

Calendar of Events

Last Week: 10/05 Alex Capo – The Charlton School
This Week: 10/19 Angie Silipigno – Exec. Director, Ballsfest
Next Week: 10/26 Bridget Simpson – Swimming Lake George
Coming Up: 11/02 Alice Marcus/Lon Pena – Amazing Alice's Story
11/16 Mike Saccoci – City Mission

Note: Regular ZOOM meetings are held Monday Evenings at 6:00 pm.
Check your e-mail for ID# and Password, as well as the phone number
you can use to phone in if using your cell phone to participate.

Please give suggestions for future programs to Dan Stec

Find us at bhbrotary.org and on Facebook

"Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves".

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The meeting opened with **"The Five Way Test."**
- Mary reported 13 Rotarians and 2 Interact members, and 2 Friends of Rotary worked Saturday to clean the Town in Bloom Gardens and put down compost in preparation for next year.
- Gini and Mary reported meeting with Nancy Matson at the Saratoga Nursing Center in Ballston Spa, Mary delivered the small gifts made by Marie Mosier.
- Gini established the Care-Card Giving Project.
- Mary reported that Mike has removed unwanted bushes at the Captain sign. Plans are being developed to work together on beautifying that sign using TIB money. The Executive Director is available for a program presentation.
- **Books for Troops** – Steve C and Rey discussed the potential for an ongoing project. The local Books for Troops project is ending, and help is needed to box and send books they have collected. See Steve for more information.
- **Annual Tree Lighting** – Tuesday, Dec. 1. Mike is working with the BPA and Friends of the Library to develop a plan for Santa to be seen by kids.
- Gregg is sending an email about nominations for the next District Governor.
- Gregg announced a holiday gift project being done by the Niskayuna Rotary.
- Gregg announced the need for donations of winter coats to the City Mission.
- Silas offered his business as the drop off place for donations.
- **Happy Dollars** – Much happiness was shared with Mike's leadership.

Baller Dream Foundation

Angie Silipigno

Greg introduced our speaker, Angie Silipigno, Executive Director of the Baller Dream Foundation. The Baller Dream Foundation is a nonprofit organization that lifts the spirits of children and young adults and their families battling cancer. Those they serve, they do not call them patients or beneficiaries, they are called the "ballers". This modern-day term suggests one is doing well, feeling well, and in control, "Ballers" are incredibly resilient, courageous, and deserving of recognition. The Baller Foundation works very closely with many children's hospitals across the country by providing all sorts of major gifts, experiences, and activities.

The Foundation was founded by a young man who was diagnosed with testicular cancer at the age of 29. He learned that he was fortunate to have a wonderful network of family, friends, co-workers. In recognizing this is not the case for others battling the disease, he established this unique nonprofit foundation to provide unique support for these children and their families. Angie Silipigno is the New York Executive Director, joining the Foundation in 2018. Prior to this, she spent 15 years as a Certified Child Life Specialist at the Kravis Children's Hospital at Mount Sinai and the Melodies Center for Childhood Cancer at Albany Med. She graduated from SUNYA and St Rose. She lives with her family in Halfmoon.

Angie shared many activities and events that showed the success of the Foundation programs. Distraction and Diversion is a program which provides arts and crafts projects to help Ballers feel more normal. It also gives the parents a little free time to share and talk with others in the same situation thus gaining needed support. During the Holidays special activities are created such as Thanksgiving bags containing all the things for a dinner except the turkey. Children are given a chance to select gifts in the Holiday Shop free for their families. Attention is paid and financial support given to families with special needs.

The Foundation works with other foundations and sources to create unique experiences for Ballers built on getting to know the child and family well. Angie showed examples of such trips and experiences. Each was very special for the individual. Often, extra help was found and provided to make the trip happen. I think all who heard this talk were very impressed with the value and compassion accomplished. To learn more <https://ballerdream.org>.

Reported by Mary Anderson