



THE CHARM



Rotary Club of Hamden, Club 6732, District 7980, PO Box 185304 Hamden, CT 06518
Webpage: www.HamdenCTrotary.org

John Kenny
Rotary International
President

Colin Gershon
District 7980 Governor

Paul Mangels
Assistant District
Governor

John Karavas
Rotary Club of Hamden
President

Volume 72, Number 11

December 21, 2009

President's Corner



When I think of this time of the year, I think of Christmas and the many memories that rise to the surface fashioned from the time I was a young boy to now.

I don't think that there is another time of the year that gives birth to more memories. I remember the times when my mother or dad would call out behind their bedroom door starting at age four, "Get back into bed. It's only three o'clock." Or walking into the living room of our four room house to see presents spilling out from the Christmas tree to the very tips of my toes. Or the year when I was in the USAF and had to celebrate the day alone with only a cheeseburger as my Christmas dinner. A lot of memories.

As years passed and my world expanded, Christmas became shared with Chanukah-a holiday celebrated with very similar festivities through the giving and receiving of gifts, holiday decorations adorning a home and the enjoyment of friends and family.

For my Jewish friends, they too have memories cluttering their lifetime.

Then came Kwanzaa, a unique African American celebration with a focus on the traditional African values of family, community responsibility, commerce and self-improvement. A holiday born in the 1960's, not as a replacement for Christmas, but intended to be a time of reaffirming African-American people, their ancestors, values and culture. As someone who passed through that decade, the birth of Kwanzaa was a celebration whose time had come.

All three of these holidays commemorate the very same things-the gift of giving, a focus on family and community and the celebration of life both present and past.

I want to wish each and every member of the Rotary Club of Hamden and, indeed, the entire Hamden community, a very Merry Christmas, a Happy Chanukah, and an incredibly happy Kwanzaa! May your memories consist of gifts spilling from your tree to your toes; but if it is a cheeseburger on your plate, may it be the very best cheeseburger you ever ate!

John Karavas

