



ROTARY VOTARY

The Rotary Club of West Chester, District 7450
 K.R. Ravindran, International President 2015-2016
 Bulletin #5 www.WestChesterRotary.us July 30, 2015

This Week's Program: July 30, 2015
Speaker: Ned Sherrill, II
Church Farm School

Next Week's Program: August 6, 2015
Speaker: Matt Chambers
Cross-Fit Proven, Exton

MINUTES by Pat Barron

President Katie Martin called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Those assembled sang "America" to **Faith Woodward's** keyboard accompaniment. The invocation was delivered by **Dan Cosgrove**, who advised us to "find our happy place" and contemplate how to make the best use of our God given gifts in simple yet powerful ways and be a gift to the world.

- We were honored by several visiting Rotarians and many guests.
- **President Katie** will make a "niche" for her year as president by inaugurating **Throw Back Thursday**, remembering important happenings in our club's history.
- **President Katie** reminded us of several important Rotary dates in the months to come.
 - ✓ August 4th is Rotary Night at the Phillies
 - ✓ August 16th is the District Picnic at Wilson Park Farm in Wayne, starting at 11:00 a.m.
 - ✓ August 19th is Rotary Happy Hour at the Mile High Steakhouse in Glen Mills, starting at 6:30 p.m.
 - ✓ September 20th is the West Chester Restaurant Festival. Katie needs volunteers from our club to help administer this event.
 - ✓ October 11 is our annual Chili Cook Off in West Chester
- **Bob Rogers** report that his wife, **Sue Casso Rogers**, suffered a broken femur in conjunction with her otherwise successful hip replacement surgery. He requested help with social media, which was quickly answered by

QVC's TV host and Rotary Club of West Chester member **Justin Sochovka**.

- **Mac Neilon** wished a happy birthday to superman **Tom Mann** (due to his exemplary service in making the Chili Cook Off a success). **Doctor Poole** wished a happy birthday to **Chris McCawley**, who will embark on an exciting four nation tour of southern Africa this summer. **Joanne Tadeo** wished a happy birthday to super friend and super Rotarian **Shauna Yeldell**.
- **President Katie** and her 50/50 partner **Mac Neilon** won the drawing but failed to win the pot, which now approaches nine hundred dollars. The number of cards remaining is in the single digit category, so buy lots of tickets!

SPEAKERS' REVIEW by Helen Flanders

Bob Frame introduced Michael Shaw who wrote the book, "The Railroads of King of Prussia PA - the Past Leads to the Future."

Michael is from New York and moved to PA in 1992. He was a history major at Ithaca College. It was his interest in history that led him to write his book. Mike declared that his is not really a railroad buff but wanted to preserve and document the hidden tracks in King of Prussia because they are a part of the area's history.

He began his talk by describing the Village of King of Prussia in the 19th century. It was a small, rural community in an area now called Upper Merion Township. Merion was named by early Welsh and Swedish settlers in the 1680s. The area boasted industries like mills and iron furnaces. There were only 4,000 inhabitants in the region. King of Prussia served as the entry point to Upper Merion Township. The King of Prussia Inn was then called Reeceville Inn and

was named for its owners, the Reece family.

Crude roads were major transportation routes before railroads appeared in the 1830s. One major route was Lancaster Pike (current Route 30) that was the first toll road in America. Canals were also major transportation routes. But Pennsylvania canals between Philadelphia and Pittsburg had many obstacles. Railroads were sorely needed in this state.

The first documented railroad in Pennsylvania was established in 1832 in Avondale. It carried freight to Ridley Creek. Other early rail lines were the Phila Germantown Norristown Railroad and the Reading Railroad. Finally, around 1838, rail lines came to King of Prussia. Trains carried passengers and freight to major areas throughout the state. One King of Prussia rail yard, named Abrams Yard in 1899, is still there today and is the only yard left in that area. Another line, the Chester Valley Railroad, ran along 202 and 252 and served Bridgeport to Downingtown. Frequent stops on this passenger line were half-a-mile apart. Another area line was the Trenton Cut-Off that was created to bypass Philly, when moving coal from Coatesville to New York.

By the 1920s, highways were popping up all over and there was more demand for freight than passenger trains. Passenger service in the King of Prussia area ended all together in 1946. There is no train service at all in the Upper Merion area now. But there is a movement to bring back a high speed rail passenger service that would originate in Bridgeport. With 40,000 people in the King of Prussia area on weekdays, a passenger line would be very busy. In fact, King of Prussia has the highest business population in the southeastern PA suburbs. Roads around that are very congested. The King of Prussia Mall, built in 1963, is still the largest mall in the nation for retail space.

It will not be easy to start a new rail line in the King of Prussia area. Norfolk Southern owns most of the rights of way. The biggest sticking point, according to our speaker, is that Norfolk Southern is hard to work with and doesn't like to share their rights of way. But Michael was confident that the project will be successful. The good news is the railroad would not affect many homes or businesses.

SAVE THE DATE

- Aug 4 Rotary Night at the Phillies
Aug 16 District 7450 picnic at the Wilson Farm, Wayne, PA 11AM
Aug 19 Rotary Happy Hour at Mile High Steak House, Glen Mills, PA 4:30 PM
Oct 11 Chili Cook Off

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 **Catherine Friedman** of Friends Association

MEMBER CONCERN

As many of you know, one of our fellow Rotarians, **Rob Lukens**, has endured severe health issues over the past couple of years. Unfortunately he is still experiencing some very serious complications and could use everyone's kind thoughts and prayers. Donations to Rob and his family can be made through this link: <http://www.gofundme.com/xnehcs>

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HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

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