

The Weekly Newsletter of the
Only Normal Rotary Club in the World
Chartered June 17, 1949



The Normal Spoke

SERVICE ABOVE SELF

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District 6490 Website: <http://rotarydistrict6490.org/> (The District Newsletter is on the left side of the main page)



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December 9, 2020: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Thanks to Alan Chapman for his suggestion to open the ZOOM Room at 11:30 to give the early birds an opportunity to get caught up on what's happening in our Rotary family.

Jack Moody volunteered for the vocation.

President's Welcome:

- It is the 342nd day of 2020.
- In 1868, the first traffic lights were installed outside of Westminster Palace in London. They resembled railway signals and used semaphore arms illuminated by red and green gas lamps.
- 1872, PBS Pinchback became the first African-American governor of Louisiana.
- In 1965, "A Charlie Brown Christmas" by Charles Schultz was aired on CBS.
- In 1967, Jim Morrison was arrested on stage in New Haven, Connecticut, for disturbing the peace.
- And, in 2005, the United Nations designated this date as the International Anti-Corruption Day, stating "Corruption is criminal, immoral and the ultimate betrayal of public trust."
- On this date in 2008, our own Governor Rod Blagojevich was arrested.

Guests: Charlie Schlenker, WGLT

President Fred Hahn thanked Normal Rotarians for their assistance:

Ryan, Larissa and Ann for Navigating and Hosting ZOOM, Larissa for acting as Judge for today's meeting, Larissa for editing The Spoke and Ann for being Spoke Reporter.

Announcements:

- Board Meeting will take place after the general meeting
- Andy Copenhaver provided an update on Poinsettias. Volunteers will meet on Friday, December 11, at 7:30 a.m. at the Chateau to unload plants. Once unloaded and counted, sellers can then deliver. Saturday, December 12, 9 a.m. – noon will be pickup for customers. Volunteers needed. Thank you to everyone who has sold this year, helped.
- Dayna: Coats for Kids: Purchased about \$18,000 in coats thanks to the Normal Rotary Foundation. Also earned about \$500 in Kohls cash which was spent on blankets, sheets, and towels, which are harder to obtain.
- Larissa: Angie Bubon has been admitted to the hospital and will be there until she delivers her twins, which are due in January. She is in OSF in Peoria and would probably appreciate the occasional card. Jack will order a bouquet to send to her from the Club.
- Art: Normal Community High School Interact has been meeting online once a month. They've conducted a Promise Shoes Drive and participated in a global green photography contest. Currently, they're working on card-making for seniors in retirement homes and nursing homes in the area. Dayna adds that Promise Shoes is a program through which used shoes that are still in good condition are donated, cleaned, and distributed to kids in need.

Judge: Larissa

- Remember that you can send your happy fines in with your dues
- Larissa noticed that there seemed to be a lot of festive red in the squares but thought that it seemed a bit mean to find people for their festive clothing. Instead, she opened the floor for happy fines.
- Greg offered a happy fine for the Illini victory the previous night.
- Nancy echoed Greg, noting that some were wearing orange, not red... including Nancy!
- Drake has friend who is a member of two Rotary clubs and asked how many members of Drake's Rotary club have died of COVID. He said three members of his clubs had passed away. This isn't a happy fine, but more a reminder of how lucky we all are.
- Bruce offered a happy fine because he spends two days a week with 18-month-old twin boys who are just starting to walk. He also noted that he was dressed in holiday gear as a lump of coal.

Speaker: Charlie Schlenker, WGLT

Our speaker was Charlie Schlenker with WGLT. He became the News Director for WGLT in 1997 and has been a journalist since 1984. He noted that the media landscape has changed quite a bit due to the pandemic. The new capabilities of working from home are nice. Like many media outlets, they've invested in new equipment that can easily be used from home.

Schlenker offered some further observations about changes in media that have impacted WGLT and similar outlets, including the overcommunication that occurs over social media and online messaging platforms. The consolidation of WGLT and WBCU has been an interesting journey. Bradley has recently continued its license and added a reporter and correspondents to round out their staff. This brings the total staff numbers to four reporters and six correspondents, with some vacant positions due to recent retirements and departures. Running in two markets means that they do have some overlap at times, sometimes running similar stories sometimes working together on stories.

Schlenker also shared some perspectives on "hyperlocalism," the niche that public media agencies like WGLT and WBCU fill. With changes in other media, public media may develop a more regional sense of coverage over time. In print media, starting salaries for a reporter begin around \$25,000, which means that the profession is attracting as many new career-driven journalists, and the models are shifting, with fewer long-serving professionals. Schlenker estimates that he may be the longest-serving journalist in the Bloomington-Normal area, at 29 years. WGLT is adjusting to these new realities by trying to become a more full-service organization, doing more news of the day and not just analysis. Long-time listeners might recognize the growth in government news coverage, debate coverage, and regional influence on establishing more local debates. There has also been some repackaging for social media, which means in some ways WGLT has become a digital media organization with a radio station.

Schlenker ended his presentation with a reminder that the end of the year is a great time to make a gift to WGLT!

Thought for the Day:

"Happiness is a direction, not a place"

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2020-2021

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