

The Spoke

Rotary Club of Danbury

www.danburyrotary.org 3 Years Best in District April 29, 2009

P.O. Box 788, Danbury, CT 06813

From the Editor's Desk:

This has been a good couple of weeks of having our members receive recognition for their volunteer efforts.

First, our heartiest congratulations to **Anita Ragona** who just received the Mary Dolce Award at the Catholic Charities Annual Charity Ball, held April 25th. The award was established 33 years ago, in 1980, in honor of Catholic Charities Danbury Advisory Board Member Mary Dolce. The award states: *"To an outstanding humanitarian whose unselfish dedication is characteristic of Mary Dolce contributions to the community."*



Anita has been a member of the Board of Catholic Charities for many years, and is a past president and founder of the Celebrity Breakfast fundraiser. She is also the Past President of our Club, recent Co-chair of our Spelling Bee, and was a District Director. In addition, Anita is a member of the Danbury/New Fairfield Women's Club which has been a mainstay of our Amber Alert program. Good going, Anita. You have made us all proud.

Secondly, two of the members of Danbury Rotary were selected by the incoming District Governor, Colin Gershon, to make presentations during the breakout sessions at the District Assembly.

For his remarkably successful efforts with the growing Amber Alert program, Bob Vetter was asked to make a presentation, and he did a masterful job. One more club appears to be ready to sign on to the program.

Finally, last but probably least, your Editor was singled out to also make a presentation at the District Assembly due to the three successive years of winning the Newsletter Award at the annual district conference. DG Colin invited your Editor to move to New Haven and take over his newsletter. The man knows how to work a crowd.

Some dates to remember:

5/1, Newport District Conference- A must for new Rotarians

6/3, Wpt District Golf Tournament.

6/20 Great Duck Race, Wpt Sunrise, 11 am to 3 pm-2,500 ducks launched into Saugatuck River, at Parker Harding Plaza, \$20.00 a ticket—can win \$5,000! www.westportsunriserotary.com

6/23, Visionary Meeting, Pamela Burdette-Miller, Chair. Note Change. Place is yet to be determined.



Speakers-

May 13th- GSE Team Visits. Bring the family. See Larry Andrea if you wish to participate.

Amber Alert-

5/31 Brookfield Fire Dept, 11 am-3 pm

6/6 Teddy Bear Family Craft Fest, N.Mfd, 10 am-3 pm

6/13 Stony Hill Fire Dept, 10 am-3 pm

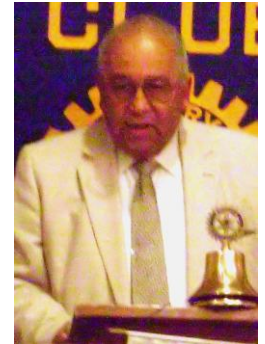
7/24 and 7/25 Village Fair Days, N Milfd.

10/17 Reed School, Newtown, 10 am to 4 pm

April 29th Meeting-

Trial Referee Judge Thomas J. West: Our Superior Court in Action--

Judge West gave us a tutorial on the work of a Trial Referee, and how this very important position fits into our court system. Trial Referees are designated by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to hear cases referred to the court, they then write opinions for the Court. This is accomplished by the referees being formed into groups comprised of 8 teams each year with each group of 3 hearing 6 cases a month in order to reduce the workload on the court.



The Superior Court is a very active place, and processes 128,500 criminal cases alone each year. The court has 196 judges, 10 senior judges (65 to 70 years of age), 4,000 employees, and will never run out of cases to process. The court also hires interpreters to assist individuals in 90 languages.

The Court is the 3rd branch of government, and deals with 2 million contacts a year. A total of 57,000 cases are filed in Connecticut each year so programs such as the Trial Referee program are essential to move the cases through the system.

Judge West indicated that he is very proud of his Danbury roots. He was born on North Street, moved down the street, and indicated his family has only gone a few blocks in 110 years.

