



## Wilton Rotary Drummer

Wilton, Connecticut

[www.wiltonrotaryclub.org](http://www.wiltonrotaryclub.org)

June 28, 2019

Vol. 38, Issue 47

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Wilton's finest service club, drew the usual suspects (and then some) to its weekly meeting this last Friday of May - Boucher, Brown Burnham, Freedman (presiding), Goldman, Hafter, Hansen, Johnson, Kent, Lavin, Russo, Sharlach, Smith, White – along with Judy's grandson Steve, and our speakers. Liz Salguero and Dawn Ladenheim

### Announcements –

1. This is Christene's last meeting as our President (this time around) after two years at the helm. Well done!
2. Pam was installed by the District as our new president on Wednesday and will preside over her first meeting on July 12. (NOT July 5.)
3. The July 12 meeting will be at the Wilton Congregational Church as Rolling Hills has some large event scheduled for that day and needs its entire clubhouse.
4. Also, our incoming District Governor, Jack Solomon, will be with us on the 12<sup>th</sup>, so do plan to attend.
5. Chamber Street Fair is July 20. Volunteers needed to man and woman our booth.

### ANOTHER LOSER!

Chris eliminated the five of clubs from the deck. Winner will now receive at least \$425.00.

### PROGRAM

Liz and Dawn are the founders of Circle of Care, an organization whose genesis derived from personal experience. Liz recounted a day in her life 15 or so years ago, which started like any other day except that she and her husband had scheduled what they thought was a brief doctor's visit with their young son. The child, Carlos, was diagnosed with leukemia, quickly admitted to Yale New Haven Hospital with protocols to begin chemotherapy treatments almost immediately, and her life turned upside down in every way

imaginably. She and her husband needed someone to help them sort out the absolutely immediate (who will meet their daughters' school bus, the not-so-immediate, how do we deal with a very young child desperately ill forty miles from home and the needs of our other children, the financial issues and the emotional and psychological issues of losing what is familiar so quickly. Liz and her husband, and Carlos, survived, and in gratitude Liz felt the need to give back to those who would face what she and her family had faced. She connected with Dawn whose son was also a cancer survivor and Circle of Care was born.

From the Circle of Care website -

Through our signature program, *Bags of Love*, we aim to meet the needs of every newly diagnosed child as soon as they and their family reach the hospital. At diagnosis, children are immediately sent to the hospital to begin lengthy treatment procedures. Often, parents don't even have time to grab a toothbrush, let alone their child's favorite thing to comfort them. A canvas tote filled with day-to-day necessities, comfort items and vital resources helps to ease the transition and let each child and family know that they are not alone. Items may include a hand-made blanket, toothbrush and toothpaste, deodorant, hand sanitizer, phone charger, a child's toy, a journal and pen and our resource directory *The Purple Pages*, which provides pre-vetted resource information to families.

Circle of Care will also provide some financial assistance for families having difficulties making ends meet during these experiences; most do have such difficulties, and will help with the redecoration of the child's room at home – which will need to be entirely redone in any case to provide a germ-free environment. And, of course, the counseling from those who have been where the family with the new diagnosis finds itself.

Liz mentioned that Circle of Care has an annual budget of half a million dollars but hopes to double that to meet the needs it sees. It offers services to those families who are Connecticut residents and others whose children are being treated at one of the two Connecticut hospitals which treat children with cancer – Yale – New Haven and Hartford. Liz was unaware of a similar non-profit anywhere in the country.

And Liz and Dawn shared the good news - more than 85% of children with cancer do recover to lead normal lives.

Enjoy the 4th and 5<sup>th</sup>. We will see you on the 12<sup>th</sup> at the Congregational Church.

Paul

***NEXT MEETING: – Lunch, Friday, May 19, 12:15 at WILTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH***