

Kalamazoo Rotary meeting Monday, December 12, 2016

The meeting began with Rotarians and guests joining together to sing an acapella rendition of the National Anthem, followed by an inspiring invocation by Rotarian Von Washington..

The meeting was then brought to order by Rotary President-Elect, Tim Kilmartin.

Arts Report - Rotarian Jim Bridenstine presented an overview of the week's upcoming Arts events and activities.

History Minute – A retrospective of Christmas with Rotary and the beginning of a holiday tradition was presented by Rotarian Troy Thrash. About this time of year in 1920, the club voted to deliver Christmas baskets to widows and the needy. In each of the 50 baskets delivered that year, there was: a chicken, corn, cranberries, mixed nuts, coffee, tea, six oranges, dates, bread, butter, apple butter and a box of candy for each child in the family.

No visiting Rotarians.

Several guests were introduced by their Rotarian hosts.

Membership: Rotarians Mary Zoeller and Dan Sytsma recognized two members: First, there were 2 “Toms” who showed up for Salvation Army bell ringing – Tom Stanek showed but when Tom Hoekstra showed up, T. Stanek went home. T. Hoekstra stayed and was able to “light up the holidays” with his “bell ringing”, and for that, Mary and Dan presented him with some holiday lights. Tom Ihling was then recognized for his work classifying each new member who comes into the club.

Slate of Rotary Officers for next year -: Past President Jim Cupper presented names of nominees for officers: President-Elect: Jeannie Brandenberger; President Nominee (new position): Heather Isch; Treasurer: Lisa Anspaugh; Secretary: Nancy Peterson; and for Directors: Gary Kent-Bracken, Dan Sytsma, and Troy Trash.

Cold, wintery weather outside notwithstanding, several Rotarians shared **Happy Bucks**.

Program - Rotarian Diane introduced Grace Lubuwana, CEO YWCA and Catherine Kothavi, PhD, Assistant Professor at WMU's Homer Stryker School of Medicine, to present topic, “Infant Mortality”, and the opportunity to bring several agencies to work together to bring infant mortality to an end. Currently, over 30 agencies are participating in the project.

Over the last 3 years, under the leadership of Dr. Kothavi, they have addressed three priorities: 1) Improving children's lives 2) Caring for the victims of assault and violence. 3) Advancing women & public policy. They have come up with a name for the project: “Cradle Kalamazoo”.

Program (continued)

The program is focused on families of color/living in poverty. Subcommittees have formed, focused on 1) Cultural Competency 2) Training and 3) Support to engage the community. Partnership with Planned Parenthood focuses on reproductive health (designing and implementing reproductive health education trainings and events).

Also discussed the "Safe Sleep Initiative": 1) Designing and implementing safe sleep education, training and events. 2) Planning and implementation of "Safe Sleep" policies and interventions. The "ABC's" of Safe Sleep are: (A) **A**lone, (B) **B**ack & C – **C**rib. The program closed with showing the "Cradle Kalamazoo" video to our members.

President-Elect Tim thanked the presenters and announced club would be making a donation to Rotary charities on their behalf.

Next week's topic: Specialty Courts

Reminder: There will be no meeting on either December 26th or January 2nd in observance of the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m..