He graduated from WestConn, and the University of Connecticut Law School. He is proud of the fact he is still busy practicing law at 75 years of age.

The judge concluded that by its nature, the law is slow and deliberate, nothing like we see on Judge Judy of TV fame. It is the most misunderstood branch of government, but the courts are working at making the process easier each year, and more clear.



Judge West receives his speaker's pen from President Carol G.

Luncheon Tidbits: Our Student of the Month:



Sid's mom, Jayshree Modha and Sid, our Student of the Month

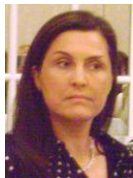
We were all impressed with our student of the month, Sidharth Modha. Sid is a most remarkable young man, with a stratospherically high GPA (4.9148). He is number one out of 787 students in his

class at Danbury High. His guidance counselor described him a young man of unusual ability, totally dedicated to learning, and a delight to have in the school.

When asked to say a few words to the Club, Sid remarked in his characteristically modest way of explaining, "I'm just a kid trying to go to school, do as well as I can, and that is about it."

Congratulations, Sid. You exemplify all that is good in the young people who will be inheriting the future from those of us who have messed up a lot of things in the world.

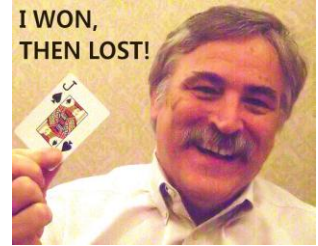
Guests- Heather Sadler, guest of Allison Fulton (left) Susan Almeida and Marnie Tereault, guests of Caryl Lucchesi, (center) and Bill Rasmussen, guest of Marvin Paige, (right).



Dad Rajiv Modha and Barbara Coleman of Danbury High

The Weekly Raffle-

Soon to be a Rotarian, David Santucci, won the small one, but lost the big one. Better luck next time, Dave. Winning too early in the game will spoil you, anyway.



Make-ups:

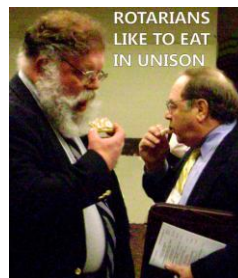
- Mon. 12:15 pm, Norwalk, Norwalk Inn
- Mon. 6:15 pm, Newtown, Inn at Newtown, 19 Main St.
- Mon. 6:00 pm, Brkfld, Mario's Pasta Garden, 174 Federal Rd., Brkfld
- Tues. 12:15 pm, Westport, Inn at Longshore, 260 Compo Rd, So
- Wed. 12:15 pm, Danbury, Ethan Allen Inn
- Wed. 6:00 pm, Ridgefield, Parks and Recreation
- Thurs. 12:15 pm New Canaan, Roger Sherman Inn
- Fri. 12:15 pm, Wilton, Trackside Restr.
- Fri. 7:30 Danbury Sunrise, The Club at WestConn, Westside Campus

Rotary Club of Danbury Officers 2008-09

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|-------------------------|--------------------|
| President | Carol Ann Giannico |
| President- Elect | James Gargan |
| Vice President | Paul Palanzo |
| Secretary | Douglas Mann |
| Treasurer | William Houston |
| Sergeant at Arms | Frank Acquanita |

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|------------------|-----------------|
| Directors | Michael Searing |
| Frank X. Hauser | Caryl Lucchesi |
| Marvin Paige | John Lucchesi |
| Elaine Malgieri | Nels deAlmeida |
| Anita Ragona | Robert Vetter |
| Paula Greenberg | |

Allison Fulton
Spoke Editor: Ralph S. Welsh
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The District Assembly had many photo ops showing how much fellowship existed between our Rotarian colleagues. Here is one such example.



We have kidded Anita Ragona a lot about her "hand talking," but we see that Larry Andrea is a master at it, as well. It makes one wonder how much Italian blood actually flows in Larry's veins.



IT LOOKS THAT WAY--