



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

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## **The Downtowner**

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

**January 1, 2023**

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### **Happy New Year!**

We are looking forward to a successful year ahead for our Kiwanis Club, and for the children we serve. As we reflect on our club's achievements last year, let's resolve to do even better in 2023! We need to attract new members from diverse groups. We need to improve our signature service projects while coming up with new ways to serve our community. We need to expand and nurture Service Leadership Programs in our local schools. We need new fund-raising opportunities to build our club's treasury in order to fund children's programs. We need to provide interesting dinner meetings, and more fun social events for our members. I am confident that with your help and participation we can achieve all of these goals. Thank you for being a member of our club and for your commitment to serving our community, one child at a time! - **President Tom**

### **Grant Awards Luncheon**



**President Tom Welcomes Guests**

On December 8, our club hosted its 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Foundation Grant Awards Luncheon at the Shanty on 19<sup>th</sup>. We welcomed over 35 guests, including 5 members of the Kiwanis Club of Emmaus, 3 from the Allentown Northeast Kiwanis Club, and special guest **Kevin Thomas**, Pa. District Kiwanis Executive Director. **Major Santa Correa** of the Salvation Army provided us with an invocation. After introductions, we proceeded to enjoy a buffet lunch of roast beef, tilapia, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, a salad, rolls and cookies. After lunch, Foundation President **Bob Ashcraft** presented grant checks to representatives of the 11 non-profit organizations who were selected for awards this year. They included:

- **Boys and Girls Club of Allentown** – “Make Your M.A.R.K.” Program
- **Community Action Lehigh Valley** –Art Supplies, Easels, Tables and Chairs for Children at the Sixth Street Shelter
- **Community Music School** – Music Instruction Scholarships
- **Lehigh County Historical Society** – Museum Admissions, Books, and Other Programming
- **Lehigh Valley Children’s Centers** – Program Enrichment Activities
- **Minsi Trails Boy Scouts Council** –Uniforms, Handbooks, Camp Fees for Urban Scouting Program
- **Phantoms Charities** - Equipment for Sled Hockey Program
- **Pratyush Sinha Foundation** – Yoga and Mindfulness Classes for Allentown Youth
- **Salvation Army, Allentown Corps** – Backpack Distribution
- **SATORI** – “Gift of Music” Instrument Donation Program
- **St. Luke’s Visiting Nurse Association** – Books for Child Abuse Awareness Month



Representatives of those organizations provided a brief report on how the grant money would be utilized. Following this ceremony, **President Tom Harp** introduced Kevin Thomas who announced his retirement next fall, after 37 years of service as District Executive Director. He thanked Kiwanians in the audience for serving their communities, and congratulated the grantees and thanked them for their services to children and their families. Tom thanked Kevin for joining us at the event, and for his tireless work on behalf of the Pennsylvania District. This was the first stop of Kevin's "farewell tour" of District clubs, and Tom presented him with some "parting gifts" with a local flair. The first was a copy of our club's history book, signed by author **Enos Martin**. The next was a Mack Truck ball cap. And finally a Yocco's Hot Dog Picnic Pack, complete with 12 hot dogs and buns, mustard, onions and Yocco's own "secret sauce." Kevin later e-mailed Tom to thank our club for the gifts, and to report that his family really enjoyed the Yocco's doggies!



**Kevin Thomas**

Regrettably, the **Allen High School Chorale** was unable to perform at the event due to a fire at the school that resulted in student evacuations. Still, we sent them a check for \$100 from our Foundation to help support the Chorale. Also regrettably, President Tom goofed by failing to name this year's "Distinguished Service Award" winner – **Enos Martin!** He quickly apologized in an e-mail to our members, and will be presenting Enos with this award at our January 12 dinner meeting.

