



**“Building our community one child at a time”**

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## **The Downtowner**

***Newsletter of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown***

**November 1, 2016**

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### **October 11 Meeting**

Our guest speaker at the October 11 lunch meeting was **Jan Musser Geier**, Outreach and Marketing Coordinator for the Salvation Army. Jan provided us with information about a little-known program offered by the Salvation Army – its Foster Care and Adoption Program. The local Salvation Army chapter is the only one in the country offering these services. The program operates in the greater Lehigh Valley as well as Southeastern Pa. They are a registered foster care agency with both Lehigh and Northampton Counties. They provide full-time foster care, as well as temporary respite care to foster families to give them a break. They also participate in S.W.A.N., the statewide adoption network. They work with children ages 5-18 years old. They also provide parent education and “visit coaching” to families to help them keep their own children in the home. They participate in the monthly “Adopt Lehigh Valley Kids” show on WFMZ-TV. They operate Comfort Cottage, a facility near Dorney Park used for family coaching visits. Their staff consists of 10 professionals. Their office is located at 425 Allentown Drive, in the Allentown Business Park near Coca-Cola Park. Jan provided us with program brochures and a copy of their “Care 4 Kids” newsletter. Our club has been a supporter of the Salvation Army for many years. However, we were unaware of this program and the wonderful impact it has on kids.

Also at the October 11 meeting, Pennsylvania Kiwanis Division 18 Lt. Governor **Jeff Rose** installed our club officers and Board of Directors for 2016-17. Incoming President **Tom Harp** thanked our membership for their support as he serves as club President for the third time. “Maybe the third time will be a charm” he quipped. We would like to thank everyone who volunteered to serve as officers or members of our Board of Directors for the upcoming year.

At this meeting, **Big Bob Ashcraft** drew a 5 of Spades in our “Aces Wild” 50/50 drawing. Sorry, Bob. No BIG BUCKS for you!

## A Message from Our President

“2016 is my 20<sup>th</sup> year as a member of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown. I have seen a lot of members come and go over the past two decades. It is hard to believe that I am now the fourth most senior member of the club, behind our “patriarch” **Sam Saxton, Jim Fronheiser**, and **John Stoffa**, who recruited me as a member in July, 1996. At the time, I was Administrator for the Allentown District Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and John was Director of Human Services for Lehigh County. We interacted professionally for years, and John finally asked me if I wanted to join Kiwanis. I was familiar with Kiwanis since I was formerly a member of the Allentown Sertoma Club. John convinced me to join, based on the wonderful work our club did with underprivileged children in the community. Back then, there were over 50 members in the club. We met weekly for lunch at what was the Hilton Hotel at 9<sup>th</sup> and Hamilton Streets. The meetings were very formal. Installation of officers was a big deal. We had special dinner meetings for that event. But as time passed, we saw a dwindling in membership. It became more challenging for members to get away from their jobs for lunch meetings. We reduced the number of lunch meetings to twice a month, moving to the Allentown Brew Works for a couple of years. We then tried breakfast meetings, first at the Brew Works on the Green at the Allentown Municipal Golf Course, and for a very short period of time at the Colonial Diner at 19<sup>th</sup> & Tilghman Streets. That last place was an amusing disaster since for most meetings they forgot we were coming, and upon arriving at our last scheduled meeting there, the place was closed and out of business! We decided to return to lunch meetings, and found a nice “home” at the Hamilton Family Restaurant. Through all of these logistics, we tried to remain focused on the main purpose of our club- to “build our community, one child at a time.” For the past two years, under the leadership of **Mike Kukitz** we have become a “1-2-3” club, striving to spend one hour a month in meetings, two hours on social activities, and three hours a month providing **SERVICE**. We have made great strides in making this vision become a reality. We want caring individuals to join our club to serve our community, not just to attend meetings. Every month, we strive to provide at least one service project for our members to participate in. Since 1996 the size of our club has been reduced from over 50 members to its current 21 members. However, we are actually providing more hours of community service than we did back then! We are less a “business networking” club than we are a true, genuine service club. And that feels GREAT! We have members who are passionate about serving children in our community. We have great pride in making our community a better place to live, learn and prosper. There are many unique challenges in our community. But I am a firm believer that if you are not part of the solution to a problem, you are part of it. We are excited to charter a new Builders Club at the Raub Middle School and a K-Kids Club at Washington Elementary School. These initiatives will help many young children learn leadership skills and the value of community service. Those children will one day likely become members of Key Clubs at our area high schools. We are helping to build our future leaders. What could be more satisfying than that? In the year ahead I plan to keep our club moving in the direction we have been benefitting from over the past two years. But I need your help to accomplish our goals. Please join me in making this year the best we can for the Kiwanis Club of Allentown, and the hundreds of children and families that we serve. Thank you for your support!”

