



**Waunakee
Rotary
Club**

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As Attorney General, J.B. Van Hollen is working to restore integrity to the Department of Justice and to prosecute cases according only to the guidelines of the law rather than based on personal philosophy or policies.

"It's hard to run on a partisan ticket and then not run the department in a partisan way," Van Hollen told members of the Waunakee Rotary Club at the May 22 meeting.

In the past, some lawsuits were not defended because the Attorney General did not like the defense, he said.

Van Hollen was elected to office in the November 2006 election. He had served as district attorney, and said his background prepared him for the position, he said.

His goal is to focus lawsuits on the law, not on a specific philosophy, and in doing so, he hopes to free up resources to fight crime, he said.

He runs his office efficiently and has been able to return \$600,000 back to the state coffers – funds that came out of waste, not from positions, he said. That \$600,000 had been earmarked for training several years ago, he added.

While the state cannot take over for local law enforcement, it can enable local law offers to do their jobs better, Van Hollen added.

Training programs can assist in investigations of homicides, and resources can be spread out to local law enforcement officers, he said.

For instance, the backlog in the crime labs was at a crisis level, he said. Van Hollen's office approached the state legislature and asked for half of the resources he believed were needed – only half because of the current budget crisis.

The Department of Justice received 30 new DNA crime analysts, and since Van Hollen took office, productivity has increased by 57 percent, he

said.

"We do what we need to do to help local law enforcement with less money," Van Hollen said.

Some of the areas the Department of Justice helps with are processing Internet sex predators and deporting illegal immigrants who are the worst offenders, Van Hollen noted.

Van Hollen said there are tens of thousands of Internet predators in Wisconsin, alone.

And he said the Department of Justice is partnering with immigration and customs to help local law enforcement deport illegal immigrants.

The Department of Justice is also working on an elections integrity initiative.

"I think we've been able to accomplish a lot," Van Hollen said. "We run a tight ship. I will continue to function in that capacity as long as I can to keep the ball rolling. When I can't keep the ball rolling forward, I'll move on."

One Rotarian asked Van Hollen if having three open murder cases in Madison was unusual.

Van Hollen noted that the press seems to focus more attention on unsolved cases.

"I believe that these three homicides, they're not going to remain unsolved," Van Hollen said.

Solving such cases takes time, as law enforcement must work diligently and deliberately, he added.

Asked if Wisconsin's drunk driving laws were too lax, Van Hollen said often the same people demanding stiffer laws also complain that prison costs are too high.

Society has to decide how it wants its tax dollars spent, Van Hollen said. He noted that the drunk driving problem in Wisconsin is linked more to the culture than to the type of penalties, and it will take a long time for the culture to change.

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Asked if he will run for governor, Van Hollen noted that AG does not stand for "Aspiring Governor" but for Attorney General.

"I did not run for Attorney General under these auspices," he said.

Other news:

•President Lynne Spielman announced that the club had awarded \$1,000 scholarships to four Waunakee High School graduating seniors, Elizabeth Secrist, Melanie Walker, Abby Walker and Janelle Oberle.

•Lynne also informed the club that Monsignor Jim Kramer had died May 19.

Guests: Lily King, guest of Neil King; Jordan Johnson, guest of Phil Willems.

Birthdays: None.

Anniversaries: May 30, Phil and Betty Willems.

Prayers: May 29; Susan Vergeront; June 5, Leonard Allen; June 12. Kim Wilde.

Programs: May 29, Randy Sproule, Polio Plus Challenge; June 5, Club Assembly.

Greeters: May 29, Peggy Acker-Farber and Leonard Allen; June 5, Bob Arntz, Ken Ballweg; June 12, Ron Ballweg, Roberta Baumann.

**Make up
meetings online**

It's easy to make up a meeting on the Internet. The site is www.rotaryclubone.org. Print out the form and give it to Phil Willems, the club secretary.