

Rotary
Club of West Chester
Celebrating 100 Years 1921-2021

Rotary Club of West Chester Quarterly Outreach - Winter 2024

Recent Club Events



Chili Cook-Off Success ☐

The annual Chili Cook-Off took on a new flavor this year, with Fiorenza's Food for Friends (4F) hosting the event. Despite a smaller footprint, the Cook-Off drew an impressive crowd of 11,000 chili enthusiasts to the Borough of West Chester, showcasing the warm spirit of community and, of course, some incredible chili!

Our Rotary team stole the spotlight with their delicious 4-Way Hi-Test Chili—a healthy and hearty Quick Turkey Chili. Their efforts earned them second place in the non-profit division of the People's Choice Award contest! This success was a family affair, with members and their loved ones working together to shop, chop, and sauté their way into the hearts of attendees. Events like this demonstrate not just our culinary talent but our dedication to community engagement and service.

Celebrating Service and Leadership

Rotarian Mac Neilon was honored as the 2023 Outstanding Citizen of the Year by the Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce. Chamber President Katie Walker presented the award at the Chamber's annual banquet, where many Rotarians gathered to celebrate Mac's achievements. His dedication to West Chester—spanning decades—has made a lasting impact, including his time as Chamber President in 2005. Mac's leadership helped secure West Chester's spot on the 2024 World Atlas list of the 12 best places to live in Pennsylvania.

Rotary at WCU Volunteer Fair

New member Miranda Reilly is already making a difference! She and Jeff Cantwell represented Rotary at the West Chester University Volunteer and Non-Profit Fair, engaging students and sharing Rotary's mission. Outreach like this helps forge future partnerships and inspire the next generation of service-minded individuals.

Community Grants in Action

Funds raised through events like the Chili Cook-Off enable our Community Philanthropic Committee (CPC) to support local non-profits. This year, nine organizations received grants to continue their vital work addressing community needs. These grants represent Rotary's commitment to empowering local agencies and creating meaningful change.

Day of Service at Project C.U.R.E. ☐

Rotarians recently returned to the Project C.U.R.E. warehouse in West Grove for another service day. Led by Mac Neilon, volunteers packed vital medical supplies to support global health initiatives. This was our second visit this year, following a multi-club effort in April.

From the Chili Cook-Off to community outreach, service projects, and grants, Rotary continues to connect people, strengthen communities, and make a difference. Thank you for being part of this journey! Visit our website for more updates: **westchesterrotary.us**.

Written by Rita G. Brouwer-Ancher

Upcoming Club Events



Late Fall and Winter Activities for Rotarians and Friends

The late fall and winter months bring a variety of meaningful and festive activities for Rotarians and their friends, offering opportunities to serve the community, celebrate the season, and strengthen connections.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

One of the most cherished holiday traditions is volunteering for the Salvation Army's bell-ringing campaign. Several members don distinctive Salvation Army/Rotary aprons as they ring bells at locations like ShopRite and the Amish Market on Route 926. These efforts aim to draw attention to the bright red kettles and encourage shoppers to contribute to this worthy cause. The Amish Market shift is especially popular among members, as it not only allows them to serve their community but also provides an opportunity to explore the market's unique offerings. After their shift, many members enjoy browsing and purchasing delicious Amish foods and handcrafted items, making the experience both rewarding and delightful.

Holiday Party

Another highlight of the season is the Rotary holiday party, a time for members and their spouses or significant others to come together and celebrate. This annual event offers a festive atmosphere filled with laughter, camaraderie, and holiday cheer. It's a moment to reflect on the year's accomplishments and enjoy the fellowship that is at the heart of Rotary.

Christmas Parade

Adding to the excitement this year, our club will participate in the borough's Christmas parade! Members will either ride on a beautifully decorated float or walk alongside it, spreading holiday cheer with carols and festive smiles. Everyone will be decked out in matching Christmas-themed attire, making for a unified and joyful presence. Be sure to watch for us as we bring Rotary's spirit to the streets of West Chester!

Informal Gatherings

As we move into the new year, a recently introduced activity will continue: informal monthly gatherings at members' homes. These relaxed social events, initiated in 2024, have quickly become a favorite among members. Four or five gracious hosts have already opened their homes, providing a warm and welcoming space for fellowship. These gatherings foster deeper connections among members, offering a chance to unwind and enjoy each other's company outside of regular meetings and events. As the year draws to a close, we look forward to all that lies ahead in the new year. From all of us in Rotary, HAPPY NEW YEAR! May your season be filled with joy, goodwill, and the spirit of giving.

Written by Cathy Palmquist



A Bit of Club History

In 1985, Rotary International launched the End Polio Now campaign. Here in WC, the club pitched in to do its part. We instituted a $.12 per week/ per member "tip" that went to the Polio Plus fund. That fund was given a boost on August 28thwhen Past President Paul Woodruff presided over the meeting and promptly fined every member a buck for not wearing their pin. By the end of 1986, the club raised $1225, enough to immunize 10,208 children. Concurrently, the club committed to raising $150K over five years to fight polio. After the first year, we were at $52K thanks to the generous pledges by 12 of our members.

In 1987, we kicked off the fruit sale- oranges were $16/case and grapefruits were $13. All proceeds benefited the WC Senior Center. On February 12, 1987, 26 Rotarians gave blood- it was noted that the club's youngest member, Jim Gasho donated twice. Later in the spring, Rotarians volunteered to play a big part in the fourth annual Chester County Hospital May Festival and we raised over $6000 for the RI foundation with our Spring Auction.

