

Speakers Club Meeting

April 02, 2024

Heartland for Children

April 09, 2024

Kevin Cook, City of Lakeland

April 16, 2024

President's Roundtable Awards

April 23, 2024

Scholarship Program

April 30, 2024

Don Selvage

A Tour of Presidential Libraries

Lakeland
Meets at First United Methodist Church
72 Lake Morton Drive
Lakeland, FL 33801
Time: Tuesday at 12:00 PM

Weekly Meeting, March 26, 2024

President Julie Townsend called the meeting to order. **Scott LaRonde** then led the invocation, pledge, and Four-Way Test.

Meggie Hoeft introduced the guests and visiting Rotarians. Happy Dollars were collected by **Melody Rider**.

Don Selvage began announcements by mentioning that March 29th is Vietnam War Veterans Day and on Saturday, March 30th, the city of Lakeland hosted a ceremony at Veterans Park. Bobby Yates, the longtime CEO of Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine and a Vietnam War Veteran was the speaker.

Rick Maxey introduced our speakers for the day, Andrew Jenkins & Jeff Griffin. Two other panelists, Regina James & Vicky Whitehurst-Walker, were unable to attend due to sickness. Rick went to school at Ocoee High School with all four of the presenters. They were one of the first classes to be integrated at Ocoee High School where they graduated in 1974. The topic for the program was "Integration of Public Schools in Florida in the late 1960's." Andrew and Rick met in the 4th grade and they both also attended Troy University together. Rick and Jeff Griffin have known each other since the 8th grade.

Birthdays

- Jennifer Swenson April 7th
- Melissa Innella April 11th
- Julian J. Weeks April 12th
- Trey Harden April 16th
- Bob Eckenroth April 21st
- Stephanie Colon April 22nd
- Larry Stahl April 23rd
- Caleb Douglas Bloodworth April 25th
- Lawrence Allen Rankin April 26th
- Jennifer L Douglas April 27th
- Brenda Ramirez April 28th



While Vicky was unable to attend, she sent in some of her thoughts to be read to our club. Her comments focused on the first day of 8th grade where she realized there were lots of new students who looked different than her. She quickly befriended some of her new friends and she loved their "cool" style. She told the story of her lifelong friend "Leo." Many of the upperclassmen at her school didn't appreciate integration. She didn't see much hate or issues in the 8th grade, although it was much more prevalent in the high school. She said they were "the class that changed the past" at Ocoee High School. She was raised differently than a lot of kids and for that she's grateful. Her parents didn't see color, and she took that to heart.

Years of Service

Janice Tedder
Jones
11-16-2010
14 Years
Vincent G. Jones
11-16-2010
14 Years
Tracy Yvonne Kimbrough
11-08-2011
13 Years
Kathryn Dhue Abels
11-08-2011
13 Years
Larry Stahl
11-03-2015
9 Years
Jason Wyatt
11-03-2015
9 Years
Kathy McGee
11-03-2015
9 Years
Cory Neupauer
11-15-2016
8 Years
Amanda Walls
11-15-2016
8 Years
Lori Winstead
11-09-2017
7 Years
Karen Moore
11-09-2017
7 Years
Tammi Crotteau
11-09-2017
7 Years
Mark Davies
11-03-2019
5 Years
Brenda Ramirez
11-03-2019
5 Years
William Roll
11-03-2019
5 Years
Tyler Davis
11-14-2019
5 Years
Caleb Douglas Bloodworth
11-14-2019
5 Years

color, and she took that to heart.



Jeff echoed a lot of what Vicky said. His father was born on a farm and his mother was of Cuban descent via Miami. He was exposed to prejudice in school - he was shy in school and was more of a follower. The environment of living in a white neighborhood & going to a white school made integration uncomfortable. There was fear that existed at that time. There were some fights that happened those first few years. He said what became clear after going to school together was that the only difference was their skin- they shared more things in common than differences. He told a story of having his first black teacher who taught geography & bonding over a shared love of food.

Andrew Jenkins provided some background on his childhood education & how excited they were to go to Drew High School. They were sad to learn they would have to go to a different school. The black community was split into two different high schools. So much of your integration experience related to your family background & how you were raised. He often experienced people watching him in stores thinking he was going to steal stuff. He mentioned integration happened quickly - what he learned was that these guys were okay & they built intimate relationships with his teammates through sports.



Rick concluded by telling a story about a white girl he went to school with. He walked her home one day to make sure she was okay after a bad day at school - when he got home, her mom was livid and scared for Rick's safety. His Mom had already received word. Rick never saw the girl again. Her dad was the local

Jennifer Swenson
11-14-2019
5 Years

pastor and was forced out of town because of that. The girl reached out to Rick about 10 years ago and reconnected and shared what happened.

Thank you Rick, Andrew, Jeff, Vicky and Regina for sharing your powerful stories with our club.

Mark Creech
11-10-2022
2 Years

President Julie concluded the meeting with her "paraproisdokian" of the week, "courage is what it takes to stand up & speak. It's also what it takes to sit down & listen."

Linda Roddenbery
11-10-2022
2 Years



District Announcements

When Rotary International declared the Environment as its seventh area of focus did you stop to think about how you as an individual could make a difference in taking care of our environment? Here are some suggestions for club and family projects:

- Nature walks, couple with clean-ups of trails and lakeshores
- Scrap metal and e-waste fundraiser
- Food waste reduction projects
- Plant-based diet challenges
- Rain barrels to promote awareness about water
- Tree planting
- Pollinator gardens
- Calculating carbon footprint savings through various actions
- Partnering with schools and community groups
- Plastic free month challenge
- Environmental minute at weekly meetings
- Working with municipalities to remove invasive species

Have you checked out **Rotary Direct** yet? It really is easy to enroll! Go to: <https://my.rotary.org/en/rotary-direct> There are lots of reasons to give to The Rotary Foundation. What motivates you? <https://www.rotary.org/en/get-involved/ways-to-give>

Zones 33-34 Membership Action Plan Webinars

6 pm - 7 pm Eastern Time

Second Monday of each month

FishHawk-Riverview Rotary Club presents the 14th Annual Crawfish Festival

Saturday April 13, 2024m 11:00 AM - 04:00 PM, Winthrop Commons, 11289 Winthrop

Main St

Riverview, FL 33578

Sign up for our next Rotary Honduras Mission Trip at:

<https://www.hondurascompassion.org/teams/important-forms/apply/> A non-refundable \$250 deposit is required. Dates are Saturday June 29th to Saturday July 6th. Rotarians and friends age 10 and up are invited to come to La Paz, Honduras and work on projects with Honduras Compassion Partners staff, volunteers, and local Rotarians to help the people of La Paz become self-sufficient. You will impact lives of the people there as well as your own. You will build relationships, change your perspective, and change your life!

Contact irmacole26@gmail.com for more information about items mentioned in our Weekly News Updates.

Events

April 9th

The Lakeland Rotary Club Board of Directors Meeting

April 23rd

Lakeland Weekly Fellowship Event

Club Leaders

Julie O'Rourke Townsend

President

Marsha Leap

President-Elect

Amanda Walls

iPast President

Jason Wyatt

Secretary

Blair Nolen Allen

Club Director

Irma Cole

Club Director

Tyler Davis

Bulletin Editor

Brenden A. Hahn

Treasurer

Josie Renee Hill

Club Director

Michael Huff

Club Director

John Loute

Club Director

Carol J. Wallace

Club Director

Fred A. Oeters

Sergeant-at-Arms

Stephanie Colon

Membership Chair

Ron Denney

Rotary Foundation Chair
