

“Building our community, one child at a time”

The Downtowner

Newsletter of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown

April 1, 2023

March 9 Meeting



Matt Sommers

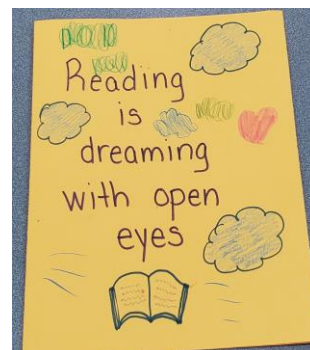
A small number of members met on March 9 and welcomed guest speaker **Matt Sommers**. Matt grew up in Bath, Pa. and graduated from Northampton High School. He went on to College Misericordia where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Sports Management, followed by a Master's Degree in Business Administration. He has been affiliated with the Lehigh Valley IronPigs since 2019, currently serving as Manager of IronPigs Charities. That non-profit arm of the IronPigs baseball team has donated over \$1.2 million since its inception. Last year it donated \$75,000 to 22 organizations that provide educational and recreational opportunities for youth in our area. Their major fundraisers are the 50/50 Raffle held at each game, the annual Phillies Winter Caravan, and a golf tournament, to be held at the Riverside Golf Club this year. Every year, nearly \$100,000 is raised with the 50/50 Raffle. They also raise money from the sale of game-worn jerseys, and other collectibles. Their grant application period is in December. Matt mentioned some of the rule changes this upcoming season in minor league baseball.

They will continue to have a pitch clock. The bases have been enlarged from 15” to 18” . And they will be trying out automated balls and strikes technology at games. The IronPigs had to invest over \$7 million in ballpark renovations required by Major League Baseball. There will be larger clubhouses, locker rooms for female umpires and trainers, an expanded workout room, and more. This will be an exciting season for the IronPigs with lots of promotions and special events. They will be playing two new teams this schedule, Memphis and Jacksonville. The Home Opener is scheduled for Tuesday, April 4. Go Pigs!

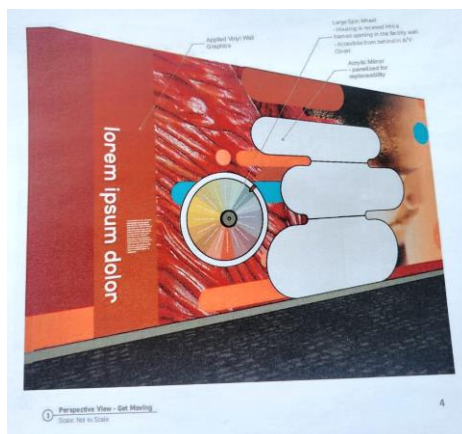
Read Across Pennsylvania



On March 16, **Enos** and **Susan Martin, Joyce Crosby, Terry Kennedy** and **Deb Lamb** visited the LVCC after-school program at the Muhlenberg Elementary School to read with the children during “Read Across Pennsylvania” week. Our volunteers reported that the children were very well behaved, and demonstrated excellent reading skills. They were divided into three reading level groups, and given their own copies of books selected by us in collaboration with the Scholastic Literacy Program. After the reading session, the kids enjoyed a snack of cookies provided by Deb Lamb. A good time was had by all!



Da Vinci Center Sponsorship



“Get Moving” Exhibit

On March 13, **Enos Martin, Terry Kennedy** and **Tom Harp** met with **MaryEllen Dickey**, Chief Philanthropy Officer for the Da Vinci Science Center to discuss sponsorship opportunities at their new facility under construction in downtown Allentown. We met at their offices in the Alvin Butz Center, directly across the street from the new “Da Vinci Science Center at PPL Pavilion.” MaryEllen reported that much of the construction so far has been to drive micro-piles into bedrock to prevent sinkhole collapse. Steel girders are being assembled on-site and a Topping off Celebration is scheduled for May 9. The building is expected to open in May, 2024. The new facility will be 71,000 square feet, twice the size of the current Science Center next to Cedar Crest College. The project is budgeted at \$73 million, for which \$67 million has already been raised. Exhibits will include a Curiosity Hall, “My Body” exhibit sponsored by LVHN, a Science Theater, and Lehigh River Watershed exhibit complete with live otters! The new facility will result in 60 full-time equivalent jobs, bringing 400,000 visitors a year to downtown Allentown, resulting in \$33 million in direct spending in the Lehigh Valley. It will be within walking distance for many low-income families.

Our club has been interested in establishing a relationship with the Da Vinci Center for many years. The new facility provides us with the opportunity to have a public presence by sponsoring one of the exhibits. The most affordable exhibit was “Get Moving” in the “My Body” area of the facility. Visitors spin a wall-mounted wheel that challenges them to perform a variety of activities such as jumping jacks or dance moves. A large floor-length mirror shows visitors their own bodies in motion. This exhibit will be especially attractive to children, and will encourage them to live a more active lifestyle. Obesity is a big issue with today’s youth. This exhibit really fits in well with our mission to serve children in our community. The cost of sponsoring the exhibit is \$15,000, which can be paid over 5 years. Our club will be recognized on a wall of founding sponsors in the lobby of the new building. Our club’s Board of Directors and our Foundation Board of Trustees has approved this sponsorship commitment. Over the next several years, our club will be fundraising for this cause. Our Foundation has agreed to match funds raised by the club. Not only will the Kiwanis Club of Allentown receive public recognition in perpetuity for our sponsorship of the exhibit, but we foresee exciting opportunities to collaborate with the new Da Vinci Center by volunteering to work with children visiting the facility. Please plan to support our fundraising efforts towards this wonderful cause!

