

THE STAFFORD ROTARY HIGHLIGHTER

March 6, 2024



March 6 Program – Michael Morris, Deputy County Administrator, Stafford County

Michael Morris is currently responsible for The Stafford County Operational Departments including Planning & Zoning, Development Services, Economic Development & Tourism, Utilities (Water & Sewer), Capital Construction & Transportation, Park, Recreation & Community Facilities, and the Rappahannock Regional Landfill.



From 2016-2021, Mike was Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities. This department includes park maintenance, park development, golf course, recreation centers, senior center, athletic programs, aquatic facilities and program, camps and classes, therapeutic recreation and special events.

Mike brought to Stafford County Government, many years of outstanding service as Director of Recreation and Parks in Maryland, Texas and Virginia.

Mike has received numerous awards and recognitions for his exemplary service including such recognitions as: National League of Cities-First Lady Michelle Obama “Let’s Move” Program Excellent Customer Service Award, Virginia Recreation and Parks Society – Best New Program-Stafford Connects, National Association of Counties Achievement Award – Armed Service Memorial, and many, many more awards for his outstanding service.

A Certified Parks and Recreation Professional, Mike has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting and a Master of Science in Education Degree – Sport Management – Old Dominion University.

Club Calendar March Is Water and Sanitation Month

- ❖ March 6 - Speaker: Michael Morris, Stafford County Towne Center
- ❖ March 13 - Samantha Mitzel UMW Rotaract President
- ❖ March 20 - Dr. Thomas Taylor - STAFFORD COUNTY School Superintendent
- ❖ March 27 - Tommi Marsans
- ❖ March 30 – RLI in Warrenton.
- ❖ March 30 – Club Social, Escape Room, 6 pm
- ❖ April 2, 4:00pm to 7:00 pm- Thurman Brisben Center - Help us cook and serve dinner
- ❖ April 10 – UMW Alumni
- ❖ April 27 - District Training Assembly - April 2024
- ❖ May 2 – Virginia Naturalists
- ❖ May 25-29, 2024 -Rotary International Convention in Singapore
- ❖ August 11-13 – District trip to RI HQ
- ❖ September 28, 29 -Via Colori
- ❖ October 4-6, 2024 – District Conference

February 28 Meeting

President Jamie presided over our first evening meeting.
Holly gave the thought of the day via Zoom.

“Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!...

Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee.
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee, -are all with thee!” Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

(Personal note: I loved hearing this. As a child I heard a poem by Longfellow, Whittier, Emerson, or Sydney Lanier every morning after morning prayer and before breakfast. I think my parents had memorized entire volumes of 19th century poetry.)

Announcements:

- ❖ President Jamie encouraged us all to attend the next Stafford School Board meeting. The issue to be discussed is school violence and student food insecurity.
- ❖ We have a new inflatable Rotary logo!
- ❖ March 23 – Bowling Social
- ❖ March 30 – evening, around 7 pm, will be an Escape Room social in Fredericksburg
- ❖ April 6 – evening, around 7 p, Axe Throwing social
- ❖ Wednesday April 10 – our guest speaker is from UMW alumni, so they'd like us to have as many UMW alums there as possible, both Rotarians and non Rotarians (invite anyone you can!)
- ❖ August 11-13 Trip RI HQ
- ❖ PDG Sandy reported on the Peace Conference.
- ❖ Jake reported that the district dues are paid.
- ❖ PE Shekela reminded us that the deadline for Soles for Souls is March 9. On April 2 we will cook and serve dinner at the Brisbane Center, 4 pm – 7 pm.
- ❖ PDG Sandy reminded everyone who has joined the PolioPlus Society to pay their \$100 minimum donation before Jun30.

February 28 Program – Sue Henderson

Our guest speaker was Sue Henderson who gave us a lively update and conversation about everything happening with the Stafford Museum and Cultural Center.

For 20 years, Sue was a Certified Recreation Professional (NRPA) specializing in large events and marketing for federal (USAF) and local (King George County, VA) recreation departments. She created Henderson Productions as a multi-service event planning and marketing company in 2001 and has more recently concentrated on the photography and tourism aspects of the industry.



Among Sue's accomplishments, she is proud to have been the Program Manager for Stafford County's award-winning 350th Anniversary celebrations in 2014. Her photographic images have won major awards from the Venice (Italy) Tourism department, the 7th Annual Julia Margaret Cameron Award for International Women Photographers (Documentary/Cultural Category), the Virginia State Fair and numerous others. Sue is a USAF veteran.

Since 2017, Sue has been the Executive Director for the Discover Stafford Museum &

Cultural Center laying the groundwork for a professionally operated Museum focused on bringing Stafford County together to celebrate the history of the County that Built the Nation.

The Stafford Historical Society has wanted a museum for over 50 years. Sue gave us an update on progress on the project. The Historical Society is hoping to convince the Stafford Supervisors to designate 1% of the Occupancy tax to generate funds for both capital and operating budgets for the proposed Stafford Museum and Cultural Center. It is estimated that the building and campus will cost about \$25 million. The plans for the building includes a 500 seat auditorium.

The Museum and Historical Society presents regular programs on Stafford's people and places. Sue demonstrated several examples of the use of technology in telling the county's story, including the virtual recreation of the Langley flights.

The organization's excellent webpage features articles on Stafford history, a virtual museum, information upcoming programs, and opportunities for volunteering. <https://discoverstafford.org/>

One upcoming program features the new mural at Moncure Elementary. The mural was designed and created by Moncure teacher Ms. Campbell. The mural depicts Pocahontas, Chief Powhatan, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington with the Chatham Bridge in the background. Celebrating local history, these murals capture the essence of our community and enrich our learning environment.

After the program PDG Sandy and President Jamie presented a Paul Harris Fellow certificate and pin to Sue.



March 3rd Tour of Sheriff's Office

The Rotary Club of Stafford had the unique experience of touring the Stafford County Sheriff's Office! Everyone who attended agrees that it was phenomenal. Sheriff Decatur toured the members through the communications center where everyone got to hear a real-time 911 call of a baby that potentially wasn't breathing. That wasn't staged at all, and you could see the "gasp" on everyone's faces. We then toured the shooting simulator, getting a feel for what it was like to shoot or not shoot in various scenarios. Everyone got their chance at the simulator to shout commands at suspects and then make the split second decision if they were going to take a shot.



March is Rotary Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) month. Through WASH programs, Rotary's people of action mobilize resources, form partnerships, and invest in infrastructure and training that yield long-term change.



President Jamie plugged in our new inflatable Rotary sign. It is large!