



“Building our community, one child at a time”

The Downtowner

Newsletter of the Kiwanis Club of Allentown

October 1, 2024

Happy “Kiwanis” New Year!

Yes, October 1 is the start of a new Kiwanis administrative year. We would like to welcome **Karen Baker** as our new club President!. And long-time club Treasurer **Enos Martin** will serve as our Vice-President and Club Membership Chair in the year ahead. Meanwhile, Pennsylvania District Kiwanis Governor **Tom Harp** will be busy touring the state, attending Fall Regional Meetings and special events. This will be an exciting year for the District! For the first time in its 109 year history, Kiwanis will be holding its International Convention in Pennsylvania. In Pittsburgh, June 25-28, 2025. President Karen has big plans for our club this year. We hope to add at least 4 new members to our roster. We will achieve half or that at our next monthly meeting on October 10, when we will be inducting 2 new members that evening. We plan to have several new service projects and fundraisers this year. We are grateful that you have renewed your membership. Please get involved by attending our meetings, and volunteering for a variety of community service projects. And ask a friend, family member or coworker to join! More members means more hands of service to children in need. Let's have a banner year in 2024-25!

September 12 Meeting

We had an excellent speaker at our September 12 dinner meeting at the Shanty on 19th. **Tyrone Fisher**, Director of Volunteer Engagement for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Lehigh Valley. That organization recently celebrated 50 years in the Lehigh Valley. In 2023, 360 children and youth (AKA “Littles”) were matched up with adult volunteers (AKA “Bigs”) with their help. Yet, there are 392 kids on their waiting list. The demand for “Bigs” is enormous. Tyrone mentioned that one new approach they are using to recruit adult

volunteers is with college fraternities, sororities, and sports teams, like the Moravian University volleyball and field hockey teams. Tyrone's background includes playing and coaching basketball. A relatively new initiative that BBBS started is the "Sports Buddies" program. That requires the volunteer to take a little brother or sister to a local sporting event of their choice once a month. Basically, a commitment of just 2 hours a month. The NFL is helping to sponsor this initiative. The BBBSLV goal is to achieve 60 matches in the "Sports Buddies" program in 2 years. So far, they are up to 28 matches. The Community Program requires each "Big" to spend at least 2 days a month with their "Little." There is a flexible schedule, with most of the time spent on weekends or weeknights. Tyrone reported on the BBBSLV STEAM Club which just started two years ago. It meets at their building in the east side of Allentown on Thursdays from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm, involving 15 kids from the Mosser Elementary School. Adult volunteers must go through a background check and two hours of training. BBBS are looking for mentors and positive role models to work with kids who mostly come from single-parent households.



Tyrone Fisher

Tyrone expressed interest in joining a Kiwanis Club in Allentown. We provided him with membership information and a copy of our club history book. As an aside, Karen Baker's daughter just applied to be a Big Sister with the program!

United Way Day of Caring



On September 19, members **Enos Martin, Karen Baker, Deb Lamb** and **Tom Harp** met at the Family Promise Day Center in Allentown to help clean up the property as a project

for the annual United Way Day of Caring. We were joined by **Diane Farleigh** of the Allentown Northeast Kiwanis Club, and volunteers from BSI and B.Braun. Karen, Deb and Diane helped to deep clean the inside of the building, which serves as a shelter for homeless families. That included scrubbing down the kitchen and bathrooms, disinfecting toys, vacuuming carpets, dusting furniture, and more. Meanwhile, Tom and Enos were in the back yard trimming “out of control” bushes. They ended up filling 20 yard waste bags with debris! We were treated to volunteer shirts and a bag lunch. It was an exhausting day, but very rewarding. We left the home spotless for the families that use the facility. The director of Family Promise, **Roslyn Kuba** spent time explaining how the agency serves those families. We were happy to make the lives of those families a little better as a result of our work that day.

Little Free Library

We are thrilled that our club’s first Little Free Library is now “open for business.” A dedication ceremony took place on September 27 at the Lehigh Valley Children’s Centers South Mountain Center. Past-President **Tom Harp** greeted everyone and provided a brief history of Little Free Libraries (LFL). The first LFL was installed in 2009 in Hudson, Wisconsin. Since then, over 150,000 LFL’s have been installed in 120 countries around the world, and in all 50 states in the US. Since its inception, more than 300 million books have been shared by the program. Their motto is “Take a Book, Share a Book.” Tom thanked LVCC for agreeing to have our LFL installed on their property. LVCC CEO **Charles Dinofrio** then offered comments in support of this project, which will benefit the dozens of pre-school children that attend classes at the center, as well as their siblings. A representative of the **Salisbury HS Key Club** was in attendance, and mentioned how their club was planning a book drive at the school to replenish the LFL as needed. Given the school’s close proximity to the South Mountain Center, it will be easy for them to drive by and monitor inventory of books in the library. Tom thanked the Salisbury Key Club for adopting the LFL as a community service project. Several young students of the LVCC Center removed a cover hiding our LFL, to a round of applause. The children then helped put books into the library box. The books were donated by Cops ‘n Kids, Lehigh University, and Pa. Kiwanis Governor Conrad Schlesinger’s “Bucks for Books” Project. We would like to recognize and thank the Pennsylvania Kiwanis Foundation for approving our request for an LFL. We will be mapping our LFL on their website so that any child in the community will be able to find it.



