



## **THE SUNRISE CIRCUIT**

**Newsletter of the  
Stuart Sunrise Rotary Club, Florida**

President Kathy opened the meeting at 7:30 on another beautiful day. Paul Salazar led the Pledge and Dave Seyffart led the prayer; Dave also sold 50-50 tickets.

Rick Zurich read a very interesting scholarship application letter from Racene Patel of Martin County High School. Racene is an extremely creative and outgoing individual who, Rick said, would have been an almost certain winner, but for the fact that she intends to seek a degree in Genetics overseas in Cape Town South Africa. She is most serious in her pursuit, as indicated by her service last summer in a hospital in Zambia. Rick explained that she got the job by visiting the hospital personally and offering to serve. She also contacted the President of Zambia who invited her to meet personally with him which she did. Racene's outlook and spirit is truly unique. She believes that genetics offers potential cures for many of mankind's most serious diseases.

ANNOUNCEMENTS included a reminder from Hap Mills that the Stuart Rotary Club will host the second annual "Mayors' Ball" honoring present and past Stuart Mayors at Mariner Sands Country Club on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Tickets to the formal event are \$150, with many benefits. The event will support the war memorial project honoring county veterans.

Kathy announced that our tree planting event will be April 14 at 11am in one of the shelter 3 or 4 at Halpatiokee Park. We will plant two dozen trees including variety of species. We will provide another two dozen, which the county Parks Department will plant. Kathy urged Rotarians to bring their families to the event, which will include a Pot Luck lunch.

Happy Bucks were led by Rainbow Dave, with Sue collecting in the bed pan. Dave opened with a "joke" of when his son asked him what he knew about Switzerland. His response was that he didn't know much, but that the Swiss flag is a plus. Many happy bucks were contributed in honor of Racene Patel, and a roughly equal number complaining about the joke. Hap was grateful for Jane's rehab and said she would be driving soon! Rex was happy to be back from his trip, as were Brenda and Paul. Gene VanCuren presented a "sad five" dollars regarding the sad performance of the ACC in the NCAA.

We were honored to welcome TWO SPEAKERS, Rachael Terlizzi and Julie Zygmun, who both informed us about the need for and importance of early (pre-kindergarten) education for youngsters.

Rachael Terlizzi is Community Outreach Director for the United Way and the Healthy Start Coalition. She thanked our club for our support for the recent "Tikis on the Terrace" event. She invited Rotarians to volunteer to serve on Citizen Panels to evaluate the services and effectiveness of organizations supported by United Way. Volunteers would spend six hours on a given day to evaluate an individual service organization. Rachael's focus, as a young mother, has been on health and literacy, particularly pre-kindergarten training. She said that 57% of kindergarteners in Martin County are not "kindergarten ready" meaning that they know little or nothing about numbers and letters, how they fit together and what they mean. Julie Zygmun, who has a Master of Arts in Teaching, is Martin County's new Early Literacy Coordinator, with the Successful Families Division and the Baby Steps Department. She spoke about the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program (VPK). She explained how lack of adequate preparation puts young students behind, and that they are frequently unsuccessful in ever catching up. 4% of high school students drop out or fail to graduate, and most do so because of their inability to read, and become 60% of our prison population. The cost to keep people incarcerated is roughly a million dollars each.

Voluntary Pre-kindergarten preparation is entirely voluntary and is fun and worthwhile. Julie forwarded her power point presentation to me, which I will forward to each of you in a minute. She will be happy to provide more information. She can be contacted at [772-320-0835](tel:772-320-0835) or email at [jzygmum@hpsfl.org](mailto:jzygmum@hpsfl.org). The website for more information is [www.hpsfl.org](http://www.hpsfl.org)

The 50-50 was won by Hap Mills.