

**“Building our community one child at a time”
For the past Century!**

The Downtowner

Newsletter of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown

May 1, 2019

April 11 Meeting



We had a great turnout at our April 11 meeting, which was held at the **Community Music School (CMS)** in Allentown. We had **15 members in attendance**, including our newest member, **Christian Averill**, Senior District Executive for the Minsi Trails Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Christian took over the job of Rich Peterson, our former member who transferred to another BSA Council. We met in the very elegant Recital Hall at CMS, and were greeted by Assistant Director **Linda Hopstock**. We enjoyed a tasty catered lunch from Panera Bread, which included a selection of sandwiches, chips, salad, and cookies. **President Todd** welcomed everyone, and we had an eloquent invocation from **Ricki Stringfellow**. Todd reported on club news and upcoming events. We also elected club officers and Board of Directors for the 2019-20 administrative year. By a unanimous vote, those present elected the following:

- President – Tom Harp
- Vice-President – Tracy Davis
- Treasurer – Enos Martin
- Secretary – Peg Harp
- Director, One-Year Term – Deb Lamb, Terry Kennedy
- Director, Two-Year Term – Bob Ashcraft, Young Chang
- Director, Three-Year Term – No candidates for 2 positions

We would like to congratulate and THANK these members for serving as officers and directors of our club!

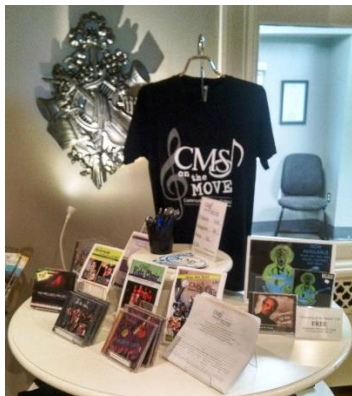
After lunch, Linda Hopstock talked about the history of CMS and some statistics about who they serve. Last year, they provided music lessons to 1,000 students. 30% of those students receive financial aid. Surprisingly, 20% of students are adults. Many are retirees who have always wanted to learn how to play an instrument, but never had the time. CMS began operations in 1981. They started out at the St. John's Lutheran Church in Allentown with just 5 instructors. From there, they moved to Miller Symphony Hall. Due to development in the area, access and parking became more of a problem. They began searching for another location, and were able to lease their current space at the former Lehigh Valley Club near 16th and Hamilton Streets. The building had been mostly vacant and considerably run down when they moved there in September 2018. The large, ornate Recital Hall was repainted, but largely maintained its original elegance and charm. In their main lobby, CMS removed wall-to-wall carpeting to reveal an amazing wood parquet floor, which was restored to its original beauty. On our tour, we stopped in the former upstairs bar, which now serves as a lounge, with WIFI access, for parents and family members accompanying a student. There is also a large play room for young siblings of students to occupy their time during lessons. There are 9 private studios, including one sponsored by Allentown Kiwanis member **Sam Saxton** and his wife **Missy**, who was on the Board of Directors for CMS for many years. Linda mentioned that CMS plans to offer their Recital Hall for rental on weekends for wedding receptions, birthdays, and other special events. The building, formerly known as the Mosser Mansion before it became the Lehigh Valley Club, was built in 1908. Following this article is a history of the mansion, researched by our club's distinguished historian, **Enos Martin**. This was probably one of the best meetings of the year! CMS is a wonderful program that develops musical talent with youth from the greater Lehigh Valley area.



Todd in Recital Hall



Linda Hopstock



Lehigh Valley Club History

Our club's April 11 meeting was held at the Community Music School's new location at the former Lehigh Valley Club. Our club has a historical connection to the site. The 1544 Hamilton Street property was owned by Charles Franklin Mosser. He died on February 6, 1934. Mosser was the father of William F. Mosser, a member of the Allentown Kiwanis Club from 1928-1945. He died in 1989. His son Charles F. Mosser was President of the Allentown Kiwanis Club for a 9 month period from April through December 1964. Due to the unfortunate stroke suffered by then President James Huffort in early 1964, Charles Mosser assumed the presidency of the Kiwanis Club 9 months earlier than he had expected. He was a 42 year member of the Club from 1949 until his death in 1991.

