**THE VALE NEWS**

Feb. 4, 2015

Vol. 30 Issue No. 28

World Understanding - a time to highlight our goal of world understanding and peace.

**Club Calendar & Speaker Assignments**

Feb. 4th Ali Smith & Geof Bergen classification speeches

      11th No meeting

      10th Valentine’s Day dinner - COMMON MAN 6 PM $42/PERSON

      18th No meeting - President’s Week

      25th Chris Pierson - MRV Rotary Club Web Page

**Birthdays**  Henri Borel 2/11; Larry Ryan  2/11, Wini Thorsen 2/19

**Anniversaries**  Leon & Ellen Bruno 2/23/57; Wayne & Lorraine Foster  2/8;

**Meeting News**

Good day for skiing - lots of snow with temperatures closer to freezing than zero degrees.  Three guests: Phil Ericson, Liz Holtz and Samatha Noone.  Our speakers today were members Ali Smith & Geof Bergen doing their classification speeches.

**Announcements**

\*Chris Pierson redoing Website. In the future people applying for funds, grants, scholarships etc., will do so thru our Website.  At present, this system is a work in progress. At least it is better than before.

\*Our club needs to select a local person as “Rotary Person of the Year”

We have 3 weeks to think about it as our next meeting will be on the 25th of February.  No meetings on Feb. 11 & 18th.

\* Valentine’s Day Dinner at the Common Man, 6 PM  $42/person.2/10/15

Deadline for payment is Thursday 2/5/15. Pay at Dave Babic’s office.

\*Harwood H.S. is having a fundraiser to send a student abroad.  It will be on Feb. 12th, 7 PM at Harwood H.S.  Please support this event.

\*Gordon Hoare , Sponsorship Committee meeting immediately following regular meeting today.

\* The annual ski race at Bolton is scheduled for March 13th. We need 8 skiers to volunteer for two teams.  It is a fundraiser to give money for heat assistance. (We will miss Heli this year, he was always on the team who won the Oldest skiers award)

Skiers will carpool from Waitsfield.  People can attend the dinner even if they don’t ski.  It is a good place to sell YBYI Raffle tickets.

\*Karl Klein - YBYI   packages of 20 tickets distributed to each member today.  Newly painted Outhouse ready to be installed on Edison Pond.  People needed to help put up the outhouse on 5th of Feb. Also more people needed to sell tickets during the next 3 weeks.  This is one of our big fundraisers.

**Mega Bucks**--$427.00 to the winner. John Hale won draw but did not find the joker - got $5 consolation prize.

Leo Cohen complained that John won too often - thought it was fixed!!

**Happy Bucks**

Al Barillero - happy for Patriots

Karl Klein - Barre Tones (quartet) Hire them for Valentine’s Day.  Happy to see new faces.

Betty Maguire - Bright light of February.

Brian Crandall - Grandchildren coming to Vermont

Dave Ellison -Everyone who skis knows why he is happy

Monk - At our next meetig, he wil be in Colorado

Stan Needleman - SKIING!!!

Carol Hosford- Babysitting her grandchildren while their son was at the Superbowl.

Bob Holden - happy to be at the grumpy table

Gene Scarpato - sitting at the table wiih the pretty girls

**PROGRAM**

Speech by Ali Smith

Good Morning! As most of you know, my name is Ali Smith. I was born on January 11, 1988 In Verona, NJ right outside of New York City. I was raised in a wonderful home with my parents , Sandy Smith, Paul Smith and two sisters, Whitney and Jessica. My father worked for Chase Manhattan Bank in the trusts and estates department. My mother was a jewelry maker and a teacher at The Allegro School of Autism. My sisters were 8 and 11 years older than me which made growing up interesting. Yet I had great leaders in the family to look up to!

In 1990, my parents bought our Snow Creek condo trail side at Sugarbush. I was raised into a family of diehard skiers. With that being said, I started skiing as soon as I could walk. They got me out there as early as possible as I'm sure they didn't want to be held up and I just so happened to LOVE it! We would make treks up to Vermont almost every weekend. My sisters did race programs as I went on to do as well.

