

Rotary Club of DeWitt

PO Box 131 · Dewitt, NY 13214

Established 1954



Monday, January 23, 2012

Volume: LVIII, No. 24

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, January 30,

12 pm: *Matt Episcopo:*
interviewing and entertainment

President Gay Pomeroy opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and an invocation by Holly Wallace. The apparent lack of singing the *Star Spangled Banner* soon became apparent



as Judge Schultz gave an interesting account of the writing of our National Anthem. The lyrics come from "Defence of Fort McHenry",^[1] a poem written in 1814 by the 35-year-old lawyer and amateur poet, Francis Scott Key, after witnessing the bombardment of Fort McHenry by the British Royal Navy ships in Chesapeake Bay during the Battle of Fort McHenry in the War of 1812.

The poem was set to the tune of a popular British song written by John Stafford Smith for the Anacreontic Society, a men's social club in London. "The

Anacreontic Song" (or "To Anacreon in Heaven"), with various lyrics, was already popular in the United States. Set to Key's poem and renamed "The Star-Spangled Banner", it would soon become a well-known American patriotic song. With a range of one and a half octaves, it is known for being difficult to sing. Although the song has four stanzas, only the first is commonly sung today, with the fourth ("O! thus be it ever when free men shall stand...") added on more formal occasions.^[2] The fourth stanza includes the line "And this be our motto: In God is our Trust".^[3] The United States adopted "In God We Trust" as its national motto in 1956.

"The Star-Spangled Banner" was recognized for official use by the Navy in 1889, and by President Woodrow Wilson in 1916, and was made the national anthem by a congressional resolution on March 3, 1931 (46 Stat. 1508, codified at 36 U.S.C. § 301), which was signed by President Herbert Hoover.



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Before 1931, other songs served as the hymns of American officialdom. "Hail, Columbia" served this purpose at official functions for most of the 19th century. "My Country, 'Tis of Thee", whose melody is identical to the British national anthem,^[4] also served as a *de facto* anthem before the adoption of "The Star-Spangled Banner".^[5] Following the War of 1812 and subsequent American wars, other songs would emerge to compete for popularity at public events, among them "The Star-Spangled Banner".

With this knowledge in hand, we then sang the anthem with new vigor, our voices soaring.

VISITORS AND GUESTS were introduced by Larry Schunck: David Maynes, Bud Curry, John Zych and Bud Poliquin, our speaker.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Monday, March 12th will be our Irish Night and final evening meeting of President Pomeroy's tenure in office.
- New members Mike Cadin and John Storey were officially inducted into the club.

PROGRAM

Almost needing no introduction, Post Standard sports columnist Bud Poliquin was introduced as our speaker. An informative and talented speaker, Bud regaled us with stories about the current sports environment in Syracuse. Following his talk, he entertained questions from the members.



The winner of the **50:50** was Major George Polarek.

The meeting was adjourned with a recitation of the 4 way test.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Miller