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Tom Corcoran
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The Newsletter of the Westtown-Goshen Rotary Club

April 7, 2010

Club Assembly on April 8 – All committee chairs or their designee will report to the Club on their activities in this Rotary Year. This report shall include past, present and future activities their committee has accomplished or will accomplish by June 30th.

Be Ready to Report!!

Results and Recommendations of the Thomas Review Committee –

- Club committee structure must be revitalized.
- Program Chair should assign each member a week per year to sponsor a program or obtain a speaker.
- Club Service Committee to actively schedule for the year a balance of social/fellowship activities.
- Club Activities Committee should plan more “sweat equity” involvement with the community and obtain community publicity.
- Recommend the Club reduce fund raising expectations overall.
- Introduce proposal of changing the Club’s meeting model to attract young men and women who support youthful family obligations.

Attached to this newsletter is Bob Thomas’s report to the Club on March 25.

We-Go Volunteers Needed for Chester County Hospital Fair – Mark Rudiger has asked for twelve to eighteen volunteers for Sunday, May 16th on the hospital grounds. We-Go will be manning a booth preparing hamburgers and hotdogs for the visitors attending the fair. Spouses are welcomed to participate. Please sign up with Mark; this is a good “sweat equity” activity for the West Chester community.

Stan Krangel is Seeking Donations to Gundaker – Respond to Stan’s request for donations. We-Go has benefitted greatly from Gundaker. Let’s meet our goal again this year.

Message From District Rotary Foundation Committee Chair Russ deFuria – Polio could be just a plane ride away!

While polio prevails, the virus is within range of our fellow business leaders and tourists who travel to India, troops posted in Afghanistan, and government representatives and aid workers in Pakistan and Nigeria.

Although the disease rarely touches Rotarians and their families in Pennsylvania personally, the virus still impacts our economy, our distant relatives and far-away friends.

Think you have news that should be put in the weekly WEGO Newsletter?

Email it to:
bobb4isu@verizon.net

www.wegorotary.org

Many Rotarians remember when polio was a local problem – when the iron lung was used at the Chester County Hospital.

We can end polio!!!

In fact, we're close. We promised to accomplish this more than two decades; we are about 99% successful. A new bivalent vaccine is being administered. Countries have stepped up their commitment to reaching vulnerable populations. To date, The Rotary Foundation has received contributions of more than \$100 million towards the \$200 million Gates Challenge. To date, two billion children have been immunized.

Please help us redouble our efforts to meet the Challenge: Spread the word that polio still exists. Ask your club, each Rotarian and each community member to join together in this fight. **Please make a donation during this Rotary year to accomplish this goal.**

With your contributions, Rotary will do its part towards the final elimination of polio. Govinda Malya is our Club Foundation chair; give your contribution to him.

Seth Birch Receives Letter From Camp Dreamcatcher – See attached for letter from Patty Hillkirk, Executive Director of Camp Dreamcatcher.

Blood Drive – Letter from Lisa Balch

Hi Jeff . . . Hope all is well with you and your family!

I wanted to remind you that We-Go should be taking credit for the two blood drives I hold each year as one of your community service projects. I didn't see it listed on your committee assignments. I know I am not technically a member of We-Go, but since you all support the drives and Travis has worked every drive I wanted you to be able to get credit for these. With that said, Travis is unable to work at the upcoming drive on May 6 and I was wondering if another member would be willing to step in in his place. The training for volunteers will be at noon and the drive will be held from 12:30 to 6:30. If any one is interested in serving as a volunteer that would be great!

I will be sending a separate email for John to distribute to all the club members so that they can sign up online or call me to sign them up.

Thank you so much for your support of this very worthwhile cause and I look forward to seeing you all on May 6th! Will you please make an announcement at your next meeting letting members know to reserve that date to donate blood and that it is considered a make up?

