

Grapevine

Rotary Club of Naples, NY
Lunch Meeting, November 20, 2017

Those telltale signs of Winter's return were upon us today, as light flakes swirled about outside the Redwood windows. Our meeting, however, was resplendent with warmth, as 24 members, plus three lovely guests, gathered for our noonday lunch meeting. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President John, and Jack led us in singing The Star-Spangled Banner. The Invocation was done by Joyce, who asked The Lord for His blessing upon our club, our efforts, and for all who are in need. Our special guests today included Joe Kohler, Sebastian Maroundit, and Judy Schwartz. Sebastian and Judy represented Building Minds In South Sudan.

Mailbag Items: John shared a follow-up note from World Polio Day. He showed a map of how WPD was celebrated globally. The next WPD Celebration will be 10/24/18. We are this close! One can still register for the Eastern Cities Fellowship Dinner, which will be held on 12/6/17. The Annual Christmas Party will be held on 12/11. The menu for the evening will be a buffet dinner, gift exchange, music by Phil Bariteau's students, and donations for the Open Cupboard. We should have a great turnout this year with our increased membership! Skip had had a call from John Murphy regarding Al and Fran Mann. They will be moving into Park Meadows in Canandaigua. This is an assisted living facility.

Calendar Coverage: Next week, Kelly VandeSande, our elementary school nurse, will be coming to talk with us about Operation Santa. The following week, on 12/4, Wade Sarkis will be visiting with us, and talking about the Canandaigua Lake Watershed.

Registration for the District Conference in May is still possible at the lower price. Rotary Day at the United Nations was held last week.

Special Guest: We welcomed Joe Kohler (at right in the picture) today. Joe, who represents Cayuga Hospitality Advisors, spoke to us about the recent hurricanes that have devastated the Bahamas. He gave special thanks to Vicky, Alex, Deb, and John B. for their involvement with these relief efforts.



Joyce talked a little bit about The Oratorical Contest. She, along with Frank and Kendall, will visit Tom Mannella's English class tomorrow, to recruit prospective contestants. Our books for the Rotary Santa Book Delivery have been ordered. The book distribution to the elementary students, grades UPK to six, will take place on 12/11, at the Elementary School.

Our Program Today: We welcomed back two very special friends today, Sebastian and Judy, who are ambassadors for Building Minds In South Sudan. Sebastian, who had survived Sudan's Civil War, and who had come to the United States, spoke first. He spoke about the development of a school in his homeland, thanks to the help of Rotary. Until a school had been built, children were attending classes "under the trees". In 2013, more classrooms were added, and by the end of 2015, 863 students were attending the school. Sebastian showed us slides of the children all sitting close together to learn their lessons. With the help of a generous donation by our Naples Rotary, benches were provided so the children could sit comfortably to learn their lessons.

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Around 300 students are girls, and a Girls' School has begun. Building the school was an act of labor for sure, as there was no available machinery to enable the process. By 2017, some classrooms were built. Judy, a former teacher herself, spoke next. She mentioned how Naples Rotary had been a part of their progress, in helping to fund the benches. Pictures that she shared showed the children eagerly learning in sweltering temperatures, with very little to sustain them. The "stats" on South Sudan are very sobering. Eighty-three of the population is illiterate. The next big project is, of course, to build a high school. Sebastian says that after 8th grade, he gives the kids a book to "tide them over" until high school. Currently, some of the rooms for the Girls' School have been completed, and Judy says that when Sebastian returns in the new year, two more rooms will be completed. Judy and Sebastian gratefully accepted a check for \$1000 from the Naples Rotary to further their efforts. Indeed, we, as Rotarians, are very much proponents of education and literacy, and this cause for Building Minds In South Sudan is certainly worth our efforts! Thank you, Judy and Sebastian, for all you have done to improve the lives of these children! We are always glad to have you return to visit us!



Fines: It was time for Karen to pass the basket! Tom, Diane, Alex, Joyce, and Matt had missed meetings. Tom had also been on a cruise with his son and grandkids! John's cell phone went off. Penny was a bit late to meeting. I must confess, I was busy writing down the various fines, but I should admit that I should owe a fine as well! Last week, I stated in my missive that it was Blanche who was going to have knee surgery. Actually, it is Brenda who is going to have this procedure done! We can send our well wishes to Brenda. Blanche says that she can wait awhile to have this done! Sorry Ladies, for the mix-up!

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Happy Bills: Happy Bills were aplenty for the program, as we all admire and support Sebastian's and Judy's efforts to help the children of South Sudan. Frank's grandkids were in a play. Alex's kids will be home for a visit. John F. is looking forward to the Ecumenical Community Christmas Concert. Jack's grandson, Jacob, did well in this past weekend's race.

Extra Efforts: A basket was sent around to help Joe with relief for those folks in The Bahamas who were affected by the hurricanes.

Ace of Hearts: We asked Joe to select a ticket number. Nancy's ticket, #617, was drawn. Nancy picked the Queen of Spades today!

Win-Win: After our program today, the Win-Win was fairly easy! Name one country where The Nile runs through. Of course, South Sudan answers the question!

In Addition: Jack announced that the Ecumenical Community Concert will feature a group of flute players, the Trinity Bells, and the Voce Canto Chorale, It should be an afternoon of pure listening enjoyment!

Rotary Moment: Shanna was our Rotary Moment person today! She told of how Rotary has been involved in so many facets of things happening in Naples. Take last week, for example. The Robotics Team received the Judge's Award. The Naples students were involved in a play. We ordered the books for the Santa Book Delivery in December. All three of these items involved the Naples Rotary! Our Rotary infiltrates our lives here in this special community, and we are cognizant and so appreciative of this!

That's all for now, folks! Here's hoping that everyone will have a wonderful Thanksgiving! Blessings to each and everyone, and their families! See you on the 27th!