



## Rotary Club of Pearl River, P.O. Box 824, Pearl River, NY 10965

District 7210 - Region 8 - Zone 32 - Club #4982 - Charter Date December 12, 1935

[www.rotaryclubofpearlriver.org](http://www.rotaryclubofpearlriver.org)

*Rotary Serving Humanity*

Larry Vergine, President 2016-17

### Board of Directors

*President*  
Larry Vergine

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*President Emeritus*  
George Westphal

*The Four Way Test*  
*Is it the truth?  
Is it fair to all  
concerned?  
Will it build good will  
and better friendship?  
Will it be beneficial to  
all concerned?*

## Meeting of February 23<sup>rd</sup> , 2017 *Aqua Terra Grille*

Pledge and Invocation- Evelyn Beckerle

Visiting Rotarians- Mike Whitehouse from  
Groton Connecticut Rotary Club



Birthdays- Maureen Neeson, Frank deftly led the birthday song.



### Announcements-

Monday- 2/27 Board Meeting at  
Noonan's, 6pm. All are invited just



let Larry know you are attending.  
Three important items require  
Board deliberations. Parts for the

Rotary "Clock in the Park" in Braunsdorf Park have come in and the Town will be handling the full cost of the repair. Thank you Town of Orangetown! Cudos to Jim Shepard for the great Valentine's Day Brunch along with surprise guest appearance of Chef Peter Kelly. Ray Pucci and the Dominican College Rotaract Club have another midnight run scheduled for March 23<sup>rd</sup>. We'll forward the list of needed items. Larry promises another mystery "bag of coats" for the cause.

Happy Bucks- Andy Marchfeld, stumping for Kirk Flynn.- Many happy bucks and memories for Past President Arthur Matrisciani. Hanns, now living in Ossining says he

misses us adding "it is lovely but lonely over there". Good to have Hanns back. Visiting Rotarian Mike tells us the factories near his home club at Groton CT can build us a submarine for a cool \$1.2 billion. He was quick to point out that we can get a price break if we buy 10 or more subs. Rather than go home for just a few hours from his busy overtime schedule at Pfizer; Jonathan sought refuge at the Neeson home only to be called back in after 2 hours of sleep and less one bottle of Dewars. Lisa's dual "Rotary Husbands" Ryan and Mike were battling it out during her absence. We didn't get all the details but our guest Mike Whitehouse had a very puzzled look on his face.

Queen of Hearts- With only 8 cards left, Secretary Mike from the "Lucky Table" called for the 4<sup>th</sup> card from the top and- there was the Queen of Hearts in all her Majesty! \$200 to each member at Jay's table with the balance going back to the Club, and to think, Jay missed it.

Program- Tales of the Rotary Club of Pearl River- Inspired by programs where we got to



better know our newest members Kathy and Lisa, Mark Jr. (me) called upon many of our long time members for brief tidbits about themselves and early experiences in the Club.

First was Don Brenner who ties with Ed Grant for the most years in Rotary (joined in 1962) while still active members. Don, both an attorney and licensed civil engineer, told us that when he joined, we met at the exact same location as now. Back then, it was called the Silver Pheasant Inn,

nicknamed the "Grey Goose". Later, Rotary moved to Lund's on Pearl Street, then Kafenio among the Flowers, now called the Greenhouse Café, then to Central Avenue's Joe and Joes. We eventually found ourselves back in our original spot, now Aqua Terra Grille. Don was Orangetown Director of Public Works in the 1970's and 80's.

Dentist, Dr. Ed Reynolds (1971) recounted working on the first Club Golf Outing, we'll have to check with Ed to see if it was at Blue Hill or Broad Acres. It was fun but lots of work.

Art Aldrich (1974) had been a member of the West Nyack Rotary since 1967 but then was pirated away by Gene Forst, a dance band leader and Pearl River Rotarian. A pianist at heart but journalist by day, Art had just started work at Our Town Newspaper in 1973.

Bob Bergman (1976) was sponsored by member and Supreme Court Judge, George Bergerman. Bob recounted his adventures with Rotary Exchange Student Lars "trouble looking for a place to start". Bob was a "kid administrator" at the time, later Town Finance Director, Town Councilman, and now Rockland County Auditor.

1982- Andy Marchfeld, owner of Thruway Messenger Service was sponsored by Seward Smith. "When I joined Rotary, I learned to play golf" explained Andy but someone quickly shouted out "No you didn't". Well at least he swings a mean club even if not everyone agrees it resembles golf.

Frank Neeson joined in 1984 sponsored by Ron Beckerle and Ed Reynolds. Frank recounted the early days of Share Christmas and the Holidays, building the high school press box, Don Brenner getting approval for our first Community Bulletin Board, and Marilyn Rose, our first woman Rotarian (Ray Pucci's sister). Frank can still be spotted with fellow sailor Past President George in competitive sailboat racing on the Hudson out of Nyack Boat Club.

Mark Griffith Jr (1985) followed in the footsteps of his dad, Mark Sr. (President 1990) and father-in-law Len Churcher (President 1981) and sponsor Herb Peckman (Pres. 1959). Mark Jr.'s installation was on the River Rose Steamboat out of Ossining cruising up the Hudson.

Ray Pucci (1986) was jointly sponsored by Willy Brandt and Jay Smith and for years ran Andy's Men's Wear which he took over from Andy Podraski. (see more about Ray's current activities on the attached Midnight Run attachment)

Ann Taylor (1994) recounted how as President I (Mark Jr) volunteered her as our new exchange student host family before clearing any of it with husband Clyde. Ann knew Clyde would be won over and they still keep in touch with their Rotary exchange student with his own his family.

Sandy Cokeley (1993) was our 5<sup>th</sup> woman PR Rotarian, Club President in 1995 and the "Voice of Pearl River Schools" as director of communications for many years. Now with her own company, Sandy's business sends her all over the globe to places like the United Arab Emirates where she is training on excellence in education.

As we ran out of time, I realized I had neglected to call up Frank Ripa (1991) but we will look forward to hearing from Frank, Ed Grant (1962 on his way to Jekyll Island at the

time), Carl Landgren (1975), Jim Trojan (1979), Steve Pantaleakis (1982), Vin Acocella (1989) and more of our long time club members at a future meeting. (Ed Fisher 1991



and Kirk Flynn 1994 ducked out before I could bring them to the podium). Thanks to all for their help with this fun trip down memory lane.

Four Way Test- George Westphal

Bulletin Editor- Mark Jr.