Rose Sale

Tomorrow is the **FINAL DAY** to order roses! Our annual Rose Sale benefits the Pennsylvania Kiwanis Foundation and our club. A dozen multi-colored roses, boxed with baby's breath and tree fern, go for \$24. Our club keeps \$9.50 for each dozen sold. That money helps both our administrative and service accounts. Our Rose Sale Coordinator **Peg Harp** reports that as of 4 PM today, 56 dozen roses have been ordered by our members. We are close to our goal of 60 dozen! For those who have not ordered any roses, you can do so by emailing Peg at pegharp@live.com. But do so immediately! Our club's order must be placed tomorrow. You can pick up your rose sale order on **Thursday, October 24** any time after 8:00 AM at Tom & Peg's detached garage, located at 1024 N. Kearney St., Allentown. Or you can request delivery later that day. We would like to everyone who has supported this fund-raiser with their order!

Service Leadership Programs

Our Key Clubs are up and running! **Kim Van Aken**, faculty advisor to the Lehigh Christian Academy Key Club reports that they have begun meeting and have elected their officers. They meet in early afternoons. The William Allen Key Club meets the first and third Thursdays of the month. We will be following up with all of our six sponsored Key Clubs in the weeks ahead.



On September 17, **Enos Martin, Karen Baker** and **Tom Harp** staffed a Builders Club table at the Raub Middle School "Back to School Night." The event was well-attended by students and their parents. Several students expressed interest in joining the Builders Club, which meets every Thursday after school. Enos reports that meetings so far have been productive, with at least 8 members in attendance. We will be checking in with the Southern Lehigh Middle School Builders Club shortly.

The meeting to re-open the Washington Elementary School K-Kids Club will be held tomorrow, October 2 at 10:30 AM. Tom Harp, and our District K-Kids Administrator **Cathy Kane** will be meeting with Principal **Jeffrey Grillo** to get the ball rolling. Tom still has plans to contact the Muhlenberg and Union Terrace Elementary Schools to open K-Kids Clubs at those schools. **Vic Mazziotti**, our club's advisor to the Ramos Elementary School K-Kids Club just had a very productive meeting with their faculty advisor, **Laura Zaharakis** and principal **Telsa Sparks**, who is new to the school but is very supportive. They will be coming up with a date and time for an organization meeting of the club.

A Glance Into Our Past

100 Years Ago – October 1924

Club meetings during the month featured the following programs:

- A presentation by three club members on their trips to Holland, France, Switzerland, and Greenland.
- Charles Grakelow, a prominent Philadelphia florist, addressed the attendees on the five million dollar “Say It With Flowers” campaign throughout the USA.
- Club member Lawrence Rupp warned club members about the acceptance of radicals and made a plea for the preservation of religion during a celebration of the discovery of America.
- Allentown Mayor Malcolm W. Gross addressed the group on the affections Allentown residents have for Allen Park and his support of the club’s business show with proceeds supporting the beautification of the park. The park was located at 4th and Walnut Streets.

75 Years Ago – October 1949

The Club’s Key Club Liaison Noel Wertman met with Father Huesman and Father Hynes at Allentown Central Catholic High School to discuss the establishment of a Key Club at the school. Father Huesman, school principal, agreed to establish a club with Father Hynes as the club’s advisor. They expected to have the club organized within 30 days. The Club was chartered on December 8, 1949, and will observe its 75th anniversary later this year.

50 Years Ago – October 1974

The Club’s gum ball machine fundraiser began the 1974-75 fiscal year with 233 active machine locations. Art Marshall (employed by Sears Roebuck as a controller), Ball Gum Committee chairman, set a goal to increase the fleet of machines by 30. The Club raised over \$2,000 for its youth programs during this time. Today, we have approximately 15 machines and raise between \$75-100 a year.

25 Years Ago – October 1999

Our longstanding relationship with the Lehigh Valley Children’s Centers began over 25 years ago. In October 1999, club members Karen Blackburn-Nichols, Cathy Campbell, and Carla Munsch hosted children from the Center on a trip to the Pumpkin Patch. The Pumpkin Patch was located at the Lehigh Valley Game Preserve (now the Lehigh Valley Zoo) and was sponsored by Air Products. Children rode around the zoo on a horse-drawn wagon with every child receiving a pumpkin.



Upcoming Meetings and Activities

MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday, October 10, 6:00 PM (Social Hour from 5-6 PM), Shanty on 19th. Lt. Governor Janet Owen will preside over the installation of our officers for 2024-2025. Program Speaker will be Carol Andersen, Executive Director of Bloom for Women.

SERVICE PROJECT– To be announced.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, October 31, 5 PM on Zoom.



October Birthday



7 - Vic Mazziotti

October Anniversaries

Cindy Ashcraft - 9 years

Joyce Crosby - 9 years

Mary DiFebo - 8 years

Barry Frick - 12 years

Peg Harp - 17 years

Deb Lamb - 3 years

Ricki Stringfellow - 7 years



- Tom Harp, Editor