***Tom Harp, President***

## November 15 Meeting



We will be “on the road” for our November lunch meeting. Since our normal meeting day falls on this year’s important Election Day, we have moved our monthly meeting to November 15, at 12 noon. And, instead of the Ham-Fam, we will be meeting at the Lehigh County Heritage Museum, located at 432 W. Walnut Street, Allentown. **Joe Garrera**, Executive Director of the Lehigh County Historical Society will be our host and speaker. After lunch, those with time to spare can join us for a brief tour of the facility, including their latest exhibit. Cost is \$8.00 for a box lunch. No 50/50 for this meeting. Tom Harp will need a head count of attendees no later than November 12. Please plan to join us!

## New SLP's!

We are quite excited and proud that our club is starting two new Service Leadership Programs (SLP's) in the Allentown School District. We have already facilitated the chartering of a new Builders Club at the Raub Middle School. At a recent organizational meeting, a dozen students attended and received their Builders Club pins. At their next meeting on November 8, they will be electing officers. They are already brain-storming service projects, including a Multicultural Display for the school. We plan to have a special “Charter Night” ceremony in November or early December. We have a very enthusiastic teacher, **Nicole Beltran**, who is faculty adviser to the club. And **Enos Martin** has done a terrific job as our club adviser to the Raub Builders Club.



We are also starting a K-Kids Club at the Washington Elementary School. The guidance counselor there, **Laura Zaharakis** originally contacted us about sponsoring a K-Kids Club, and will be faculty adviser for the club. We have submitted a charter application to Kiwanis International, and the school is beginning to recruit members. It appears they will have between 15-20 members, mainly 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. **Tom Harp** is currently serving as our adviser to the new K-Kids Club, but is willing to turn this over to any other member of our club who might be interested. The club currently plans to meet at the school on Mondays from 3:10 PM to 3:45 PM. Please let Tom know if you are interested in serving as our adviser to this club.



## Division 18 News

### REGION 6 MEETING SET FOR NOVEMBER 19TH

The Region 6 meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, November 19th**. The meeting will be held at Northampton Community College, Keystone Hall, Route 715, Tannersville. It will be the official Governor's visit to our Region and our first Division 18 meeting of the new Kiwanis year.

Cost is \$25.00 for the continental breakfast and luncheon. Registration begins at 8:45 AM and the meeting starts at 9:31 AM. Tom Harp plans to attend. If anyone else is interested in attending, contact Tom. Deadline for reservations is November 11.

**ALLENTOWN NORTHEAST FLAPJACK FUNDRAISER** – NOVEMBER 19, 8 – 10 AM at Applebee's, off Catasauqua Road, 2109 Motel Drive. Tickets are \$7.00 and \$5.00 for children 12 and under. Tickets will be available at the door.

### Upcoming Meetings and Activities

**Tuesday, November 15, 12 Noon, AT THE LEHIGH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM, Speaker will be Joe Garrera, Executive Director of the LCHS. A brief tour will follow the lunch meeting. Invocation by Belinda Gray.**

**BOARD MEETING – Wednesday, November 30, 5:15 PM at the J.S. Burkholder Funeral Home.**



### November Birthdays (LOTS!)



- 9 - Cindy Ashcraft
- 19 - Tom Harp
- 22 - Tracy Davis
- 26 - Rich Peterson
- 28 - Belinda Gray



*Tom Harp, Editor*