



The Spoke



April 26th, 2017

Students/Teacher of the Month



Steve McIntosh introduced the Students and Teacher of the month from Estero High School.

Maddie Baldini is a junior at Estero High and is also enrolled in the Cambridge Program. She is a member of both the Interact Club and the Key Club and has over 127 volunteer hours completed.

She explained the Cambridge Program which leads to the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), an international Diploma that students can earn via an advanced academic curriculum.

Zach Clark is a junior at Estero High School and is enrolled in the Cambridge program. He has one more year to decide his college plans but would like to stay in Florida. His career aspirations at this moment are to be either a politician or a comedian. His current GPA is 4.83.

Mr. **Ben Stitgen**, Teacher of the Month, graduated from the University of Wisconsin (Music Performance) and FGCU (Education). He currently teaches history in the Cambridge Program and has been on the faculty for two years. He was nominated and selected by the administration for always going above and beyond his academic duties. He is very active with the music department, announces for the baseball team and is involved with many areas of the campus life.

Last Week Meeting...42

President **Steven Slachta** convened the meeting. **Chuck Spears** ad-libbed the invocation; **Roger Brunswick** led the Pledge of Allegiance and then tried, but failed, to recite the Four Way Test.

Steve Krchniak was pressed into service to lead the singing. He changed the scheduled song to *God Bless America* and the audience responded in good voice.

Adam Botana is looking to get money and ticket stubs from the Reverse Raffle. He reminds that payments may be made on-line at the club web site.



Scott Gerrish presented his Vocational Service Minute. He used slides to illustrate his early working life as a Navy pilot and showed some of the products from his years in cryogenic tank manufacturing.

Last Week Speaker



Chuck Spears introduced our speaker, club member, **Heber Paulin**. Heber has been in banking for 25 years. He is now a regional manager of 64 branches.

Heber was born in Cuba in 1966, left with his family at age 14 and spent a year in Jamaica before coming to the U.S. Because of his accented English, he describes himself as the Ricky Ricardo of banking.

Heber described the hardships of growing up in Communist Cuba. “You don’t have a childhood in Cuba. We heard our parents as they struggled to get through every day.”

Heber is a “Preacher’s Kid” and is a practicing Sabbath Keeper. His beliefs are that the Sabbath should be observed from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset and that no work should be done on the Sabbath.

When he went to elementary school, he would not wear the Pioneros banner. This was a banner that stated “I believe in Communism”. Since communists are not supposed to believe in God, he refused to wear the banner which was against his core beliefs.

Every couple of months as a 7 and 8 year old, he would be sent to the principal’s office to meet with the head of the Communist Party of the city to argue the points of view of “Why did I believe in God?” He didn’t back down, and on one occasion his arguments stymied the communist who told him, “Get the hell out of this office.”

In the higher grades, classes were held on Saturday. Heber’s religious beliefs did not allow him to attend. This infuriated the principal who wanted to flunk him. Somehow, he managed to do well enough to offset the zeros on Saturday. This was, “A higher power working in my favor.”

At that time in Cuba, there was compulsory military service for three years beginning at age 15. His older brother was in the service and was jailed because he refused to work on the sabbath. Just before Heber's 15th birthday the family moved to Jamaica. There they lived with many families crowded into houses while they worked to get to the U.S.

Heber told us of a story by a long time political prisoner of a teen ager who refused to work on the sabbath, was jailed, tortured, and never seen again.

"I am proud of the land I live in today. I have lived here longer than I lived in Cuba. I became an American citizen the minute I was able.

"We don't know the freedom we have. We don't have a clue of the liberties we enjoy each and every day; the facilities we have; the ability to get whatever you want."

In Cuba today, toilet paper is an unknown luxury. Food is rationed and many are hungry. Heber says, "Cuba is a very fertile country. How come our people are starving with no rice, no beans? The excuse is 'The Embargo'. It's a joke folks. The embargo is doing nothing. Cuba can get anything from anywhere else in the world.