The following spring, the dynamic changed as membership was opened to women for the first time in the clubs 67-year history. Mel Josephs was inducted in March of 1988 followed a month later by Linda Hicks. Both ladies would later serve as club presidents.

1988-89 saw some interesting speakers visit our club including Jim Briggs who spoke of installing a new 911 call system in Chester County, Stephanie Seltzer, a Holocaust Survivor, Reggie Wilkes, former Linebacker for the Philadelphia Eagles, and Bruce Sellers, who spoke about a rapidly growing company that he believed would change the retail environment that was established right here in West Chester called QVC.

Written by Bill Friedmann



Non Profit of the Quarter

Believe and Achieve

Providing basic needs to children and families in local neighborhoods is a goal of Believe and Achieve (BA). The non-profit agency works with children living with limited resources, as well as children and adults with physical and mental disabilities. BA helps improves basic needs but also helps children build self-esteem and confidence. Providing children the opportunity to believe in themselves and giving them the chance for success in life, BA works to educate and inspire them, providing outreach opportunities and experiential learning. BA's premise is that strong community partnerships, quality outreach partnerships, and quality outreach programing make a positive and lasting difference in youths lives. BA programs include the enhancement of summer programs provided by local school districts and community youth organizations. The Farm Fresh Market is another BA program, as well as #100 Meals program, which is supported by participating restaurants. Past programs included After-School Scholarships, and the Weekend Backpack Nutritional Support Program.

The BA program has been funded, in part, for a number of years by the Community Philanthropic Committee (CPC) of the Rotary Club of West



Club Member Personality

William (Bill) Friedmann: A Journey of Community and Entrepreneurship

William (Bill) Friedmann, the owner and founder of Blue Dog Printing & Design, has made significant strides in his business and community since his humble beginnings in Prospect Park. Born on July 1, 1971, he moved to Springfield in 1976 and West Chester in 1996. Bill grew up in a close-knit family, with his father working at CoreStates Bank and his mother caring for him and his siblings. His early involvement in Boy Scouts, where he earned the rank of Eagle Scout, shaped his leadership skills and values.

Bill's educational journey began at Springfield High School, where he graduated in 1989. He pursued a degree in Pre-Law at Elizabethtown College, earning his BA in 1993. After a brief stint in the workforce, he returned to West Chester University to earn his Master's in 2009.

His career took off at Wawa, where he entered the Store Management Training Program. Over the years, he managed several locations and contributed to corporate projects, including the introduction of touchscreen ordering. In 2003, he and his wife Debi launched Blue Dog Printing & Design, combining her graphic design expertise with his management skills. By 2005, he transitioned to the business full-time and later expanded their offerings by acquiring a promotional products business.

Bill's achievements have not gone unnoticed; he was named the Exton Region Chamber of Commerce Small Business Person of the Year in 2014 and received the Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year award in 2022.

Outside of work, Bill treasures his family life with Debi and their daughter Alex, born in 2001. A passionate Philadelphia sports fan, he enjoys golf, reading history, and cooking. As a dedicated volunteer, he even plays the role of Santa during the holiday season.

Since joining Rotary in 2012, Bill has forged lifelong friendships and engaged with community leaders, emphasizing his commitment to making a positive impact. Looking ahead, he aims to mentor aspiring entrepreneurs and integrate sustainable practices into his business while cherishing time with his family and exploring new cultures around the world. Bill Friedmann's journey exemplifies the power of community involvement and the spirit of entrepreneurship.
Thank you, Bill, for your service to our community.

Written by Anne Driscoll



Cocktail of the Quarter

by Howard Sundwall

"Cheers"

Who invented the Moscow Mule? Well, like a lot of things that happen in bars, the story is a little hazy. Was it John Martin, a liquor importer who wanted to introduce Smirnoff Vodka to the American market, teaming up with Jack Morgan, a friend and bar owner who was trying to launch his own brand of Ginger Beer? Did Morgan's girlfriend just happen to inherit a factory with a surplus stock of copper mugs she was trying to unload? Or was it Wes Price, bartender at the Cock 'n' Bull pub in Hollywood just trying to clear out an overstock of Ginger Beer in the basement? Whoever and however, it started in the 1940s, and thanks to this drink, America learned to love Vodka, and the Moscow Mule became a staple of American cocktail culture. Vodka lacks a strong flavor, but Ginger Beer's taste is very spicy and distinctive, making this one drink you'll either love or hate. If you've never had one, give it a try next time you're at your favorite watering hole. Extra points if they serve it in the iconic copper mug and even more points if the mug is chilled. Mine is shown in the photo above.

The Moscow Mule
2 oz Vodka
1/2 oz freshly squeezed lime juice
1/4 oz simple syrup (1:1 ratio of sugar to water)
Shake and pour over ice in a Collins glass or copper mug
Top with about 3 ounces of Ginger Beer
Garnish with a lime wedge and a few mint leaves

The West Chester Rotary Club meets weekly on Thursday @noon at the West Chester Country Club. Visitors are always welcome. Join us for lunch and see what we're all about!

The following members of the Rotary Club of West Chester contributed to this newsletter: Cathy Palmquist, Anne Driscoll, Bill Friedmann, Howard Sundwall, Rita Brouwer-Ancher, and Jeff Cantwell