

“Building our community, one child at a time”

The Downtowner

Newsletter of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown

September 1, 2023

August 10 Meeting



Kim Schaffer

On August 10, we welcomed guest speaker **Kim Schaffer**, Director of the Community Bike Works (CBW) to our monthly meeting. **Enos Martin** ran the meeting in Tom's absence, and **Deb Lamb** was Program Chair. We are very familiar with CBW, which was the recipient of several grants from our Foundation, primarily for their "Earn a Book" program. Youngsters in their program "learn life lessons through bicycles." The "Earn a Bike" and "Junior Earn a Bike" programs require school attendance and academic achievements. Participants learn bike mechanics and maintenance, riding skills, and safety on the road. There is 1:1 mentoring by staff and volunteers. And the opportunity to learn leadership skills. The program serves 600 youth a year at three locations. 90% of youth that enroll in the program earn a bike. The program encourages physical activity, a critical need given the epidemic of childhood obesity. To earn a bike, participants attend

12 classes a month, 24 hours with a mentor. If successfully completed, they earn a refurbished bike and a new helmet. The program helps youngsters build confidence and other skills to combat teenage mental health issues. There are paid apprenticeship opportunities for youth 14 and older. And they have a Youth Advisory Council to advise the Board of Directors, and to develop youth-directed projects. The CBW Food Pantry began operations in June, 2022. It has grown from serving 50 families a month to now over 300! CBW received a \$1.4 million federal grant to purchase and renovate a bike shop near Franklin Park, and to renovate their new hub in Easton. Kim was proud to announce that CBW was chosen to host the 2024 National Youth Bike Summit. Kim suggested that our members could help by donating a bike, serve as a mentor in the program, volunteer at the pantry, support “Earn a Book”, and of course, by donating money. CBW is an excellent program that is having a positive impact on urban youth.

LVCC Reading Events



Susan Martin



Deb Lamb

On August 2, **Enos** and **Susan Martin**, **Tom** and **Peg Harp**, **Deb Lamb** and **Terry Kennedy** read to two “Pre-K Counts” classrooms at the Lehigh Valley Children’s Centers Fairmont Street location. The children were well-behaved and attentive as we read “The Foolish Turtle” and “Chicken in Space.” And they were thrilled to have those books donated to them. The staff at the Fairmont Center were helpful and enthusiastic as well. We are looking forward to future reading events at an LVCC center.

Pa. District Kiwanis Convention



Our Display at the Convention

The 106th Annual Pennsylvania District Kiwanis Convention was held August 10-13 at the Hilton Conference Center in Scranton. **Tom** and **Peg Harp** arrived on the 10th, registering early and setting up a display promoting our club, and Tom's candidacy for Governor-Elect. Later that evening, Tom attended a bus excursion to PNC Park to watch the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre Rail Riders take on the Syracuse Mets. The District reserved a picnic patio for our group. It was a fun evening despite some sprinkles. The next day, Tom attended the Opening Session with Governor **Mike Coolbaugh**. Speakers included **Paige Cognetti**, Mayor of Scranton and **Cassandra Coleman**, Executive Director of America 250PA. That organization is planning state-wide celebrations of our nation's 250th Anniversary in 2026. This was followed by a number of Breakout Sessions. One was on the Kiwanis Children's Fund and the Pennsylvania Kiwanis Foundation. The KCF offers grants to clubs for major projects that address one of their three priorities – Health & Nutrition, Education & Literacy, and Youth Leadership Development. The project must be Kiwanis-led, and have at least one other partner. At least 25% of project funding must be from the club, and no more than 40% from KCF. A club may apply two times a year for the same project. Key Clubs and Circle K Clubs are eligible to apply for these grants on their own. The PKF has been providing grants to fund "Little Free Libraries" at a cost of \$1,700 each. Our club plans to apply for one of those next year. They also provide a "new club service grant" of \$250. The PKF awards college scholarships totaling \$15,000 a year. That includes one \$2,000 "Kiwanis Dependent Child Scholarship" award to the child of a Kiwanis member, regardless if he or she was in a Key Club.

At the "Sit Down Lunch and Learn" general session on Friday, "Kiwanis Hero in Service" Awards and other recognitions were presented, including Signature Projects Awards. Our club won a 3rd Place Award for our annual LVCC Christmas party!



