

The Roundtable

***Published on Gray, Foggy Mornings by the
Bangor Area Rotary Club Breakfast***

www.bangorbreakfastrotary.org

June 27, 2019

Out of Uniform. Now What?

Military personnel, whose lives have been governed, regulated and in which they created strong bonding that includes life-saving trust, returning to the civilian world can be very difficult.

“Within six years of getting out, veterans experience a high rate of suicide and divorce.” Susan Slick, who served twelve years in the Air Force Guard and Reserves, spoke at the morning meeting. She addresses mental health issues with veterans in her membership on the Bangor Chapter of the Maine Military Community Network Committee and the central Maine chapter of Team Red, White and Blue. She currently works as Director of Community Care Services at Northern Light Acadia Healthcare.

She strongly advised employers to read veterans’ resumes carefully. “We learn fast!” she said. “I was an 18-year-old joining the Air Force (her father is a 40-year Army veteran). I didn’t know anything right out of high school. How would you like to refuel jets in flight? I was asked. I didn’t know anything about refueling jets, but I learned!”

She worked in a team on KC-135’s, refueling small, medium and large planes in flight. She worked stateside and for nine years in overseas deployments.

Ms. Slick experienced the difficulty and grief of transitioning from the military environment to the civilian sector.

“Yes, there is grief. If you notice a veteran demonstrating grieving, try to talk with them or find a mentor with whom they can work,” she said. Ms. Slick praised her mentor for the help she received when she and her family chose to come to Bangor. “Have the conversation with an ex-military person. Tell them ‘Don’t give up.’”

A helpful experience for military-to-civilian job seekers is to have enrolled in the Professional Military Academy, a course designed to integrate members from across all branches of service into a unified force. The course is



designed to expose enlisted personnel to joint education and prepare them to succeed by improving their ability to operate effectively as part of a future joint force and supervise multiple service members.

The academy can help translating the military work experience into more easily understandable civilian terms, especially when matching a military occupational specialty with its civilian counterpart.

Spouses can suffer. Because of frequent changes in assignments, spouses often have to take entry-level job positions. New posting=new entry level position, until there are few opportunities to get traction in a career of their own.

Ms. Slick mentioned tax credits for employers of veterans. She urged creation of jobs for vets.

June's Swan Song

President June Kontio opened and closed her last meeting today of her term in office. Your editor got to thinking about “swan song,” and found this: The swan song is a metaphorical phrase for a final gesture, effort, or performance given just



before death or retirement. The phrase refers to an ancient belief that swans sing a beautiful song just before their death, having been silent (or alternatively, not so musical) during most of their lifetime. This belief, whose basis in actuality is long-debated, had become proverbial in ancient Greece by the 3rd century BC and was reiterated many times in later Western poetry and art.

June did not sing. **Lisa Wahlstrom** and **Les Myers** did, however, for the birthdays of **Jeff Plourde** and **Karen Schaller**. Karen announced that attendance at make-up meetings can be applied anytime during the year, not just for three months. She mentioned also that dues are, well, due. She has only a few days to report our membership numbers to the District.

Belated Roundtable congratulations to **Ken Huhn**, this year's Paul Harris Fellow. He mentioned the secretive calls to his home by members of the committee. Ken's sons wondered what he had done wrong. Our club sponsored one of Ken's sons in the Soap Box Derby years ago.

Ken Kimball had a brush- literally – on a bicycle run when a tree fell very close. He did get hit, and received treatment at a hospital. Some surgery remains to be done on his shoulder.

Lisa Wahlstrom attended a wedding in Boothbay Harbor last week. “Iffy” weather was timed so that the outside ceremony remained dry, but a deluge fell just after the attendees moved indoors for the reception.

Karen Schaller extolled the beauty of Assateague Island, Maryland where she and Curt traveled last week. She told of the wild ponies.

Our Rockin' Rock reporter, **David Zelz**, saw and heard Phish. He said a man came from Los Angeles to hear the group. It was his 60th time to hear Phish.

Les Myers- June 27, 2019



A management discussion on the best way to correct employees' behavior.
Pudge Harrison, Susan Slick



Pudge works the room, greeting Dr. Gaston To'olo

No meeting next week!