Thanks again!
Lisa H. Balch

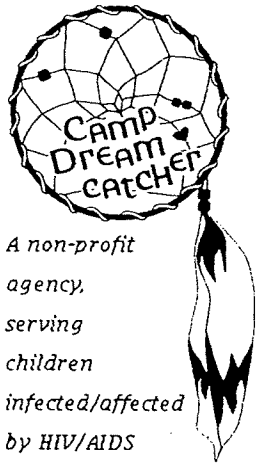
Milt Stith Receives Letter From West Chester Area Senior Center –

Dear Milt,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and members of the West Chester Area Senior Center, I would like to thank the Westtown-Goshen Rotary Club for the generous donation in the amount of \$1,000 to our Nutrition Program. This gift will enable us to purchase new service items for our senior and community meal programs.

As our center embarks on our 35th year, our primary focus is to continue meeting the physical, social, and nutritional needs of seniors in the West Chester community with the best programs and services possible. Your financial help is so important, and will make all the difference in the world to our seniors. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Kathy Sullivan, Interim Executive Director



A non-profit
agency,
serving
children
infected/affected
by HIV/AIDS

Patty Hillkirk
Executive Director

Megan Perigo
Program Director

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www.campdreamcatcher.org



United Way of
Southern Chester County

April 2nd, 2010

Seth Birch
4055 Ridge Ave.
Apt. 6305
Philadelphia, PA 19129

Dear Seth:

I was delighted to receive the news that the Westtown-Goshen Rotary Foundation has chosen to support Camp Dreamcatcher. The \$525.00 grant will sponsor a camper to our therapeutic and educational camp session, which will be held August 15th-21st.

We are moving forward with the planning of our camp session in August at the Westtown School. My experience thus far with the school has been an extremely positive one and we share the vision of creating a healing and safe environment for our campers. The transition will bring challenges, but as one teen camper stated at our fall Teen Leadership Retreat, "we are a family and we will face this move together – we will be okay". I am pleased to report that ten of our previous campers will be joining us this year in the role of counselor! They are graduates of our Counselor in Training and Junior Counselor programs and I look forward to working with them as colleagues this year.

We've had busy fall and winter here at Camp Dreamcatcher! Our Teen Leadership Retreat was held September 26th & 27th and we recently participated in the *Social Entrepreneurship and Community Leadership* course at Penn State Great Valley, for the second time. Over 200 people attended the December 1st, World AIDS Day screening of "Tiny Tears" at Loyola University in Maryland and we are currently scheduling screenings for the spring. We welcomed 120 campers and their families to our Holiday Party at the Kennett Area YMCA on December 6th and 70 campers received gifts through our Adopt-a-Family program. I am happy to report that Camp Dreamcatcher embroidered clothing items can now be purchased on our website at www.campdreamcatcher.org

I look forward to welcoming you and the members of your club to camp on August 19th and I hope you can all join us for dinner. Please express my deep appreciation to the members of the club for choosing to support Camp Dreamcatcher.

With warm regards,

Patty Hillkirk
Executive Director

For income tax purposes, this letter acknowledges your \$525.00 donation in support of Camp Dreamcatcher. You received no goods or services in return for this contribution. Please keep this letter with your tax documents as a record of your 2010 gift.

At the meeting several weeks ago we were all asked to share our views on the current status of WEGO. This was done in response to an undercurrent of dissatisfaction within the club.

The president appointed a small committee to consolidate the information you provided and make some recommendations to the club that addressed the issues you raised. We were also asked to make suggestions and present them for your consideration.

What you told us:

Fellowship is missing inside and outside Rotary. Members expressed interest in using their time and knowledge as currency to meet their desire to give back to the community.

Members were almost unanimous that service to the community should be our focus and fundraising only one component. There is too much emphasis on fundraising and not enough on the more hands on projects.

The service projects we participate in are all in support of other organizations (bell ringing, distributing food drive for Salvation Army). We should have our own service projects large and small.

Communication from the boards and committees is poor. There are few if any committee reports, no reports to the general membership on board activities. Members feel disconnected from the workings of the club.