"Where does the embargo say farmers can not grow rice and sell it to the people of Cuba? Cuban farmers can not sell beans to their own people. Your [Cuban] president is giving you the embargo.

“He does that so you get up every morning trying to figure out how to feed your family so you don’t have time to think about how to get this guy out of power.

“Fidel was smart but evil. For the first three years he never said anything about being a communist. But he was preparing the secret police, the suppression police secretly. We didn’t know if the neighbors were watching and reporting. People were scared to do anything.

“When I wanted to join the Marines, my mother begged me not to. In honor of the commandment to honor thy parents, I didn’t go. If I could do one thing over again, it would be to serve this great nation as a token of gratitude for what it has done for me and my family.”

Heber is planning a trip to visit his wife’s ailing grandmother and aunt. He will be preaching at a small rural church and is going to give a gift bag of soap, cooking oil, rice, etc. to the congregants. If you would like to contribute contact Heber.

After listening to this presentation, Jim Horein said, “I have one more reason to be proud to be a Rotarian, that’s you.”

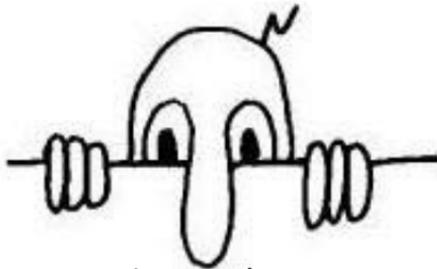
Upcoming Events

Saturday, April 29th, 6 pm. 21st Annual **Reverse Raffle**. St John the Evangelist.

May 18-21 **District 6960 Conference**. Hyatt Regency Sarasota.

This Week

Jessica Trippler
Director of Client Services
Brink Results



50/50 \$2,091

27 Cards

**Jon McLeod drew the
9♣ for \$5**



The 50/50 is \$2,091

Birthdays

Adam Botana Apr 27

Rotary Sings: You're a Grand Old Flag

You're a grand old flag,
You're a high flying flag
And forever in peace may you wave.
You're the emblem of
The land I love.
The home of the free and the brave.
Ev'ry heart beats true
'Neath the Red, White and Blue,
Where there's never a boast or brag.
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
Keep your eye on the grand old flag.

This Morning's Invocation

God, we gather once again as men and women committed to the values espoused by Rotarians everywhere, values and virtues desperately needing to be infused in our culture. We believe the qualities which characterize Rotarianism at its best have their origin in Your will and purpose. We pray, therefore, for divine assistance as we seek to so integrate them into our social, business and professional structures, that they become the accepted basis for behavior.

Bless now the food provided for our use and enjoyment, and use the congeniality of our fellowship as a winsome witness to the quality of our togetherness. Accept our gratitude for all gifts and challenges which come from Your hand. Amen.

Rotary International President

John F. Germ
Rotary Club of Chattanooga, TN

District 6960 Governor

Ladd Waldo
The Rotary Club of Lakewood Ranch

Area 3 Assistant Governor

Sally Smith
The Rotary Club of Estero

2016-2017 Club Officers

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|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| President | Steven Slachta |
| President-Elect | Jon McLeod |
| Secretary | Claudie Delgado- Feeney |
| Treasurer | Bob Lombardo |
| Sergeant-at-Arms | Roger Brunswick |
| Asst. Sgt-at-Arms | Bill Banfield |

Members of the Board

**Tom Briers, Steven Slachta, Jon
McLeod, Claudie Delgado-Feeney**

2014-2017

**Frank Mazzeo, Peter O'Flinn,
Susan Schmitt**

2015-2018

**Adam Botana, Joe Murgalo,
Jon Shaw**

2016-2019

**Bob Lombardo, Kae Moore,
Gary Price**

Trustees of The Foundation of The Rotary Club of Bonita Springs

**Jim Dati, President; Stephanie
Kissinger, Secretary; Richard Garner,
Treasurer; Jason Dolle, Sandy
Hemstead, Ed Houck, Mark McCaw**
Trustees



Rotary Club of Bonita Springs, chartered
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Scott Gerrish issue editor.