



ROTARY VOTARY

The Rotary Club of West Chester, District 7450
K.R. Ravindran, International President 2015-2016
Bulletin #36 www.WestChesterRotary.us March 17, 2016

This Week's Program: March 17, 2016
Meghan & Shannon
Irish Dancing
with Catherine Friedman singing

Next Week's Program: March 24, 2016
Speaker: Darryl Campbell
Downingtown Bicycle
Getting Started in Biking

MINUTES not available

(President-Elect **Bob Rogers** filled in for **President Katie** and he reported that he did a good job.)

SPEAKERS' REVIEW by Winnie Stroup

Bob Frame introduced Joe Masalta, a former Navy SEAL. He reminded us that Joe had previously addressed the club to share his experience as a SEAL protecting ships off the coast of Somalia. He had even shown a video of a rescue from pirates.

Joe has been living in the States for about 13 months. Prior to that he was in one combat zone after another since 2002. Currently Joe is studying to become a nurse. He has been working with the Boys and Girls Club to teach Scuba Diving to at risk teens. In addition, he is a popular auction item for Boys and Girls Clubs offering himself in a Tandem Sky Diving experience.

Joe spent most of his session answering questions. Why Scuba Diving? It helps build key life skills that will be of value in any job: building communication skills; learning processes thru safety checks and learning teamwork thru collaboration. We wanted to know how the kids were selected. The individual clubs decide. Joe has found retired Veterans and Police officers who own or work in Scuba shops to help. He also has solicited local business to teach classes on interviewing skills and tax preparation. Why taxes? Joe is passionate about the effect on kids who have no glimpse of a life where they might even owe taxes when they can learn that there is a different life open to them. The only Entrepreneurial job many of them have seen previously is drug dealing. He would like to see the Scuba lessons go national with YMCA and then Global with the United Way.

Regarding The SEAL program, Joe said that there is

a long waiting list. No one who can only meet the minimum push up etc. requirements would be accepted. As to the veracity of movies like Lone Survivor and American Sniper, he said that they are pretty accurate. He also suggested to his ex-wife that when driving their children, she note available exits and alternative car routes given today's instances of random shootings.

As a club we appreciate Joe's service and are grateful for his level of give-back to kids.

NEW MEMBER

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

Eric Smith: Chief of Staff for Rep Dan Truitt; Classification Government Staff.

Sponsor: **Matt Holliday**

John Messersmith: Owner Messersmith Financial Services; Classification - Owner Financial Services.

Sponsor: **John Schwab**

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.

SAVE THE DATE

Mar 17 Soup for Safe Harbor
Apr 2 Board Retreat
Apr 5 District 7450 at the Sixers
Apr 13 Rotoplast at the Media Theater

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

THANK YOU

Copies of the *Votary* are provided today by
Matt Holliday

FROM THE ROTARIAN

GOOD WILL GAMES

The fierce July sun beat down on us as we approached the field where the match was to take place. It wasn't much of a soccer pitch, with its uneven terrain and rusty poles for goalposts, but the local teens we had met came ready to play. They guided us over the piles of bricks and broken tiles that separate their neighborhood community center from the field behind it and took their positions.

Much like any schoolyard competitors, incursions from grazing cows notwithstanding, players stretched and warmed up, took turns retrieving out-of-bounds balls, and, after the final goal, lined up to exchange high-fives. The Vietnamese contingent handily outscored our group of American Rotary volunteers, but the defeat was far from bitter. The five Rotarians, four Interactors, and two 20-something alumni of Rotary Youth Leadership Awards had already achieved what they had come to Vietnam to do: distribute durable soccer balls to promote play and to spread Rotary's message of service and goodwill.

The community center sits on the outskirts of Hoi An, a resort town on the South China Sea. Orange and fuchsia bougainvillea blossoms spill over stalls selling scarves and spices at one of Vietnam's oldest marketplaces, and along the banks of the Thu Bon River, food vendors serve aromatic *pho* (noodle soup) and *banh mi* (sandwiches). By night, tourists dine under glowing silk lanterns at the seaside restaurants and hotels.

The kids we met in Hoi An have a few soccer balls on hand, but are just as likely to kick around rocks or bundles of banana leaves. Tim Jahnigen first observed this phenomenon in 2006 as he watched news footage of a refugee camp in Darfur, Sudan. The children on the screen were playing soccer using a bundle of trash tied with twine. Struck by the evidently universal tendency of children to play no matter how difficult the circumstances, Jahnigen set out to develop a soccer ball tough enough to endure the harshest conditions.

Almost 10 years later, One World Play Project – the company Jahnigen founded with his wife, Lisa Tarver – has provided more than 1.5 million durable soccer

balls in over 175 countries. The ball itself is made of a proprietary foam-like blend that bounces like a soccer ball but won't puncture, deflate, or otherwise fall apart.

"Play is vital for humans to thrive," Tarver says, echoing recent research. "Play is one of the most effective therapies for any kind of trauma or hardship, whether in refugee camps or inner cities afflicted with gang violence – anywhere kids have suffered human rights abuses or the effects of poverty or natural disasters. Play is what allows them to recover and connect with their community."

Our team of Rotary members and youth program participants from the San Francisco Bay Area brought to Vietnam 2,400 of these balls, bound for schools and community centers. We traveled south from the capital, Hanoi, through the mountains and along the scenic coastline to Ho Chi Minh City and the villages of the Mekong Delta. In each community we visited, we met with local officials, handed out balls, and challenged the recipients to a game – no translation required.

"Play is the universal language," Tarver says. "You go somewhere and you may not be able to talk to the people, but if you pull out this ball, you'll be connected, because it's intuitive. The ball is the connector between the visitors and the community."

THE ROTARY CLUB BOARD of DIRECTORS

President, Katie Martin; President-Elect, Bob Rogers; Vice-President, Mickey Hall; Past President, Rob Feenan; Secretary, Sue Casso Rogers; Treasurer, Tim Walsh; Sergeant-at-Arms, Bill Friedmann; Directors-at-Large: Dave Barkasy, Judi Bell, Cristina Combee, Linda Hicks, Matt Holliday, Jim Smith, Debra Sparre, Marjorie Wentz, Denise Wine.

Chad Rosenberg, District Governor

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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 site:

Webmaster@WestChesterRotary.us Judi Bell.

Committee Members: Rachel Barakat, Pat Barron, Chris Feryo, Elizabeth Guman, Gary Hess, Matt Holliday, Jim Kammerer, Laura House Kelly, Fran Luft, Cathy Palmquist, Winnie Stroup, Glen Sweet, Marjorie Wentz