



“Building our community, one child at a time”

The Downtowner

Newsletter of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown

August 1, 2021

July 8 Meeting

Our meeting on July 8 was a very special one. It was the first in-person meeting since March 12, 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic began to shut everything down. Since then, we met virtually every month on Zoom calls. It was great to see everyone each month and to ask how they were tolerating the pandemic. But we missed the fellowship and comradery that only a gathering in person can provide. We returned to the Shanty on 19th for our dinner meeting, and had a wonderful turnout, with 18 members and guests! The room got a little crowded as we shared the space with video machines and a pool table. However, we made do and enjoyed some fine food, and a few drinks in advance during a social hour. All of our meeting equipment was held in storage by the Shanty. We thanked owner **Joe Taschiere** for safekeeping our stuff. President **Todd Siegfried** greeted everyone, including guests **Mayor Ray O’Connell**; **Cathy Kane**, **Chas** and **Jane Chase** from the Allentown Northeast Kiwanis Club; and Southern Lehigh HS Key Club Scholarship winner **Saskia Van’t Hof**, her mom, and her Key Club faculty advisor **Tom Beaupre**.

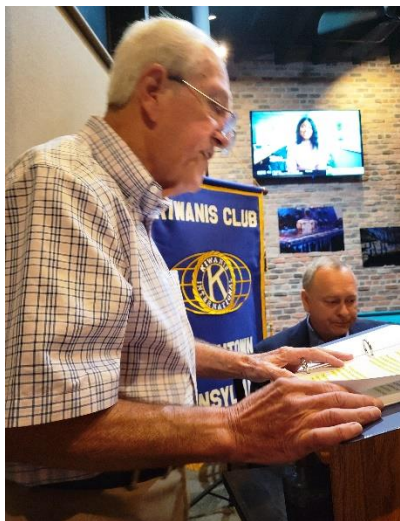
After ordering dinner, we proceeded with our traditional program, including a Pledge of Allegiance and a chorus of “God Bless America.” Boy did that feel good! One thing you really can’t do well on Zoom is reciting or singing in unison. Just these simple acts helped us feel closer to normal again. Todd welcomed everyone, then led a ceremony inducting **Tom Harp** into the Kiwanis “Legion of Honor” for achieving 25 years of membership. Todd read Tom’s bio from our club history book, indicating that he joined our club in July, 1996. Our newest member **Mark Hanichak** was President of the club at the time, and remembered Tom’s induction ceremony. Tom recalled his recruitment into the club by his sponsor, **John Stoffa**. Tom was Administrator of the Allentown District Office of Vocational Rehabilitation at the time, and John was Director of Human Services for Lehigh County. They had collaborated on various human service initiatives, especially in

the field of disability programs. Tom expressed his pride for being a Kiwanian and in serving children in our community. Todd presented Tom with a “Legion of Honor” certificate and 25-year pin.



Tom & Todd

Following this ceremony, **Bob Ashcraft**, President of our Foundation presented a college scholarship check in the amount of \$1,000 to Southern Lehigh HS Key Club member Saskia Van't Hof. Saskia was a 2nd year President of the Key Club, was editor-in-chief of the school newspaper, a varsity field hockey player and ESL tutor at the school. Her favorite Key Club activities were the Senior Citizen Dinners and babysitting nights at the high school. She was an officer of the Key Club for three of her four years in the club. She will be attending the University of Pittsburgh in the fall, majoring in International and Area Studies. She is a very worthy recipient of the only Key Club scholarship our Foundation awarded this year.



Mayor O'Connell

Tom Harp then introduced our speaker, Allentown Mayor Ray O'Connell. Mr. O'Connell has served as mayor of the city since March 29, 2018 when he was elected by City Council to replace Mayor Ed Pawlowski who resigned on March 9. He was subsequently elected by city voters in November 2019 to serve the remainder of Pawlowski's term which expires in January 2022. The Mayor is a former two-term councilperson and three year

president of council. He has resided in the City of Allentown for over 34 years. He is a retired Allentown School District teacher and administrator. The Mayor provided us with a "State of the City" report, which was very promising. Crime in general is down, and the Allentown Police Department has been able to recruit and retain officers despite major problems in other large cities. Community policing has been successful in gaining trust between citizens and the police. Economic development is equally important. New office buildings and apartments are being constructed downtown every month. The Riverfront Development is inching along. Quality of life is important as well. Allentown offers a park system that is unequaled for a city its size. And recreation programs are resuming post-pandemic. Financially the city is doing better. Mayor O'Connell and city Council raised taxes to prevent a shortfall, and with stimulus money to cities, Allentown is in decent shape with its budget. Even though the Mayor lost in this year's primary election, he looks forward to working with a new administration next year to continue promoting Allentown, and to encourage economic and community revitalization. We look forward to doing our part as a community service organization to improve the quality of life for children in the greater Allentown area.

