



ROTARY VOTARY

The Rotary Club of West Chester, District 7450
John F. Germ, International President 2016-2017

Bulletin #48 www.WestChesterRotary.us May 5, 2017

This Week's Program: May 4, 2017

**Foreign Exchange Student Presentation
Speaker: Gabriel Bay**

**Next Week's Program: May 11, 2017 Noon
Meet at Bill Winter's House
629 N. Church St.
Pulled Pork Showdown**

MINUTES by Faith Woodward

President Bob opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, we sang "God Bless America", and **Gary Hess** gave the invocation.

There were no Visiting Rotarians.

Cliff DeBaptiste introduced the minister of his church, **Dr. Wayne Croft**. **Carol Hanson** welcomed **Gabriel Bay** our exchange student and visitor Christine Compton. **Stan Zukin** introduced his wife Elsa. **Jeff Brown** introduced Chris Fellio and DLN reporter Bill Rettew. Former club members Bill Bunch and Tom Mann were introduced as guests.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

May 11 Pulled Pork Show Down – noon meeting at **Bill Winters'** house. Bring guests and chairs. Fly fishing demo.

May 25 Rotary at the Blue Rocks

June 22 Presidential Installation – evening meeting.

July 26 Rotary Night at the Phillies. Proceeds will go to Polio+ and our club must buy 50 tickets.

President Bob let us know that, thanks to **Ernest Zlotolow's** efforts, 5,000 eyeglasses were collected. Also **Rob Feenan's** house was on TV! Don't forget the District Conference in Gettysburg May 5-7. Nominations are being received for District 7450 Board of Directors.

Sponsorships are needed for the Chili Cook Off Give the company name and a contact phone number to **Brad Abel** and he'll do "the ask". There is a tri-fold brochure to give friends or companies who can participate. Last year 10,000 attended so it's great exposure.

Glen Sweet needs volunteers to help with the Rotary Auction held at the Presidential Gala. Please see her contact info later in this Votary.

Matt Holliday announced that CPC applications are due April 30 and committee members are needed.

Happy Bucks: **Catherine Friedman** (following **Andy Keen** who is now teaching in impoverished schools overseas. Please see Catherine if you can help by giving needed supplies). **Sue Flynn** (while taking 110 children from CCFA to the Camden Aquarium, she bumped into **Steve Founds!**). **Cliff DeBaptiste** (thanked **Jeff Brown**, in inimitable **Cliff DeBaptiste** style, for the program today) **Rob Feenan** (the TV show of his house aired today so everyone can post any photos they took) **Diana Liberi** (Can't come next Thursday because her oldest daughter

will be having a C-section)

Rotarian-of-the-month awards for previous months were presented to **Steve Founds** and **Rob Feenan**.

Mac Neilon won the 50-50, the proceeds of which will go to the Home of the Sparrow

SPEAKERS REVIEW by Gary Hess

Sue Casso Rogers introduced the speaker today, our own **Jeff Brown**. Jeff was here today to talk about the "Three Stars of the Restoration of West Chester."

Jeff started with a bit of '**dub C**' history. Back in the day, when Hush Puppies and Schwinn bikes were the thing and college kids weren't slathered in disgusting tattoos, West Chester had a vibrant retail district. The department stores brought in the customers, and there were quite a few boutiques as well. Indeed, I own a bowler hat that was made and sold at a hatter on West Market Street, so that should tell you something. The advent of shopping malls slowly drew away the customers, which in turn sounded the death knell for the West Chester retail scene. By the mid-80's, tumbleweeds were rolling down Gay Street and our beloved burgh had become a ghost town.

Jeff was on the Chamber of Commerce board at the time, which was understandably perturbed at developments, or lack thereof. After scratching their collective heads for a little bit, decided to commission a study to figure out how they could revitalize the downtown district. They contacted economics professor Dr. Chris Fiorentino from WCU, but the university wanted \$20,000 for Chris's time. With zero dollars in the kitty (*I know the feeling, bub*), the Chamber went hat in hand to town father and Rotary member **Charlie Swope** to see if he could "help out." Charlie offered 5 G's toward the effort and said he'd make some calls and see what else he could scrape up. The next day, he had the whole \$20k raised. This earned him the figurative FIRST STAR in the restoration of West Chester.

