

Rotary Club of Olympia
The Wheel
Date: 03/10/25

Today's Program: Thurston Economic Development Council

Meeting Called to order: President Corrina @ 12:25pm

Pledge of Allegiance led by: President Corrina

Four Way Test led by: President Corrina

Visiting Rotarians:

We did not have any visiting Rotarians today.

Guest of Rotarians:

Luke Kiley - guest of Bob Heck

Announcements:

Paul Harris Plus One - Cindy Hough was recognized for earning another level toward her Paul Harris giving. Barbara Barney shared an update on the club foundation and made an appeal to club members to continue to give generously to both the local and international foundations.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing - the club helped the effort raise \$2,000 more this year than the year before.

Camp Thunderbird - Bob Wubbena shared that March 21 and 22 will be the next volunteer work party to continue the construction work funded by the district grant. If possible, please join between 9am-1pm.

Auction - Steve Bean, back from recovering from surgery, helped auction off a box of local spirits and snacks. Cindy Zechmann and Corey Gauny combined their efforts to win.

25th Anniversary Paul Harris Dinner - The annual Paul Harris Dinner. It is the 25th anniversary of the event. Paper registration forms are available, if needed. To register online go to: www.paulharrisdinner.com For every member who is in attendance, you will get 100 Paul Harris points toward your next Paul Harris level. The date this year is March 20. The venue is Indian Summer Golf & Country Club.

Happy Bucks:

Natalya Ruble - Happy that the crew season has started and her rowers are back on the water.

Kristen Taylor - shared that each of the Canadians she met on the Rotary Friendship Exchange have all reached out to her to express their support for the current political climate in the US. She also offered to connect any club member with the current president of the Rotary Club of Nanaimo, they are happy to host any Rotarians who want to visit.

Brett Anderson - the OHS Interact Club collected over 700 books for their annual book drive this year. He reminded the club that the Interact Club has started planning the annual international dinner. He requested that if you are connected to a local restaurant, and are willing to request that they participate in the international dinner, please contact Brett for more details.

Oscar Soule - just returned from a week in Phoenix where he and Barbara had a wonderful time at Spring Training. He also requested additional support for Mr. Snappy items.

Warren Carlson - shared that Nineveh has grown from one food truck to now have a second location, a physical restaurant in downtown Olympia.

Program: Thurston Economic Development Council

Nate Peters introduced Michael Cade, Thurston EDC Executive Director. The Thurston EDC was established about 50 years ago to support the local economy. Today the focus of the conversation is on

Ashley Whitley, WCWB Program Manager. The Washington Center for Women in Business supports women entrepreneurs in all areas of being a business owner. Ashley has been with the EDC for two years. She has helped over 140 businesses statewide, including 60 businesses within Thurston County. Ashley shared the types of businesses the center supports and the programs the center coordinates to support women in business at all levels.

For more information about WCWB visit: <https://www.wcwb.org>

Gene Angel, Thurston EDC Director of Research. Gene shared an overview of all of the programs that the EDC runs/coordinates. Just looking at 2024 the nearly 1,600 interactions generated 71 million in output, nearly 26 million in labor income, and 380 jobs. Looking back at the last 5 years generated output is nearly 1 billion dollars and over 3,800 jobs. Gene talked about how our local economy is seen from outside the state. Thurston County is ranked the most 'equitable' in the country. This relates directly to the disparity of income from high earners and low earners. Olympia is ranked first in the country for middle class share of employees.

For more information about Thurston EDC visit: <https://thurstonedc.com>

Michael, Ashley and Gene took several questions from club members.

The meeting was recorded, if you would like to see the recording, please contact President Corrina.

Mr. Snappy: Corey Gauny won a \$25 gift certificate at the Curry House Restaurant donated by Bret Anderson.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:15 pm by President Corrina.