April Service Project



Our community service project in April will be to help out at the annual West End Alliance spring cleanup event on Earth Day – Saturday, April 22. Volunteers will meet in the parking lot in front of the Udder Bar, 1852 Allen St., Allentown at 11 AM. Trash bags, safety vests and pick up tools will be provided by the city. We will be walking through the West End business district picking up trash. Event will be over by 1 PM. So far, our volunteers include **Enos Martin, Deb Lamb, Terry Kennedy, Vic Mazziotti** and **Tom Harp**. Contact Tom if you are able to join us!

Corsage Sale!



Please support our first fundraiser of 2023 by purchasing a beautiful carnation corsage for Mother's Day. Only \$10 each, and half of that money goes to our club's treasury. Information about the sale, including a flyer was e-mailed to members on March 7. Deadline for orders is May 3, with delivery or pick-up on March 13, the day before Mother's Day. This is a special gift that will bring joy to the moms, wives, or other significant others in your life. Order your corsages with Peg Harp at 610-428-9878 or pegharp@ptd.net. Thanks!

Service Leadership Programs

Enos and Susan Martin recently met with the Southern Lehigh Middle School Builders Club. That club has 60 members, down a bit from pre-pandemic years. But they continue to be very active. They have organized a "Pink Out" event at the school, a "Sassy Massy Day", Mustache Days in November, a Coat Drive, Toy Drive, and Blanket Drive. Their members are very aware of the needs of the homeless community and how to raise money for a variety of charitable causes. Our Ramos Elementary School K-Kids club advisor **Vic Mazziotti** reports that they will not be meeting this school year. There is a new principal at the school and the faculty advisor had a number of health issues. However, they are planning to have the K-Kids Club meet after school in the fall. We will

attempt to meet with the Allentown School District Superintendent to get the support of the administration in strengthening our SLP efforts in the fall. We hope to re-energize the Union Terrace K-Kids Club as well as possibly the South Mountain Builders Club. And we will also explore chartering K-Kids Clubs at the Hayes and Muhlenberg Elementary Schools.

A Glance Into Our Past

100 Years Ago – April 1923

From the April 14, 1923, edition of The Morning Call:

“Winning the first two games, conceding the third, but finishing with a winning lead of 48 pins, the Allentown Kiwanis bowlers defeated their Easton counterparts in Easton by the total score of 2,389 to 2,341. The games were rolled at the Easton YMCA alleys and were witnessed by many followers of the game. Allentown Kiwanians made the round trip by automobile without mishap. Friday’s contest was the first of a series, the second game to be rolled in Allentown on the twenty-seventh. The game will be staged at the Elks alley.”

75 Years Ago – April 1948

The Kiwanis Club held the first annual Sports and Hobby Show at the Allentown Armory on April 1-4, 1948. Proceeds from the four-day event were used to help fund activities undertaken by the Club for various sponsored youth organizations. Some of the attractions included plug casting and archery, game dog obedience tests, marksmanship, table tennis, and fencing. Comedy shows were also part of the festivities. Jeeps and motor boats were on display along with a multitude of other sporting equipment. Thousands of spectators took in the show. Approximately \$2,600 was raised by the show for the youth programs.

Boxer Jersey Joe Walcott, the world heavyweight boxing champion in 1951 and 1952, was the guest of the Kiwanis Club at their April 8th meeting. Born Arnold Raymond Cream, he changed his name to Joe Walcott in honor of his boxing idol, Joe Walcott, a welterweight champion from Barbados, and added Jersey since he was born in New Jersey. Walcott had lost a controversial decision to Joe Louis for the heavyweight title several months prior to his appearance at the Kiwanis meeting.

50 Years Ago – April 1973

In the monthly report for April to Kiwanis International, the Club reported a total membership of 157 members including 124 active, 13 privileged, and 245 senior members. The club attended five interclub meetings during the month including the Riegelsville, Whitehall (twice), Salisbury, and Quakertown Kiwanis Clubs. Unfortunately, none of those four clubs exist anymore.

25 Years Ago – April 1998

On Saturday, April 4th, members of the Kiwanis Club joined the Dieruff High School, Emmaus High School, Lehigh University, and Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Program volunteers in a cleanup effort along the Lehigh River, the Little Lehigh Creek, American Parkway, and Union Street as part of the 1998 Spring Clean Lehigh Valley Program. Over sixty volunteers participated in the cleanup.

- ***Enos Martin***

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday, March 13, 6 PM (Social Hour from 5-6 PM) at the Shanty on 19th. Speaker will be Michelle Weissman, Development Director for the Sixth Street Shelter.

SERVICE PROJECT – Saturday, April 22, from 11 AM to 1 PM. Earth Day cleanup of the West End Business District. Meet in front of the Udder Bar on 19th & Allen Sts.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, April 27, 5 PM on Zoom.



April Birthday



26 - Jennifer Kramm



- *Tom Harp, Editor*