At the luncheon the main speaker was **Maureen Maher-Gray**, Executive Director and Founder of NEPA Youth Center, a facility serving homeless and at-risk children in Northeast Pennsylvania. It was founded in 2006. They provide food, clothing, personal care items, life-skills training and suicide prevention services to troubled teens, many of whom have been kicked out of their homes. Later in the afternoon was a "Meet the Candidates Happy Hour" where **Conrad Schlesinger**, candidate for 2023-24 Governor, and **Tom Harp**, Governor-Elect candidate were able to express their vision and goals for the District, and were asked a series of pre-selected questions. One more light-hearted question was "Wawa or Sheetz?" Tom answered very diplomatically that we have both in the Lehigh Valley and they are both very good. Later, Tom and **Karen Baker** were joined by **Cathy Kane** of the Allentown NE Kiwanis Club for dinner "on your own."

Saturday, August 12 was a big day at the convention. There was a general session providing District administrative updates, and a discussion about the proposed \$10 District dues increase. At the Business General Session the dues increase was approved by a unanimous voice vote. After that was the election of the Governor and Governor-Elect for the 2023-24 administrative year. **Conrad Schlesinger** of the Lock Haven Kiwanis Club was elected Governor without discussion. Then, **Enos Martin** provided a nomination speech for Governor-Elect candidate **Tom Harp**, followed by a seconding speech by **Cathy Kane**. Tom followed with an acceptance speech. There were no other candidates for the position, and Tom was elected by a unanimous voice vote. In October, 2024, Tom will become only the second District Governor in our club's history. He will be Governor in 2025, when the Pennsylvania District will host its FIRST Kiwanis International Convention in Pittsburgh. **Congratulations, Tom!**



Tom Giving Acceptance Speech

At the "Governor's Banquet" on Saturday evening, there were remarks from current Governor **Mike Coolbaugh**, and a tribute to District Executive Director **Kevin Thomas**, who is retiring the end of September. As an aside, interviews for the three positions replacing Kevin and **Michelle March**, District Secretary, have taken place and offers have been accepted by two of the three candidates. An announcement is forthcoming.



Our Table at the Banquet

At the “Kickoff Breakfast” on Sunday, Tom was officially installed as Governor-Elect by Kiwanis International Trustee **Cathy Tutty** of Montana. There was a Keynote Address by **Frank Bartoli**, Founder and CEO of NEPA Inclusive, an organization that provides employment opportunities for individual with disabilities.



Tom's Installation

This convention was truly memorable, particularly for our President. In the year ahead, Tom will be passing our club's leadership torch to VP **Karen Baker**. For the first time ever, next year's Pa.District Kiwanis Convention in Reading will be held jointly with the New Jersey District. We are looking forward to it!

“Back to School Bash”



Our Display

On August 16, our club participated in the first annual “Back to School Bash” organized by the Allentown School District, at Cedar Beach Park in Allentown. Rain from the day before postponed the event from the 15th to the 16th. Weather was perfect, with low humidity and a nice breeze. **Enos Martin** and **Tom Harp** arrived at the scene at 11 AM to set up our table. Enos created a display featuring our Service Leadership Programs (SLP). We erected a canopy over the table, and laid out Early Learning Guides, information about SLP's, a candy dish and two gift baskets to be raffled off. The event was supposed to start at 1:00 PM, but as soon as our table was ready at noon, a flood of children and their families poured down on us! Visitors to our table were non-stop until our shift ended at 2:30 PM. The candy dish was empty, but replenished by our reliever, **Kathryn Best**. Allentown Northeast Kiwanis Club President **Diane Farleigh** joined her.

Later in the afternoon, **Deb Lamb, Terry Kennedy** and **Karen Baker** staffed our table, along with **Dr. Blankowitsch** of the ANE Club. Tom and Enos returned after 6 PM to break down our display and to draw raffle tickets. Tom dropped off the gift baskets to the lucky winners. We easily gave away over 700 Early Learning Guides, and had several inquiries about Key Clubs, Builders Clubs, and K-Kids Clubs in the ASD. We hope that this will result in new members in existing clubs, and the development of new SLP's in the district. The event was expected to draw 6,000 people, but it was likely that more than 10,000 attended. A very successful day for the school district and for us!



What a Crowd!



