



“Building our community, one child at a time”

The Downtowner

Newsletter of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown

May 1, 2024

April 11 Meeting



On April 11, we hosted an interclub with guests from both the Allentown Northeast and Emmaus Kiwanis Clubs, as we welcomed speaker **Sen. Nick Miller**. At age 29, Nick is the youngest member of the Pennsylvania Senate. He was introduced by Program Chair **Deb Lamb**. Nick grew up near Union Terrace in Allentown, attending St. Thomas More and Allentown Central Catholic High School. He went on to get degrees from Penn State and the University of Pennsylvania. In 2019 he was elected to the Allentown School Board, serving as Vice-President in 2021. He is Minority Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, and serves on the Appropriations; Community, Economic, & Recreational Development; and Urban Affairs & Housing Committees. As a small business owner, he is concerned about economic development in the Lehigh Valley. He mentioned the need to redevelop the former Lehigh Valley Dairy property, which is scheduled to have its main building

demolished. He is also for property tax reform, especially for seniors. He is a proponent of urban school districts receiving more funding from Harrisburg. He cited improvements in public safety in Allentown, with a crackdown on ATV's and dirt bikes on public streets. Nick is very knowledgeable about cybersecurity issues and the damage cyber attacks can have on our infrastructure. He was elected to the Pa. Senate in 2022. He is a fresh face with deep roots in our community, and a strong sense of community service. We provided him with information about our Kiwanis Club, our Service Leadership Programs, and community service projects. Following his talk, **Enos Martin** presented Sen. Miller with a copy of our club history book.

Earth Day Service Projects

On Saturday, April 20, **Enos Martin** helped clean up trash in the West End of Allentown at an Earth Day event organized by the West End Alliance. At the same time, **Deb Lamb** helped assemble a mosaic tile mural at the Sixth Street Shelter in Allentown. She reported, "the project was not finished on Saturday -- there is lots more mosaic tiling to do...One nice touch was that the sign-in sheets were titled 'Kiwanis Mural Project.' One mom wanted to know what that meant, so I had the chance to tell her about Kiwanis." We will find out if there is another volunteer opportunity to finish the mural.

Service Leadership Programs

The Raub Middle School Builders Club just had a neighborhood cleanup at the school. Our high school Key Clubs are planning to volunteer for the LVCC Picnic on May 23. On April 24, President **Tom Harp** participated in a charter ceremony for our newest Key Club at the Lehigh Christian Academy. The club has already conducted several community service projects, including the donation of over 1,000 batteries to the homeless community in Allentown, designing Easter greeting cards for nursing home patients, and now collecting used clothing for infants and toddlers. At the ceremony, Tom provided information about Kiwanis and its Key Clubs and SLP's. After that, school advisors **Jeremy Kappes** and **Kimberly VanAken** handed out officer and charter member pins. Tom presented the charter certificate to Key Club President **Logan Agentis**. After Logan addressed the audience, we unfurled the Key Club banner. Our club now sponsors 6 Key Clubs in the Allentown area. We look forward to the new club at Lehigh Christian Academy thriving in the years ahead, and to our club building a positive relationship for the benefit of those less fortunate in our community.



May Service Projects

May will be another busy month for our Kiwanis Club! On **Friday, May 10**, **Bob and Cindy Ashcraft** will be donating materials for our annual **Mother's Day Flower Pot** project. Children at the Lehigh Valley Children's Centers (LVCC) Early Learning Center (ELC) and Walnut Street locations will be decorating small flower pots, and our volunteers will add the flowers. We then help the children create their own Mother's Day cards. Bob and Cindy will help out at ELC. We still need a volunteer or two for Walnut Street! If interested, let Tom know and report to the facility at 9:00 AM. It is always a fun and rewarding experience.