## **LVCC Annual Christmas Party**



**Santa Todd**

On December 16 our club hosted its 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Lehigh Valley Children's Centers (LVCC) Christmas Party at the Judith Chase Early Learning Center (ELC) in Allentown. We have come a long way from hosting our first party for LVCC pre-school children on December 7, 2006. At that time, it was limited to just the Walnut Street Center, and was held at the Allentown Brew Works ballroom. Only 19 children participated. This year, 102 children from three LVCC centers - ELC, Walnut Street and South Mountain attended the party. For the past several years, the party was held at the South Mountain Center. This year it was moved to ELC for a number of reasons. Alliance Hall, where ELC is located, has a large gymnasium where all of the children's activities could take place. It also features a commercial kitchen to prepare food for the party and an elevator to transport it. The venue worked out perfectly! Earlier in the week, **Enos** and **Susan Martin** picked up over 300 toys from the Toys for Tots warehouse outside Northampton and later dropped them off at ELC. **Tom Harp** picked up the food and dropped it off the same day. On the day of the party, volunteers arrived around 9:15 AM, including members Enos Martin, **Terry Kennedy** and Tom Harp. They were joined by Allen HS Key Club faculty advisors **Mary DiFebo**, **Steve Patterson**, and 8 members of the Key Club. **Todd Siegfried** arrived later with his good friend SANTA. Children from other centers arrived by bus and the activities began. They included candy cane beading, Christmas trees with star garland, paper books with Christmas stamps, magnet tile gingerbread houses, and a Christmas bowling/snowball toss.



Miss Lori

Musical entertainment was provided throughout the party. Following the planned activities, lunch consisting of chicken nuggets, carrot sticks, cookies and box drinks was served to the children by our volunteers.



Terry

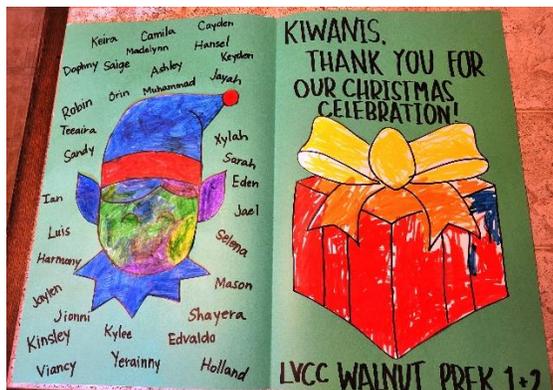


"'Twas the night before Christmas..."

After a break, Terry Kennedy led the children in a reading of “The Night Before Christmas.” This was a perfect lead-in to the children visiting, and having their pictures taken with, SANTA! Class by class Santa welcomed the kids with bellowing HO-HO-HO’s, and wishing them a Merry Christmas. After seeing Santa, the children boarded busses and returned to their classrooms, each with two new toys. It was a joyous occasion that brought the holiday spirit to not only the children, but to our volunteers as well!



Allen Key Club Elves



Kids’ “Thank You” Cards

## Service Leadership Programs

Our advisor to the Ramos Elementary School K-Kids Club **Vic Mazziotti** received word from the school advisor **Laura Zaharakis** that she hoped to schedule a first meeting of the club before the holidays. We expect that once school is back in session that the club will elect officers and become active again.

The Builders Club at the Raub Middle School has been a pleasant surprise. They have elected officers, and regularly have at least 9 members attending meetings. Our club advisor **Enos Martin** attends their meetings and has observed new levels of enthusiasm among the students. On December 20 Enos joined several members of the club delivering wreaths with candy attached, to several residents of the Phoebe Home. Faculty Advisor **Nicole Beltran** provided this inspiring report of the visit:

“Good morning! I just wanted to quickly share with you what an incredible time Mr. Martin and I had with the students on our Phoebe Nursing Home trip yesterday after school.

Every year (when possible) in Builder's Club we make candy wreathes, write holiday cards, and wrap a few small gifts for about 10 of the residents at the nursing home, and yesterday we had the privilege once again of delivering them in person. Precious moments flooded the kids' hearts, one after another, as residents got tears in their eyes, returned holiday greetings, and showed their heartfelt appreciation. One particular man (who had recently had a stroke) simply smiled at the children, repeating the word, 'happy...happy,' several times. As we walked back to school that evening after all the gifts were given, the students expressed their joy in a way that moved me to tears. One of our girls said, 'This made my Christmas. If I get nothing else, this was my gift, and it made my Christmas.' One of our boys said, 'This trip was really great. It opened my eyes... I want to keep going there.' I am so honored to have had the chance yet again to go with our kiddos up there. Thank you to Mr. Martin for helping to organize the trip, to Mr. Izzy for supporting the club, and Mr. Delgado for sending us with tons of encouragement and positive energy before we left yesterday!"

