



THE ODESSA FILE

PRESENTED BY: CHARLIE HAEFFNER

HOSTED BY: STEWART MCDIVITT

Meeting Date: May 3, 2018 –

Charlie Haeffner was born in Auburn, NY, which Charlie notes is known as the birthplace of the electric chair. His dad, a successful travelling salesman and mother moved to MI when Charlie was young and he grew up in Bloomfield, MI. He attended Albion College where he found a passion for journalism. Charlie signed up for the elective and though he and the professor didn't hit it off right away, the teacher later became a mentor.

Charlie wrote for Pontiac Press in MI, now known as Oakland Press. He married, but the marriage later ended and he met his second wife, Susan. In 1980 he and Susan moved to Schuyler County and purchased a house in Odessa. He started working for the Star-Gazette and spent some time in Washington DC through a sister company. He took a leave from journalism, writing a number of books, some of which Charlie passed around to view.

When he decided to return to newswriting, he considered starting his own newspaper, but there was competition in a small town and the costs for publications was steep. His youngest son suggested an online paper and Charlie was stunned by the simplicity of the solution. That's how The Odessa File was started – with a focus on covering youth sports in Odessa. Charlie sent out press releases to get a boost in traffic to his website. He taught himself sports photography and recalled when a highschool athlete made a great play and immediately ran to Charlie on the sidelines to ask, "Did you get it?"



Charlie has stayed in touch with some of the local kids he got to know through his work with The Odessa File, including Jenny Thomason, who refers to him as "Uncle Charlie" and even gave him a seat at the family table at her wedding.

Charlie's sports coverage led to an Athlete of the Week recognition and with the help of friend, Chet – Top Drawer 24, a coveted honor for the top students among 10 schools in our area. Students are reviewed for their academics, athletics, and citizenship and only 2 dozen students receive the honor.

Charlie estimates The Odessa File gets about 20,000 visits a week and he continues to cover school sports and functions, school board meetings, local events, and news pertinent to our County. And when he's not busy Charlie is escaping to an island in Michigan – where we can expect he'll be this summer. He is also a proud father to three sons and grandfather to a little girl.

NEXT MEETING: MAY 17

PROGRAM: AIM Independent Living Center

SPEAKER: Derrick Ek

HOST: Meredith Williams

GREETER: John King

**MEETING THURSDAY, 12:10 PM AT WATKINS GLEN ELKS LODGE • WATKINS GLEN, NY
FOR MEMBERSHIP LIST AND MEETING MAKEUP LOCATIONS VISIT WATKINSMONTOURROTARY.COM**

NEWS FROM MAY 3

GUESTS: Ted Peet, Guest of Doug Hagin

RAFFLE WINNER: Nancy Peters (Pulled the Joker for a \$166 win!)

AUCTION: A bottle of Schooner Red wine won by Jim Howell! **MAY:** Don Franzese, Glenda Gephart, Rich Greenberger

FUNDRAISING:

DREAM RAFFLE FUNDRAISER: Tickets are \$10 each or 3 for \$25. Members are encouraged to sell tickets. They can also be purchased at the Watkins Glen and Montour Falls Chemung Canal branches and Watkins Sporting Goods. Winning ticket will be drawn at Ribs & Reisling event on May 24 at Seneca Lodge.

SENECA LAKE FOOD & WINE AT CLUTE PARK: Don Stocum is leading Rotary volunteers at this annual event. Volunteers are needed for the Wine Check – collecting purchases at winery booths and returning to the pavilion. Volunteers receive a ticket to the day's event for either the morning or afternoon. See Don to sign up. The Club will receive a donation for assisting.

RIBS & REISLING EVENT: The event is May 24 at Seneca Lodge. Members should have received invitations in the mail. Proceeds from the event will support literacy programs at Montour Falls library. Tickets are \$50 each and include food and wine tastings.

CHICKEN BBQ: Our newest event, Chicken BBQ, will be held June 2 in front of Visions in Watkins Glen. Looking for help, baked goods for the bake sale, and please come for chicken dinners!