Next, in 1998 our family moved from Verona to Little Falls, where my mother had grown up. I went on to do some middle school and then all 4 years of High School at Passaic Valley Regional High School. At Passaic Valley I played Varsity Volley Ball and Varsity Softball and had a high focus in Fine Arts. I graduated in 2006.

After High School, I went on to attended William Patterson University where I majored in Fine Arts. I had a gift and a passion for the arts and was happy to be pursuing my dreams. I spent two inspirational years at William Patterson University.

Despite my dreams, the reality of very large student loans was haunting me. Within the fine arts spectrum I began to think that maybe I needed to fine tune a different career path to be able to live more comfortably. I knew that my artistic abilities would be with me forever and I didn't need a degree to solidify my talents.

I moved to West Milford, New Jersey in 2008 where I lived on a lake. I started working for an architecture firm where I was able to be involved in artistic touches but I was solely responsible for the books. The finances of the business became my responsibility and I Loved it! Maybe I had found my calling….

FINALLY, I made the life altering move to Warren, VT in 2010! Moving is never easy so I faced some very tough moments leaving my family and friends behind, but this move became the best choice I've made yet. I moved to the Mad River Valley to follow my love of skiing, art, hiking, outdoors, the beauty of our landscape and a simpler way of life. My parents moved up shortly after.

Upon my arrival, I started working as a part time teller for TD Bank, my first job in banking. I was trained by Pamela Marino. Quickly I knew this may be my calling. I picked up customer service quickly as I seemed to have a natural knack for it. Reaching out to people and helping became a strong suit of mine.

Alongside my part time teller position, I volunteered at the local food shelf on Saturdays. This was a good way to help out my community and be involved in my new surroundings. On top of all of this I also picked up a hosting position at the Hyde Away. I wanted to make friends and figured what better way than to serve the locals!

As time went by I needed a full time job. TD Bank unfortunately did not have a full time position for me at that time so I moved on to a full time teller position at People's United Bank.

In 2014, my love for skiing started to make me feel as though I needed a last hurrah. I followed my dreams and moved to Steamboat Colorado. The Rockies always reached out to me and I needed to test the snow for myself! I worked for Vectra Bank as a vault custodian, taking on a new aspect of the financial industry. I was able to grow even more in my career. As much as Steamboat was absolutely amazing, I learned quickly it wasn't going to be forever.

When the snow melted, I decided to come back home. At this point, home had become Vermont.  I made the trek across the country with 3 other great friends from Vermont. This little journey was more than eye opening … It was life changing. It was this journey that opened my eyes to our country and all that it has to offer. I'd say this was a growing up experience to say the least.

In September of 2014, I started working as a Customer Service Representative for TD Bank in the incredible Mad River Valley. All of a sudden I found my priorities in life had changed.

Today, I strive for A plus results in my career path. I make the steps every day to ensure I am meeting the needs of all of the people who reach out for my assistance and present those who don't ask for assistance with solutions to making their financial profile even stronger. I was given the opportunity to prove myself and I feel as though I have done just that! Within my career path at TD Bank, I have the ability to push myself and grow within these walls. I strive for results every day and work very hard to meet all of my goals. It is my duty to help the people within our community meet their financial goals. I am now taking on more responsibility then I have had in my financial career to date and I absolutely love it.

Today, I have decided to join the Rotary club to give back to my community. To find another way to branch out from more than just my career. After speaking with Chris Pierson I was able to get a good sense for what the Rotary club is all about. "Rotary club brings together dedicated individuals to exchange ideas, build relationships, and take action." I am ready and willing to do just that. Already I have been able to connect with individuals here that I probably never would have if it wasn't for this organization.  Being here I know I can truly make a difference.

Also, I believe I can bring a lot to the table when it comes to the club chair. I have a big personality and am more than willing to spread it throughout our community.  With my knowledge of social media I would love to help the rotary become known to a whole new audience. I can help use social media in a way that will spread the word on community events to get a bigger outcome. By word of mouth I can share my positive experience here at Rotary to get people involved!

"Integrity, expertise, and a commitment to service-all the qualities that make Rotary members extraordinary." I plan to do just that. I know I can bring a different dynamic to the Mad River Valley Rotary Club and look forward to working with and getting to know everyone here!

Geoff Bergen

• Born and raised in Sacramento and Davis, CA

• Did undergrad at Berkeley.  Graduated with a Degree in English only to find myself in the labor market of 1977 (some of you may remember that time).