2023 Flower Pot Project

Then, on **Thursday, May 23** we will be hosting our **14th Annual LVCC Picnic**, at the Rose Garden Pavilions in Allentown. We are expecting over 230 pre-school children from four LVCC centers. **Keith and Jessica Reynolds** have once again generously donated their time and resources to the event. They have recruited over 70 volunteers from the William Allen, Allentown Central Catholic, Brandywine Heights, Parkland, Salisbury and Southern Lehigh Key Clubs. We are in the process of signing up volunteers from our club as well as the Allentown Northeast Kiwanis Club. Allentown **Mayor Matt Tuerk** and Lehigh County Executive **Phillips Armstrong** plan to stop by. We have also invited State **Sen. Nick Miller**, as well as Allentown School Superintendent **Dr. Carol Birks** to join us. Phantoms mascot MeLvin and "Red", the Red Robin mascot will visit the children. There will be appearances by high school mascots as well. Keith is arranging for an Allentown Fire Truck to set up as a learning station. And the popular "Reptile Guy" will be there to show off his slithery friends. Keith will request that Channel 69 cover the event, and we will try to promote it with other local media outlets. This is our club's "Signature Service Project" with a myriad of details. But thanks to Keith, Jessica, their family and friends, our Kiwanians, Key Clubbers and the fantastic staff of LVCC, it has always been a wonderful time for the children, with memories that last a lifetime!



A Glance Into Our Past

100 Years Ago – May 1924

At its May 15 meeting, the Kiwanis membership approved a resolution to oppose the Allentown School Board's decision to abolish the Junior High Schools in the district. The resolution read as follows:

“Now therefore be it resolved by the Kiwanis Club that it is our opinion that a system of Junior High schools should be established; that the provision should be made as soon as the board finds it practicable to do to build and establish a modern, fully equipped Junior High School; and be it resolved that a copy of these resolutions be submitted for the favorable action of the board.”

This resolution was submitted to the school board after the board had communicated its decision to act on a resolution submitted to the board recommending then elimination of the Junior High school and its school supervisors. The Junior High schools ultimately were not eliminated.

75 Years Ago – May 1949

The May activities report to the Pennsylvania District noted the following:

“The Key Club Committee met with the principal of the Central Catholic High School in order to sponsor a club at that school. A letter has been received stating that they are willing to have Kiwanis begin a group. Plans are now being made to start one before the beginning of the school year.”

The Central Catholic Key Club was ultimately chartered on December 9, 1949.

50 Years Ago – May 1974

In the May 6, 1974, edition of The Morning Call, an Allentown Kiwanis Club sponsored project was noted as follows:

“The shores of Leaser Lake, Jacksonville, Lehigh County, have been planted with 1,700 evergreens in the past several weeks, it was reported by Joseph J. Gackenbach, parks superintendent. He said the 1,500 seedlings were planted by the Allentown Kiwanis Club and the Allentown Girl Scouts. The County planted the remaining 200 trees, 4 to 6 feet tall saplings.”

25 Years Ago – May 1999

The following article appeared in the May 20th edition of the Morning Call:

“The Allentown Kiwanis Club has donated more than 100 books to the St. Luke's Hospital KidsCare Health Center in Fountain Hill. The presentation was made on May 11. Club President Carla Munsch said the club donates books to not-for-profit agencies each month. KidsCare, on the third floor at St. Luke's, provides health and education services to children who do not have a pediatrician and who rely on medical assistance.”

- **Enos Martin**

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday, May 9, 6:00 PM (Social Hour from 5-6 PM), Shanty on 19th. Speaker will be Jessica Armbruster, “Keep Allentown Beautiful.” ALSO, **ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTION OF CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2024-25.**

SERVICE PROJECT – Friday, April 10, Mother’s Day Flower Pots, LVCC Early Learning Center and Walnut Street Center. 9 – 11 AM.

SERVICE PROJECT – Thursday, May 23, LVCC Annual Picnic, Allentown Rose Garden Pavilions, 9 AM to 1 PM.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, May 30, 5 PM on Zoom.



May Birthdays



15 - Jerome Yost

May Club Anniversaries

Karen Baker - 1 year

Young Chang - 19 years!



- *Tom Harp, Editor*