To Zoom or not to Zoom? That is the question.

I started my year by reading a book with the theme of giving so I figured it was only appropriate that I end my year with a literary reference.

In all seriousness, as we come together today to induct Kristen Jones as our newest President and highlight members with 35 or more years of membership in our Club, it exemplifies the evolution of our Club and the need to continue to evolve in this ever-changing world.

While this past year was not without trials and tribulations, these too, presented us with an opportunity to assess past practices, long-observed traditions, and things that “have always been done that way,” to begin to position our Club in a way that is more in line with today’s world. This insight will help us continue to attract a new, diverse group of members that will someday be honored for their 35 years of service to a Club that honors and encourages tradition, but embraces change and evolution.

Before we honor our 35 plus Club, I would like to take a moment to do some recognition and thank you’s:

First of all, I would like to thank the Board who has been so helpful and supportive:

Scott Behmer

Trey Bell

Tammy Bertrand

Dianne Brehm

Rob Ernst—who was so helpful and insightful as Immediate Past President and who almost single-handedly raised 17,000.00 in Steak Fry sponsorships! He also took over the Sergeant at Arms responsibilities and chairing the House Committee—thank goodness he retired!

Annie Heidersbach

Chuck Hirsch

Kristen Jones—I can’t wait to see where she takes our Club!

Jim Miller—Resident song leader

Mark Mroz—Who provided us with a great year of informative, interesting, and entertaining programs

Chris Pyanowski—Who along with Amanda Deery gave us yet another wonderful Steak Fry. And talk about trials and tribulations! They were able to make it a success and look easy while dealing with lost supplies, new processes and 100 degree heat!

Robin Kaufman for making sure bills were paid, dues collected and keeping spending (mostly mine!) in check.

I would also like to thank Dave Janowicz and the Grants committee for helping us to continue our tradition of philanthropy and giving. Aside from scholarships, we also gave grants to Garford Arts Fest, Good Knights, Elyria Catholic, Horizon Activities Centers, United Way Tax Prep, the YWCA, College Now and Sharing Christmas.

Dan Haight for taking over the 4-Way Test contest and gave us our biggest group of students in years and a representative to the District Contest, Lucy Rothgery who won the contest and received a 1,000.00 prize!

Andrea Repko, Mary Siwierka, and Matt Van Wormer for providing opportunities for service and fellowship with events like passing out food from 2nd Harvest at Elyria High, packaging feminine hygiene products for Path and Green along with appetizers and drinks at Valley of the Eagles, and reading to students at Easter Heights.

Kent Iler, Dan Haight, Gary McIntyre, and Trey Bell our Tech committee—need I say more…

Mindy Neilsen, Clarence Wills, and Rob Demby for all the work they do for the Foundation. And just a reminder that all their hard work paid off as our Club was named Foundation Excellence Club of the Year at District Conference.

We also had the Annual Peace Conference spearheaded by Jeanine Donaldson and Greg Kruszka which was a huge success. Greg was also instrumental in helping us get all of our 35 plus members here today so thank you for your help with that.

Sam Battle for his continued work with Strive and the youth of our community.

A special thank you to Mark King for his support, mentorship and good advice.

Last by definitely not least is someone who does so much for this Club and much of it is behind the scenes and under the radar. His help this past year was invaluable and his guidance through some difficult situations cannot be measured. Steve Hosler is the unsung hero of this Club and I cannot thank him enough!

Now on to honoring our legacy members!

Slide show

Announce members

Jim Hunt—who has been named to the Rotary International Membership Society for New Members Sponsors as the only Rotarian in Rotary District 6600 who has sponsored over 25 members.

Thank you all for your commitment to The Elyria Rotary Club!

Kristen Jones…