The Lehigh Valley Shriners Club was founded in 1924 as a Masonic men's dining club and initially met at 616 Hamilton Street. In 1936, the Club purchased the Charles F. Mosser estate at 1544 Hamilton Street. The formal opening of the elaborately renovated mansion occurred on January 12, 1937. Features included an elegant reading room, dining room, cocktail lounge, magnificent bar, and large kitchen and pantry. The basement was redone to create recreation facilities, including pool and card rooms.

In early 1949, a new \$250,000 wing was added to the facility and there was a complete renovation of the rest of the interior. The installation of floor space for dancing and a motion picture screen were included in the renovations. A "reopening" of the renovated facility occurred on May 19, 1949. In January 1951, the organization's name was officially changed to the Lehigh Valley Club. The name change occurred because of a complaint filed by the Rajah Temple in Reading related to the membership of the local club.

In November 1991, the Lehigh Valley Club filed bankruptcy actions. Financial problems were attributed to declining membership for the large facility. On June 28, 1992 the Club closed its doors for the final time. In April 1993, the facility re-opened as the Scottish Rite Center and was operated by the Scottish Rite Cathedral which owned the property. In October 2017 developer Mark Smith, a board member of the Community Music School, purchased the property for \$800,000. The Community Music School's lease at Miller Symphony Hall came to an end in 2018. Smith saw the Lehigh Valley Club as an ideal facility for the school. Although the plans were to move from its downtown location to the new location by June 2018, the move was made in September 2018. CMS leases its space, with an option to purchase the building in the future.

The Allentown Kiwanis Club's longstanding luncheon location at the Americus Hotel ended in October 1971. Meetings were moved to the Lehigh Valley Club, except for a brief period from January 5 through September 7, 1978 when they were again held at the Americus Hotel. The move was made because the Lehigh Valley Club raised the price of the lunch to \$4.84, which at the time was considered too much. In August 1978, the members voted to move back to the cozy confines of the Lehigh Valley Club since they considered the Americus Ballroom way too large to hold congenial meetings. The Lehigh Valley Club continued to be the home of our club through July 1988 when the meetings once again were moved back to the Americus Hotel. The Lehigh Valley Club served as our club's meeting location for 17 years.

- **Enos Martin**

Saxton Studio



While touring the Community Music School on April 11, we quickly noticed that one of the studios, for piano lessons, was named after **Missy and Sam Saxton**! Missy had served on the Board of Directors of CMS for many years, and they donated to the building's renovations. We would like to recognize the Saxtons for their support of this fine program.

April Service Project

The weather was cloudy and cool, with patches of rain on April 28, when our volunteers, **Serena Ranney, Deb Lamb, Terry Kennedy** and **Tom Harp** reported to a city park off Fish Hatchery Road to plant tree seedlings. We met with the Allentown Parks & Recreation Director, **Karen El-Chaar**, and were joined by several parks employees. They used a power auger to dig holes while we planted the seedlings, back-filled the holes and inserted plastic tubes staked into the ground to protect the baby trees. We did this in rows near the Little Lehigh Creek. We also planted some "pussy willow" plants along a more rugged tract nearer the creek. We had a good time interacting with the parks department crew, and left feeling satisfied that we had played a small part in beautifying Allentown's wonderful park system



Serena, Deb and Terry



A Seedling in the Tube

Mother's Day Project



For the past several years, **Bob and Cindy Ashcraft** have organized a Mother's Day project at two Lehigh Valley Children's Centers locations. This year, on **May 10**, Bob and Cindy will be visiting the LVCC Walnut St. Center with flower pots for the children to decorate, soil and seedlings to plant in the pots, and Mother's Day cards for the kids to personalize. At the same time, **Enos and Susan Martin** will be visiting LVCC's Early Learning Center to supervise the same activities. A total of 72 children will participate in this special event. **Happy Mother's Day!**

11th Annual LVCC Picnic



Our 11th Annual LVCC Picnic is just around the corner! It will be held on **Thursday, May 16** from 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM at the Allentown Rose Garden Pavilions. We expect 237 pre-school children from four LVCC Centers in Allentown – Walnut Street, South Mountain, Early Learning Center and Union Boulevard. Over 50 Key Club members from William Allen, Allentown Central Catholic, Salisbury, Emmaus, Parkland and Whitehall High Schools will be helping out. There will be dozens of LVCC teachers and other staff to supervise the children. And already, 14 of our members have volunteered to either help with picnic setup, prepare and serve lunch, or to cleanup afterwards. We would like to thank all of our volunteers, and hope for perfect spring weather on the 16th!

