



“Building our community, one child at a time”

The Downtowner

Newsletter of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown

January 1, 2024

Foundation Grant Awards Luncheon



Foundation President Todd

On December 7, we welcomed 40 guests to our annual Foundation Grant Awards Luncheon, held at the Shanty on 19th. Members of our club and the Kiwanis Clubs of Allentown Northeast, Emmaus, Easton and Palmer Township enjoyed each others company, and a delicious hot buffet served by the Shanty staff. President **Tom Harp** greeted everyone and introduced **Major Santa Correa** of the Salvation Army, who provided the invocation. Following lunch, the Kiwanis Foundation of Allentown President **Todd Siegfried** presented grant checks totalling \$10,000 to 12 local non-profit organizations. Representatives of those organizations provided information about their services, and specifically how the grant money would be used to benefit children and their families. Following this ceremony, President Tom awarded our club's 2023 "Distinguished

Service Award” to **Karen Baker**. Karen joined our club just 7 months ago, but has already made a major impact. She has participated in nearly all of our meetings and service projects, has volunteered to serve as our club’s advisor to the Brandywine Heights HS Key Club, and to serve as our Vice-President. She attended the Pa. District Kiwanis Convention back in August, and has volunteered to chair our Club Membership Committee. Karen is very deserving of this honor. We then introduced **Brandon Remp**, Director of the Allen HS Chorale, and enjoyed a couple of songs performed by four of their members. This event has always been a great way to kickoff the Christmas Holiday Season.



Holiday Hope Chests



On December 6, **Karen Baker**, **Deb Lamb**, and **Tom Harp** visited the Salvation Army Children’s Services office in Allentown to drop off Holiday Hope Chests gift boxes and gift cards for 18 children and youth enrolled in their Foster Care & Adoption Services program. They were met there by **Stefanie Niemira**, Social Worker, who expressed gratitude for our donations. The gifts were distributed individually to each child in their homes. Once again, we would like to thank all of our members who contributed to this wonderful cause. Your gifts were greatly appreciated!

LVCC Christmas Party

Our **17th Annual LVCC Christmas Party** was held on **Friday, December 15** at the Judith Chase Early Learning Center (ELC) in Allentown. We were pleased to welcome over 180

pre-school children from LVCC's South Mountain, Walnut Street, and ELC centers to the party. There were several activities set up in the ELC gym, including coloring Christmas cards, putting together Christmas tree ornaments, playing ring-toss, and dancing to music performed by soloist **Lorri Woodward**. Our volunteers arrived around 9 AM, including 8 members of the **William Allen HS Key Club** and their faculty advisors **Mary DiFebo** and **Steve Patterson**. Members of our club included **Deb Lamb**, **Karen Baker** and her daughter **Chelsea**, **Enos Martin**, **Young Chang**, **Tom Harp**, and our Santa, **Todd Siegfried**. Enos and Young prepared chicken nuggets for lunch, while Karen, Chelsea and Deb sorted out the box drinks. We transported the food to the gym where Key Club volunteers set up an assembly line to serve the food. We interacted with the children, many of whom were dressed in holiday attire. Then, class by class the children went upstairs to visit with Santa and have a photo taken with him to take home. Each child received two toys, courtesy of Toys for Tots. It was another glorious day, abundant with the spirit of Christmas. We were happy to provide an opportunity for the LVCC children to have a day that will live long in their memories.





35 pounds of Nuggets!



Kiwanis Elves with Santa



Allen HS Key Club



Service Leadership Programs



The Raub Middle School Builders Club outdid itself by assembling 11 Christmas wreaths featuring sugar-free candy, and donating them to residents of the Phoebe Home on December 14. Our advisor to the Builders Club, **Enos Martin** and their faculty advisor **Nicole Beltran** joined several of the members as they visited with elderly men and women who otherwise lacked any kind of family visitation. They were surprised and thrilled to the point of becoming emotional. What a wonderful gesture of kindness during the Holiday Season by those young people!



Another amazing community service project was initiated by members of the Salisbury HS Key Club. Their faculty advisor, **Barry Frick** reports that members of the club donated **111** gift boxes to the Holiday Hope Chests campaign! Many went to children at the Valley Youth House. The students have really embraced this annual project that brightens the lives of those less fortunate.

Karen Baker has had her first opportunity to visit with the Brandywine Heights HS Key Club. She was warmly received by the students and their faculty advisor **Kirsten Paxson**. We are looking forward to building a strong relationship with our newest Key Club. Meanwhile, our advisor to the Allentown Central Catholic HS Key Club, **Peg Harp**, plans to attend one of their meetings at the school. She recently heard from their faculty advisor **Rebecca Saylor** who reports that the club has around 30 members and meets twice a month. They are raising money for Dream Come True.

We look forward to chartering new Service Leadership Programs in 2024! We are meeting with the Lehigh Christian Academy on January 4 to discuss the possibility of opening a Kiwanis Key Club at the school. And we will be following up with the Administration of the Allentown School District to begin a dialogue with Principals in the District about SLP's in those schools.

A Glance Into Our Past

100 Years Ago – January 1924

The Herbert Paul Lentz American Legion Post No. 29 held an open house on January 24 to honor the Kiwanis Club of Allentown for its efforts to raise funds to furnish the three-year-old facility. The Post was located at 457 Hamilton Street. The City of Allentown had turned the building over to Post, but it stood empty until Kiwanians raised sufficient funds to fully furnish the building. The Post was named for the first resident of Allentown to die in World War I. He died heroically as a result of the torpedoing of the USS destroyer Jacob Jones by a German U-boat. After rescuing three fellow crewmen, Lentz died trying to rescue additional sailors. The Post was relocated to 127 S, 7th Street during the 1930s. The Lehigh County Courthouse is now located at the original Hamilton Street site. The Post apparently closed in the late 1970s due to dwindling membership. The S. 7th Street site was sold in 2004 and converted into apartments.

75 Years Ago – January 1949

The Kiwanis Club of Allentown officially launched its gum ball machine fundraiser. The Ford Gum Ball Company began operations with a 100% connection to the Kiwanis Clubs throughout the United States. When Allentown joined, 1,600 clubs had already been associated with the company. The Kiwanis Clubs across the country used the proceeds to fund their youth community service projects. A total of 250 machines were installed during 1949 and an amazing total of \$1,017 raised during the first year. The effort still continues with roughly a dozen sites with less than \$100 raised each year.

50 Years Ago – January 1974

Allentown mayor Joseph Daddona addressed the Kiwanis Club to outline his plans for the city during 1974. Over \$700,000 of the 1973 budget was committed to existing programs with another \$200,000 needed for new commitments. The city had approximately a \$300,000 surplus moving into 1974. His goals included the implementation of solid waste collection along with recycling, the addition of police and fireman to the existing city forces, implementation of a central office of information and complaints, and revision of traffic regulations to increase right turns on red.

25 Years Ago – January 1999

The Club's January board meeting minutes indicated the treasury had \$7,348.12 in its administrative fund and \$1,346.08 in the youth and community services fund. The Club collected baby food during the month of January to donate as part of Kiwanis's Young Children Priority One program.

- ***Enos Martin***

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday, January 11, 6:00 PM (Social Hour from 5-6 PM) – Speaker will be Kathryn Best, Development Director, Boys & Girls Club of Allentown.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, January 25, 5 PM on Zoom.



January Birthday



6 - Alex Hirschberg

January Club Anniversary

Susan Martin - 5 years

**Happy
New Year!**

- Tom Harp, Editor