

Presiding: Chooch Salmond

Invocation: Larry Lockhart

Four-Way Test: David Gardner

Music: Provided by John Mineo as part of the belated Valentine's Day celebration.

Announcements:

Jim Gislason announced that the 103rd anniversary of Rotary will be celebrated February 23, 2008, and a grant from the District has been approved for the Vincennes club to give the City of Vincennes to study a Brownfield clean-up near the Rendezvous site. There will be a formal recognition of this grant this Saturday morning but Jim will provide members more details by e-mail.

The Literacy Quiz Bowl is also this Saturday.

50/50 Drawing:

Karen Trotter had the lucky number but did not draw the lucky card. Mark Schleicher won free tickets to the Red Cross Fund Raiser.

Guests:

Student guests from Lincoln: Laine Bailey and Cassie Cleveland. Our other guests were Rotary sweethearts and those associated with the program including Laura and David Bobe, Doug Rose, and Dr. Alan Stewart.

Program:

An abbreviated Valentine's Day program featured John Mineo singing and dancing with Valentine's Day chair Mary Gladys Wheeler. John sang one love song and treated us to his Irish brogue singing some songs which he will sing as part of the upcoming Red Cross Fund Raiser. Thanks to Mary Gladys, her committee, and John for their always excellent Valentine's Day party which included not only the music but lovely decorations and prizes.

Dr. Alan Stewart then spoke about the Middle School Project. Dr. Stewart stated that the successful remonstrance against the earlier building project caused the Vincennes Community School Board and the administration to re-evaluate their plans. They determined that there were certain concerns that had not been properly addressed in the first plan including the total cost, the loss of neighborhood elementary schools, a plan for the eventual use of the historic buildings that were being replaced, and the cost of remodeling compared to building.

He mentioned that after significant study the school board has proposed a project to build a new Middle School on the High School grounds with a maximum cost of \$27.3 million compared to renovation costs of at least 15 million which even the architect doing the estimate indicated would not be money well spent. The new building will have three wings – one for each grade. Dr. Stewart said that interest rates are currently quite low and the construction market is favorable so that their expectation is that bids would come in at or under estimates. This project cuts the costs by half from the earlier project. It keeps the elementary schools with a facilities plan to upgrade a different elementary school every five years. Further, there has been significant interest in the current Clark building for elderly and low income housing and Adams Coliseum also has aroused interest from different entities. Dr. Stewart pointed out the need for the Middle School continues to be there and this is a way to address the concerns that were raised by the previous remonstrance.

Laura Bobe then spoke. Laura and her husband David are the proud parents of six young children, the oldest of whom currently attends the Middle School. She has a son who is handicapped and she spoke eloquently as to his right to a safe and wheelchair accessible school. Laura pointed out the Clark does not and cannot meet ADA requirements. She also spoke about the need for top rate facilities for science labs and other improvements to help challenge and inspire her children and those other children in the community.

Lastly, Superintendent Rose spoke. As had Dr. Stewart, he pointed out the concerns raised during the first building project had all been addressed. Superintendent Rose spoke passionately about the need of this school project for the future of our community and its young people.

Rotary thanks Dr. Stewart, Superintendent Rose, and Laura Bobe for their educational and inspiring presentation.