Meeting Notes – Sep. 26, 2023

The LaFayette Rotary Club met on Tuesday, September 26,2023 for its weekly meeting. Rotarian Merilyn Vines introduced our speaker, Mr. Sid Mickle. Sid is a native of LaFayette and was a student at LaFayette High School, and a graduate of Chambers Academy and Troy University. While at Troy, he had an opportunity to play college sports. After graduating he had a career in sales and marketing, which took him around the country. He shared with us his time with the company, Johnson and Johnson, during the Tylenol tampering crisis. Johnson and Johnson made the decision to reimburse all of their vendors who sold Tylenol products, regardless of the size of the inventory. While many thought it was foolish, this ultimately resulted in J&J having a larger market share than what they started with. J&J's response had an impact on Sid and he later had the opportunity, with the small Chicago company, Outer Circle Products, to establish the best working environment of his forty year career. The company changed its internal operations and culture to one of a principled business. The staff determined the principles and the working guidelines associated with each principle in partnership with the owner and management team. A fundamental principle was that you could not come to management with a problem with a co-worker until you had spoken directly to the coworker. This new culture eliminated about 80% of the discord that previously existed. After 40 years in sales and marketing, Sid retired in 2020 to pursue his passion of writing.

Sid began writing in 2002 but did not have his first book published until 2020. The first book he began writing was actually the second book he published. The characters in his fictional books are based off of people who he grew up with and knew in LaFayette. He currently has five books published and is working on the final two books of a trilogy. His third book was actually a book about his graduating class and he gave each classmate a copy of the book at their 50th high school reunion.. His advice to someone who wants to write is to just start. Grab a piece of paper and a pen and write something down. He also advised being selfish, i.e., writing for yourself or a group (such as he did for his graduating class). He feels writing stimulates the mind, keeps you busy, and gives an outlet for ideas. An interesting fact we learned is that when a book is published through Amazon, as his are, Amazon only prints the number of books that are ordered that day. So, if four books are ordered, Amazon prints four.

Sid has published the following books:

"If I Could Turn Back Time: Reflections of a Life Unfulfilled"'

"Backwards Glance: Stories From My Southern Childhood"

"The Class of '73"

"Who Killed Glenna?" (this will be first in a trilogy)

"Principles: How to Create a Principled Business Culture"

Diane Sheriff