Milford Rotary Chat November 12, 2026





Meeting Minutes 11/5/2026 SBC Restaurant 12:15PM

Welcome:

Joe Barnes led us in The Pledge of Allegiance.

Reverend Dick Popilowski did his usual fine job with the prayer:

Heavenly Father,

As we gather in fellowship today, we give thanks for this meal, for the friendships that enrich our lives, and for the opportunity to serve others through Rotary.

Now that our clocks have been turned back and the days grow shorter, remind us that while daylight may be limited, our opportunities to bring light into the world are not. Help us to use the time we have wisely, guided by Rotary's enduring motto, *Service Above Self*.

May we be generous with our time, compassionate with our hearts, and willing with our hands. Strengthen our commitment to helping those in need, supporting our community, and building a better future for all.

Bless this food, those who prepared it, and the work we undertake together. May our service continue to shine brightly throughout this season and beyond. Amen.

Greg Schmitt screwed up The 4-Way Test. *(It's not like I haven't been reciting it for almost 4 decades.)*

Guests:

Tom Mercaldo & Todd Mann from Prepared 2 Help our speakers for the day, Matt Reith was here for the 2nd time (future new member). Jake Clifford & Braydon Seaburg from Fair World Mortgage joined us. Also, future members hopefully.

Do Good: (Dave Adams – Sargent-At-Arms)

Dave Adams got us started with a joke about a woman that shows up in the ER with burns on both her cheeks. She was ironing and the phone rang and she was confused and picked up the iron and not the phone. She was asked how she burned her other cheek. They called back.

John Stoddard gave an oral report of the trip he and his wife took to South America where they spent 5 days in the Amazon and 10 days in the Sacred Valley of the Incas including Machu Picchu. Roads were terrible and even on the train you got tossed around. There was no public drinking water. They flew to Iquitos which has a population of 500,000 people but is only accessible by boat or air. It is the largest city in the world that is not accessible by roads. He caught and ate piranha. He also learned to us a blow gun. They went through the Sacred Valley where they bounced between 6700 to 12375 ft in elevation including Manchu Picchu. The Incas and their empire was famous for their ability in building with huge blocks of granite that were between 100 and 1200 kilos, all without the invention of the wheel. The Incas moved their religious gold and silver in to the jungle to protect them from the Spanish. These treasures were never found.

Frosty Smith was happy to see Bill was back but was not happy with the results of the election.

Carrie Reed was under the weather last week. She saw Rush on Friday at the Mohegan Sun. She and her Mom are going to be in a feature in Milford Magazine titled Pioneer Women.

Phil Ucci said Thursday was a good time. He was on the wine trail. Just recently bought a car on Carvana - it was a good experience.

Don Wetmore was happy to be sitting next to Lou Trevisan. Dave reminded him of a funny joke (which he told).

Barry Bonessi reminded everyone that this Sunday, the 8th, at 1:00 there is the Veteran's Day parade.

Lorna Sura had a great time with her grand kids. All you have to do is bring cake and they are a happy bunch. It was a good time at Orange Ale House. Glen is going in for surgery, the wire came off his pacemaker.

Tom Margius said his daughter (Deanna who is expecting in January) and Son-In-Law are having a gender reveal party this Sunday where his SIL is going to jump off the Empire State Building with the appropriate colored parachute, but he was joking.

Do good raised $70 today.

Speakers:

Dick did a nice intro for our speakers, Tom Mercaldo and Todd Mann from Prepared2 Help. They are the Co-Chairs of the group. They grew out of the Boy Scouts efforts for their food drive at Thanksgiving. They have delivered over 200,000 pounds of food. There is no overhead and 100% of every dollar goes to support people's food needs. They feed 350 Milford families with enough food to cover Thanksgiving plus a few more weeks. They also support 11 other Milford charities.

This year they are camping out at Wasson Field from November 13-15. They are hoping to take a group picture on the 14th. Right now they have 344 families on the list but they are adding more and expect to exceed 350. If you know of families in need let Todd and Tom know. No questions asked. Every school in town is helping with the collections. They have 250 youth volunteers and it has been a great event to educate the youths of Milford about the food insecurity need that exists. All help is welcome and they can even track volunteer hours who want a record of their volunteer time.

Over the past 21 years, the Thanks for Giving Food drive has provided food to more than 6000 Milford area families and provided support to more than a dozen different food distribution charities. Sponsored by Prepared 2 Help and supported by area Scouts the principal beneficiaries of the drive include the Milford Food Bank, John Rigley Food Pantry, Cornerstone Food Pantry, Purple Pantry Boxes and Food2Kids. More than 200,000 pounds of food and 6,630 turkeys; and $77,000 has been raised to help feed those in need.

The setup is impressive to see in action. They are looking for donations of food, turkeys, money or time. The need is real. Our club donated a check today for $500. If looking for a place to bring donations, Phil U is collecting food in his office.

Facebook:@thx4givingfood Twitter:@thx4givingfood Instagram: thanks_for_giving_Milford
eMail MilfordThanks4Giving@gmail.com

Announcements and Upcoming Dates:

11/5 was 1st Lobster Bake Meeting for next year's Bake
11/12 is the next board meeting at Christine Early's home at 7 Flax Mill Lane.
11/13-11/15 Prepared2 Help Wasson Field Food Collection
11/15 11:30AM District Luncheon in Branford at Woodwinds. Goal is to celebrate donors.
12/10 Combo Board & Christmas Party. Mark & Maria are generously hosting at their home on Racebrook Road.
12/18 is the next meeting for the fund raiser the Rookies are organizing. It is at 6:00 in Jorge's office in Milford Bank. Different ideas are being floated as to the nature of the event (possibly a dueling pianos event?). The bulk of the funds raised will be going to the Beth El shelter.
12/19 Keeping Milford Warm fund raiser at Grassy Hill. $125 per person

Photos of Bake & Awards Luncheon by Ray Carissimi Lobster Bake photos Scholarship Photos

Upcoming Speakers:

11/12 Megan Altomare, CEO Boys & Girls Club of Milford
11/19 Jacob Yoder, Natural Highs
11/26 Happy Thanksgiving
12/3 John Waller, AI
12/10 PDG Ronald Webb, Rotary Foundation Chair

Scribe: Greg Schmitt

Who's Who for the July 1, 2026- June 30, 2027 Rotary Year

Officers:			**1st Yr Board Dir:**	**2nd Year Board Dir:**
President – ***Bill Parry***	**Sargent-At-Arms:** ***Dave Adams*** **AsstSrgent-At-Arms:** ***Joe Barnes***		***Roger Pocock***	***Carrie Reed***
President-Elect – ***Lise Robinson***	**Treasurer:** ***Tracy O'Brien***		***Gary Johnson***	***Evelyn Karam***
Vice President – ***Dick Popilowski***	**Asst Treasurer:** ***Christine Early***		***Gina Gaglione***	***Matt Fama***
Secretary – ***Ray Carissimi***	***Lorna Sura*** **(Immediate Past President)**		***Phil Ucci III***	***Joe Barnes***
Membership Chairman – ***Gary Johnson***	**Beth-El meal leader-** ***Dave Adams***			***Lorna Sura – IPP***

Board Meeting the Second Thursday, 5:30 PM Social, 6 PM Meeting every month unless noted otherwise

Your Rotary Chat Team: Scribes: Greg Schmitt, Tom Margius & Win Smith, Jr Setting/Editing/Circulation: Tom Margius
Milford Rotary, PO Box 381, Milford, CT www.milfordrotary.org

Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world. A veteran doesn't have that problem.
— Ronald Reagan