

The Desertarian

The Newsletter for the Rotary Club of Palm Springs,

Rotary



SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES

October 27, 2021

October is Economic & Community Development Month



Pres. Dr. Paul Raffer

President: Dr. Paul Raffer **President-Elect:** Michele Nobleman **Secretary:** Ed McBride **Treasurer:** Eileen Reilly

Board Members: Bob Allan, Victoria Bentley, Judy Bronstein, Tim Ellis (Ex-officio), Walter Gendell, Dorys Haltermeyer, Barbara Lippert, Andrea Madrigal, Frank Peabody, Margie Taft

District Governor: Dan Goodrich

Desertarian Reporters: Frank Peabody, Barbara Lippert, Jim Dunn, Nandy Kruger, Walter Gendell

Rotary
Rotary Club of Palm Springs



This Weeks Program

Deserterian Reporter— Walter Gendell

Vocational Speaker – Victoria Bentley

The meeting began with a Vocational Talk from Victoria. Victory shared how she first got involved in Rotary. Back in 2007 she was watching the news about women in the Congo. The story truly resonated with her, and she felt that it was a calling for her to get involved with a project in the Congo – which she did. This led to a connection with someone who suggested she should join Rotary where she could continue with her good works in the Congo. And as she has shared with us previously – from there she eventually found her passion and strong interest working with the Pygmies in the Congo, which she has been involved with ever since. Victoria is also Chairing the Rotary Foundation for Palm Springs

Guest Speaker – Mike Swize, Superintendent of PSUSD

Our guest speaker today was Mike Switz. By way of background, Mike obtained his bachelor's degree in history with an emphasis on Chicano Studies and Spanish from the University of Colorado, his master's in Education Administration from Azusa Pacific University and his doctorate in organizational leadership from the University of La Verne. He is a membership of numerous associations where he held many positions – and has achieved numerous awards throughout his career including several district awards for top administrator, principal and teacher between 1993 and 2013. Mike has worked in the school district for 32 years starting out in Desert Hot Springs.

Mike then talked about the structure of the school district, information on the student population, how they are handling Covid and the pandemic in general and what some of their priorities are.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Join us **IN PERSON** or on **ZOOM** each week at the following link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84324635354>
Meeting ID: 843 2463 5354
- A Fireside Chat has been scheduled for November 9 at 5:30 – 7:30.
- Next Week's Program: Timothy Courtney a Psychic Medium
- We have a new Club email that you can send emails, requests or comments to:
Psrotaryclub886@gmail.com

Rotary District 5330 Club: Palm Springs

Birthdays and Anniversaries for October

Member Birthdays

Allan, Robert C.
(BOB) 10/4/21

Haltermeyer, Dorys
(DORYS) 10/12/21

Hughes, Robert
(ROBERT) 10/19/21

Taft, Margie
(MARGIE) 10/20/21

Member Anniversaries	Start Date	Years	Total
Bentley, Victoria (VICTORIA)	10/9/19	2	7
Nobleman, Michele (MICHELE)	10/3/18	3	0

This Weeks Program (Continued)

There is a five-member elected school board with 27 schools in the district serving the following desert cities: Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Desert Hot Springs, Rancho Mirage and 1000 Palms (for a total of 500 square miles). This would include 16 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 4 comprehensive high schools and some alternative/hybrid schools in Cathedral City and Desert Hot Springs. There are 2600 staff members! When the requirement to be fully vaccinated came out they got 99.99% participation!!

One of the issues they are facing is declining enrollment – 2,200 fewer students since 2012 and 700 fewer just last year. The highest number came from the elementary school age children. They are trying to contact and reach out to these students as best they can. Adding to this is a declining birth rate in California. An interesting statistic is in the 1970's one in three people in California were children and they expect that to be one in five by 2030.

Mike spent some time going over several statistics regarding the student population. Some meaningful ones are:
80% of the students are Hispanic; 11% White and 5% African American
30% are learning English
97% are socioeconomically disadvantaged
10% are homeless or in foster care
The good news is that 91.1% graduate and over 51% go to college.

Mike shared mostly good news regarding the pandemic and Covid cases – active cases consist of only 7 students and 7 staff. Everyone must wear masks, they eat outside whenever possible, they have free testing everyday all day long and have put up plexiglass barriers where appropriate. They have been very open and transparent with the community and parents which Mike believes contributed to a high acceptance rate on mask wearing and testing.

Regarding priorities – they are focusing on equity and anti-racism. A question was asked about police on campus. This is not new – police have been in the high schools for 20 years. What is new now is the role they are playing. Instead of being there to arrest students, they are working in partnership with the administration and counselors to support the students – and not arrest them. Everyone appreciated Mike attending our meeting and sharing this information!

Afterwards Michelle did trivia questions (which most people got wrong!) Like how many pounds of candy corn is made (too many) and what were they called previously (chicken feed).

Announcements

Mark your calendars for November 14 for the Thanksgiving Potluck and White Elephant giveaway. It will be held at the Palm Mountain Resort and will cost \$15.00/pp with the proceeds going to youth services. Bring an unwrapped gift. Appetizers will be at 5:00 and dinner at 6:00.

Michele announced that the clothing drive for Safehouse will be October 27th. PLEASE bring donations to the club meeting. Remember that the clothes will be used for homeless teenagers so please keep that in mind when selecting items to donate.

Frank invited all to attend the monthly breakfast at Billy Reed's at 8:30

Meeting was adjourned at 1:00.