Newsletter could be more frequent and more informative about upcoming events. The leadership of the club should be giving the editor of the WEGO information about the activities of their committee.

The meetings are not providing the fellowship anticipated by members.

The programs are not engaging and few members look forward to the meals.

Simply stated: Member's reasons for being Rotarian are not being realized by the current structure of WEGO.

If there was any doubt as to where we are let me share some statistics since I am the number guy.

Statistically **WEGO** is failing as measured by membership and engagement.

In 5 years from 2006 to 2010 we inducted 12 new members of which 6 remain. **We should be asking ourselves Why.**

In 6 years from 2000 to 2005 there were 24 new members inducted 8 remain. **We should be asking ourselves Why?**

Over the past 35 years since the club began we have had 186 people come and go and only 12 were women. **We should be asking ourselves Why?**

At our zenith WEGO had close to 55 members with only about 5 who were not engaged, that is, they didn't come to meetings and didn't participate in projects.

Today we have 37 official members with about 15 either completely disengaged or partially disengaged. **We should be asking ourselves Why?**

In 2009 we lost \$350 in guaranteed meals to the Holiday Inn. In response to the poor attendance we reduced the guarantee to 14 dinners. **We should be asking ourselves Why?**

More important is the recurrent theme that WEGO is not meeting the club membership's overwhelming desire to touch our community in meaningful and relevant ways. Our member's reasons for being Rotarians are not being met by the current structure of the club.

On the edges of most of our concerns about WEGO is the unspoken word "failure".

I took some time to research the issue of a failing organizations. I sought resource from both inside Rotary and outside Rotary.

I will briefly tell you about both sources and what I found.

From within RI I found many clubs have newsletters on line. The newsletters were not shy about documenting their struggles to pull their clubs back from the brink of failure. One such newsletter struck a chord to our current status.

District Governor Bill Crawford wrote about his observations about the failings and dangers of “meet, greet, eat and retreat Rotary clubs” .

He said “...these kinds of clubs pose a threat to the recruitment and retention of Rotarians, especially new and younger members. Most of the people we want to have in our clubs are already busy people, and becoming a Rotarian is one more commitment of time and interest. We persuade them to become a part of Rotary’s extraordinary humanitarian efforts, and then they experience the “meet, greet, eat and retreat” reality and too little of what they expected.”

Outside Rotary I accessed a wealth of information on organizational dynamics. These sources differentiate between micro and macro failures within organizations. Often a failing organization will resist the macro solution in favor of one or several micro solutions that usually fail to move the organization out of failure.

Both sources encourage failing organizations to look at every single aspect of the organization and evaluate each of them on the basis of current external and internal stress. Why an organization did things years ago may no longer work. And organizations that pull themselves out of failure are usually the ones willing to evaluate these issues honestly and thoroughly.

Our evaluation attempted to look at all aspects of the club. We ask that you look and consider each one in the spirit of the 4 way test since some of them may initially impact you personally.

Recommendations

Committee Structure must be revitalized

Recommendation:

**All club committee chairs should meet with committee ASAP
Chairs should establish goals for remainder of fiscal year
Report to the club assembly in 2 weeks.**

**Secretary of the boards should prepare minutes of the
meetings and the minutes should become part of the club
minutes by submitting to the newsletter editor.**

Recommendation:

**Members should present to the Activities Committee ideas on
“sweat equity” projects in the community. One goal should be
to get some community exposure for WEGO as a by product of
the projects.**

**RI website has a wealth of information on finding such
projects.**

Recommendation:

**Club Service Committee should actively schedule for the
balance of the year for social and fellowship activities.**

Projects should be more hands on.

Recommendation:

Program Chair should initiate a schedule for re-classification talks by all members to help members have a more current understanding of their fellow members.

Program chair should assign each member one week per year to sponsor a program or obtain a speaker.

Presentations requesting funds should be curtailed.

