



FRIDAY, February 13, 2025

The meeting was called to order by President Ted at 12:15.

The Pledge was led by Jeff M. Mike E. led us in the 4-Way Pact and the invocation was provided by Jack L.

Our visitors

We were joined by Conant High School RYLA participants, Fishing Well Scholarship recipients and visiting Rotarians

Happy \$\$\$s

- \$ Ted opened with appreciation for the participation in the Fireside Chat
- \$ Allen was also happy to have hosted the Fireside Chat at his house.
- \$ Jim Mc for his wife
- \$ Mary happy that she is NOT doing the Buzz today
- \$ Mike E for the students with us today and because of the jersey contest at his office
- \$ Joe Sabatino (Schaumburg AM) glad to be here and invited to his club's fund-raiser, the Souper Bowl of Soups on February 26th at the Chicago Marriott Schaumburg, 50 N. Martingale Rd.
- \$ Heather celebrating 10 years of Fishing Well
- \$ Eileen for all our Fishing Well students
- \$ Gene first for all the students with us and second for daughter Bailey who is filming at Conant tomorrow

Announcements

- ☞ Wendy – volunteers are needed for the District 54 Food Pantry distribution at Keller Junior High on Friday, February 20th 3:30 – 5 pm. Donations of food and hygiene items are welcomed - particularly self-care items such as shampoo, conditioner, body wash and deodorant.
- ☞ Wendy also reminded us that more volunteers are needed to meet our club's Meals on Wheels commitment for delivering meals on Fridays. There are only 4 people doing it at this point and MORE help is needed. The more volunteers we have, the less often each person will need to make the deliveries.
- ☞ Gayle shared information about our Classic as our major fund-raiser with our visitors. She reported that 269 tickets have been sold and 183 meals and there are only 11 days until we need to submit our meal count to the Marriott. A sign-up sheet is being passed around to gather information about table assignment preferences.

☞ Mike E spoke about the President-elect Training Seminar that is also on March 7th. There will be a general leadership training opportunity that afternoon for anyone interested in learning more about Rotary. Contact Mike of President Ted if you are interested in learning more about this opportunity.

Tom circulated the wireless microphone around the room so that the RYLA participants could introduce themselves and share what being a part of RYLA meant to them. The feedback was unanimously positive about every aspect of the program and experience. The enhanced self-confidence, better understanding of leadership and making new friendships were highlighted.

Dave Moravek from Conant also shared his thoughts on the impact of RYLA for the participants and for the school. He thanked Tom and acknowledged Jim F for his support. He spoke about the positive outcomes of the RYLA experiences he has seen. He noted that in training 3 or 4 students you change individuals, but training 18 young people changes the culture. Conant now has a strong “leadership bench” due in large part to RYLA. He expressed gratitude to our club for making these experiences possible. We also heard from Sean Nelson, RYLA Chair, who has been instrumental in the success of RYLA in District 6440.

Fun and Frolic

Allen took over the mic to raise some money so that we can keep on making a difference. The fun began with a guessing game: who arrived at Allen’s house first for the Fireside Chat – Diane, George, Mike or Debbie? We all got to “vote” for one. Anyone who did not guess Mike had to pay \$2

Fines included

- Anyone who did not turn in Classic tickets this week
- Didn’t attend the Fireside Chat
- No visiting Rotarian(s) at the table
- Arrived late for the meeting today
- Went to Chandlers before making it to Bella Napoli
- No prospective member at the table
- Has not solicited or contributed an item for the silent auction
- Sean and Dave said nice things about Jim F. – the rest of us had to pay

Our program

Heather Z spoke briefly about our Fishing Well Scholarship program, tying it to Rotary’s Four Way Test. In providing these scholarships we are not just investing in the students, we are investing in the community. The students who were with us all introduced themselves briefly. Brenda E then proceeded to present our annual Fishing Well report. She led off with a review of the criteria for the program and the volunteer service component.

She has followed up with alumni from the program beginning with the 2016 cadre of recipients. Of those who were willing to share salary information, 81% are earning more than \$50,000 a year and 44% of those are making over \$75,000. 100% reported that the impact of the scholarship on their education, careers and personal life.

We were treated to video messages from three graduates of the program. Nicholas Miuran, who was a part of the first group in 2016, is now a fully certified EMT working for the Waukegan

Fire Department. Eun Young Suh for the 2019 Cohort is working in her chosen field of sonography at Northwest Community Hospital. Aida Arson, also from the 2019 Cohort is employed as a physical therapist assistant.

Kristie Heintz was with us in person, along with her boss. She reaffirmed that we are truly changing lives with these scholarships. She is living proof of that. She received the scholarship in 2021 and graduated with training in HVAC and a 3.6 GPA. She shared with us that when she began in the program she was not in a good place. She was struggling to make ends meet, feeling ashamed when paying for her groceries with food stamps. It wasn't just financial assistance the scholarship gave her, it was hope. She felt supported by Rotary and found role models within the organization and did not want to let us down. We believed in her and that helped her believe in herself.

When we last heard from her, she had recently been hired by AMS Industries and was looking forward to a successful career. That hope is being realized as she has developed even greater skills and been promoted to more responsible positions. Before joining AMS, she was supporting herself and her daughter on \$12,000 a year. Now she is making 6 times that amount. Although her original training was in residential HVAC, those skills provided the foundation for moving into commercial HVAC. As her boss told us, the principles are the same, it is just bigger! Her boss also thanked our club for making such a difference in Kristie's life -- for her sake and on behalf of the company -- because she is a real asset to AMS Industries.

Eileen claimed the best of the "best job in the world" competition. She presented a \$6,000 check for the transfer scholarship for this year. This scholarship is designed to help students moving on from Harper to a four-year university. She noted that we have donated over \$700,000 in scholarships between Fishing Well and ACE I & ACE II.

In closing, the high school students were informed of our other scholarships. Also, we were reminded that we will be kicking off Project Selection soon.

John S. led us in the 4-Way Test.