



Wilton Rotary Drummer

Wilton, Connecticut USA District 7980

www.wiltonrotaryclub.org

Our 31st Year of Service!

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Seventeen Rotarians, a cameo appearance by Mark Koler, guests and prospective members David Taylor and Heidi von Hoffman, soon-to-be-member Beth Edwards and speaker Pat Sesto, Wilton's Director of Environmental Affairs, assembled for a twin-bill presentation and October's final Friday midday fete at Marly's.

Announcements:

1. Help! Halloween Hustle – Even Paul dressed as Gunga Din can't single handedly manage the water table at the High School Field House. Please help. You'll be guaranteed a cup of coffee – 9:45 a.m. Sunday, October 27.
2. Proud President Paul announced that the Club will be sending two high school students to the upcoming RYLA Conference.
3. Pat Russo announced that the Wilton Fire Department teamed up with the Kidde Corporation to donate 40 fire detectors for use in our Wilton Senior Protection Program.
4. Grants News – Get your Grant Applications in by November 1 if you want them considered now. The Grants Committee will meet on November 6 to evaluate applications. Grant applications received after November 1 will not be considered until May 2014.
5. President Paul's Art And Mixology series will continue Monday, 6:30 p.m. at Marly's. Then, Tuesday at Marly's (5:45 p.m.), Paul invites all to meet and discuss club communications (what?). Paul has openings for Wednesday and Thursday evening at Marly's.

Program I: Reflections On The Generator For Center Of Hope, Hinche, Haiti

Frank Spencer and John Lemke provided a recap and status report on the Club's "Generator Project" for the Center Of Hope orphanage and school in Hinche, Haiti. John provided some history. The Club became involved when orphanage/school was just a vision. Frank noted that this project, like many in unstable and needy areas, required patience and perseverance to pay off. With the Club's involvement, starting in 2005 or 2006, the project had many precarious moments. For example, the Club secured a grant and was ready to fund the generator purchase, but conditions at the time in Haiti raised doubts as to whether the generator would reach the construction site. The Club made the difficult decision to return the grant funds and wait until circumstances at the site improved to the point the generator could safely and securely be integrated into the project. In 2010, the generator went on line allowing the school and orphanage to open. In 2012, municipal power was extended to the site. After serving two years as the sole electric power source, the generator now serves as the facility's backup power supply.

Still providing a vital service in a needy area, the school has about 300 students with dormitories provide housing for 50 orphans/students.

Program II: Pat Sesto – Keiser Property Conservation Easement Proposal

Pat Sesto, Wilton's Director of Environmental Affairs, described why the Wilton is proposing to partner with the Wilton Land Trust and purchase a conservation easement covering 35 of 43 acres on the property known as the Keiser Family Property. The picturesque tract has long been in the Keiser family. Straddling 1,000 feet of the Norwalk River at the intersection of Cannon and Seeley Roads, the tract is considered to provide key ecological and scenic benefits preserving open space and protecting what remains of Wilton's rural character. The easement will prevent commercial or residential development on the 35 acres. The owners can still pursue certain agricultural uses. The easement will also provide public access in designated corridors principally for hiking and fishing. A vote to approve bonding for the \$2.2 million purchase price (estimated to cost the average household \$20 per year) comes to a head at a Special Town Meeting on November 19 at 7:30 p.m. at the Wilton H.S. Clune Center. Voting continues on Saturday, November 23 at the Clune Center, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Friday, November 1, 2013 – Marly's in Wilton