



Wilton Rotary Drummer

Wilton, Connecticut

www.wiltonrotaryclub.org

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Editor: Paul Burnham

Wilton's finest service club, having said "see ya later" last week to its chief financial enforcer for the nonce, drew twelve quite sober members this still chilly second Friday of March - Boucher, Burnham, Castaldi, Freedman (presiding) Goldman, Johnson, Lavin, Meehan, Russo, Sharlach, Smith, Tailauria, White – along with speaker Paul Steinmetz, representing Western Connecticut State University in Danbury.

Announcements –

1. Save the late afternoon, early evening, on Monday March 25 for the Police Awards ceremony. Unlike in several prior years this will take place in the Brubeck Room at the Library. Contact Carol if you can help with the set-up and the take-down.
2. The Installation Dinner is set for Thursday evening, June 20 at Rolling Hills. More details will be available when our President-elect returns from France (just in time to go to PETS in New Jersey).
3. This is Wilton Reads time at the Library. Several events at the Library, check the website if you were not at the meeting to receive the printed handout, lead up to a meet the author (Heather Morris) program on April 11 – The Tattooist of Auschwitz is the book to be read. Never Forget.
4. On March 11 at 6:00 PM the State Insurance Commissioner (acting) is expected at Marly's. Stop by to hear all the stories of his first week on the job.
5. Wayback Burger days coming up – March 13 and April 10. (Second Wednesday now)
6. Christine promised to put her head under the water at Kiwanis Pond on March 15, Swamp Romp Day, for a measly \$30.00 more dollars of pledges. (This is at 4:00 PM, after our next meeting.) Do dig deeper.
7. The 50-50 pot has now grown to almost \$250.00. Judy helped us all out by drawing the six of spades – one less card for the next person to draw in error.

PROGRAM:

Paul Steinmetz is the Director of Public Affairs and Community Relations for Western Connecticut State University. He was, until recently a member of Danbury's Rotary Club.

Not many of us are familiar with Western Connecticut, even though it is less than fifteen miles away from Rolling Hills and has close to 6,000 students. It is a state university, in the same network as Southern, Central and Eastern, but not UCONN. About thirty percent of its operating budget comes from the State, the balance from tuition and fees, with a little help from its endowment.

Like many institutions of higher learning, Western Connecticut is feeling the pinch of the fewer number of college aged students than in years past. (This is scheduled to reverse itself, but not until 2026 – in the meantime many significant schools may be forced to merge or close.) Western Connecticut seeks to fill its dormitories –as boarding students generally bring in more revenue – and is starting to offer in-state tuition rates to New York and Massachusetts residents as a way to attract more students,.

Paul is quite proud of his employer. The school has a very strong nursing program, it has one of the best records in Connecticut in terms of its accounting students passing their CPA exams at their first attempts. Many if not most of the music teachers in CT's public schools received their educations at Western Connecticut. The honors program is superb. None of its students graduate with out of control debt. The school is also very flexible in terms of adjusting to their student's circumstances – it sounded as though the students who graduated in four consecutive academic years were by far the exception.

Perhaps more students from Wilton should consider Western Connecticut one of their college choices.

Paul

NEXT MEETING: – Lunch Meeting, Friday, March 15, 12:15 at ROLLING HILLS COUNTRY CLUB