



## **Wilton Rotary Drummer**

**Wilton, Connecticut USA District 7980**

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

**September 15, 2006**

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### **Visitors:**

None. Members in attendance included Murena, Dulberg, Lemke, Ashway, Russo, Tenore, Spencer (presiding), Glass, Burnham, Dephtereos, Mattoni, Grunewald, Hafter, Klein (presenting).

### **Announcements:**

Carnival. Quite successful. Unsold food went to the Norwalk Emergency Food Shelter.

Connecticut Challenge – Additional funds will be given this worthy organization from Fun n' Fines.

Fire Prevention Program – Pat is working on.

Next meeting – Oldies show – we are to be led by John or Paul or Bill, as Frank goes to a Rotary District function.

### **Program**

This meeting was held at the Comstock Community Center. The lasagna, and it was delicious, came to us probably from Village Market, and was delightful. We were there at the invitation of our own Heather Klein, current director of the Wilton Children's Center.

The Wilton Children's Center has served the Wilton Community since the early eighties, about as long as Rotary has been in existence. Formerly associated with the Wilton Family Y, the center is now fully autonomous from all other organizations. It serves 155 children during the academic year and provides

summer services for an additional 60 to 90 children. It is a 501©(3) organization.

A further renovation of Comstock is on the drawing board, and the lease from the Town to the Children's Center has been canceled by the Town as of August 31, 2007. The Children's Center had been promised the old Gilbert & Bennett School building by the prior administration, but the new Board of Selectmen has taken that option off the table.

The Center is now seeking to raise funds to build and buy its own building on Route 7 in North Wilton. The site has been located and the building designed. However, about \$400,000 is needed by Thanksgiving or the Center will have to consider closing at the end of its lease.

This would be a real shame – not only for the dedicated administration and staff at the Center, but also for the Wilton families (residents and workers) who have used the center for their family's child-care needs and the employers who need their employees to have convenient day-care. Those of us who no longer rely upon children's day-care directly will remember those days easily – when regardless of what was happening at the office, their children's needs had to come first. Perhaps, like me, you are occasionally rendered helpless when your secretary calls from home when her carefully-constructed child-care arrangements fall through.

Heather reports that while she and her board have explored every source of governmental funding available, the fact that the Children's Center is based in a community such as Wilton, reputed for its affluence, is very much against them.

It would be a real shame for the Community to lose the Children's Center. I remember fighting quite hard to preserve the Center 10-12 years ago, when the last Comstock renovation occurred.

If we are not in a position to give money, the least we can do is to write to our Selectmen!

***See you Friday***

..... ***Paul***