With the green light on, Chris Fiorentino went about his work and came back with what now seems like an obvious conclusion...the stores can't compete with the big box retailers and they're **not coming back**. The sooner you get this through your thick heads the better (*he didn't really say that*). Chris recommended restaurants. The buildings downtown are of a certain vintage, with interesting

characteristics and architectural details, just the kind of places in which people wouldn't mind hanging out. This earned Chris the **SECOND STAR**. The Chamber encouraged the borough to spearhead this effort to show that they were all in, and commerce director Peggy Dawson-Schmidt sprang into action. She visited numerous restaurants in the surrounding area in an effort to convince them to open a second location in West Chester. Clearly, it worked!

During this process, Rotarian **Clifford DeBaptiste** served as mayor and chief cheerleader for the town, earning him the coveted **THIRD STAR**. There were others who figured in the restoration of the downtown as well. Can't ignore **Stan Zukin**, sans ponytail. Stan owns quite a few buildings in town, many of which are restaurants. As landlord, Stan would buy the liquor licenses and pay to install kitchens, smoothing the way for any would-be restaurateur. The Chamber (let's slap Jeff on the back here) certainly deserved credit for its part in the whole process. As Jeff says, they were the conductor for orchestra, the maestro, the **BIG CHEESE** (*I added this last bit because I'm very fond of cheese*).

These efforts have paid dividends in a **YUGE** way. If you have been around town for a while, you can't help but notice how vibrant the downtown has become, now home to over 75 eating establishments. The Business Improvement District (BID) now carries the torch for the borough. In fact, the BID was just named one of three winners of the 2017 Great American Main Street Award, the first Pennsylvania community to be recognized with this distinction in nearly 20 years (*I plagiarized this part from the Daily Local*). Thank you to the Three Stars, Jeff, and everyone else connected with this effort!

NEW MEMBERS

The following individuals have been proposed for membership and have indicated their desire to become members:

Diana Liberi: CFO at MacLaren Kitchen and Baths.

Classification - Business Admin

Sponsor: **Brad Abel** or **David Barkasy**

Ann Baker: Senior Marketing Director at Angel Companions. Classification - Health Homecare

Sponsor: **Dan Wilson**

Brandon Smith: Partnership Development Director at Operation Warm Inc. Classification - Nonprofit / Development Mgr.

Sponsor: **Tim Walsh**

If no written objections are received by the Club Secretary within ten (10) days of this notice a date will be set for their inductions.

AUCTION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Presidential Gala is Thursday, June 22, in the evening at WCGCC. Several volunteers are needed to help with organization, set up and check out. This *does not* involve soliciting businesses for items for the auction. Interested persons please contact Glen Sweet at gsweet510@verizon.net or at a weekly meeting.

THANK YOU

Copies of the Votary are provided today by
Eric Kuhn at Pillar Real Estate Advisors.

INVOCATION REMINDER

Invocation will be given by;
Bob Frame 5/4 and **Catherine Friedman** 5/11

EXCHANGE STUDENT

Gabriel Bay from Rafaela, Argentina
Attending Henderson High School
Host Parents: Marcell and Destardi Moye-Sherman
410 Oakland Dr Downingtown PA 19335
destardi@gmail.com [484-348-1623](tel:484-348-1623) (work)
[484-889-6729](tel:484-889-6729) (Destardi's cell)



SAVE THE DATE

May 5-7 Multi-District Conference at Gettysburg

May 11 Pulled Pork Showdown

May 25 Rotary at the Blue Rocks

June 22 Presidential Installation

June 26 Rotary Night @ the Phillies

Check out the Rotary Calendar of events at

<http://www.westchesterrotary.us/clubcalendar.htm>

Add events: calendar@westchesterrotary.us

THE ROTARY CLUB BOARD of DIRECTORS

President, Bob Rogers; President-Elect, Mickey Hall. Vice-President, Bill Friedmann; Past President, Katie Martin; Secretary, Sue Casso Rogers; Treasurer, Tim Walsh; Sergeant-at-Arms, Brad Abel; Directors-at-Large: Laura Aloisio, Dave Barkasy, Judi Bell, Cristina Combee, Linda Hicks, Jim Smith, Andrew Stump, Michelle Venema, Ernest Zlotolow.

David Haradon, District Governor

Bronwyn Martin, Assistant Governor

Charles Streitwieser, P. D.G. '13-14 District 7450

Robert Poole, P.D.G. '80-'81 District 7450

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

Votary Committee: Chair, Faith Woodward, 610-918-3432;
Votary@westchesterrotary.us Web support: Judi Bell and Howard Sundwall.

Webmaster@WestChesterRotary.us Committee: Pat Barron, Chris Feryo, Elizabeth Guman, Gary Hess, Matt Holliday, Fran Luft, Cathy Palmquist, Patty Roos, Winnie Stroup, Glen Sweet, Marjorie Wentz