



**Make Dreams Real**

# ROTARY VOTARY

The Rotary Club of West Chester

Dong Kurn Lee, International President 2008-2009

Bulletin #10 [www.WestChesterRotary.us](http://www.WestChesterRotary.us) September 11, 2008

**This Week's Program: September 11, 2008**  
**Speaker: Sachi Mallach**  
**Happenings at the Historical Society**  
**Arranged by: Ed Malet**

**Next Week's Program: September 18, 2008**  
**Speaker: Bill Ronayne**  
**Chili Cook Off Part 1**  
**Arranged by Noel Stanek**

## MINUTES lost in an e-mail glitch

### SPEAKERS REVIEW by Victoria Dow

Dan Wheeler, 'The Best Seat in the House'

**Dave Biffen** introduced Dan Wheeler, a 30-year veteran of radio and TV, with 17 years of that spent at QVC. He is the main host for sports programming at QVC. He brought two copies of his recent book as an addition to our 50/50 drawing.

After sharing a good example of why one should never be "on" when over tired, Dan launched into three character sketches from his book, *Best Seat in the House*. Over the years at QVC Dan has had the opportunity to meet lots of sports greats, especially baseball legends, while featuring sports memorabilia. Three greats in particular were Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantel, and Cal Ripken. Dan does a good bit of background work before meeting these people, as well as spending time with them before going on-air.

The first "guest" Dan presented to us was Joltin' Joe DiMaggio, 13-time All Star, with nine World Series wins, and the still-standing 56 game hitting streak he set in 1941. A graceful player, DiMaggio made the game look easy. During interviews, DiMaggio would not talk about Marilyn Monroe or his son. The topic has to be baseball. Dan spent 10 hours with DiMaggio, three of those on-air. DiMaggio was legendary in memorabilia, commanding \$100 for a signature on an 8x10 photo. He was not a giving person though – he'd measure photos, and count them as well, charging the signature hunter more for each photo over the 8x10 size

and for each photo over an agreed limit. Sometimes this lead to Joe never picked up the tab; someone always paid for him. In many ways, DiMaggio was a sad, jealous person – he trusted no one, gave nothing back, and when he died only 30 people attended his funeral.

The second "guest" was Mickey Mantle. Signed right out of high school, Mantle was from Oklahoma with huge forearms that were the driving power behind his batting. He liked to play jokes on friends, and had a side-kick who played them on him, often feeding him the wrong name when Mantle met someone new. In seven World Series, Mantle hit baseball's triple crown in 1956 with .353 batting average, 52 HRs, and 130 RBIs. Dan met Mantle several times; on one occasion Mantle would not sign a baseball for a kid when Dan asked, saying if he signed one, he'd have to sign them all. Mantle never wanted DiMaggio mentioned in interviews – turns out Mantle was injured in stopping short going for a ball to let DiMaggio get it. The pain of that injury, combined with a family history of alcoholism, turned Mantle to drinking. He would drink steadily during the shows he did with Dan; so, a backup guest was always necessary to pick up after the first hour by which point Mantle would be talking in one-liners. Mantle's drinking lead to a failed marriage, and, sadly, all four of his sons were alcoholics as well. It also lead to very low self-esteem for this brilliant baseball player, who never saw himself as deserving of praise or the adulation of his fans. Which was why, he explained to Dan one day long after the incident with the kid and the baseball, he did

not want to sign the baseball when Dan requested it: Mantle just didn't feel worthy.

The third and final "guest" was Cal Ripken, the Iron Man who only retired in 2001. In Dan's opinion, Ripken saved baseball after the 1994 strike because he was approaching Lou Gehrig's record, which he tied on September 5, 1995. People attended games that year just to see him bat. Ripken has signed over all income from his signature to charity, and appeared on QVC the night before his final game just to bring in more income for his charities. Ripken founded charities to help teach children baseball, especially underprivileged children. He has built a number of Little League fields at Aberdeen, MD that look like major league ball fields – Camden Yards, Wrigley Field, etc. There Ripken can often be found signing balls for kids, and he doesn't leave until every child has his signature, even in the rain. Dan once asked him how he wanted to be remembered – Ripken said that just to be remembered would be pretty special. Ripken is a great example of someone who finds joy in giving back.

Dan ended his "visit" with the three guests by pointing out the lessons their lives teach – what loneliness, anger, and stinginess look like, what never measuring up looks like, and what true enjoyment of success and giving look like.

### STUDENTS TO TRAVEL OVERSEAS

Our district is looking for two more students to travel overseas next year. There are three options. One, a summer only session; two, one semester; three, a full year. The student must be no younger than 15 1/2 nor older than 18 1/2 on the date travel begins. Relatives of Rotarians may apply! Send an email to Pat Barron ([patrickbarron@msn.com](mailto:patrickbarron@msn.com)) if you have a candidate.

### CHILI WRISTBANDS ON SALE 3/\$25

call Bill Ronayne at 610-692-3900

### SAVE THE DATE

Sept 20 Habitat for Humanity work day



Oct 18 Charter Night for the West Chester Downtown "Fridays" Rotary Club  
Check out the Rotary Calendar of events at <http://www.westchesterrotary.us/clubcalendar.htm>  
Add events: [calendar@westchesterrotary.us](mailto:calendar@westchesterrotary.us)

### THANK YOU

Copies of the Votary are provided at our meeting by **Bob Frame** of Caldwell Banker Preferred-Exton.

### EXCHANGE STUDENT

Anri (pronounced Anli) Izui at Henderson HS  
Hosts: Mark and Ellen Morun  
416 Chrislena Lane West Chester 19380  
610-344-0205

### THE ROTARY CLUB BOARD of DIRECTORS

President, Steve Karp; President-Elect, Dave Rayburn; Vice-President, Bill Ronayne; Past President, Gary Hess; Secretary, Patricia Kotsay; Treasurer, Rob Feenan; Sergeant At Arms, Katie Decker; Directors-at-Large: Rich Kauffman, Adrienne Masak-Rozier, Terry McGrath, John Messersmith, Bob Rogers, Bill Ronayne, Mark Sammarone  
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### HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

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