Milford Rotary Chat November 19, 2026





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

Welcome:

Don Wetmore was well prepared and started us off with 3 points: 1) A tribute to our Veterans and had them stand, 2) Appreciation for the Honor of free elections, and 3) The Pledge of Allegiance explained through Red Skeleton from 1/14/1969 YouTube & PDF

Dick Popilowski gave us a prayer and tribute:

Let us pray. Gracious God,

Today we gather with grateful hearts to honor the men and women who have worn the unform of our nation and answered the call to serve. We thank You for our veterans, whose courage, sacrifice, and devotion have protected the freedoms we enjoy and often take for granted.

As we reflect on Veterans Dy, remind us that true service requires commitment, humility, and a willingness to place the needs of others before our own. These are the very qualities we celebrate in our veterans and the values Rotary seeks to embrace through our motto, "Service Above Self".

We give thanks for those who stood watch in times of war and peace, for those who served far from home, and for the families who supported them with strength and love. May we never forget the cost of freedom or the debt of gratitude we owe to those who preserved it.

Inspire us, as Rotarians and as citizens, to follow their example by being servants in our communities. Help us to lift up those who are struggling, to bring hope where there is despair, and to build bridges of understanding in a world that often needs healing.

Bless our veterans gathered here today. Grant them good health, peace of mind, and the assurance that their sacrifices are remembered and appreciated. May their example challenge each of us to live lives marked by compassion, integrity, and service.

As we share this meal and fellowship, unite us in a common purpose: to leave our community, our nation, and our world better than we found it.

For these blessings, and for the privilege of serving others, we give You our thanks. Amen.

Dan Smith gave us The 4-Way Test with his additional bylines.

Guests:

Seamus Warakomski from Tri-City Appliance, Jake Clifford and Braydon Seaburg from FairWorld Mortgage.

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

Megan Altomare, our speaker today was noted to have her "new badge".

Dave Adams said his father was a Korean War Vet – he re-enlisted for 2 terms.

Frosty Smith noted that the new construction with BethEl is rising. His father was in the Battle of the Bulge (Frosty and Dan are vets).

Gary Johnson was happy to see Megan at today's meeting.

Bill Parry went to the Grasy Hill Food 2 Kids event with Phol and noted that they raised $100k that night.

Phil Ucci let us know that the Thanks for Giving event with the Scouts is Friday and Saturday with a Milford Rotarian photo at 11AM in the parking lot of Wasson Field.

Matt Fama noted that all the grocery stores including Shop-Rite are accepting donations for Thanks for Giving. He gave an emotional description of a phone call that he was the first to receive a call noting his Uncle died in Military Service.

Dan Smith let us know about some ancient history of Frosty's Military Service and noted that two of his relatives were killed in the Civil War.

Lorna Sura said that Glen is a Army Veteran and was happy about their recent concert seeing Chicago at the Oakdale.

John Stoddard was in the ROTC and gave a short story about his grandfather taking a musket in the elbow. He has a history of Veterans in the family.

Christine Early was happy for the 100th Anniversary of the Milford Garden Club that had a recent luncheon. She also gave us a short about her daughter and an alarm.

Joe Barnes was happy about our club having many 50 year Rotarians.

Barry Bonessi was happy that he'll be 80 in 4 months and let us know that he joined Rotary when he was 27 years old and as Milford Rotary Club's President in 1977-78, and in 1991 was the Rotarian of the Year.

Lise Robinson gave a happy fine for her Veteran Father who flew in Vietnam, got shot down and got a purple heart.

Tom Margius let us know that last Sunday's "Reveal Party" revealed an upcoming Boy for her Daughter and Son-In-Law this January.

Gina Gaglione apologized for not being at our meetings since the Shred Event. Her son had a baby boy, Anthony James (AJ) and they live in Boston.

Speaker:

Megan Altomare, our speaker today was the founding CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Milford in 2010. At that time it started with 30 kids and a $70k budget. In the 16 years it has grown to 1400 kids and a $2.3 million budget. They currently use a few of the Milford Schools including using 6000 sqFt area of Simon Lake School where they provide for all schools in Milford. They have a teen center which works with 40 to 100 teens per day. The Boys and Girls Club has "grown up" such that they need more space to provide greater access and more programs.

They have a new project in conjunction with the City of Milford to Renovate St. Gabriel's Schoool they will be developing it such that is will be about 22,000 sqFt. They will have classrooms for different ages, a STEM center, and Art Center and Playground. They will expand the hours that are currently restricted due to utilizing operating Schools property. With their own space they will be able to have additional and weekend hours. Current programs are chess, cooking, football, fingerprinting/forensic programs with UNH, Environmental Educational awareness, and financial awareness. The current cost is $130 per month per student with $250k in scholarships. They don't turn students away and work closely with the community.

Megan is excited about the new project and is working with City and Federal funding. There is currently no State funding. There is currently site/design and interior work being done with contractiors. They are working with getting further private and public funding to move the project to completion.

Milford Rotary Club gave a $2,000 check to the Boys and Girls Club today.

Announcements and Upcoming Dates:

12/10 Combo Board & Christmas Party. Mark & Maria are generously hosting at their home on Racebrook Road.
12/19 Keeping Milford Warm fund raiser at Grassy Hill. $125 per person
1/11/2027 CPR Class at Carrie Reed's Office $50

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

Upcoming Speakers:

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

It's not the minutes spent at the table that put on weight, it's the seconds.

— Unknown