

Monday, July 15, 2024

A Token of Thanks and Changing of the Guard



Lewisville Noon Club Meetings

Lewisville Noon Rotary meets Wednesdays at 12:00 PM at Bistecca - An Italian Steakhouse 2300 Highland Village Rd. Highland Village, TX 75077.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Please pray for everyone across Texas who suffered loss due to Hurricane Beryl.

Events

August 3rd
Adopt A Spot August 2024

Years of Service

John Kazor
06-30-2009
15 Years
Thomas R. Emmet
07-14-2021
3 Years
Jim Baker
07-07-2022
2 Years

Birthdays

Kyle Shipp
July 16th
Audrey L. Stansbury
August 1st

New club president Sue Bowman last week presented Melanie Robinson and Bill Lawrence with a token of her appreciation to welcome them to her board for the 2024-25 service year. They were unable to attend the year-end party last month, during which Sue gave each new board member a small gift.

She also presented Eyad Salloum with his new Rotary badge signifying his standing as Past President of the Lewisville Noon club. We are grateful that Eyad is staying on as Treasurer with this year's new board.



The Wonder of Building Community



Melanie Robinson
August 4th
Sue Bowman
August 8th
Matt Michel
August 8th
Mike Ball
August 11th

Speakers

7/17: Four students from RYLA

Club Officers

Sue Bowman

President

Melanie Robinson

Secretary

Eyad Salloum

Past President
Treasurer

Steven Cox

Rotary
Foundation Chair

Dwayne Middleton

Membership
Chair

Leslie

Thompson

Communications
Chair

Rachel

Roberts

Sergeant-at-Arms

Kathy M Travis

Youth Services
Chair



L to R: Tom Schwolert, LNR club president Sue Bowman, and featured speaker Shawn Small of WonderVoyage.

The Lewisville Noon club was pleased last week to welcome featured speaker Shawn Small, founder of Wonder Voyage, a non-profit organization that leads pilgrimages and mission trips all over the world, after working as a youth minister in the 1990s.

“This is a room full of people that want to see transformation in communities,” said Small, an accomplished author, speaker, and filmmaker who previously worked as a youth minister. “We are in about 65 countries, and the thing I love is we’ll bring about a thousand people a year” on trips, he said of the work of Wonder Voyage, before talking about ways to transform communities through service.

Serving others can be a thrilling adventure, said Small, who shared his memories of attending company picnics in the 1970s to set the stage for his point. Back in the day before social media, kids would swim in the river as adults mixed and mingled around homemade fare at the company picnic. Small didn’t know how to swim when he was younger, but that didn’t stop him from jumping into the water at one particular picnic and “pogo-sticking” his way back to shore to join in the fun. After a couple hours of carousing in the water with his peers, he attempted a front flip, only to bellyflop and gasp his way to a pole in the water as he tried to catch his breath. When one of the other kids warned him about leeches on the pole, Small suddenly found the courage and strength to dog-paddle to shore. When presented both the opportunity and a sense of urgency, Small discovered he could swim.



“Diving in is the only way to go,” he said. “We learn to swim in life’s adventures and seize remarkable opportunities when we are willing to take a leap of faith and simply give something a try,” Small mused. The trips he leads with Wonder Voyage invite others to experience the wonder of different cultures and the joy of serving, putting into practice the ethos of *carpe diem* for the greater good.

“The [Fischer Projects](#) were the most nefarious projects in New Orleans,” Small recounted, using another personal anecdote to illustrate his point. “It was a place of hopelessness and poverty,” but a close friend decided to go serve in that community and invited Small to join him, he continued.

“I did not know the river was that deep when I went down to the Fischer” with 40 kids to do service projects, Small said with a chuckle.

After befriending “Miss Val,” the *grande dame* of the housing project, and sharing his heart for service, Small was told his group had the green light to get to work. Their mission was to clean up trash all throughout the development, and Miss Val had made it clear to the local gangs not to harass or threaten the volunteers. “By the end of the day, we had it clean. It looked really nice,” Small said of the crime-ridden housing project. Miss Val invited the team to come back the next day, but when they arrived, they discovered that ungrateful kids in the community had purposefully spread trash all around the projects again.

For a second day, Small and his band of high school volunteers picked up trash. This time, however, the volunteers started singing old hymns as they worked, raising the spirits of numerous elderly members of the community. Miss Val, in turn, took the initiative to petition city officials to arrange ongoing cleanup efforts at the Fischer Projects, which the city did for years.

“We didn’t change Fischer as much as Momma Val [did],” Small said, asking his audience rhetorically, “What is that story for you?” If you want to get more people to join you to transform your community, they have to hear that story, he said.

To read the story of Miss Val and other uplifting anecdotes from Small’s years of leading service projects, pick up his latest book, *Into the Wonder*, available in paperback and eBook formats on Amazon. To learn more about Wonder Voyages, visit www.wondervoyages.com.