Reflections of a Legion of Honor Inductee

I would like to take this opportunity as the newest inductee into the Kiwanis Legion of Honor, and editor of this newsletter, to express my great pride in being a 25-year member of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown. When I joined the club in the summer of 1996, Bill Clinton was our President, and the Atlanta Olympics were well underway. We were rooting for local cycling sensation Marty Nothstein who won a silver medal in the sprint race. I was invited to a lunch meeting of the club at what was then the Hilton Hotel at 9th and Hamilton Streets. The club had over 50 members at the time. I was a bit overwhelmed, but felt welcomed by everyone. We met weekly then, which was a little hard to comply with both in terms of my job and finances. But we always had a good time with excellent speakers and occasionally a contest to stir things up. What really attracted me to Kiwanis was its dedication to children. Serving children locally and around the world. There have been a few guiding principles I have followed in my life, and my career in human services. One is that if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem. It is easy to sit back and complain about kids in our city who get into trouble. We have big-city problems that require big solutions. But each of us can have an impact in the positive development of the lives of these children. Even if it is just in reading them a book, providing them with a picnic or party, or donating food and volunteer hours for a local food bank. Another principle I have followed is best memorialized by Jonas Salk, who discovered the cure for polio. He was lauded and presented with many awards and honors. But he said "the greatest reward for doing, is the opportunity to do more." As I rose up the ranks in state employment, from being a Child Care Aide at White Haven Center, to a Rehabilitation Counselor, to a supervisor, administrator and Bureau Director in Harrisburg I found that my ambition and dedication provided me with opportunities to have a bigger impact in the disability community. Each of us by our good deeds with Kiwanis can have that expediently important impact on the lives of disadvantaged children in our community. It was been my pleasure and honor to serve this community through Kiwanis for the past quarter-century.

- **Tom Harp**

Pa. District Convention



Kiwanis
PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT

Four members of our club will be representing us at the annual Pennsylvania District Kiwanis Convention (DCON) at the Harrisburg Hilton from August 19-22. **Joyce Crosby, Belinda Gray** and **Tom Harp** are our three official delegates at the convention. At the Saturday, August 21 Business Session, they will vote on any proposed amendments to the District By-Laws, and for District Governor candidates. So far, only **Mike Coolbaugh**, Region 6 Trustee has declared his candidacy for Governor-Elect. **Enos Martin** will also be in attendance, as Division 17/18 Lt. Governor, and as a delegate at-large. Enos will be setting up a display in the exhibition room featuring our club's history book. We hope to sell several of them at the convention. We have purchased an ad in the DCON program promoting the book, and also honoring **Sam Saxton**. A report on the convention will be in next month's newsletter.

A Glance Into Our Past

100 Years Ago – August 1921

On August 18th, a large number of Kiwanians from Trenton, NJ, traveled to Allentown for an interclub dinner meeting at the Hotel Allen to be followed by a baseball game at Muhlenberg's baseball field between the two rival Kiwanis Clubs. Unfortunately, the Trenton Kiwanians thrashed their Allentown counterparts 24-1! The following week 30 Allentown Kiwanians traveled to the Chester Kiwanis Club for an interclub meeting as well as competition in baseball, tennis, and golf. This time Allentown put on a better showing on the baseball field, but still lost 5-4. The tennis and golf participants, however, were able to defeat their Chester rivals.

75 Years Ago – August 1946

Keeping with sporting endeavors, Allentown Kiwanis took on the Allentown Rotary Club in golf at the Brookside Country Club on August 8. Kiwanis defeated their fellow Rotarians by winning 7 matches to Rotary's 3. Scores ranged from 79 to 125. A week later, the Kiwanis baseball team took on the Allentown Lions Club baseball team at the picnic with the Lions Club at Brookside. The Kiwanian nine lost to the Lion counterparts 16-15 with the winning run scoring in the bottom of the 9th inning.

50 Years Ago – August 1971

Speakers during the month included member John Henry Leh describing his recent travels to the South Seas, Australia, and the Orient; Mrs. Clair Siegele on the Meals on Wheels, Nick Fragnito on the Boys Club, and Frank Marino, head football coach at Muhlenberg College. Club members attended interclub meetings at Whitehall, Allentown Northeast, Allentown-Salisbury and Reading during the month.

25 Years Ago – August 1996

The monthly newsletter noted that 50 disadvantaged children, 8 -12 years old, were able to learn about computers at LCCC from a \$2,400 grant from our foundation. Meeting programs for month included: Randy Bloch (Morning Call), “Racing and the Indy 500”; Attorney Fred Rooney, “Locating Abducted Children”; Claire DiLorenzo, “Characteristics of an Ideal Employee”; Myron Yoder, “How the Internet Affects Everyday Life”; and Robert Ott, “Yesteryear at Dorney Park”.

Club Anniversaries:

Since July anniversaries were not included in last month’s “Glance Into the Past,” let’s recognize Tom Harp for celebrating his 25th Kiwanis anniversary during the club meeting in July. Tom became the 138th club member to achieve 25 years of membership.

The only August anniversary is John Stoffa who celebrates his 27th Kiwanis anniversary. John became the 137th member to achieve membership of 25 years or more in 2019. He currently ranks 124th on the list of longest club memberships.

- **Enos Martin**

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday, August 12, 6:00 PM (Social Hour from 5-6 PM) at the Shanty on 19th. Speaker will be Diane Donaher, Managing Director of the Civic Theatre of Allentown.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Wednesday, August 25, 5 PM on Zoom.



August Birthdays



9 - Jim Fronheiser

14 - Bob Ashcraft



- **Tom Harp, Editor**