



ROTARY VOTARY

The Rotary Club of West Chester

Wilfrid J. Williams, International President 2007-2008

Bulletin #20 www.WestChesterRotary.us November 29, 2007

This Week's Program: November 29, 2007
The New Friday Club
Facilitator: Gary Hess

Next Week's Program: December 6, 2007
Speaker: County Commissioner Carol Achele
Arranged by Bunny Welsh

MINUTES by Fran Luft

President Gary rang the bell promptly at 12:30 p.m. **Charlie Lyddane** gave an invocation centered around Thanksgiving. There was no joke today as the screen writers are on strike. Visiting Rotarians are Joe Kahn, and John Saling. Guests present were Kevin O'Hara (**Joe Polito**) Lynn Eaton (**Bill Eaton**) and Dan Cosgrove (**Sue Casso**).

Students of the Month - Henderson High School: Nathaniel Vanderwerff, and Esha Corona; East High School: Amanda Erb, Christina Batog and Neal Herring. Congratulations to each of you on this accomplishment.

Jack Wintermute extended birthday wishes to **Alice Thomas, Ed Malet** [in abstensia], and **Clint Wiggins**.

Announcements: **President Gary** stated that November is Rotary Foundation Month. Checks are coming in. Please consider giving a donation. **Terry McGrath** is in good shape now. He thanks all for their concern and good wishes. **Ken Hickman** announced that assistance is needed for Brian's Run. Please get in touch with **Rich Kauffmann** to sign up. **Mac Neilon** asked for Habitat for Humanity volunteers for any Thursday and Saturday, January 12, 2008.

A Rotary/ Borough blood drive will be held December 6th from 10 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. at the West Chester Borough Hall.

The 50-50 was won by **Trish Kotsay**.

SPEAKERS REVIEW by Eric Metzker

Speaker: Hon. William (Bill) P. Mahon
Arranged by **Paula Ott**
Subject: Drug Court

"What's the biggest problem facing judges and the justice system?" That was the opening question posed by Judge Mahon who sits on the Drug Court for Chester County. The answer? 1/3 of the cases deal with driving under the influence of alcohol and of the other 2/3, 75% are related to drugs or alcohol – dealing with what the defendants do to get the drugs or alcohol or what they do after they get the drugs or alcohol. After some quick math we see that we have 1/3 DUI and 1/2 eligible for Drug Court. And since alcohol is the most used drug (even though it is legal) that means 83.3% of the cases in Chester County are Drug (or alcohol) related.

So that leads to the next big question from Judge Mahon: "What do you do about it?" To help us through the silence as we pondered the question, Judge Mahon offered some handy facts.

One year of incarceration costs between \$30,000 (for direct costs) and \$70,000 if we include indirect costs (e.g. courts, sheriffs, social services, costs incurred by people outside of prison who are related to the prisoner).

Also the rate of repeat offense is extremely high considering the person in prison comes out a year or two older and the only experience gained is from other prisoners.

And the likelihood of lowering crime by legalizing the sale and use of drugs can be explored by looking at alcohol, the most-consumed drug in the nation. Clearly 1/3 of the crimes committed are simply driving under the influence. That doesn't include all of the other social ills and costs associated with alcoholism.

Raising prison sentences for drugs has only made the crimes more violent while not reducing the number of crimes.

The war on drugs that focuses on the supply of drugs has not been able to reduce drug use.

And finally, the average cost for someone to participate in drug court and to have a 30-90 day in-patient stay at a rehabilitation facility is only

\$3,500. Also, recidivism (defined as remaining arrest free for 1 year) drops dramatically compared to incarceration – from 21% without drug court to 6% with drug court.

The conclusion reached by Judge Mahon? It's clear that while it is popular to run for office by being tough on crime, the number of police and prisons alone will not reduce the number of crimes. In fact, as soon as the latest prison was built it was already full. Apparently the toughest thing against crime rates that we can do is also the most cost-effective – pay for drug court and the associated rehabilitation

The club members were obviously drawn in to this important topic and responded with a warm reception applause and thank-you to the Judge. To underscore the workload of the drug court, Judge Mahon had to bid a hasty farewell to avoid being late for his next case.

SAVE THE DATE

- Dec. 1 Set up for Brian's Run
- Dec 2 Brian's Run
- Dec 6 Blood Drive @ Borough Hall
- Dec 7 Holiday Party @ Annalie's
500 West Union Street, West Chester

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

Add events: calendar@westchesterrotary.us

EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Bjoern Brauner (Germany) Henderson HS
Host Family: Mark and Ellen Morun
416 Chrislena Ln, WC
610-344-0205

Bert Volger 610-793-1708(H) 484-459-9023(C)

Andrea Kogoj (Italy) Unionville HS.
Host Family: Marc and Rachel Bevis,
110 Merrymet Farm Dr.
Kennett Square

610-444-0324(H) 610-563-0443(C)

Joe Polito 610-692-8123(H) 610-431-3090(W)

THANK YOU

Copies of the Votary are provided at our meeting by **Chuck Swope** and **Jim Lees**, Source Realty Group, Inc.

FROM PAUL WOODRUFF

A BIG heartfelt thanks for the generosity shown by members of our Rotary Club on behalf of Hudson Asiema. In the last several weeks we continued to receive donations from Carol Hanson, Patty Jefferis, Terry McGrath, Bob Poole, Dennis Wallace, Bunny Welsh and a few anonymous friends. We raised over \$3800, including the one to one match, which will cover Hudson's tuition for the Spring semester. I'd like to share with you part of a recent email from his father, Francis: "I have been deeply touched by your kindness. I had not expected that such a substantial amount of money would be raised within a short period of time. Please extend our sincere thanks to all those who have been part of this effort. You can be assured that we have not taken this for granted."

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HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

Votary Committee: Faith Woodward, Publisher. 610-918-3432 fwood@bf.kendal.org Mark Sammarone, Vice-Chair and Web site maintenance. Committee Members: Pat Barron, Bruce Beadle (Web site), Matt Bradley, Sue Casso, Victoria Dow, Elizabeth Guman, Charlie Lyddane, Fran Luft, Eric Metzker, Paula Ott, Cathy Palmquist, and Joe Polito