



# The Spoke



November 8th, 2017

## Last Week Meeting

President **Jon McLeod** was at the podium. **Ray Faubion** presented the invocation; **Roger Brunswick** led the Pledge of Allegiance; and **Ike Lichtenstein** again attempted the Four Way Test. Apparently, this was just another rehearsal.



We were treated to a duet of **Ron Anderson** and **Bobbi Bird** who led the singing of *When You're Smiling*.

Jon announced he is looking for volunteers to man the front desk in the coming months. Please let him know if you are willing to take some shifts.

**Save the Date! December 20th at the Colony Bay Club starting at 5pm for cocktails and dinner at 6pm. Marc Vee will be supplying holiday music for your enjoyment :)**



**Marjorie Rubacky** introduced today’s program, a “debate” on the “grass roots effort to change the way Lee County Commissioners are elected. “

**Ray Judah**, on right in photo, who served as Lee County Commissioner from 1988 - 2012 was the advocate for Lee Voter Freedom, supporters of changing to the non-partisan process.

**Dr. Peter Bergerson**, on left, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at FGCU was the adversary.



The present partisan process means that unless you are registered with one of the two major political parties, you may not get a say in who your next commissioner will be in Lee County.

## Active registered voters as of November 1st, 2017

Republicans	186,654	43.4%
Democrats	116,665	27.1%
Others	126,713	29.5%
Total	430,032	100.0%

Jon McLeod acted as moderator and **Vince Modarelli** was the time-keeper. The audience was invited to submit written questions during the session.

Ray Judah proclaimed he wanted the process to be “Fair to all concerned.” He says the Citizen United decision has had a tremendous impact on “what we used to think was a two party system. Super PAC spending has skewed the entire political process..elections are becoming more of an auction than a campaign.

Ray noted that the six cities in the county elect their officials on a non-partisan basis. The existing law allows a “write-in” candidate to effectively close the primary to other party and independent registrants. “When this happens, the candidate is selecting the voters, rather than the voter selecting the candidate.”

Ray noted that in 2016 a large fraction of the under 40 year old voters were independents and thus not able to participate in partisan elections.

He noted that the Lee Voter Freedom campaign needs 30,000 petition signatures in the next four months to get the referendum on the ballot for November 2018.

Dr. Bergerson says that in states with open primaries, “voter turn-out is desperately low.” He notes that a “non-partisan election does not mean no politics, just a different form of politics. Oftentimes less transparent.”

He says that the lack of party endorsement of candidates may reduce the public scrutiny and gives a distinct advantage to the incumbent over challengers because name recognition becomes the important factor in candidate selection.

Dr. Bergerson says the greatest predictor of why and how people vote is their identification of being either Republican or Democrat. “When you take away the party, [it] reduces the incentive for people to vote.”

He noted that only 29% of the registered voters participated in the 2016 Primary Election. There were several local state and national office contests on the Republican ballot. Republican turn-out was 42%. There was only one contest on the Democratic ballot, US Senator. Turnout was 25%. Other (independent) voter turnout was 12%.

Ray Judah said no one should feel threatened by the open (non-partisan) process. “It’s about everyone having the right to vote and shouldn’t be special interests hand picking a candidate.”

Dr. Bergerson says that from the party’s perspective the issue is, “who should control the original candidate selection process. Historically, the job of the parties. [Non partisan] elections will dilute the strength of the parties and the accountability of the party to its members.”

From: *The Spoke* archives:

10 Years ago

President **Fred Partin** called the meeting to order. The invocation was delivered by **Doug Pratt**, **Frank Mazzeo** led the Pledge of Allegiance and **Jim Renfro** guided us through the 4 Way Test. **Steve Krchniak** ably conducted the club in singing an oldie, but not familiar song, *For Me and My Gal*. May it rest in peace. It was worth it in that **George Cohan** fined the honest members each \$1 for singing the song. Steve did make up for it though by leading a select group of singers in singing Happy Birthday to **Dave Shellenbarger**.

5 Years ago

The international scope of cooperation and goodwill that is Rotary became apparent as Kitty Green of Habitat for Humanity acknowledged and accepted a \$35,000 grant that was the joint effort of our Foundation, three Clubs in Poland, and Rotary International. The grant will facilitate construction in ten Habitat Homes. Thanks for your unified efforts.

[The Grant was presented by **Steph-anie Kissinger**, **Sandy Scoogins**, **Nancy Ross**, and **Ron Anderson**]

# This Week Chris Patricca, Lee County Board of Education.

## Upcoming Programs

Nov 15th. **Teri Lamaine**. Executive Director  
Bonita Springs Assistance Office.

Nov 22nd. **Paul Gavin**, Esq. You are in charge,  
You decide.

Nov 29th. **Jon McLeod**. Club Assembly

Dec 6th. Dr. **Larry Antonucci** President &  
CEO Lee Health Systems



50/50 \$900±

29 Cards Left

Including 2 Aces, Joker

**Donna Marcotte drew  
the 6 ♠ for \$5**



**The 50/50 is \$900±**

***Birthdays***

**Bob Lombardo Nov 10**

**Rotary Sings:  
God Bless America**

God bless America, land that I love.  
Stand beside her and guide her  
Through the night  
With the light from above.

From the mountains  
To the prairies  
To the oceans, white with foam,  
God bless America,  
My home sweet home.

God bless America,  
My home sweet home.

## **This Morning's Invocation**

Lord of the Past and Present, as we experience Veterans Day this week, we acknowledge with gratitude and awe, the providential favor you have shown toward our country.

In solemn remembrance we salute with pride the military veterans who gave themselves in personal sacrifice, to win and to preserve the freedom represented in so many ways.

We pray for men and women now serving in armed forces. Surround them, we pray, with your protective providence. Help us all to be loyal citizens as we rededicate ourselves to the values and virtues which made our nation great.

Now bless, we pray, our club proceedings, our meal and our friendship. Keep us true to our historic purposes. Amen.

# **Rotary International**

**Ian Riseley**

**Rotary Club of Sandringham, Australia**

## **District 6960 Governor**

**Bobbi Bird**

**The Rotary Club of Bonita Springs**

## **Area 2 Assistant Governor**

**Joe Faerber**

**Estero Rotary Club**

## **2016-2017 Club Officers**

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**Jon McLeod**

**President-Elect**

**Claudie Delgado**

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**Treasurer**

**Bob Lombardo**

**Sergeant-at-Arms**

**Roger Brunswick**

**Asst. Sgt-at-Arms**

**Bill Banfield**

## **Members of the Board**

**Steven Slachta, Jon McLeod,**

**Claudie Delgado-Feeney,**

### **2015-2018**

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**Jon Shaw**

### **2016-2019**

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**Gary Price**

### **2017-2020**

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**Saunders**

## **Trustees of The Foundation**

**Jim Dati, President; Stephanie**

**Kissinger, Secretary; Mark McCaw,**

**Treasurer; Jason Dolle, Sandy**

**Hemstead, Steven Slachta, Rex Sims**

**Trustees**



**ROTARY:  
MAKING A  
DIFFERENCE**

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