



August 5, 2014



Devlin McNeil **Community School of the Arts**

Denise Hallett introduced Devlin McNeil, President and Executive Director of the Community School of the Arts (CSA) since June of 2013. Devlin leads CSA in realizing the objectives defined in the organization's strategic plan.

She received her BFA from UNCC, and is a candidate for the Master of Arts in Arts Administration (MAAA) program at Winthrop University. Since her graduation in December 2002, she has worked for the McColl Center for Visual Arts, and spent 10 months working with the Public Art Program of the Charlotte Area Transit System. Other accomplishments include being a presenter at the NC Arts Education Conference; a panelist for the United Arts Council of Greater Greensboro; juror for multiple arts competitions, including UNC Charlotte, and an association with the Metrolina Business and Professional Women's Organization.

Devlin was attracted to CSA in large part because of its strong Mission and Vision Statements, and by the importance of CSA in improving our region's quality of life. She continues to be impressed with the large number of people who have long term relationships with the school. After presenting the History of CSA, founded in 1969 by Henry Bridges in the First Presbyterian Church, she provided an overview of the school's programs.

These programs serve almost 4,000 students each year through: Summer camps; Family workshops; Partnerships with Discovery Place, the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, and other arts organizations; their Arts Reach Program that serves some 400 students in various at-risk elementary schools and community centers; the Preschool Arts Lab, a 20-year old preschool literacy and arts program that helps establish school readiness; and Orchestras in Schools, founded 2003 when music instruction was deleted from CMS elementary programs. OIS serves over 60 students per year at three at-risk elementary schools. They receive free 45-minute group violin lessons before school twice each week; along with loaner violins for each student and two concerts per year that give all the students the opportunity to perform together. Visit CSA's website at www.csarts.org for more details.

Devlin then asked why all of this was important. The answer is that arts education impacts developmental growth, and levels the playing field for children across socio-economic boundaries. Art studies are shown to have a measurable impact on at-risk youth in deterring delinquent behavior and truancy problems, and increasing academic performance. Arts teach children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships. While in many subjects facts and rules are most important, in the arts it is judgment that prevails. Art studies help students develop confidence in their abilities and "learn how to learn," skills which transfer to their school work and help them to avoid a wide range of problems in middle and high school. Arts education teaches children the 'Cycle of Achievement;' set goals, work toward those goals, and as they are reached, set new and higher goals.

According to 'Americans for the Arts' (a nonprofit arts advocacy group) students who regularly participate in arts programs are 4 times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement and to participate in a math or science fair, and three times more likely to be elected to class office, than students who do not.

A study of the Community Youth Symphony in San Diego showed decreased classroom disruption, and improved motivation, behavior and attendance among those studying an instrument. Other studies reported that those not participating in music studies showed a decline in reading skills between the second and third grades, something not evidenced in students of art and music.

Arts education teaches children the skills that they need to be successful in the 21st century workforce--innovation, imagination, critical thinking and collaboration.

Art means business. Spending by arts organizations and event-related spending by their audiences totals some \$2.4 million per year in Mecklenburg County. This supports 6,240 full-time equivalent jobs, generates \$144 million in local household income, and provides \$18 million of government revenue.

Support of the arts not only enhances our quality of life, but also adds to our economic well-being. An area's vibrant cultural life helps to attract desirable employees and clients for businesses; and arts education helps to build a climate of high expectations, discipline, and academic rigor attractive to companies locating to the area.

Moving to a new initiative, Devlin noted that during its 45-year history, the school failed to keep (lost?) information on its students, programs, or faculty. They are now engaged in researching CSA's history and acquiring data, particularly on its alumni, so that they can determine and demonstrate the impact of their programs. They hope to have this project largely complete by their 50th anniversary. Devlin concluded her remarks by stating that the Community School of the Arts, one of the largest providers of music and art instruction in the southeast, is committed to nurturing the next generation of competent, creative children.

The program closed with an impressive violin performance by one of those children, Jirah Montgomery, an 8th grader who attends Northwest School of the Arts. She is a member of the CMS Middle School Honors Orchestra and the Western Regional School Honors Orchestra, and is a member of her high school orchestra in addition to the middle school orchestra. Jirah is a graduate of the Orchestras in Schools program discussed above. She played two pieces, and was rewarded with a standing ovation by our Club.

Written by: Rick Handford

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Head Table: Mary Rinehart, David Head, Tony Zeiss, Denise Hallett, Mac McCarley; Invocation: John Snyder; Visitors & Guests: Steve Eanes, Health, Happiness & History: Martin Waters; AV: Jessica **Dupree** & Nikki Keith; Photos: Bert Voswinkel

Club News

Karen Price has joined Shiel Sexton Company as director of community relations; **Will Barnhardt** received his 50 year Gold Card from the Boy Scouts of America; **Gene Bratek** has been named Head of School at Davidson Day School.

Roster Updates: Charlotte Dilworth SouthEnd Rotary meets at the Dilworth Neighborhood Grille, 911 E. Morehead (Friday's – 12:15); Email changes: Karen Price kprice@shielsexton.com; Art Ringwald adringwald@gmail.com. Let me know of other changes and I will post in the newsletter.

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS (8/12/14 – 8/18/14)

08/12 Ben Dobson
08/17 Paul Schmidt

UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES (8/12/14 – 8/18/14)

08/16 Penny & Scott Hefner; Frannie & Frank Martin
08/17 Mary & Mason Alexander
08/18 Norva & Ed Pickett

ATTENDANCE

Visitors & Guests	18
Club Members	152
Total Attendance	170
Percentage	54.4%

MEMBERSHIP

08/05/2014	318
07/01/2014	317
Net Increase:	+1
New Members:	Omar Kazzaz
Resignations:	

UPCOMING LUNCHEONS (www.charlotterotary.org and click on the events tab)

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Photos from the Luncheon





Photos from our luncheons and other events can be found on [Flickr](#) [Click here](#)



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