

Present at the meeting at the barn of Huntingdon Valley Presbyterian Church were: **Jim Barr, Dan Bramer, Jordan Goretti, Rich James, Michael Landis, Sean McVan, Calvin Morrison, Dan Morrison, Leon Moscherosch, Michael Moscherosch, and Noel Wolfe**. Joining online were **Timons Esaias** and **Hayes Lewis**.



Rascals by the Number

Statistics are the best part of baseball. But the Rascals are more exciting than America's favorite pastime. Even so, the Rascals have noteworthy statistics. Here are a few:

- **First Rascal meeting:** February 3, 1989.
- **First Lair 1 meeting:** August 21, 1993.
- **First Lair 2 meeting:** January 6, 1996.
- **First Lair 3 meeting:** November 11, 2000.
- **Total men who attended Rascal meetings:** 266.
- **Men who attended Lair 1 meetings:** 108.
- **Men who attended Lair 3 meetings:** 126.
- **Total Rascal meetings:** 137.
- **Ur-Lair meetings:** 6.
- **Lair 1 meetings:** 47.
- **Lair 2 meetings:** 4.
- **Lair 3 meetings:** 80.
- **Total average attendance:** 10.8.
- **Lair 1 average attendance:** 13.1.
- **Lair 3 average attendance:** 9.8.
- **Largest Rascal meeting:** 27 (tie: Don Pickerine's Pliny Miles presentation, Lair 1, September 9, 1994; and Dan Morrison's James Hubbard presentation, Lair 3, June 8, 2019).
- **Most Lair 1 meetings:** 39 (Lee Wolfson).
- **Most Lair 3 meetings:** 74 (M. Moscherosch).
- **Most total meetings:** 94 (Dan Morrison).



Lee Wolfson, pictured here with the RR&R flag, holds the record for most Lair No. 1 meetings with 39 to his credit, not including Rascal Balls and Picnics.

The Megaphone

"Mostly True ... Since 1994."

Pliny Miles, editor

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Jordan Goretti joined Lair No. 3 on March 13, 2021. Here he is pictured with his 2020 Mass Challenge entry.

Goretti Newest Rascal

All-around intellectual and lover of arcana, Jordan Goretti was elected a Postulate at the first quarter 2021 meeting of Lair No. 3.

Relative of St. Maria Goretti, the newest Rascal studied political science. He once worked for a stamp auction house and enjoys online gaming.

He is a drummer with the band at Huntingdon Valley Presbyterian Church. Married with two kids, Jordan lives in Roslyn, Penna. His property abuts a SEPTA rail line which means backyard chats are regularly interrupted by passing commuter trains.

