

July 18, 2018

President Betty presided. Guests: Our speaker was Suzanne Sheridan Director of the Rockbridge Area Health Center. Visiting Rotarians: None. Guests: Two, Suzanne Sheridan & Shane's mother. In attendance were 15 members for a total of 17. Meeting held at the Lexington Golf and Country Club.

Announcements and Business:

1. Kent provided an update on the preparations for the Rockbridge Community Festival. Sponsor ships are moving along with 19 so far. The space assignment spreadsheet has not yet ben started by a good number of requests have been received. All systems are go and we are on track for the August 24th festival.
2. Announcements about future events? The next meeting will be a joint meeting with Kerr's Creek Ruritan club on August 14th starting at 7pm.
3. Dick Minnix was not with us as he was in hospital with a suspected thrombosis and has since been discharged and is resting at home.

Program:

As Dick was the RoD, Betty took over and introduced Susan Sheridan the director of the Rockbridge area Health Center and a past member of our club. They have known each other since 1989. This was a return visit within a month for Suzanne. This time she came equipped with her own laptop and projector. Suzanne started her presentation by showing a short referral video about the health center and how help was given to people while they or their family were in great need. Also Steve Grist an ex member of our club and president of Cornerstone bank referenced the importance of Rockbridge county remaining healthy so the community could thrive as without the excellent work done by the RHC staff the area could fall in to hard times.

Using a slide presentation Suzanne then discussed the changes that have been made since the original Free Clinic five years ago to a local private and non-profit Health Center which is now receiving a large portion of running costs through an annual Federal grant. Suzanne confirmed Steve Grist's views by confirming the goal of the new RHC is to build a healthy community by providing healthcare for all no matter their means. There has been significant growth since the change that has driven the need to expand the size of the current facility, but at the same time we should realize that the RHC is still small. The goal is to provide affordable high quality healthcare for all whether or not insured, regardless of insurance or income. The RFH provides financial assistance so no patient is ever turned away therefore healthcare is provided for all.

The local community also benefits economically. For every dollar spent the RHC returns 2 dollars back to the community. The way it does this is by employing local people, by buying locally and extending the existing building is a big capital project. This project will will expand existing space from 9,000 to almost 24,000 square feet. A larger RHC building was needed as the number of Patients has grown significantly by 93% in 4 years currently serving about 5,000 patients. Growth is expected to continue as Rockbridge County has been designated, by the Federal government, as a healthcare shortage area.

Suzanne concluded her talk by saying there is a positive future for the Rockbridge Health center and so she is planning for future expansion of patient services and a corresponding increase in healthcare professionals to deal with the growing need.

As there was a late start to dinner, Betty decided not to have Happy Bucks or the 50/50 draw this week.

Future Programs & Activities:

Aug 14: Joint Meeting with Kerr's Creek Ruritan Club (TUESDAY at Kerr's Creek Presbyterian Church)

Aug 22: Joint Meeting with Jaycees; planning RCF

Aug 25: Rockbridge Community Festival

Aug 29: Meeting with DG George Karnes at Glen Maury Park, BV (time TBD)