

BECON
2/18/22

Guests were a plenty this morning at breakfast, which BTW, was held at a potential new spot for us in Metra. That being around the corner to the west from the Metra Café in a walled off area that is much larger. They did not provide carpet for us as promised, which would help with the cavernous echo, but we did have significantly more room.

Guests

- Youth of the Year guests included Mia Hansen and her parents Tricia and Pat; Christian Kay and his dad Josh; Cassandra Ball and her mom Patricia; and Mia Wohlgenant and her dad Dan.
- Leif also had guest Desiree Bond.
- And I believe new member Alexander Clark had guests Piper Skilley-Robison, Chelsey Wiley and Karla Burgeles.

Announcements

- Wiley reminded us of the bowling social to be held tomorrow at the Town and Country Lanes in Huntley. 3 pm start and there are still a few spots left if interested.
- There are 3 events at Metra in March that will go on the website for signup including the Home Show (3/5); an Outlaws football game (3/24); and Jeff Dunham on 3/23.

Speakers

For those new to the club, Exchange provides scholarships for local high school students via our Youth of the Month program application and essays with the local winner advancing to the Youth of the Year competition held at the Exchange Club National Convention. Overall winners have the chance to win a \$15,000 scholarship. BEC has hosted several schools over the years with Billings Central students presenting this month. This year, all essays will be based on how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced and changed their lives.

The speeches the students present to us are not graded or scored but rather a way for us to get to know them better. These speeches are based on a set of 7 topics that are the same each year.

Mia Wohlgenant spoke to what she believes to be the number one issue facing teens - anxiety and depression – and how COVID seemed to increase this mental health issue. She stressed that teens need to have someone to speak to about their problems – most likely friends. Mia is involved in many things outside of school including gymnastics and work and hopes to study pre-physical therapy at a MT college after graduating.

Mya Hanser, who is quite an accomplished athlete and has committed to playing basketball for Butler University after high school, not surprisingly spoke to us about whether professional athletes should be expected to be role models. Mya believes that any athlete in the public eye – at any level – can and does influence the behavior of onlookers, good or bad. As such, these athletes have an obligation to behave appropriately.

Cassandra Ball discussed the impact COVID has had on her life and how being secluded was so hard. Between masking requirements being the new normal and the loss of taste and smell she experienced, it was funny to hear how excited a high school student was about the opportunity to attend in-person classes again reaffirming how important the social aspects of life are. Cassandra, also a gymnast and worker will study pre-med at Carrol College next year.

Christian Kay spoke to us about leadership and the traits needed for successful leadership. Through the leadership he has provided as captain of the swim team and through his research of Bill Gates and other industry leaders, he concluded that successful leadership is driven by the members of the team and that the leader must empower all of its members. Christian would like to study a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) curriculum at college but hasn't yet decided on where he will attend.

Have a great weekend!