For discussion:

*****Consider changing meeting model from dinner to End of Day or Sunset***

The committee was not prepared to suggest this as a recommendation, however, it does bear some consideration. This is in keeping with RI encouragement that clubs be willing to evaluate every aspect of the club.

Our meeting is the first face we get to present to a prospective new member. There is no doubt our meeting are no longer compelling for current or prospective members.

WEGO was started 35 years ago (1975) by basically a handful of men were committed to Rotary but, because of their jobs, could not get to the local meeting at noon. They started a dinner meeting Rotary (WEGO) as a way of fulfilling their commitment to Rotary and fulfilling their desire for fellowship with one another.

In 1975 when the club was founded, 45% of traditional families had both parents working. The dinner meeting was established in that environment. There were ample prospects who could be away from their families for a dinner meeting. And, let's not forget these were all men.

Today 80% of traditional families have both parents working. In this environment a dinner meeting becomes less attractive with both parents returning to hearth and home and all the ongoing duties associated with children.

Looking again at the male centric nature of the club, studies have shown that the fathers of today are more engaged with their children than fathers were in 1975.

The engagement of fathers has been measured and has been shown to have increased almost proportionate to the rise in the number of two income households.

So what we have today are fathers more engaged in parental duties associated with child care, homework, coaching, and the proverbial shuttle busing. This shift in family and economic dynamics makes attending a dinner meeting very difficult for prospective members and even current members.

I personally believe changing the dinner meeting model is the macro change and the macro solution to putting WEGO back on track.

I don't come by this easily from a personal standpoint. For the past 30 years that I have been with WEGO I have spent the hours of 4:30 to 6:00 with my mother and dad who are now in ill health well into their 80s. This weekly time has become a Thomas Family tradition now joined by nieces and nephews. So changing the meeting will require me to change a family tradition.

The added benefit is that it would cut the weekly cost in better than half, promote more opportunities for fellowship and would possibly be a way to bring more spouses to more meetings

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BY REVIEW COMMITTEE OF

MARCH 11TH MEETING - CLUB ASSESSMENT

March 25 meeting: Report committee's findings and recommendations

1. Committee structure must be revitalized
 - a. Club committees meet with committee chairs ASAP
 - b. Chairs will establish goals for remainder of fiscal year.
 - c. Report to Club Assembly in two weeks.
2. Program Chair should assign each member a week per year to sponsor a program or obtain a speaker.
 - a. Re-Classification talks by all members to help younger members know the older members better.
 - b. Fewer charitable organizations used as evening programs.
 - c. Speakers sought to present interesting / diverse / relevant topics
3. Club Service Committee to actively schedule for the year a balance of social / fellowship activities.
4. Club Activities Committee should plan more "sweat equity" involvement with the community (i.e.: Project Business, Teaching prisoners to read, etc.) and obtain community publicity.
5. Recommend the club reduce fund raising expectations overall.
6. Introduce proposal of changing the club's meeting model to attract young men and women who support youthful family obligations.
 - a. Change from dinner meeting to:
 - i. End-of-Day or Sunset Club meeting 5:00-6:00 pm
 - ii. One hour meeting
 - iii. Hors d'œuvres and beverages only
 - iv. Reduces meeting costs. One set price for meeting collected in dues semi-annually.
 - v. Goal to bring-in new members, increase members' interaction
 - b. Questionnaire to poll membership on viability of model change.

April 1 meeting: Recommend CANCELLING meeting for Holy week / Passover

April 8 meeting: Club Assembly for Committee Chair Reports



East End Neighborhood Association

*Invites you to join us for
Tasty Treats to benefit our
Educational Advancement Program*

On

Thursday April 29, 2010

6:00 – 8:30pm

At

Milestone Events

600 East Market Street West Chester, PA 19382 (610) 918-4704

Silent Auction & Door Prizes

Tickets \$20 each

Catered Hors Devours, Delightful Deserts & Vibrant Wines Served

*For More Info Contact: Ramona Lang 610-453-0411 or
Shirley Porter 610-692-8071*