"Bundles for Babies"

The "Bundles for Babies" knitting group, led by **Peg Harp**, continues to meet every Tuesday from 3-4 PM at Atria Assisted Living in Bethlehem. Each week, several Atria residents join Peg in knitting baby blankets, hats and other items for the Nurse-Family Partnership. If you are interested in joining the group, call Peg at 610-428-9878.

Service Leadership Programs



According to club advisor **Terry Kennedy**, the **South Mountain Middle School Builders Club** is still in transition with a new faculty advisor. The **Raub Middle School Builders Club** is decorating shoe boxes for every classroom to use in collecting "Box Tops for Education." The deadline for collecting the box tops is November 1, 2019.

In March, the **Ramos Elementary School K-Kids Club** raised \$1,800 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society "Pennies for Patients" initiative. According to our club advisor **Vic Mazziotti**, the K-Kids members hung up posters, distributed collection boxes to each classroom, and even made a short video to promote the fundraiser. The **Washington Elementary School K-Kids Club** just completed a toiletry drive to benefit local homeless shelters. They are also planning to pick up litter around the school now that better weather has arrived.

The **Allentown Central Catholic HS Key Club** will be building a reading corner at Sacred Heart Hospital on May 17. They raised money through a couple of student raffles, and are using those funds to buy materials for bookshelves, a reading rug, and books. Nine members of the club will be helping out at the LVCC Picnic on May 16. The **Salisbury HS Key Club** already has 16 students signed up for the picnic, and the **Allen HS Key Club** is sending several members as well. .

Division Merger Proposal

Pa. District Kiwanis **Governor Phil Weber** has asked clubs in Divisions 17 and 18 to vote on a proposal to merge those divisions into a single Division 17. The District Board is exploring ways to balance the number of clubs in each division statewide. Our division, Division 18 once had 10 clubs, but is now down to 4. Only 3 of those clubs attend Division Council meetings. Division 17, to our east, has 6 clubs, including 2 in the Stroudsburg area. The proposal is to move the Upper Perkiomen Kiwanis Club from Division 18 to Division 19, Montgomery County area, and to merge the remaining 3 clubs in Division 18 with the 6 clubs in Division 17. So the newly-aligned Division 17 would have 9 clubs, including ours, and a total of 265 members. This proposal makes sense for a number of reasons. Our club's Board of Directors has voted unanimously in favor of the proposal. 2/3 of clubs have to vote in favor for the District to adopt this proposal. If adopted, the merger will become effective October 1, 2019.

Division 18 News

Kiwanis Club of Allentown Northeast Semi-Annual Pancake Breakfast, **Saturday, May 11 between 8:00 – 10:00 AM** Applebee's, Catasauqua Road, Bethlehem.

Kiwanis Club of Emmaus 46th Annual Pancake Festival, **Sunday, June 2nd, 8 AM to Noon.** Emmaus Fire Company #1, 6th & Broad Streets, Emmaus, PA. Tickets: \$7.00 per person, children under age 10 eat free. All the pancakes you can eat! For tickets and information: (610) 395-4818 or www.emmauskiwanis.org.

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

SERVICE PROJECT - Bundles for Babies” knitting project at Atria Senior Assisted Living in Bethlehem. Tuesdays at 3:00 PM in Atria’s activity room.

MONTHLY CLUB MEETING - Thursday, May 9, 6 PM (Social Hour from 5-6 PM) Shanty on 19th. Speaker will be Christine Duddy, Director of Operations at Mary’s Shelter in Bethlehem, a shelter for pregnant women who are homeless or from abusive homes.

SERVICE PROJECT – Friday, May 10, 9 AM. Mother’s Day flower pot project at the LVCC Walnut Street and ELC Centers.

SERVICE PROJECT – Thursday, May 16, 10 AM – 1 PM. 11th Annual LVCC Picnic, Rose Garden Pavilions, Allentown.

FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING - Tuesday, May 28, 4 PM at the J.S. Burkholder Funeral Home.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING - Tuesday, May 28, 5 PM at the J.S. Burkholder Funeral Home.



May Birthday



8 - Christian Averill



- Tom Harp, Editor