

Rotary News, July 26, 2021, Submitted by Charles Ofstein

President Sid Ellis called our meeting to order at approximately 12:15 PM. The club recited the pledge of allegiance. Our invocation was presented by Past-President Seth Weeldreyer, while arts news was presented by Rotarian Pierre Van der Westhuizen. Information about all current arts events can be found at <https://www.kalamazooarts.org/>.

There were no visiting Rotarians or guests this week.

Announcements:

- If you are interested in presenting invocations, please contact Past President Seth.

Happy Bucks!

- Jack Hopkins contributed a “5 fins” for a recent trip to Arizona. He was able to catch up with 23 family members!
- Amy Remmert recently participated in a meeting regarding Rotary and its satellite clubs. She was happy to report that she met two potential candidates for Rotary.
- Bryan Zocher was pleased that his five-year-old granddaughter was becoming wise enough to make her own rules! Congratulations!
- President Sid contributed to honor of the club itself. Despite the pandemic and the loss of a meeting space the club continues to persevere online.

Presentation:

Past President Joe Brogger introduced our speaker, Scott Schrum. Scott is the Chief Executive Officer of Residential Opportunities, Inc. He joined “ROI” in 1983. He has been the organization’s CEO since 1988.

Scott began his presentation with a brief history of ROI. The non-profit began in 1978 as an outgrowth of a community centered planning process focused on transitioning individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities from regional institutions into the community at large. The organization now provides services for individuals with all types of disabilities, with a strong focus on specialized residential and affordable rental housing.

It took three decades, but ROI now serves 600 people annually. Their areas of focus remain with specialized residential housing and affordable rental housing. But they also service individuals needing assistance with supported living alternatives, Representative Payee services, and autism services.

After a brief video presentation, Scott updated the club on ROI’s current initiatives and its status during the COVID-19 pandemic. Per Scott, ROI’s staffing shortages mirror the current state of the economy. Employment is down to 350 from a peak of 450 pre pandemic. The shortages effect the services that ROI can offer. The non-profit has recently announced a wage increase to pick up their staffing numbers.

Scott then took questions on the state of his non-profit. ROI's good work continues! Their success and their challenges can be found online at:

<https://www.residentialopportunities.org/>