• So I joined the Peace Corps.  They sent me to Niger, which was then, and is now, one of the poorest countries of the world.

• Let me take a minute on Niger. It was in the news about a decade ago as the supposed source of yellow cake uranium for Iraq, and just recently for anti-Christian riots following events in France.  The more important story is that it is consistently ranked near the bottom in terms of income, but also indicators of health, education and the status of women and children.  It is nearly all desert, and climate change has been pushing the desert south across the fertile zones for many years.  Meanwhile, radical Islam has spread north from Nigeria.  I dwell on this because Niger is a place close to my heart.  The PC wasn’t my only stint in Niger — I returned 20 years later and lived there 5 years in all.

• After PC, I returned to CA and got a job with the US Dept of Labor, where I spent 3 1/2 years as a Mgt Analyst in SF and then NYC.

• And 3 1/2 years with the Federal bureaucracy was enough.  So I went and did a Masters in International Relations at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced Int’l Studies in Washington, specializing in African Studies and Int’l Economics.

• From there I took a job at the Philadelphia National Bank (which no longer exists), and rapidly came to the conclusion that neither commercial banking nor Philadelphia were where I wanted to be.  The one really good thing to come out of my year there is that I met, dated and married (in that order) my wife.

• We got married, hopped in the 1972 Ford Country Squire her parents gave us as a wedding present and drove to LA, where several years and 3 children later I emerged with PhD in Poli Sci from UCLA.

• So I found myself once more jobless, but this time with 3 kids to support.  I had actually taken a job delivering newspapers so I could keep writing my dissertation and have some cash coming in when I got a phone call that led to a job with the World Bank, where I ended up spending 20 years.

• A little background about the WB:

? Created in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference along with the IMF.

? The IMF was created with the goal of avoiding international currency crises, which had been one of the major factors leading to WWII.  The WB had a separate function initially, which was to focus on the underpinnings of national economic growth — at first meaning mostly infrastructure.

? The WB played a major role in the reconstruction of Europe and Japan.  But as most of the former European colonies moved toward independence in the 50s and 60s, the WB’s role became to help them leap-frog into the global economy with investments in infrastructure and industrial development.

? By the 1970s it had become evident that more was needed — that poverty, hunger, low levels of education and poor health care were holding them back as much as infrastructure.  So the WB’s mission expanded to investments in all these areas.

? By the 80s and 90s, the Bank had become the world’s biggest investor in primary education, national health systems, agricultural debt., urban development, water systems, telecommunications, and working with governments to do a better job managing national resources — in fact, just about everything.

? The Bank is in essence a large multinational cooperative whose members are the governments of the world (except for North Korea and Cuba).

? The Bank is not an agency of the U.S. government, although the U.S. is the largest stakeholder and by tradition the President of the Bank is an American.

? Last year it provided @$65 billion in mostly loans and some grants for development projects and programs around the world.  To the poorest countries it provides interest-free loans with long maturities, and these are subsidized with money from the major stakeholder countries with the U.S. in the lead.  To better-off countries, it provides loans on commercial terms, which are cheaper than a commercial bank could offer and also come with the Bank’s technical assistance

• I did a lot of things at the WB.  At one point I was the Speechwriter to the President.

• Mostly I managed country operations as the Bank’s representative in-country, with the title of Country Manager.  I did this four times: Niger (again), Chad, Honduras and Colombia.

• As Country Manager, I was the Bank’s point person in dealing with the government, as well as other donor agencies, the private sector and civil society.  I dealt with the media and NGOs.  I was responsible for managing country offices with mainly local staff.  And I made sure that whatever projects we were financing were operating smoothly, so spent a lot of time with our technical specialists driving around in-country and visiting project sites.

• So I retired from the WB 2 years ago.  Jenny and I had been living in northern Virginia where we raised our kids, but moved up to Vermont about a year ago and to the Valley 6 months ago.

• Our kids are all in their 20s now

• Although I’m retired, I take consulting jobs.  I’ll be leading a team down to Peru in April to do a Democracy and Governance assessment financed by USAID.

Susan Snider led the 4 Way Test and the meeting was adjourned.

**Club Officers**

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