



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2024
YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

Create Hope
in the World

MARK CHENEY, STEVEN SANCHEZ, JAVIER ARCE & PETER FINCH
REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS IN THE YAKIMA VALLEY

This Thursday’s meeting will share information about an innovative on-the-job training program for youth and adults in the Yakima Valley. High school juniors and seniors from schools throughout the Yakima Valley have been placed in Registered Apprenticeships with local businesses where the students earn high school credits, college credits, and an hourly wage. These opportunities are preparing students for post-secondary success.

A panel discussion will be moderated by fellow Yakima Rotarian, Dr. Peter Finch, Superintendent of the West Valley School District. Panel members will include Mark Cheney, South Central Washington STEM Network; Javier Arce, Pexco Aerospace; and Steven Sanchez, Genie Industries. As a graduate of West Valley High School and Central Washington University, Steven Sanchez was one of the first students in the Yakima Valley to complete a Registered Apprenticeship.



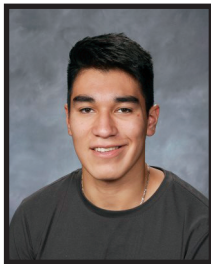
Dr. Peter Finch



Mark Cheney



Javier Arce



Steven Sanchez

FOR THURSDAY’S MEETING

Music – Nancy Leahy
Greeters – Shawna Masters, Joshua Shockley
Invocation – Kurt Labberton
Sergeant-at-Arms – Kathy Miller Parrish
Program – Peter Finch
Attendance – Nicole Franson

FUTURE PROGRAMS

March 7th – Raul Martinez, Diverse Lands, Unified Vision:
The Expansive Reach of DNR
March 14th – Noe Alvarez, Spirit Run
March 21st – Steve Hobbs, Washington Secretary of State
March 28th – Amy Behrens, Maryhill Museum of Art

PROPOSED NEW MEMBER

Unless written objection is received by the Board of Directors by Friday, March 1, 2024, the following candidate will be elected to membership:

Yvette Inzunza
Public Information Officer
Yakima Police Department
**Classification: Law Enforcement,
Public Information**
Proposed by: Chris Rankin

ROTARY ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP

The 2024 Rotary Academic Scholarship
deadline is March 8th.

The scholarship is open to high school students attending Davis, East Valley, Eisenhower, Highland, LaSalle, Naches Valley, Riverside Christian, Selah and West Valley high schools, homeschooled and Running Start students in those same districts, YV-tech, Stanton Academy and Yakima On-Line students.

The application can be found at yakimarotary.org.

FEBRUARY SECOND CHANCE SOCIAL

Wednesday, February 28th
5pm – 6pm
Second Street Grill

Bring a guest, prospective new member, or the person you forgot on Valentine's Day. Rotary will provide hors d'oeuvres. You buy your beverage. Mark the date and be prepared for great company, and wonderful conversation.



REVIEW

This week's program was an opportunity to learn about Yakima County's new regional Crime Lab. But before we could hear from our guest speakers, we had Rotary business to take care of. Our music provided by Linda Kaminski, celebrated a song that was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame and is one of the most lucrative songs ever written – Jimmy Buffet's "Margaritaville"; Celisa Hopkins provided a moving invocation that spoke to what it is to be human; and Bob Romero raised money for Charities with sergeant-at-arms all about catching criminals. President Erin welcomed our guests and recognized members Sharri Greene who was recently elected President of the Realtors Association, and Rich Austin who was recently awarded the Citizen of the Year Award by the Association of Realtors. Sean Kinney announced this month's Second Chance Social is on February 28th from 5pm – 6pm at Second Street Grill.