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ROTARIAN PASSING: Sad news – Our Fellow Rotarian, Ginny Eaton passed away on May 2.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE: Bridgette Stewart and Nancy Loughlin will be attending the District Conference. Thank you to members who donated items for the gift basket.

MEMBERSHIP: Anticipating finishing the year, into double digits for new members.

PROPOSED NEW MEMBERS:

Louis Perrazzini proposed by Dena Carrigan; **Erin Thaete** proposed by **Rich Greenberger**; **John Franzese** proposed by Dominick Franzese; **Ted Peet** proposed by Doug Hagin; **Keith Caslin** proposed by Jim & Kristine Somerville

MAKEUPS:

Nancy Peters made up a meeting in Tennessee

THOSE WE MISSED:

Duke Argetsinger, Rebekah Carroll, Judy Cherry, Linda Confer, Beth DeCaro, Jim Guild, Dean Hillyard, Brian Kenney, Judy Keough, Mike Learn, Nancy Loughlin, Gary Mead, Dennis Morris, Kevin Murphy, Emily Peckham, James Preston, Nancy Ruda, Jeff Schultz, Kristine Somerville, Lindsay Wickham, Nan Woodworth, Ken Bell, Jim Chedzoy, Tom Clifford, Dave Ryan, Dave Sidle

CELEBRATIONS AND CONFESSIONS:

Our Sergeant at Arms, Jim Howell, imposed a fine for not attending the Schuyler County Business Park groundbreaking ceremony...

Rich Greenberger: A Veteran and his family will be living in the home in Burdett. Thanks to all who responded to the email request for donations. Will end term as President in 6 weeks.

Michel Ray: Going on vacation, Missed meeting

Michelle Benjamin: Missed meeting, Late to meeting

Matt Hayden: Purchased a boat!

Jim Bacalles: Son getting married on May 19

Meredith Williams: Missed meeting, going on vacation, did attend groundbreaking ceremony

Dena Carrigan: Missed meeting, Not at groundbreaking ceremony

John King: Not at groundbreaking ceremony

JC Argetsinger: Not at groundbreaking ceremony

Judy Phillips: Not at groundbreaking ceremony

Jennifer Sweet: Missed meeting, 4H Carnival on May 5

Stan Beaver: Missed meeting, didn't attend groundbreaking but deserves a break for mowing the lawn for 12 years!

Fred Hall: Not attending groundbreaking ceremony

Don Stocum: Late to meeting, Not attending groundbreaking ceremony, Celebrating mother's birthday at Yankee Stadium

Glenda Gephart: Missed meeting, appeared on TV Show – Travels with Daryl; Celebrating 40 Year anniversary moving to Schuyler County.

Charlie Haeffner: For appearance on TV at groundbreaking ceremony

Tony Fraboni: Missed meeting, not attending groundbreaking ceremony

Nancy Peters: Missed meeting, not attending groundbreaking ceremony

Doug Hagin: Missed meeting

Ted Peet: Considering joining Rotary

FOUNDATION MINUTE FOR WEEK OF MAY 7 FROM ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

The Rotary Club of Leogane, Haiti, brought electricity to the Respire Haiti Christian School in Gressier – and with it, education for children and adults. The school serves 500 orphans, disadvantaged children, and restavecs (child domestic servants). For a long time, its six buildings had no electrical power, forcing teachers to rely on the sun as their primary light source and preventing the school from offering evening classes to address the community's high adult illiteracy rate.

Using funds from a Rotary global grant, the Leogane club and its international partner, the Rotary Club of Parker, Colorado, installed a hybrid energy system, featuring locally sourced solar panels, to power lights, computers, and even the school's water pump. Teachers received training in adult literacy instruction so the school could offer evening reading and writing classes in Creole and French. Now both young students and adult learners are receiving the education they deserve.

Your contribution to The Rotary Foundation enables this to happen. Thank you for your support.