

Reporting Meeting of April 11, 2016

Calendar of Events

Last Week: 4/11 Club Assembly

This Week: 4/18 65th Anniversary Meeting

Next Week: 4/25 TBD

Coming Up: 4/30 Community Breakfast

Attendance: 23 Rotarian

Invocation: Garry Morrow

Note: Regular meetings are held Monday Evenings at 6:15 PM in the William E. Sewell Memorial Room at the Ballston Town Hall.

Please give suggestions for future programs to Peter Parker.

Six of the large pennant displays had been hung on the walls in anticipation of the BHBL Rotary 65th anniversary dinner next week.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- President Bill led the Pledge, Bob Youmans the National Anthem and Garry Marrow an thoughtful and inspirational grace.
- Welcome to our guest, Dan Caine
- Linda LeTendre's father and his girlfriend were in a motor vehicle accident in Mexico, and Linda went there to help.
- Jon Costolo needs to know how many club members and guests will be attending the 65th anniversary dinner next week.
- Jon also reported on plans for the Pancake Breakfast April 30. Posters and tickets and work sign up sheets were distributed.
- Laura Lee thanked the club for supporting the 4H walkathon.
- Happy Dollars were collected by Ken Crotty.
- The free dinner ticket was given to Fred Baily.
- Peter Sawyer spoke regarding his concerns about the implementation of testing associated with Common Core, as well as the test itself. He spoke specifically about the English Language Arts portion of the test, recently administered at the Middle School.
 - 1) To accurately count those students with parental permission to opt out of the test a letter had been sent home, asking parents to notify the District by 3/25 if they were planning to have their child opt out, so an alternative academic activity could be provided. 44

- students showed up for the alternate activity without having been signed up and it was unknown if the parents truly wanted them to opt out. Parents had to be contacted by the principal that morning.
- 2) Some students did not complete the alternative activity as they did not understand that it was required.
- 3) Teachers believe the test itself does not encourage students to think. Questions from higher grade levels are included, which penalizes students who are at grade level or below.
- 4) Some students did not take the test seriously, thereby skewing the results.
- Last year the Opt Out movement was well organized and as a result of the high number of students opting out, it got the State's attention that parents do not like the loss of local control. There is a new Chancellor and a new Commissioner in place who are trying to figure out how to move forward. This year teachers were not assessed based on test scores, but they still feel marginalized, as the test does not reflect the curriculum being taught.
- Higher levels of opt outs will eventually result in the loss of state funds to the school district, which will hurt education. The community places a high value on education, which attracts people to move to the area. In the long run property values may be impacted.
- April 12 the Board of Education will vote on a resolution regarding their position on testing, with a Privilege of the Floor prior to the vote. More information is available on the District website.
- A lively Q&A period followed.
- Laura Lee shared her Rotary story including her love of the area, outdoor sports and how she became active in the fields of history, museum work, archeology, as well as how important it has been for her to be a mentor.

Reported by Beth Brownell

Serve with us. The world is waiting.

Set up: Ken Crotty, Val Mosier, Bill Wherle, Walter Grattidge Clean Up: Paul Lewandowski, Silas Schrader, Jon Costolo