Ms. Beltran's comments are a testimony to the value of Kiwanis Service Leadership Programs in our local schools. These youngsters are learning leadership and team-building skills while gaining an appreciation of community service. And they have experienced the true meaning of Christmas in bringing joy to the lives of others.

We would also like to recognize and thank **Susan Martin** for volunteering to serve as our club's advisor to the Southern Lehigh Middle School Builders Club! Susan will be attending one of their meetings after the New Year. They are a very active club with over 60 members.

Our Key Clubs were very active as well prior to the Christmas holiday. As reported above, the Allen HS Key Club helped us out at the LVCC Christmas Party on December 16. The Salisbury HS Key Club donated over 60 Holiday Hope Chests to the Volunteer Center of the Lehigh Valley. Our advisor to the Allentown Central Catholic HS Key Club **Peg Harp** reports that they have a new faculty advisor, **Rebecca Saylor** who will be attending our annual Key Club Dinner on February 9 with two of the club's officers. And the Southern Lehigh HS Key Club has been very healthy and active.

## **A Glance Into Our Past**

### ***100 Years Ago – January 1923***

The following was printed in the January 1, 1923, edition of The Allentown Morning Call:

**ORRIN E. BOYLE**  
***President of Kiwanis Club***

"Look Back! Amid trials and tribulations, disappointments and failures, you have endured to love, to smile, to serve and to succeed.

"Look forward! What brighter prospect have you in life than the useful attainments which spring from the consciousness: 'I can!' and the resolution: 'I will!'

Thus says Allentown Kiwanis to all people of our fair City, County, State, and Nation.

Knowing no distinction of race, class, religion or politics, while it endures in fervent love for God, our Country, and our Fellowmen, Kiwanis greets you in this New Year with the hope that health and prosperity may cheer and comfort you in Service."

Note: Orrin Boyle was the sixth president of the Allentown Kiwanis Club. This proclamation is one that would serve us well today!

### **75 Years Ago – January 1948**

At the January 29<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Kiwanis Club at the Americus Hotel, John Stanley Grauel (described as a lecturer, radio commentator, seaman, world traveler, and writer) addressed the attendees on the subject “New Thresholds.” Grauel volunteered as an ordinary seaman aboard a vessel carrying 4500 “Illegal” Jewish immigrants into Palestine, crammed on the ship “Exodus 1947” which was boarded by a British naval party outside of the territorial waters of the Holy Land. Grauel subsequently gave eye-witness testimony on this internationally-important incident to the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine. This incident was a catalyst in forming the new state of Israel. The effort to transport these Holocaust survivors was organized by a group of private American citizens.

### **50 Years Ago – January 1973**

The second annual Allentown Kiwanis Snowmobile race was scheduled at the Allentown Fairgrounds for January 28<sup>th</sup>. For the second consecutive year, the race had to be postponed because of the lack of snow. February 11<sup>th</sup> was selected for the rescheduled date. February 11<sup>th</sup> came with no snow and the race was cancelled for the year. Although the race did occur in 1972, it happened with very little snow cover. With the unpredictability of sufficient snow fall and the efforts necessary to plan the event, the Club decided not to continue the fundraiser in future years.

### **25 Years Ago – January 1998**

Allentown Mayor William Heydt gave his “State of the City” address to the Kiwanis Club at the Allentown Hilton Hotel on January 8<sup>th</sup>. His major topic in the address was the demolition of the A&B Meats plant with the subsequent \$32 million project including a riverwalk, transportation museum, and a welcome center for the Delaware and Lehigh Canal National Heritage Corridor.

- **Enos Martin**

## **Upcoming Meetings and Activities**

**MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday, January 12, 6 PM (Social Hour from 5-6 PM) at the Shanty on 19<sup>th</sup>. Speaker will be Jennifer Keeble, Executive Director, Phantoms Charities.**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, January 26, 5 PM on Zoom.**



**January Birthday**



**6 – Alex Hirschberg**