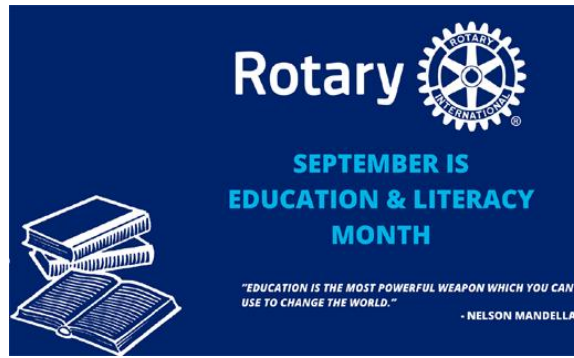


Milford Rotary Chat September 10, 2026



Meeting Minutes 9/3/2026 SBC Restaurant 12:15PM

Welcome:

Frosty Smith led us in The Pledge of Allegiance.

Dick Popilowski gave us a Labor Day inspired Prayer.

God of all work and all workers,

As we gather in fellowship, we pause to remember the spirit of **Labor Day** – a time to honor the people whose daily efforts shape our community.

We give thanks for those who build, teach, heal, protect, and serve. For those who labor with their hands, their minds, and their hearts. For those whose contributions are seen, and for those whose quiet work often goes unnoticed.

Bless every worker with strength, fairness, and dignity. Bless those searching for work with encouragement and open doors. And bless those whose labor is caregiving, volunteering, or supporting others in ways that cannot be measured by a paycheck.

As Rotarians, remind us that our greatest work is done when we live out **Service Above Self**. Help us to offer our skills generously, to listen compassionately, and to act with integrity. May our service lighten burdens, open possibilities, and reflect the best of who we strive to be.

Guide us today and in the week ahead, that our work – whatever form it takes – may honor You and uplift Milford. Amen.

Don Wetmore recited The 4-Way-Test with a few hiccups.

Guests:

Dora Kubek was a guest of Frosty Smith, Luis Rosa was a guest of Ray Carissimi, Michele Steinlauf of Food2Kids and our speaker Michael Stearns.

Do Good: (Joe Barnes – Sargent-At-Arms)

Tom Margius gave a sad fine for Lou D'Amato's passing. He was happy about his 75 mile ride on Tuesday with his son Andy. There was only about ½ hour of severe downpour otherwise fair from Rye, NY to Milford.

Phil Ucci brought his daughter to school for her 2nd year of college, a little easier than last year. He told about the "Secret Hideout" at the last District Leadership Conference. It was near a house but had to take a boat to a small island!

Evelyne Karam was happy to have friends coming next week from Virginia. She was also happy that one of her remote students would be coming to Milford for 3 days to have 3 days of "immersion French" with her.

Frosty was sad about Lou D'Amato's passing and noted that he, his brother Dan and Lou developed 3 shopping centers together. He was also happy that Dora was here as a guest and also happy that the Yankees beat the Red Sox over the weekend in a game by the score of 16-1.

Michele was sad for some health issues with Rev. Adam Eckhart and that her brother is on a transplant waiting list.

Christine Early was happy to have recently come back from an Alaska trip with siblings. Though with siblings she said that they all had fun!

Carrie Reed recently went to North Carolina the visit her son and granddaughter who tested for her Yellow Belt in Karate.

Carrie played Tennis (she called it Tenn-knee-iss). She also saw are Milford 9 year old grandson test for a belt in Karate which she said was pretty intense and brutal.

Dan Smith was sad about Lou D'Amato's passing and noted they played baseball together when younger – Lou was a catcher. He told a story that he, brother Frosty, and Lou bought a house in the mid-1960s on Moorehouse Avenue for \$3,000. They had to put cinderblocks under the house to raise it up to prevent flooding. He was also happy that the oldest of 7 grandchildren started school.

Win Smith was sad about the Red Sox but was happy that his latest granddaughter is coming home from the Hospital.

Joe Barnes noted there was Bob Peck's President's Chair from 1957-58 Rotary Year and it will be donated to Beth El.

Ray Carissimi went to Madison to see the movie "54" which is about Martin Luther King's 54 mile walk. Ray gave some brochures for the Running for Water for Africa 5K on Saturday October 3rd at Walnut Beach 9AM.

Andy Greenawalt was happy that his son who was looking for a job got 2 good offers in one day. He is happy that he'll be going to California next week to visit him. He had a t-shirt with BFC on it – Bike Friendly Community!

Speaker:

Our speaker was Mike Stearns from the [School of Rock](#). Music has been a part of his life for that age of 5 where he learned every dance/song by heart of Mary Poppins. He graduated from University of South Carolina in Entertainment Management/Music. He was classically trained vocalist, learned Bass and drums and even sang in the Opera. He noted that he had been a student at School of Rock from the age of 15 and played in a Led Zepplin Tribute band, Presence, which he still performs in throughout Connecticut. He opened his own School of Rock Franchise in 2022 in North Haven shortly after college with a little prodding from his Father. He teaches music including instruments/vocals along with 8 instructors to ages 3 to 80. He started with about 100 students and after 3 years about 250 students. The membership in School of Rock is much like a Gym Membership. It includes a monthly fee. Students have other commitments throughout the year, e.g. soccer or baseball and may need to take a break but he noted that the business is flexible in that way. The premise of the lessons are to be able to play in group performances – to get out and play with a band. Carrie Reed had seen him play in a group recently at Stonebridge in Milford and invited him to speak to us. In the band there was a 13 year old keyboard player and Carrie noted his maturity in both music and his mannerisms. The idea is to get kids to “do what they can do” as they play in a group and play on stage. He said it is not like music lessons, you play. He said normal music lessons are like only going to Soccer Practice but never playing in the game. His focus is on getting everyone to perform – even the shy kids. The music is a variety of venues including Led Zepplin, Beatles, Country. Next year students will be performing Latin Rock singing in Spanish and Portuguese. He noted that School of Rock internationally has an All Stars World Tour Program that kids 15 to 17 years old perform throughout the world. Kids from Brazil, Australia, and US for example are on stage together.

Announcements and Upcoming Dates:

A \$1,500 check was given to Michele of Food2Kids for their programs.

9/10 Board Meeting at The United Way at 20 Evergreen Ave Milford

9/11 Beth El is sponsoring the Yacht Lobster fund raiser. Tickets are as low as \$29. Get tickets at [Yachtlobsters.com](#) and click on event bright where you can pick your seats. They will be having refreshments.

9/13 Next Beth El Luncheon – Contact Dave Adams or Phil Ucci if you can volunteer

9/23 at the Bridges Healthcare facility Dave and Bill will be installing an AED at about 12 noon.

9/25-9/26 [Devon Rotary's Octoberfest](#)

10/3 is the MAC event [Jazz'n Downtown](#) Milford

10/3 is also the [7980 District Assembly](#) in New London. Admission is \$75.

10/11 is the Shred Event at Spectrum on New Haven Ave

10/13 Carrie is hosting an AED/CPR course at her office. Starts at 6:30 PM and fee is \$45. For those looking to renew their certificate, this course can do that.

11/6 [Food2Kids Winter Gala](#) at Grassy Hill Country Club.

Photos of Bake & Awards Luncheon by Ray Carissimi [Lobster Bake photos](#) [Scholarship Photos](#)



Upcoming Speakers:

9/10 [Hunnebee Project](#)

9/17 Milford Police Chief Keith Mello

9/24 Brad Dancer – SHU Radio

10/1 Milford Fire Chief Christopher Walksnoris

Scribe: Tom Margius

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

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

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

The truest expression of a people is in its dances and its music. Bodies never lie.

—Agnes De Mille