

Rotary Meeting, June 10, 2019, Editorian Amy Remmert

The meeting was called to order by President Jeannie Brandenberger.
The invocation was delivered by Aaron Winter.

Visiting Rotarians: Kerry Stewart, Matt from Oshtemo Megan Oshtemo

Guests: John Dillworth introduced Grace Kalufet, , Ann Fergemann brought Jeanne Grubb, Carol Carter, Coby Chalmers, Cindy Trout brought Joanna Dales and Julie Lonchart, Deb Harris Brought Michael Sheckles, other guests included Greg Taylor, Valerie Michell, and Nancy Timmons.

Songs: John Dillworth and Grace Kalufet, carried on a tradition of singing "The Rose" in honor of today's Red Rose honoree Jack Hopkins.

Art News: Art News was displayed on the screen before the meeting in the interest of time.

Birthdays: Betty Mason, Lisa Anspaugh and Rob Williams

Rotary Foundation: Rick Briscoe announced that we are a little short of our annual Foundation commitment, but Polio Plus has exceeded goal by a thousand dollars.

Paul Harris Honorees: Mushtaq Luqmani, Nancy Peterson, Aaron Winter, and Steve Duisterhof were recognized as Paul Harris Fellows

Red Rose: Dr. D. Terry Williams spoke briefly about the Red Rose Award. It has been a part of Rotary's tradition since 1945 to honor a man, woman or couple who have exemplified a life of giving. The selection committee was very proud to be able to present this year's recipient and one of our own Rotarians, Jack Hopkins with the prestigious award. This committee is comprised of Jeff Murphy, Lisa Godfrey, Brian Kauffman, Cheri Thomas-Cloud, Ann Fergemann, Joe Licavoli, Kristen Chesak, Karl Sandelin and Zaf Khaja.

Special guests for today's event were Jack's wife Andy, son Keith, Sandy Bliesener, Tim Brown, Wes Freeland, Susan Springgate, Betty Vienhuis among others. Many past Red Rose Recipients were in attendance. Although not all were able to make it to today's special event, the list includes, Betty Lee Ongley, Betty Upjohn Mason, Ken Miller, Mary Tyler, The Honorable Carolyn Williams, The Honorable Bill Schma, Linda Brown, Marian Wattles, Caroline Ham, Karl Sandelin, Al Heilman, and Patti Huiskamp, Earnest Lanier, Mark Schupan, Mike Seelye, Judy Jolliffe, Tim & Joy Light, and Jim & Lois Richmond.

Mike Williams wrote that Jack stands for the Rotary mission of "Service above self". Zaf Khaja says that Jack is a good listener, responds to need, takes action and sees things to completion. Tim Brown stated that Jack was a community legend and that retirement was more like a job change. Among other things, He was the president of Nazareth College earlier in his career. Jack is a Board member of DKI, and The Kalamazoo Promise and has a passion and commitment to Ministry with Community, has been a Vine Neighborhood volunteer and committed to affordable housing for underserved as well as a stalwart member of St Monica.

Wes Freeland spoke of Jack's work at the Foundation and learned quickly that he was going to need to learn what PRI was. It took Wes time to get his hands around that one. Wes spoke highly of Jack's work to improve the funding model of the Foundation and improve its portfolio.

Terry Williams was saddened to announce that Betty Upjohn Mason, who was to be one of our speakers, was dealing with a virus so in her tried and true nature, asked her understudy, Caroline Ham to read her comments. And they go something like this: Jack has made a significant contribution to Kalamazoo and Bill Lawrence commented years ago, "we are hanging on to the tail of a comet". Jack has done amazing work as a landlord, becoming a mentor and financial advisor to many of his tenants. The accolades go on from there.

Rotary President, Jeannie Brandenberger, felt humbled and honored to present the Red Rose to Jack Hopkins in honor of his resolve to improve the Kalamazoo Community.

With that Jack made his remarks: He was the person that drove the bus to get members of Rotary to participate in a survey to admit women which was a somewhat divisive topic this group of resolute men to take on. In an audience debate he fashioned, those in favor women being admitted, had to defend the opposing view, and likewise, those opposed to women had to defend their admission into Rotary. This interesting approach ultimately led to a vote to admit women into the club. Jack announced that he was humbled and honored to be presented the award but was fearful he is lowering the bar. During his presidency at Nazareth, Jack made many friends in the community, and Rotary and all it stands for has become a central part of his life. A final thought he left us with is that a Civil society is very important to the survival of us all.

In a final comment by President Jeannie, she pointed out that on a weekly basis, we recite the Four Way Test and wondered if we really concentrate on the meaning of what we pledge. It might be time to really concentrate on each statement and give them more thought and consideration.

Is it the Truth?

Is it fair to all concerned?

Will it build goodwill and better friendship?

Will it be beneficial to all concerned?