

# The Roundtable

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**Bangor Area Rotary Breakfast**

*www.bangorbreakfastrotary.org*

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## **Careful Growth, Expansion = Quality Seeking a “Good Fit”**

**D**enis St. Peter was relaxed, conversational and full of information about CES, the Brewer-based engineering firm for which he is president and CEO, as he spoke to us Thursday morning. His demeanor belied the many engineering and environmental services the company provides. It has over 100 employees and offices in Maine, Florida and, soon, upper New York state.

Mr. St. Peter joined CES in 2000 and became its CEO in 2010. He emphasized in their strategic planning, facilitated by Jeff Wahlstrom, that their growth must include companies with a “good fit” with CES. Bean, Whitaker, Lutz, and Kareh, Inc., a well-respected consulting firm specializing in surveying, civil engineering and planning for over 30 years in Fort Myers, Florida is such a fit. The company is CES’s first out-of-state acquisition, joining in-state CES offices in Brewer, Bar Harbor, Saco, Presque Isle, and Machias. A former member of Breakfast Rotary, **Jeff Teunisen**, PLS is Executive Vice President and Survey Division Director.



Denis St. Peter, Chris Swift

The regulatory work on acquiring a company in upper state New York is perhaps testing CES’s patience. Mr. St. Denis said the state’s regulatory environment can take up to six months to negotiate, much longer than their experience in Florida. When CES began its plan for acquisitions, their goal was to examine ten companies and interviewing each that seemed to have the good fit they sought. The acquisition of Summit Environmental Consultants, Inc. in 2013, for example, added geologists to CES and the capability to do constructive materials testing.

The negatives in the acquisition process? “You’re dealing with people,” said Mr. St. Peter. The positives include not having lost a single client because of any acquisitions.

The company’s 100 employees are spread between the 25 in Florida and 75 in Maine.

CES supports many non-profit organizations and the communities in which they live. CES staff members clean trails and roadsides, particularly near water resources to keep

them clean, and donating toys and clothing to the Salvation Army Angel Tree program in Brewer and the Androscoggin County Valley Chamber of Commerce. CES received the Gold Award from United Way of Eastern Maine for a third year. Recipients are acknowledged for meeting criteria such as campaign total greater than the year before, average gift greater than \$260, employee participation greater than 40% and hosting special fundraising events.

The Greater Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce named CES “Business of the Year” at its annual dinner in January. CES was named one of the best places to work in Maine in 2018. As we saw in a video about the company, it is dog-friendly!

“We want to give back to our community,” said Mr. St. Peter. The company’s matching grant of \$100,000 benefited the Good Shepherd Food Bank. It is also giving a \$100,000 contribution to the new labs and engineering complex at the University of Maine.

“This will increase the number of professors and new jobs in the area,” Mr. St. Peter said. “It takes time to find experienced engineers.”

### **Omelets and Other Delicacies**

President *du jour* **Ken Nagle** played the “Rotary song” from a video. He announced also that the Board would meet next Wednesday.

*All That Jazz* preparations accelerate with the reminder about business card ads. **Lisa Wahlstrom** is handling those ads (@\$50) for the program booklet. **Ken Huhn** is soliciting business ads.

Your editor’s absence last week meant he missed. **Chris Swift** is our newest member joining the club. Chris is the service officer for the Disabled American Veterans Department of Maine.

Ken Nagle will travel to the Dominican Republic in April to participate in the distribution of 250 wheelchairs. Information about the project comes from the Ellsworth Rotary web page:

*We will be delivering the wheel chairs in the Santiago Region of Northern Dominican Republic starting April 4, 2019 and returning home April 13, 2019. The average price for a room is \$125 US per day. Flights average around \$500. We are looking for 40 Rotarians to assist either for a few days or the entire trip.*

Ken Huhn gave a Rotary Moment highlighting a couple of features from the March edition of *The Rotarian*. A concern for Rotary Clubs, at least in this area, is membership stagnation. **Pudge Harrison** said he met with members of the Old Town and Bangor Noon clubs to create ways in which the three clubs can work together to spread awareness of our existence and of our services to the communities we serve.

Speaking of one of our services, **Jen Khavari** announced that Eastern Maine Community College’s Student of the Year received a scholarship from our club. Finally, there’s a new Rotarian coming into the world. **John Quinn** and his wife will become first-time parents in September.

*Les Myers- March 7, 2019*



Next-to-newest “Chris” learns sign-in process



We’re skeptical, but we’ll listen.

ck-in procedures