John Baule gave a presentation in honor of Black History Month. He shared excerpts from interviews that were done between 1997 and 1998 with black members of our community by Davis High School teacher Jim Bodeen. Ray Alexander expressed you had to have a car to visit black people in Yakima as they were spread out around the Valley until after WWII. During the war friends began moving closer to each other and that's when Southeast Yakima became a community. Wilma Beauchamp grew up on Naches Ave. and at the time it was a very multicultural neighborhood. However, once she got to school students were separated. This was echoed by Gilbert Chandler who began school at Adams Grade School. About a month in, the school board told the parents that Adams School was too crowded and moved the black children to Jefferson School. Pearl Langley was twice married, once to a black man and once to a white man. In both cases she was not accepted by the other side. A long time Grandview teacher who graduated from college in 1950 found that no district would hire her. The only black teacher at the time was in Tacoma. Federal monies changed that in the 1960's. Overall, the people interviewed expressed enjoying a very strong community life but also recognized how far they have come.

Time is crucial in criminal investigations. The technology at the new Regional Crime Lab located in Zillah is helping law enforcement get information in a matter of hours instead of days and weeks. Larry Mattson introduced Kathy Geil, Crime Lab Manager, Chris Wickenhagen, Executive Director for the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG), and Sheriff Bob Udell who spoke to us about the new lab serving law enforcement agencies across Yakima Valley. Up first was Chris Wickenhagen who shared how the crime lab came to be. YVCOG is a local government that administers programs and services for the different municipalities in Yakima Valley. In a sense they fly under the radar because all of the authority stays within the cities. The crime lab started when YVCOG received a Law Enforcement Grant to provide community outreach involving law enforcement. An idea was formed after a discussion at a law enforcement meeting after a presentation from the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms on the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) machine. What was expressed was the machine was cost prohibited for any individual city. That's where YVCOG

came in. They put together a proposal that included purchasing the equipment and hiring staff and took the proposal to Sheriff Udell. As you can imagine, crime is a huge tax burden. A homicide costs a community \$1.4 million per suspect, an injury \$670,000 per suspect. From 2018 to 2022 Yakima County saw a 31% increase in homicides. YVCOG not only bought the NIBIN machine but expanded the services and remains the administrator of the program. However, Police Chiefs and Sheriff Udell decide what services the crime lab offers. The cost of the program is shared by all of the members.

Sheriff Bob Udell described the program as the greatest collaborative law enforcement project the Valley has ever seen. On his travels, he has run into people who perceive Yakima as a crime riddled community. He made a comparison showing why - Boise had 2 homicides in 2021, Yakima had 35. This collaboration works to make our cities safer. He made three main points. 1. The modern forensic technology give results in hours. 2. The program allows for the most up-to-date data to be shared. 3. The collaboration between all law enforcement allows for input regardless of the size of the city within the county. Everyone comes to the table and has the same level of input, so everyone has the big picture.

Kathy Geil came to Yakima to make a difference. With over 22 years as a Forensic Scientist, she recognized there was a desert of forensic services in the Valley. The support to get the lab up and running has been amazing. The vision behind the lab was the investigative lead – getting information back to the investigator to let them know if there is any information they can share about a firearm, cartridge case, DNA, fingerprints etc. and get this information to them within days, not weeks or months or longer. Why do we need a Crime lab? The Washington State Patrol has huge backlogs. They have to prioritize cases meaning they can't take care of early investigative leads. What's hiding in those cases is potential information to progress a case. The new crime lab is working so efficiently, Kathy does not have a backlog of cases. The services provided at the crime lab include the NIBIN unit, which takes images of the head stamps of spent cartridge cases and compares it with other cartridge cases in the system to see if there are any other associations such as other shooting events. Because everything can be done in house, the evidence collected is quickly delivered to investigating officers aiding them in solving violent crimes. So far there are 550 NIBIN sites across the U.S. Other tools include digital forensics/cell phone extraction, an intel analyst, and Rapid Hit DNA. They can handle latent prints, DNA and firearm swabs getting rid of roadblocks that may have delayed a NIBIN entry. The Rapid Hit DNA runs a DNA sample in 1-2 hours. The machine helps with triage of multiple DNA samples from a crime scene so they can identify or weed out people as suspects. Crime lab test results still need to be confirmed with the State Patrol if a case were to go to trial, but getting information rapidly helps determine what gets sent to the State. The project is a perfect example of local law enforcement working together, combining resources, and providing enhanced technology to combat violence and crime to make our communities safer.