



Live Steam

Rotary Club of Pittsburgh, District 7300

Chartered in 1911 as the 20th Club. Today, one of 33,135 worldwide.

Volume LXXXX # 500 December 12, 2012

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Hours:

Monday-Friday | 8:30am-5:00pm

Rotary is a leader in making Pittsburgh a place where every young person has an opportunity to succeed.

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LAST MEETING: 12/05/12

By: Linda Fischer



"Divine Providence" ... or was it "Intervention?"

Today's meeting was presided over by President-Elect PK Weston. The invocation was led by Barbara Johnson, Esq.; followed by the pledge and song by James Gourlay, Music Director for River City Brass Band singing "White Christmas" with Jim Hall on the piano.

BIG REMINDER - Our annual Holiday Party will be hosted on Monday, December 10th at the LeMont Restaurant where we will be entertained by the River City Brass Band. NO meeting at the hotel on Dec. 12th. You'll be disappointed if you forget.

After Secretary Kirk Chambers, Vice President of ContactPoint provided this week's announcements, we honored our "Student of Distinction."

Patty Naleppa, Bank Manager for First Commonwealth introduced Tom Colt, Assistant Director of College Counseling at Shady Side Academy (SSA) who presented a magnificent bio on Sr. Class President Mike Pohl. From Tom's introduction, we learned how incredibly wonderful Mike has been with his outreach projects: He was awarded the Fox Chapel Firefighter of the Year Award; he campaigned for a new flag pole, and started the SSA "Flag Club." Mike is also active in the Farm Club, and helped to lead the football team to the WPIAL playoffs. His parents were there to honor their son and grace our meeting. This outstanding student is making a difference in his world and community one project at a time with service over self. In many ways, Mike Pohl exemplifies what the award stands for.

At last week's Club Assembly meeting, two signature projects were presented, one locally with North Star Urban Pathways, and one Internationally with Kate Fletcher's Kenyan boarding school known as "Hekima Place." Due to lack of time, we were only able to view a brief video telling how in 2005 Kate slowly began a refuge for boarding orphaned and abandoned girls whose parents died of HIV/AIDS.

Periodically, Kate Fletcher returns to Pennsylvania and surrounding states to meet with the twelve churches and a few organizations that support as benefactors. As she seeks additional resources, she shares inroads they are making in educating the young women. Today was our gift; Kate was in town allowing us the honor of hosting her for lunch. Our intent was to invite Kate to the dais so that President-Elect PK would present a small check from our Foundation, however, either through Divine Intervention ... or ... Providence ... our scheduled speaker was unable to attend the meeting due to being held over in court. We believe a higher power was at work! Kate was then able to provide detailed information on aspects of life for these abandoned children, and how much infrastructure and consistency is making a huge difference in their lives.

More insight was provided, as follows:

- The boarding school increased from 10 to almost 70 children. There are presently six buildings that house ten children supervised by a house mother, "Mommie." Keeping up with the buildings and facilities are ten male workers formerly called "Uncles," are now referred to as "Daddies." Infrastructure and consistency is key in supporting the children. It is empowering, and allows them to see life outside of the abject poverty that surrounds.

- Due to being abandoned, abused, left in alleys, sewer drains, etc., many suffer from post traumatic stress disorder. Kate is now able to budget for counseling support. She shared an example where a two year old child living in a sewer drain untouched, starving, was brought to Kate. This little one's body was tense with her arms behind her as she screamed continuously...all Kate knew to do was to pick her up and hold her close for as long as it took the child to become calm and feel safe. This child never knew love until Kate intervened. It's just one of many heart touching efforts the staff at "Hekima Place" undergo to bring stability into the lives of the abandoned. We take so much for granted here. There is no comparison for this type of destitution.

- Young girls (14) are relegated to a life of servitude and baby making unless they become educated. Their culture only supports boys going to school. Public schools are overcrowded and lack the essentials that our students take for granted.

If "Hekima Place" continues with its mission to provide a safe, faith-based loving home that supports excellence in education and empowerment, these bright shining stars will become the beacon for their villages and community. While they may have been abandoned, they will not forget the love and support given to them. They will become Kenya's future ... bright and strong.

Our Club will be engaging students locally to connect with Kate's students. Our intent is to sponsor a child's education for a year, and to engage as Kate needs continue to develop. If YOU want to also become more involved, by sponsoring a student, or by becoming a "big sister" or "mentor," see www.hekimaplace.org for more information.

If you would like to make a donation (no matter how small), please send to:

Kathy English, Treasurer, Hekima Place, 407 Morrison Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15216...Hekima Place is a 501(c)(3) organization.

If you want to cheer Rotarian Kate on...and goodness knows she can use a friendly note or two, her email address is: "Kate Fletcher" hekimaplace@yahoo.com.

I think today we had "Divine Intervention."



HOLIDAY PARTY

Monday December, 10th
6:00 pm
LeMont Restaurant
1114 Grandview Avenue





It's a Great Day for Rotary!



UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

Event: Caring Habits
 Date: December 11th
 Time: 9:00 am
 Location: South Hills Middle School

Event: New Citizens Reception
 Date: December 21st
 Time: 10:30 – 11:30 am
 Location: Lawrence Welk Room

FUTURE PROGRAMS

(subject to change)

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 19TH
 Fellowship Meeting

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 26TH
 No Meeting
 Happy Holidays!

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 2ND
 No Meeting
 Happy Holidays



President Elect PK Weston recognizes Mike Pohl as a "Student of Distinction"



President Elect PK Weston presents Hekima Place Executive Director Kate Fletcher with the Club's check to sponsor one girl for a year

BIRTHDAYS

Justin GarlowDecember 11th

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

Richard Dixon26 years

For more information about the Rotary Club of Pittsburgh or if you're interested in joining, visit our website at www.pittsburghrotary.org or call the Rotary office at (412) 471-6210.



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