



Waunakee Rotary Club

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Katie Kennedy Shepherd's career in business, politics and marketing has taken her from her home state of Wisconsin, to Washington, D.C., New York, San Francisco, then back to Waunakee, where she was born and raised.

Katie shared her life experiences with the Rotary Club during her classification talk Dec. 10.

After graduating from UW-Madison, Katie interned with Scott Klug. She, with an intern of Russ Feingold's, decided to restart UW-Madison's daily newspaper, the Daily Cardinal.

"It was an important learning tool for journalism students," Katie said. It was also a defining moment in that it taught her how to run a business, she added.

The experience led her back to Washington, D.C., this time to work as a staffer for Congressman Klug. She also worked on her MBA at George Washington University, and when her gig with Klug was over, attended a business program at Northwestern University that included publishing.

Her publishing career took her to New York City, but she was lured to Silicon Valley in 1999 and worked for a high-tech branding and public relations firm.

"We created executive platforms for senior executives," Katie said.

Katie said she put in 16-hour days but added, "You worked hard and you played hard out there."

She found herself traveling back and forth to Madison in the summers for weddings, and eventually gravitated back when she landed a job working on Lt. Gov. Margaret Farrow's campaign.

Though Scott McCallum lost his bid for re-election, the outcome was

better for Katie: Through the campaign she met her future husband, Jeremy Shepherd, who was working for McCallum.

Katie now owns her own public relations firm, Boomtown Communications, and has a diverse set of clients such as the Madison Children's Museum, Children's Theater of Madison and Michael F. Simon Builders.

She is also member of Ad2 Madison, a young professionals group that also does pro bono work.

Public service continues to be a focus, and that's one of the reasons Katie joined Rotary, she said.

Katie's life has come full circle. She now lives on the street she grew up on, in the home that once belonged to her grandparents, Bernard and Louise Kennedy.

She and Jeremy, a lobbyist with the Wisconsin Bankers Association, have one child, Sophie, 2, and another on the way.

Other news:

- Ben Ballweg attended the meeting to invite Rotarians to help build a house in Haiti at the end of March.

- Jim Tubbs announced that the Waunakee Community Foundation's benefit hypnotist show will be Feb. 20. Jim and Ken Ballweg have tickets. They make good stocking stuffers.

- Tom Reis said the Rotary Lights fund-raiser is going well. One visitor during the Dec. 8 snowstorm donated a \$100 bill. But Tom emphasized the need for a good crew to tear down on Jan. 2.

- The club is adopting a family through the Waunakee Neighborhood Connection. A list is

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Calendar of Events:

- Dec. 17, Christmas party at Rex's
- Feb. 5-7, Winter weekend for Rotary Exchange students
- Feb. 7, Super Bowl
- Feb. 20, Hypnotist show benefit for Waunakee Community Foundation

available of presents club members can purchase for the family, and the unwrapped presents can be brought to the Jan. 17 Christmas party. The club will also auction off wrapped Christmas presents at this party.

Guests: Chelsea Gilbertson, guest of Paul Gilbertson; Steve Hanson, guest of Jeremiah Gollon; Ben Ballweg, guest of Ken Ballweg; Tom Fendrick, guest of Shelley Moffett.

Visiting Rotarians: Tom Fendrick, Stoughton.

Birthdays: None.

Anniversaries: Dec. 23, Paul and Chris Gilbertson

Prayers: Dec. 17, Pat Durden; Dec. 24, Christmas Eve, no meeting; Dec. 31, Susan Vergeront.

Programs: Dec. 17, Christmas Carols at Waunakee Manor; Dec. 24, Christmas Eve, no meeting; Dec. 31, social meeting, New Year's Eve.

Greeters: Dec. 17, Susan Hedrick and Travis Heiser; Dec. 24, Christmas eve, no meeting; Dec. 31, Bob Hoskins and Jonathon Jordan.