



ROTARY VOTARY

The Rotary Club of West Chester

Bill Boyd, International President 2006-2007

Bulletin #38 www.WestChesterRotary.us March 29, 2007

This Week's Program: March 29, 2007

Speaker: Chris Kemple, General Manager of the Wilmington Blue Rocks
Arranged by Jack Wintermute

Next Week's Program: April 5, 2007

Speaker: Gary Hess
Gundaker Foundation
Arranged by Gary Hess

MINUTES by Fran Luft

President Annalie rang the bell and **Bill Ronayne** gave a very fitting invocation with the theme being diversity of religions of our fellow Rotarians. **President Annalie's** joke today centered around a Quaker farmer. **President Annalie** thanked host **Bob Connolly** for making all of the arrangements for our meeting today at Westtown School.

Guests included Erica ? who was introduced by **Victoria Dow**, **Dick Yoder** brought his two granddaughters Katie and Stephanie and **Bob Connolly** brought Pete and Amy Quinn and Andy ? The lone visiting Rotarian was Reece Reynolds.

Birthday greetings were extended to **Mike Alfonsi** by **Lonnie Beck**; **Brad Barron** to his dad, **Pat Barron**; **Charlie Lyddane** to **Jim Lees** and **Steve Quigley** to **Hal Green**. There was no 50/50 and Happy Bucks were free today. Happy Bucks: **President Annalie (Bunny Welsh- Safe Kids Program, and fruit sale)**; **Sue Casso (Jeannie McGinn – thanks to all who have given her assistance.)**; **Steve Quigley** announced? (Sorry Steve I could not hear- too much background noise.)

Announcements: On April 14th the Rotary Leadership Institute will take place. Please go on our website for more information. There will be a joint service project on April 28th with the Longwood Club in Chadds Ford at 9:30 a.m. We received a thank you letter from The Arc of Chester County for our \$400 donation to them. This coming Saturday is World Water Day. **President Annalie** has five Rotary hats to sell for \$12.00 a piece. Please see **President Annalie** if you would like to purchase a hat.

Geoff Baker announced that all the fruit from the fruit sale has been sold. The results given are as follows 9th place- Ticket Sellers- **Andrew Stump**-61.9 cases; 8th place-Ring Masters- **Paul Woodruff**- 69.4 cases; 7th place-Circus Dogs-

Dick Yoder- 80 cases; 6th place Lion Tamers- **Steve Quigley** 91 cases; 5th place-High wire- **Cristina Combee**- 95.4 cases; 4th place - Horses- **John Messersmith**- 96 cases; 3rd place- Elephants- **Bert Volger**- 100 cases; 2nd place-The Clowns- **Noel Stanic**- 102.9 cases; 1st place **Don Stonestrom** 104 cases. Applause was given to **Don Stonestrom**. Geoff had the Rotarians stand up who sold 10-15 cases, 5-20 cases – Congratulations.! Geoff also mentioned individuals **Jean Oakes, Carol Hanson, Bob Poole, Steve Quigley, Bob Connolly, Joe Polito** and **Don Stonestrom** for outstanding number of sales. (If I missed any names I apologize). Congratulations to all for a great fruit sale.

SPEAKERS REVIEW by Sue Casso

Following a delightful lunch at Westtown School, Rotarian Bob Connelly (or Colony as Geoff Baker was heard to say) with the assistance of achivist, Mary Brooks and Pete Flynn (of Pete's Produce) presented an interesting program on the history of farming at Westtown School.

In 1784 while the Constitutional Convention took place in Philadelphia, the largest city in the colonies and the capital, the idea of a private Quaker School in Westtown came about. Westtown was a "full coach ride" or an entire days trip from Philadelphia. Life for Quakers in Philadelphia had become divided - some Quakers (or Friends) supported the revolution and they were suspicious of those who would not take up arms. But it was agreed that children needed an education in the manner of Friends. Following an epidemic of yellow fever, the school was opened in the summer of 1794 on a 600 acre farm purchased from the Gibbons family. The property was given to the Gibbons family in 1681 by William Penn. Westtown School is the oldest continually operating boarding school in the US.

In 1795 the farmland was leased to a tenant farmer, Edward Churchman who farmed the land until 1852 at which time the school hired its own farmers. At this time, the spring house was upgraded and enlarged and a farm house was acquired with lodging for visitors. This farmhouse eventually became a restaurant which was known by some in our club.

In 1910 a new dairy barn was added and in the 1920's farming was added to the educational program at Westtown. In the 1940's war years, the school produced nearly ½ of all it's own food and all the students participated in the farming chores. It was not unusual for school to be dismissed so the farming chores could be accomplished. In the 1940's pasteurization was added and the farm milk was sold. By the 1960's the herd was sold and Nussex farms rented some land from Westtown School.

With the current help of Pete Flynn, the land is still farmed today. Pete explained that he started farming the land in 1995 in area which is now Bayard Rustin School. In 2000 he relocated his produce market to it's current location on Rt. 926.

Pete learned many of his farming techniques from New Jersey farmers. He explained the advantages of growing vegetables under plastic for weed control and irrigation efficiency. The plastic helps maintain the water. Some veggies are grown under white plastic to reflect the heat (tomatoes, for example) and others under black plastic to retain the heat. Pete grows a wide variety of products - tomatoes, corn, strawberries, pumpkins, Lima beans (with a cult following!), onions, squash, peppers, eggplant, garlic, watermelon and cantaloupe. He also grows lots of beautiful flowers. Interesting tidbit of information about tomatoes - heirloom tomatoes have become very popular. The number of leaves on a tomato plant indicate the taste. The heirloom tomato is very leafy, hence a better taste. Commercial tomatoes are not as leafy as heirlooms. (who knew!??) The writer is a regular customer of Pete's Produce and thoroughly enjoyed Pete's time with us and interesting presentation. Thanks to Bob Connelly for arranging this annual meeting.

THANK YOU

Copies of the Votary are provided at our meeting by **Victoria Dow** of the West Chester Public Library.

SAVE THE DATE

Apr 14 Rotary Leadership Institute
July 12 Presidential picnic for **Gary Hess**

Check out the Rotary Calendar of events at <http://www.westchesterrotary.us/clubcalendar.htm>

To add events send e-mails to:
calendar@westchesterrotary.us

EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Fiona Baldinger (France) Henderson HS
Host Family - Paul & Peg Eberts
125 E Virginia Ave, W Chester, PA 19380
Ph: 610-430-8111

Counselor - **Cristina Combee**
610-399-5047(H) 610-431-6977(W)

Francois Dellis (Belgium) East HS
Host Family - Claudia and Dr. Gregory Simone
930 Weston Rd., West Chester, PA 19382
Ph: 610 701-5445

Counselor - **Bert Volger**
610 793-1708

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