

Rotary News, January 9, 2017, submitted by Charles Ofstein

President Bryan Zocher called our first meeting of 2017 to order at exactly 12:30 PM. Our club, accompanied by pianist Jon Dillworth, sang the Star-Spangled Banner. Our invocation was given by Rotarian Bill Rose.

President Bryan began the meeting with his thoughts on the WMU coaching vacancy and new phrases that might be employed by a new coach. None of these phrases need be repeated here. This author will just stick with the tried and true "Row the Boat" (still trademarked by WMU . . . even though the originator of that phrase has, apparently, moved to Minnesota.)

Arts News was presented by D. Terry Williams. Please enjoy all of the events throughout Kalamazoo this week in the categories of Theatre, Music, Dance and the Visual Arts.

President-Elect Tim and Rotarian John presented several songs for the club's consideration. The choices included international banking and the Minnesota Golden Gophers fight song. But given the many great events of the past week (as opposed to the not-so-great loss of WMU's football coach) it was only fitting that the club sing the WMU fight song. Go Broncos! It was a great Cotton Bowl!

We had three visiting Rotarians today. From the Portage club, we were joined by Arthur Roberts and Sharon King. From the Midland club, we were joined by Ron Beacham.

Our Guests (and their Rotarian hosts) included: Frank Jamison (Hal); Ben McNinch (Larry); Amy Kartch (Bob); Susan Rush (Amy); Eric Dougal (Kevin); Jared Vanderweele (Susan); Dominic Gualtieri (Mary) and the Rev. Mary Perrin and Pat Vinge (Sharon King).

Our Membership Minute was presented by Mary and Dann. Mary pointed out that there were four "New Year's" trinkets spread around the room. Each person sitting near a trinket provided the group with a Rotary new year's resolution.

Rotarian Ken P. reflected on his family, who was together for the holidays. Rotarian Thell was happy with the growth in club membership. Rotarian Don reminded the club that Lakeside Academy was only one month away from opening up a wellness center.

All Members were moved by Rotarian Dave's thoughts. He presented a great update on his STRIVE mentee, Malik. Over the holidays, Malik showed Dave a great report card. In addition, he made the basketball team (shooting guard), works at the union as a server, and enjoys dressing well. Even more importantly, he was happy and smiling. Congratulations on your continued success, Malik and Dave!

Announcements:

President Bryan provided our club with an update on the Daquarian "DQ" Hunter scholarship. The scholarship will be housed at the KRESA foundation. In addition, Education for Employment will assist us with the scholarship process! Now, our club just needs to raise a little bit of money. To that end, Past President Steve will be forming a fundraising subcommittee. The ultimate goal will be \$10,000. That amount would be able to provide the club with a yearly \$500 scholarship in DQ's memory.

Time for Happy Bucks! Rotarian Sid acknowledged the opportunity that YMCA had over the weekend to assist the local chapter of the Red Cross with their fire rescue assist efforts. Despite being closed, YMCA volunteers helped place over 100 seniors who were evacuated from their homes due to a fire.

Rotarian Vonn seconded Sid's praise. He noted that he went to the Y on Sunday. When he arrived, there were over 40 people waiting for placement. When he left, there were only fifteen people waiting.

Rotarian Steve was happy to announce that his youngest son got married to his high school sweetheart over the weekend. He was also happy to remind Rotarian Von that this was the same kid who "Principal Washington" had expelled for 10 days in high school!

Past District Governor Rick praised his two grandchildren. One of his grandchildren is a student at Central Michigan University who will be studying in Singapore. One of his other grandchildren will be going abroad to study at Franklin University, in Lugano Switzerland.

Our program's speaker was Sharon King. She was introduced by Rotarian Luke. Sharon's topic was her club's International India Blood Bank project.

Sharon is a 29-year resident of Portage. After retiring from Pfizer, she became involved in international outreach through her Church, St. Martin of Tours Episcopal. She saw the need for a blood bank during her travels to Sarenga, Bankura, West Bengal, India.

Sharon's experience fits in line with Rotary's international goals. Rotary is seeking to establish safe medical processes for blood collection, testing, transfusion and storage in several places around the work. This work serves needy people in dire need of medical care and life-saving procedures. The goal is to make safe blood transfusions reasonably safe and readily available worldwide.

Sharon, her church and her local Rotary club are seeking to establish a blood bank in Sarenga, India. The need there is based on population and the citizenry's rampant anemia. Person to person transfusions are, unfortunately, common in the area. The goal is that a blood bank would prevent the spread of communicable diseases and decrease the morbidity and mortality statistics in the area.

The project has run into several barriers. This includes the local citizenry's traditional beliefs and practices when it comes to medicine. But Sharon and her team feel that education will remove those prejudices. They have developed a plan to combat that barrier.

Sharon indicated that the total cost of the club's proposal will be about \$119,800. Currently, the club is about \$12,000 short.

If you would like to provide to a great international humanitarian need in a local fashion, this might be the program to do it with! If you are interested, you can contribute through our Kalamazoo Rotary Charities Foundation or the District 6360 foundation. Please specify that you are contributing to the International India Blood Bank Project.

Thanks, Sharon for all of your hard work on this important project!