



Club Meeting

Stuart-Sunrise
Meets at Banyan
Creek Country Club
1701 SW Crane Creek
Ave
Palm City, FL 34990
Time: Thursday at
07:30 AM

Speakers

January 30, 2025

[Lori Sang, Executive
Director Little Lights
Dentistry](#)

Birthdays



Nils G.
Weibull
February
19th



David Shoaf
February
20th



Ken Furcron
February
21st

Club Member Anniversaries



Susan
Dawson
Whittington
02-22-
2007
18 Years



Michael L
Costopoulos
02-01-
2015
10 Years



Scott A
Gilmour
02-15-
2024
1 Year

Rotary News for January 23, 2025

By Susan Dawson Whittington

Meeting was called to order by Linda, who led the pledge, followed by the prayer led by Sue Whittington.

Announcements:

- January 30: Board Meeting next week immediately following the regular meeting
- February 2: Family of Rotary event at the Elliott (please RSVP to Sue by Monday, January 27)
- Kathy has forms for donations to Rotary International for Polio Plus – if you give her a check she will mail it in for you and even complete the form! PS You can also enroll as an annual donor on the Rotary International Website
- Linda attended pre-PETS (President Elect Training) and learned many valuable things. Our district dues are going up \$5 a year but they are still cheaper than they were two years ago. An item of interest, you can download the IGNITE app in the APP Store and that has DacDb and all things Rotary.
- Rotary Anniversaries this month: Chris Shoaf and Charles Dame, neither of whom were in attendance. IN FACT, WE MISSED MANY OF YOU TODAY – IT WAS A LIGHT CROWD!

Since Sue forgot that she was taking notes, there are no big details with happy and sad dollars, but they mostly reflected around football and the weather. JD did a stellar job standing in for Charles.

The 50/50 was won by Gene who donated his prize to House of Hope.

Rob Ranieri, House of Hope

Our speaker today was Rob Ranieri, the hardest working man in Martin County, CEO of House of Hope.

House of Hope has food partners in several locations in Martin and St. Lucie County, and just established their first food partner in Indian River County.

House of Hope has locations throughout Martin County and today Rob talked about the Golden Gate Center. The building has a rich history. Constructed in 1925 it was the cornerstone for Martin County's first planned major residential development, however a major hurricane hit Florida and ended the real estate boom. Until 1959, the building served several purposes including a commercial office and place of worship, and the home and studio of local artist Jim Hutchinson and his wife. That ended in 1959 and the building sat in disrepair, was saved from destruction in 1990 and purchased by Martin County in 2002. It is on the National Register of Historic Buildings.

House of Hope took over the center in when people who were trying to restore the building went bankrupt.

Today they run a variety of classes, including serving 50 students in English as a Second Language and SMOKING CESSATION.

They rotate in classes as a result of community needs identified through surveys and there are lots of partnerships in that building. The goal is for everything to be FREE and for the classes to be enrichment accessible to all.

They are open from 12-7:30 p.m. each day and serve primarily Seniors and preschoolers during the day, kids with homework help after school, and entire families after hours.

The county did a survey and found that the Golden Gate community was the lowest community in terms of using free early learning programs. The barriers were transportation and trust.

House of Hope stepped in and started an early learning program at Golden Gate and in Indiantown. While the kids are taking classes and parents are as well - fire safety, dental hygiene, etc.

Rob says they are a "reasonable substitute for school, but we are not school - we encourage our families to use school."





In other news,

The Jensen Beach location was not increasingly productive as a thrift store, so now it is a dedicated enrichment center.

House of Hope took over the Kindu Center in Indiantown, but now it is not just for the Hispanic population. They have a beautiful kitchen there, so they do a lot of cooking classes and nutrition education.

House of Hope does not look to recreate programs and whenever they identify a need, they first look for partners.

Their model is an EMPOWERMENT MODEL.

Clients who come to House of Hope are surveyed based on their need for Mental Health Services, Transportation, Education, Housing, Food Insecurity, Nutrition etc.

These clients are ranked on a scale of 1–5 and those in crisis and the first linked to services needed. 30% of clients are seniors and House of Hope works to connect means and opportunities to improve people's lives.

Copper Key Scholarship is new, in collaboration with Nina Haven and The Community Foundation Martin St. Lucie.

Identify kids as young as 6th grade and provide wraparound opportunities to set that child up for success and transition to college or trade school.

There are 23 scholars to date and the oldest are juniors in high school.

They are ready to start a mentorship program for these students who will help them find the path they need to navigate the world.

Rob used a beautiful phrase:

We would like to turn from "adults who would be clients" into "thriving adults who are House of Hope donors"!

Next focus is on affordable housing:

Working to partner people with extra room and income need with people who need housing.

PLEASE TAKE A TOUR OF THE FARM at the corner of Citrus and 714 in Palm City. They are negotiating the purchase of a contained growing facility from a private seller that will expand the capabilities of House of Hope to grow food.
