



Village President and event host Karen Darch welcomes the crowd.

Meeting of the Minds

BARRINGTON'S CULTURAL COMMISSION HOSTS THIRD ANNUAL TOWN-WARMING EVENT FEATURING GOV. CHRIS CHRISTIE

On a snowy winter day in January, the Village of Barrington's Cultural Commission re-created a 1940s-era Barrington tradition called the "Town-Warming". On Saturday, January 25, 2020, more than 180 people gathered at Barrington's White House to immerse themselves in a day-long speaker series that was keyed by Gov. Chris Christie, who participated in a fireside chat with his good friend and Town-Warming sponsor Greg Brown, Chairman and CEO of Motorola Solutions. Presenting sponsor of the event was Northern Trust.

Titled "Vision 2020 Part II: Media, Politics, and the Arts in the New Decade," this third annual Town-Warming featured more than a dozen speakers and panelists of local and national significance who spoke on important topics of the day.

The event kicked off with a welcome from Village of Barrington President Karen Darch, who has been the visionary behind the Town-Warming. She was followed by Rev. Dr. Zina Jacque, senior pastor of the Community Church

of Barrington, who prepared the audience for the day with a courageous vision of coming together as a community and being open to a wide variety of thoughts and perspectives.

The first panel featured a discussion of the media in the modern era and was moderated by Corey McPherrin, anchor at WFLD FOX Chicago. The panel featured political editor Mike Flannery of WFLD; Daily Herald Editor and Senior Vice President John Lampinen; and former CBS and NBC news anchor Derrick Blakely. The panel discussed the state of media today and the challenges of fairness, truth, and accurate reporting in the hyper-partisan environment of an election year.

The second panel centered around the importance of the arts in our increasingly polarized and always-on culture. The panel included Lynn Osmond, President & CEO of the Chicago Architecture Center; Fawn Ring, Director of Lectures and Performance Programs at The Art Institute of Chicago; Crystal Coats, Director of Community Programs, Lyric Opera of Chicago; and Veronica

Roth, a native Barringtonian and best-selling author of the Divergent Series. The panel discussed the importance of the arts in an increasingly fractured world, and the state of the arts in 2020.

Following a break for lunch, guests were entertained by WGN radio personality John Williams, who interviewed "Teddy Roosevelt" as performed by humanities scholar and character actor Clay Jenkinson. John and "Teddy" provided much-needed perspective on the state of politics today through the lens of the politics of the early 1900s. The highlight of the day was the keynote presentation, a "fireside chat" between Motorola Chairman and CEO Greg Brown and Gov. Chris Christie. Gov. Christie regaled the audience with tales of his governorship in New Jersey, as well as the nuances of his relationship with President Donald Trump. No matter your politics, Gov. Christie provided a thoughtful and thought-provoking look at the current political landscape, as well as an unfiltered look into the mind of Donald Trump.

Barrington Village President Karen Darch said

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Presenting Sponsor Tom Wischhusen of Northern Trust gives opening remarks.

“I am so thrilled that we have been able to bring this tradition back....”
- Karen Darch



Rev. Dr. Zina Jacque of the Community Church of Barrington sets the tone for the day.



Panel: The Foundations of Our Culture: Why Arts and Culture Matter in the New Decade (from left, novelist Veronica Roth; the Lyric Opera's Crystal Coats; and the Art Institute's Fawn Ring).



Veronica Roth, best-selling author and Barrington native shares her insights as a writer.



Clay Jenkinson portraying "Teddy Roosevelt".



Panel: Media and Politics in an Election Year. From Left: Former CBS News Anchor Derrick Blakely; Daily Herald Editor John Lampinen; Fox 32 Chicago Political Editor Mike Flannery; and Moderator and Fox 32 Anchor Corey McPherrin.



Motorola Chairman and CEO Greg Brown conducts a fireside chat with keynote speaker Gov. Chris Christie.



of the event, “This was our third annual Town-Warming event, and each year it continues to surpass the year before in terms of its energy and excitement. This event was conceived by our Barrington forebears in the 1930s and 1940s as a way to bring our community together during the dark, cold days of winter in order to hear interesting perspectives from a wide variety of thought-provoking speakers. I am so thrilled that we have been able to bring this tradition back in the modern day in order to provide our community with an opportunity to gather in the spirit of broadening our perspectives and learning something new each year.” 



Patty Dowd Schmitz is the Director of Communications & Community Engagement for the Village of Barrington. Barrington’s White House is our area’s premier cultural and community center right in the heart of downtown Barrington. The Barrington Town-Warming is an annual program produced by the Barrington Cultural Commission of the Village of Barrington. For more information, contact Patty Dowd Schmitz at pdschmitz@barrington-il.gov or 847-304-3443.