A Very Busy Diane and Enos



Enos Explaining SLP's



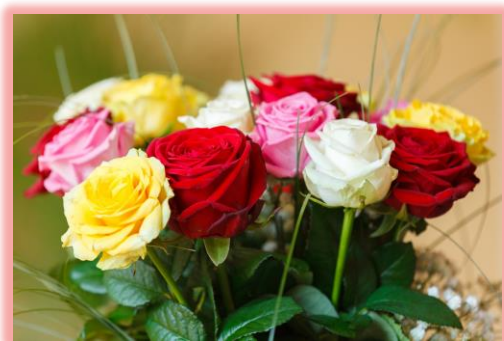
Allen HS Canary Cheerleaders

United Way Day of Caring Day of Caring



For the past several years, our club has volunteered for the United Way Day of Caring. We have spruced up the LVCC Union Boulevard Center. We helped replace shelving for a food pantry at the Allentown YMCA. This year, on **Thursday, September 14** from 10 AM to 2 PM we will help paint and clean up around The Girl Scouts' Camp Mountain House, located on South Mountain in Salisbury Township. We would like to thank **Enos Martin, Deb Lamb, Karen Baker** and **Tom Harp** for volunteering to help out with this project. This will be a busy day for us, since our monthly dinner meeting is that evening.

Rose Sale!



PLEASE support this year's **Pennsylvania Kiwanis Foundation Rose Sale** by ordering dozens of fresh, multi-colored roses, boxed with baby's breath and tree fern, that benefits the District Foundation and our club's treasury. The roses sell for \$24 per dozen, and our club keeps \$9.50. Our goal is to sell 50 dozen, and we have orders for 23 dozen so far. We are nearly half-way to our goal! The deadline for orders is **Thursday, September 28**. Roses will be delivered on **Thursday, October 26**. Contact **Peg Harp**, our Rose Sale Coordinator with your order at 610-428-9878 or pegharp@ptd.net. Brighten up the day of your loved ones, friends, and coworkers with these beautiful roses!

A Glance Into Our Past

100 Years Ago – September 1923

In the early years of the Kiwanis Club, its members engaged in numerous athletic contests with other local Kiwanis Clubs. On September 19, 1923, the Club's tennis team traveled to Reading to take on the Reading Kiwanis Club's racketeers. Led by member Ernest Ashley, dubbed the "Dean of Allentown Tennis", The Allentown Kiwanis Club swept the three singles and two doubles matches to win the contest 5-0. Prior to the matches, the two clubs sat down for an excellent banquet at the Wyomissing Club. Ashley was also known for establishing and operating Ashley Florists on Hanover Avenue in east Allentown for many years. The business still exists in the same location on Hanover Avenue.

75 Years Ago – September 1948

Allentown School District's J. Birney Crum Stadium opened in September 1948. The Kiwanis Club of Allentown had a great hand in having this fabulous stadium come to fruition. The following is from the September 2, 1948, club newsletter:

"Allentown Kiwanis Club is represented by Warren Schadt on the committee that is arranging for the dedication of the new High School Stadium. This committee has put in many hours of work and arrangements are now complete. Allentown Kiwanis members have been great supporters of everything that goes on at Allentown High School (now Allen). We are again asked to support these dedication exercises. Never in the history of Allentown or our high school have we ever had a more outstanding week of event."

50 Years Ago – September 1973

On September 29, 1973, four Kiwanis Club members along with five family members took 16 children with disabilities to University Park to see the sixth-ranked Penn State-Iowa football game. The children enjoyed a bus trip, the game which the Nittany Lions won 27-8, and lunch and dinner on the Kiwanians.

25 Years Ago – September 1998

The Club celebrated its 80th anniversary on September 18th at the Allentown Hilton, 9th Street and Hamilton Mall. Music was provided by the Community Music School, still being supported by our club today. Keynote speaker for the dinner was Pennsylvania District Governor Lee Berg, who at the time was a member of the now-defunct Southern Lehigh Kiwanis Club.

- **Enos Martin**

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday, September 14, 6:00 PM (Social Hour from 5-6 PM) at the Shanty on 19th. Speakers will be Holly Edinger and Liz Martin from the West End Alliance.

SERVICE PROJECT – Thursday, September 14. United Way “Day of Caring.” Painting and Cleanup of Camp Mountain House, from 10 AM to 2 PM.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Wednesday, September 27, 5 PM on Zoom.



September Birthdays



20 – Barry Frick

28 – Mary DiFebo



- **Tom Harp, Editor**