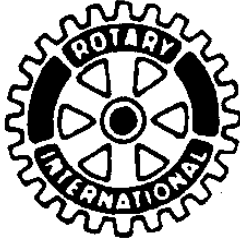


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Waunakee Rotary Club

Feb. 16, 2006
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At the Feb. 9 meeting of the Waunakee Rotary Club, state Rep. David Travis discussed a variety of issues that will face the legislature this year.

He said the state's finances are in not-too-bad of shape now, compared to two years ago. At that time, Wisconsin was coming out of a recession and years of fiscal mismanagement that created a huge deficit and we are still digging out of it. Wisconsin now has a balanced budget – accomplished without a tax increase, he said.

Travis also referred to information from the Legislative Fiscal Bureau regarding the direction of property values and property taxes in Waunakee.

In 1992-93, a median home in the village was valued at \$99,265, compared to the median value of \$232,202 in 2005-06.

Waunakee school taxes in 1992-93 were \$1,852 on that median home, dipped to \$1,666 in 1996-97 and shot up to \$2,202 in 2005-06. The state government's commitment in 2005-06 to pay two-thirds of school costs brought that dip in school taxes and the relatively low growth that followed, Travis said. Forty percent of the state budget goes to elementary and secondary schools.

He also noted that Waunakee municipal taxes on that median home were at \$435 in 1992-93, compared to \$1,378 in 2005-06. That growth is probably due to the growth in the village, he said.

Health care is a big issue for everyone in Wisconsin, Travis said. The state has instituted Badger Care to provide health care to poor kids. The state also set up Senior Care to help the elderly with drug costs.

In his state of the state speech, Gov. Jim Doyle proposed a catastrophic insurance pool to help small businesses, although the details are

not out yet, Travis said.

Wisconsin is continuing its effort to become a magnet for stem cell research, Travis said. Plans are in the works for a huge research facility on the UW campus, partly devoted to that research. When realized, that facility should serve as an economic engine for the entire area.

Travis said he is working with Wisconsin's attorney general to update the law to protect computer owners from viruses, popups and spyware that, in effect, take control of your property – that is, your computer and your software.

One important item that passed the legislature was an amendment to the state constitution regarding the governor's veto power, he said. The media overlooked this issue. Another constitutional amendment prohibiting gay marriage will be on the ballot in November, although it is already illegal in Wisconsin.

Asked about term limits, Travis said that the Republicans pushed for them in the mid-1990s in a transparent attempt to force Democrats from office. Since the Republicans have taken power in the legislature and in the Congress, they are not so keen on term limits anymore, Travis said.

"We already have term limits," he said. "They're called elections."

In the Assembly, Travis has the second-longest tenure. Very few serve for a long time in the Assembly, he said. There is a lot of turnover there.

In a legislature, the new faces are important, but so are the more experienced members who can contribute some institutional memory.

Travis has served 28 years in the legislature. He is a member of the Assembly committees on utilities, elections and rules.

Other items:

•A sign-up sheet circulated for helping on the Feb. 28 Whitetails

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Calendar of Events:

Feb. 28, Whitetails Unlimited
March 15, Super Raffle
May 19-21, District Celebration

Unlimited event.

- Former Rotarian Al Kessenich died Feb. 7 at age 92.
- Kim Lengfeld announced that she has tickets to Super Raffle, which is being held March 15 at Rex's Innkeeper.
- President Greg Garton said he has received several "Every Rotarian Every Year" pledges. Please turn yours in soon.

Guests: Tony Brewster, guest of Jim Meyer; Larry Van Epps, guest of Kim Langfeld; Harriet Statz, guest of Ray Statz; Ellen Schaaf, guest of Lisa Pertzborn-Whiting.

Birthdays: None.

Anniversaries: None.

Prayers: Feb. 16, Jon Townley; Feb. 23, Msgr. Kramer; March 2, Larry Felsheim; March 9, Susan Vergeront; March 16, Leonard Allen.

Programs: Feb. 16, Susan Udell, handbells; Feb. 23, Wendy Miller, auditor, Wisconsin Department of Revenue on individual income taxes; March 2, Club Assembly; March 9, Walker for governor; March 16, fundraising committee/Kim Lengfeld classification.

Greeters: Feb. 16, Pat Durden, Fritz Durst; Feb. 23, Ed Endres and Bruce Engebretson; March 2, Gary Epping and Bill Erickson; March 9, Mike Fehrenbach and Larry Felsheim.