

Announcements, Induction, and Updates filled our meeting. We were a full house, with many of our members able to attend our first meeting of the year after a two-week break for the holidays. And let's not forget that we had the pleasure of hearing from our Global Scholar, Abby Blocker, IN PERSON! So, without future adieu:

Announcements/Updates

*Paula Holtsclaw of the Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition (a friend and guest of Barb Wheeler), shared information and a request for assistance with the annual Point in Time counting of the homeless that will occur on January 30. There will be online training on January 21 at 2pm. Contact Paula at datamanager@midflhc.org if you are interested in participating. It is best to get pre-registered. This is the online link for the training: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2689949044127692118>

*Habitat for Humanity Home Build Event – February 1, Habitat Village at Citrus Springs, 8-12. Sign up with Lace Blue-McLean

*One Bag – February 4, Whispering Pines Park with Floral City Elementary, activities 11:30-1:30. Contact Lace Blue-McLean

*The Rotary Club of Inverness Foundation presented Abby with \$2500 in support of her final leg of her educational journey

Induction

We were happy to add another new member to our club. Welcome, Jill Goddette! Jill has recently retired from nursing care and is interested in activities that will benefit children. We can certainly find her something to do!

Update

And the “pièce de résistance”....Abby! Abby, who is currently residing in Cape Town, South Africa, is visiting her “hometown”, and shared her current status on her journey to her Ph.D. She estimates that she has 1-1 ½ years left, having already finished her Masters. Her focus remains on Bio-Medical Engineering, developing an opportunity to serve remote areas of South Africa with medical assistance through telecommunication(telemedicine). This is a difficult process as access to the internet and electricity are sometimes quite limited. Her research and prototypes will eventually be studied and scrutinized toward her final approval for her to receive her credentials.

She has also had an opportunity to speak at several conferences this past year, including a SATNAC conference on telecommunications on how to provide online services with poor connectivity. Zimbabwe was also interested in learning more about her vision and had her speak at a conference there. They could very much benefit from her efforts.

As always, she shared a little something about South Africa that she thought we would enjoy. This time it was...Food! A little to her dismay, she is a vegetarian in a carnivorous country. South Africans consume lamb, beef and Brai Meat(a type of BBQ). There is also Vetkoek(fried dough-sometimes stuffed), Rooibus and Buchu tea, Rusk(tea biscuit), Pap(corn flour), Biltong(jerky), Chips Gatsby(a hoagie roll stuffed with French fries), and Umgombothi(traditional beer from sorghum), which, by the way, didn't look all that good.

Oh, and, Bertha is doing well in school in India. She is in the 90% and a class representative.

Happy/Sad - \$155

50/50 - \$41 to Vera Swade