

# HOT POTATO

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Rotary Club of Wayland, New York, D7120

Robert Oswald, president

Thomas Quinlan, secretary

## Sheriff York Describes Investigation

The wind had already started to pick up in the forecast windstorm. That did not deter fourteen members and about as many guests, who attended last meeting. The guests were Peter Vogt, Cynthia Oswald, Jim Burns, Pat Schubmehl, Hazel & Mike Hanna, Marilyn Robinson, Joann Smith, Arlene Hazlett, Carol Kimmel, Ellen Stephens, Helen Didas, and of course Sheriff York, the speaker of the evening.

The Miller House had yet another new recipe for us. At least I don't think we have had Chicken Stir-fry there before. It was served over rice, and it was very good. The dessert was outstanding. Vanilla ice cream with raspberries and "granola."

For last week's Rotary Minute, George Smith brought our magazine The Rotarian, of course, and pointed to some very good articles, if you hadn't already seen them.

### Confessions, Happy Bucks

President Bob put himself at the mercy of past president Tom Didas for his five trips to Pennsylvania, visiting his cousin (not uncle, as I mistakenly wrote last week), who had pulled through installation of stents and an automatic defibrillator. He is 88 years old! Cynthia had accompanied him on three of the trips. It wasn't clear how many cases of Birch Beer were smuggled. Tom let him go for a buck, but

Bob added four happy ones himself for his cousin's good outcome.

Sharon Vogt put in a happy one for the attendance, - five tables worth. I also was reminded of what the "Bucket List" was by movie aficionados at our table, so that's what she did last week.

Bob Radell had another anecdote from Springwater. Hilarious, as usual. No fine.

### Announcements

The board meeting will take place next Tuesday instead, so as not to make the evening too long.

### Sheriff York

Art Traphagen had heard the Sheriff's fascinating description of the investigation of the tragic multiple hit and run accident on I390, where a young female student at Geneseo was killed. Fortunately, Art thought about us, and was able to invite the Sheriff to our club. Art's son-in-law, whom we met at the golf tournaments, for example, is a state police investigator on the case, but he was not able to come.

The woman was killed around 6 am after she had been stopped by police near exit 6 (Groveland). For some reason, the patrol car had left before the victim, who is believed to have had a "nature call." Upon returning to her vehicle, it is further

believed that she misjudged the direction of an approaching truck as heading right toward her, an illusion the investigation recreated. She may have panicked and tried to run across the road, where she was hit.

It was a devastating sight, said the Sheriff, and it was soon clear that more than one vehicle was involved. I390 was closed between exits 5 and 7 to allow investigators gather forensic evidence. He brought lots of pictures. Over 200 pieces were collected at the site of the accident, and another 150 around rest stops and places where it was determined suspect vehicles had stopped.

Forensic evidence was only one part of the investigation's success. Old fashioned detective work, like interviews with people who may have traveled there, established three types of suspect vehicles: A semi trailer truck with a Peterbilt tractor (the classic style with all the chromed barrels, - not the 21<sup>st</sup> century Volvo look alike style), a gray SUV (the small stupid looking kind), and a small red car. The truck, pulling a refrigerated trailer, hit the victim first, then the SUV, and last the PT.

The truck had a damaged cross-over fuel line, which the driver had tried to plug with rags and a piece of clothing. The investigation focused on interviewing places, which received frozen food, and

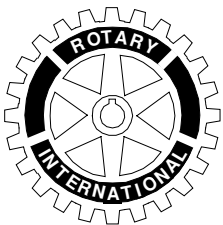
also on places where the truck may have sought repair of the fuel line. It paid off, and a trucker from Chenango county was apprehended, when returning to his home.

One of the passenger car owners was identified when he submitted a deer accident claim. The forensic team took a long look. Even though the car had been washed twice, important evidence was found.

I run out of room, suffice it to say that the Sheriff gave a most interesting program, and a long question and answer session followed. Sheriff York and the half dozen people from his department are to be commended for their great job. The trucker recently faced the grand jury, so there is more to come.



I have another picture, but couldn't resist this one. I expect to be fined.



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