

Rotary Club of Portage Bulletin

Porta-Rota-Call

March 17, 2021

by Paul Ballard

President Matt Semelbauer called the meeting to order at 12:02pm. We recited the Four Way Test and the Pledge of Allegiance. Dick Hewitt gave the invocation.

PROGRAM: Randy Orwig introduced our speaker today – Keli Ekola with the Kalamazoo Wings Hockey organization. Keli wears many hats as the Executive Assistant for both the Business Operations and the Coaching Staff. Her duties involve working with sales staff, special events, groups and reporting stats to the league. The K-Wings stadium is the smallest in the league with a seating capacity of 5,113. The pandemic forced 2019-2020 season to end early on March 20, 2020. The 2020-21 Season was to have started in December 2020 with a reduced capacity of 500 fans. But this was pushed to January and then the season was cancelled. All ticket holders received full refunds. They hope to start the 2021-2022 season on October 23 2021 at 7:30pm against Toledo. The seating capacity for the opener is still unknown.

Her responsibility for the coaches and players keeps her very busy throughout the year. She works with US Immigration to get visas for players coming to the team from other countries. About half of the players come from Canada but recently from Austria and Russia. Four players are from WMU. She sets up housing for team members in the Kalamazoo area (including quarantine quarters when needed). When they go on the road, she arranges the transportation (usually sleeper buses), hotels, daily allowances for around 20 people. Like most of us they have been working every day at home during the pandemic.

The K-wings are a Minor League Affiliate of the Vancouver Canucks. The Canucks can move players back and forth between teams. This can add to the immigration workload. Keli answered a few questions and can be reached at kekola@kwings.com if you have more.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Virtual Auction Update – AJ Smrek reported that the auction proceeds of \$3,700-3,900 were better than expected despite problems at the auction site with displays and bids.
- Gray Meyers and Rafael Wolf explained problems with our online Dacdb service. If you aren't receiving emails, check your "white list". Due to a system change, Gary will not be sending emails each week notifying you that the bulletin has been posted.
- Amazon Smile Link - <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/38-3353675> - Use this link to add Portage Rotary as your chosen non-profit.
- Payments are accepted through PayPal for Rotary items, find a quick link at <http://www.portagerotary.org/>, or use PayPal app - Rotaryclubofportage@gmail.com

- Super Bowl Winnings – in President Matt’s office.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES (through 03/23/21): Wendell Pierce’s birthday is today. President Matt Semelbauer and Rafael Wolf celebrate their Rotary membership anniversaries on the 23rd. Jen Maynard celebrates hers today.

HAPPY BUCKS: - Given by Dick H, Matt S, Bill C, Shirley J, and Mark B. Sergeant-at-Arms Chris Buckley then used St Patrick’s Day trivia to procure bucks from Dick H, Pete M, Tom W, Kim C, Bill C, Ben B, Jose S and Dan M.

Next week’s program: Johnny Agar, TeamAgar – on living with Cerebral Palsy

The meeting was adjourned at 12:59 pm.

Review this Zoon meeting...

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/--hrno-iUjEvYpY2vv3ONoU3suC3IGcfDO72maSFbUUHVnj13UF4oEUY6cEQayfl.ehgIYCFKvBRDanLz> Passcode: K=K2T=Lb



[Facebook link](#)

The Portage Rotary Club provides financial support for youth education, families in need and other local charitable causes. We are part of Rotary International. A service organization of business and professional leaders that provide humanitarian services and help build goodwill and peace in the world