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**Hanover Rotary Club Minutes**

**9/15/21 Weekly Meeting**

Brenda called the meeting to order at 6:52 PM.

**Blessing: Brenda**

**Pledge: Glenn**

**Attending Members:** Brenda, David Creasy, Rickey, Glenn, Jerry, Ken, Mike, Judson, Janice, Michelle, Rachel and Mike Swinford, Harvey

**Honorary Rotarian:** None

**Visiting Rotarians:** None

**Guests:** Linwood Thomas, Director, Hanover County Economic Development

**Sergeant-at-Arms Report**: 13 Rotarians are present. With our guest present. Mike gave a joke about a man whose hearing was resolved but

**Happy Bucks:**

Jerry has sad bucks because we lost 2 former Rotarians: Wayne O’Bryan and Tim Way

**Rotary Minute:** Ken gave a Rotary Minute about literacy and Rotary forging a path for full literacy in India where they have worked to improve literacy since 2014. Full literacy is a rate of 95% in people 7 years and above. Rotary Clubs across India help with rolling out the program. The program has also helped with adult literacy. We have several programs with regarding literacy, and one is the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and the Essay Contest.

**Announcements:**

9/22 – Packing bags for Teachers

9/29 – Tamera Wilkins Harris, Richmond Regional Tourism

District Conference – Oct 15-17 at Marriott Downtown Richmond

Peanut Sales are coming! Glenn has received the pricing list from Plantation Peanuts and hopes to have the forms ready in 2 weeks. Orders will be due by November 10. Peanut Sales are important source of income for the Club.

Christmas Party – Ashcreek Clubhouse – December 9 (No meeting December 8)

**Program:**

Linwood Thomas of the Hanover County Director of Economic Development spoke to our club. He grew up in Fredericksburg across the street from prolific politicians who influenced his career and nurtured his talent. After finishing college, he moved into Economic Development. He has been at the county for about 5 years and loves the County and would not move back to Fredericksburg!

There is a team of 5 that run the office. Hanover County has a strategic location and is seeing a lot of interest because of the transportation location, good quality of life, low tax rates, and a central location. There is about 30% of the area of Hanover where the Board of Supervisors is interested in growing, along I-95 and 295.

Hanover County has continued create jobs and economic growth and activity and population has grown and has healthy, sustained growth. Hanover was one of the fastest growing communities by job growth, pre-COVID. At the height of the pandemic, Hanover County had unemployment rate of 8.9% and today is about 4%, which is considered full employment. Pre pandemic it was 2.9% and has growing annual wages.

Shop Local is Hanover County’s campaign to support local businesses as a number one priority. The rolled out a resiliency grant to give 58 business to help them get through the pandemic for those that met the criteria. Over 50% were Small Women and Minority businesses. The program helped 588 jobs. They wanted to help drive traffic so they created a [video](https://www.hanovervirginia.com/explore-hanover/things-to-do/shop-local-here-in-hanover-va/) featuring the Sheriff, Fire & EMS, Police & the Board of Supervisors as well as many familiar local businesses to show how the dollars come back to the community. Linwood showed the video which can be seen on their site. On average about 65% of a dollar spent at local business stays in the community. Local businesses give back creating jobs and purchasing for other local business. Buy Local. Buy Hanover! Developed an app that is a guide to what’s hAPPening in Hanover, VA that can be downloaded from [www.HanoverVirginia.com](http://www.HanoverVirginia.com).

There are many projects that have been announced and are looking for land that can be used to attract companies to the region. In the 6 million square feet has come on line in the last 2 years, there is a lot of new development along Route 1 and Lake Ridge parkway.

He touched on the Wegman’s project and it has won awards and will bring 700+ good jobs to the community, even though there is a lot of local opposition. Also, ECC test Lab will testing medical marijuana that meets State Guidelines – located here in late 2020 and will grow (jobs, not marijuana!) in the future. Also, Indevco, ChemTreat, and Wine & Beer Supply have invested in and located in the county as well as Cascades, a box company, is located here near Doswell. Virginia ABC Headquarters and Distribution Center has broken ground, and Virginia dept of Forensic Science will be building a facility here too near the Times Dispatch off 301. Even though they don’t pay taxes, they create jobs so it’s a trickle-down effect.

There are lots of things to attract company and people to Hanover. Hanover Public Schools have the third highest on-time graduation rate in Virginia with 100% of schools accredited.

They have revamped their website to drive traffic to it so that people can research coming to Hanover. [www.HanoverVirginia.com](http://www.HanoverVirginia.com).

After Judson led the Club in the 4-Way test, Brenda adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Michelle Nelms