



**Wilton Rotary Drummer**  
**Wilton, Connecticut**  
[www.wiltonrotaryclub.org](http://www.wiltonrotaryclub.org)

**March 11, 2016**

**Vol. 35, Issue 32**

**Editor: Andy Mais**

What began as a cozy group of four or five at 12:15 grew to a convivial gathering of 13 Rotarians (including President Richard), plus a future Rotarian — Pam’s daughter Larkin, a junior at Moravian College — and our guest speaker, Selectman and [Lifetime Achievement award winner](#) Dick Dubow.

**Announcements:**



- Here comes the Judge. Bob Genuario will be our guest speaker this week and your attendance is strongly requested. Rotarians not attending may find themselves receiving subpoenas.



- Some days you’re the dog, some days the hydrant. Pat Russo started out well, winning the draw from Bud “The Gambler” Boucher, but then picked the wrong card and became another loser, much like yours truly. On top of all that, his brother took Pat’s convertible and had a little accident in Florida. We feel your pain, Pat. BTW, when you fix your convertible, can we borrow it?
- We still need a safe house for our Exchange student. Please see [Beth](#).
- Susan G met with our Exchange student’s next host family. All is well.
- Foundation Chair Carol asks you to keep in mind that your annual [Rotary Foundation](#) gift is due by June 30. Next year is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foundation. Your gift matters.
- Before losing Bud’s draw, Pat, Matt, and company installed more than 30 smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors. Almost done.
- Paul H needs a head count for the mailings and labels for the Crafts Show.

**Upcoming meetings (see Pres. Richard):**

3/14 — Police awards at 6 p.m. at Trackside	3/17 — Board meeting at 5 p.m. at Fairfield County Bank
4/1 — Devon Rotary Club Comedy Night (\$50)	4/29 — District Conference runs till 5/1 at Renaissance Hotel in Providence
5/2 — Golf Outing (\$275/golfer including lunch and cocktails)	5/3 — Annual Town Meeting

## Program: Town government



Dick Dubow has lived in Wilton for 35 years and served on just about every town board during that time. Most recently reelected to a four-year term on the Board of Selectmen (BOS) in 2013, Dubow shared his view of the town and its upcoming budget.

The proposed BOS budget represents a decrease in nominal spending, while the Board of Ed budget contains a small increase. Both budgets will be the subject of televised public hearings (3/16 for BOS) before the Board of Finance. The process culminates in a vote at the Annual Town Meeting on May 3, with voting continuing on May 7. A 15% aggregate turnout is required for a no vote to be effective. The lack of even that anemic turnout last year meant that budget was adopted despite more votes against than in favor.

Flat spending does not mean flat taxes or a flat mill rate. The Grand List rose a mere 0.2%, and with decreased state aid and a reduced ending fund balance, the mill rate will most likely rise to fill what the First Selectman says is a \$2-million plus gap. Debt service will increase, and that will be felt by the citizenry for a couple years until older debt begins to be retired.

Dubow noted a number of issues the town will have to consider in the near future. These include a possible charter revision commission to address potential changes to the budget approval process. Numerous municipal projects need to be undertaken, Dubow said. The Town Hall complex is too old and too small for its current population and uses. Turf fields will need to be replaced as well, and Dubow asked if the town should require groups other than the schools to make contributions to their eventual replacement. Current town spending may at best maintain the status quo, Dubow said, adding: "Only maintaining the status quo is a step back for the community."

In other updates, the contentious Miller-Driscoll renovation is on track and for now under budget, and the Comstock renovation is largely complete. Dubow praised the town's new director of facilities, and noted that Sensible Wilton had dropped its lawsuit relating to Miller-Driscoll.

BOS is reevaluating how vacancies on boards and commissions are filled, as well as evaluating proposed changes in how legal fees are contracted for. Dubow urged all to let their voices be heard at the Town Meeting.

***NEXT MEETING: Friday, March 18, 2016 at Marly's. If you haven't heard, Judge Robert Genuario is the guest speaker.***