



THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2022 YAKIMA CONVENTION CENTER

*Serve to
 Change Lives*

DR. MICHAEL J. LAWLER PNWU FORWARD



Dr. Lawler is President of Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences (PNWU) in Yakima, Washington. He leads PNWU's mission to educate and train health care professionals, emphasizing service to rural and medically underserved communities throughout the Pacific Northwest, including Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

His four decades of experience in health and human services includes 28 years as a leader in higher education at PNWU, University of South Dakota, and University of California, Davis.

He has authored more than 80 publications on children's health and well-being, American Indian health, rural health, and professional education, and was recently Co-Editor of the American Psychologist for a Special Issue on Adverse Childhood Experiences. Dr. Lawler previously served as the United States Principal Investigator of Children's Worlds, an international research project on children's health and well-being. He is past chair of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Committee on Children, Youth and Families, and currently serves on APA's Committee on Rural Health. Dr. Lawler has received a number of awards for leadership, public service, and research.

He and his wife, Kimberly Lawler, live in Yakima with an assortment of elderly rescue animals.

FOR THURSDAY'S MEETING

Greeters – Kyle Curtis, Aaron Ruff
 Music – Rick Fairbrook
 Invocation – Adrienne Garner
 Sergeant-at-Arms – Moriet Miketa
 Program – Kevin Good
 Marble Draw – Jane Davis, Courtney Beckler

FUTURE PROGRAMS

June 9th – Mark Brown, Washington State Parks
 June 16th – David Horsey, Political Cartoonist
 June 23rd – Melannie Cunningham, Peace Queen
 June 30th – President John's Recognition

MARBLE DRAW

There was no winner this week meaning the \$210 from the last meeting is being carried over to next week and there is one less marble in the bucket. Don't forget to bring extra money to support Yakima Rotary Charities.



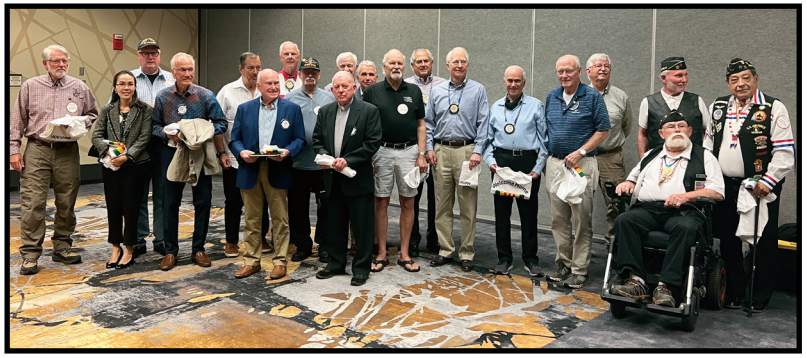
YAKIMA ROTARY TRUST HAPPENINGS



Mollie Davis Scholarship Awards Presentation
 Tuesday, June 14th
 YVC Conference Center
 5:00pm
 Appetizers & Beverages
 Please RSVP to Robin Beckett
 at robinbeckett@yakimarotarytrust.org

Mollie Davis Memorial Golf Tournament
 Friday, July 22nd
 Yakima Country Club
 Lunch & Registration 11:30am
 Shotgun Start 1:00pm





- REVIEW -

Each week, Rotary gives us an opportunity to learn - learn something new about each other, learn something new about what's going on in our club or community, and learn something new about our world. This week was one of those days as Russ Mazzola, Msgr. Ecker, Neil Buren, President John Baule, and Rick Pinnell who as Vietnam Veterans, shared short stories of their experience before they went to war and after they came home.

It was not our typical meeting as we flowed with the backdrop of the times, the introduction of special guests, the Presentation of Colors, an Unsung Hero presentation an invocation and sergeant-at-arms weaved into stories, and how the VA has changed.

The Backdrop. The Vietnam era was a very volatile time. The draft and the war were unpopular especially with older teens and young 20-year-olds. Demonstrations took place on college campuses and cities throughout the nation. Unfortunately, returning Vietnam veterans and active military took the brunt of those demonstrations.

Special Guests & Presentation of Colors. Honored were two Gold Star families Rob & Sandi Adams and Dick Rowland & Amy Seely. Sandi's 20-year-old brother was killed in Cambodia and awarded the Bronze Star for heroism. Dick's 23-year-old brother was killed in an attack at Marble Mountain. They were joined by all Vietnam veterans who served in country and Vietnam era veterans. Standing together, the Yakama Warriors Presented the Colors and with the National Anthem played by one of them on the bugle. It was a magnificent sight to behold.

Rick Pinnell. The first indication that things were different in the states was the night he arrived back in the U.S. from Vietnam. He wanted to go to the officers' club but was told he couldn't go. Why? Because he was wearing jungle fatigues; it was all he had. He was eventually allowed but it was a very hard night. His next station was Ft. Meade, Maryland where he was assigned as a company commander of Vietnam returnees. His job was to take care of all the problems - drugs, alcohol, community issues, and AWOLs. He tried his best to work with civic organizations to get help, no one would take vets - it wasn't their responsibility.

President John Baule was stationed at Fort Lewis after his number was part included in his county's lottery draft in 1970. Having never been to the Northwest, he decided to go to Seattle Center to see the Space Needle on a free weekend (he was still in basic training and was required to wear his dress uniform). He found himself singled out and berated and called names by the people he encountered; he returned to base and never went back. Fort Gordon in Georgia was his next assignment; it was even more trouble. He didn't have to be in dress uniform when he went off base, but it was apparent he was military and as such he was not treated well. He was sent to South Korea always knowing that he could be sent to Vietnam at any time.

Russ Mazzola went into the Marines as a volunteer. He was one of the fortunate ones when he returned. He traveled frequently in his Charlies (short sleeve shirts and khaki pants) because airlines provided military discounts when in uniform. He never had anyone speak or look at him disrespectfully.

Unsung Hero Award & Msgr. Ecker. Msgr. Began by presenting a Rotary Unsung Hero to the Yakama Warriors Association for their

dedication to their fellow veterans by offering dignity and respect particularly at funerals or special community event of those that are veterans. While associated with the Yakama Nation, they are representative of different ethnic groups. Their tradition to serve reminds us of the sacrificial service that their fellow military brothers have had through history and exemplify Rotary's motto of Service Above Self.

Msgr. Ecker was stationed with the second battalion Third Marines in Vietnam from 1968-69. Two months after arriving back in the states while traveling back to Boston for a reunion of his priestly ordination class, he was spit upon in the face at Logan Airport. It was traumatic experience. He was in his mid-thirties at the time; most veterans coming back were kids in their late teens or early twenties. He experienced the same reaction in Yakima when one of his fellow priests said he was a disgrace to the priesthood for serving in the military and being in Vietnam.

Neil Buren had deferments while in college and law school. He was working at the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office in Seattle when he received his draft lottery notice from the Yakima Selective Service Board. Not wanting to just go in, he elected to enlist in officer training and eventually transferred to JAG Corps and went to Vietnam as a captain. After spending a year in Vietnam, he came back to Fort Lewis where he was part of the legal defense team for Sergeant Hutto charged with war crimes in the My Lai Massacre. Jane Fonda was outside the courthouse; it was not a good experience! He then read a letter published in the Washington Post by Frank Schaeffer. It was a powerful message from the father of an enlisted soldier.

Changes to the VA. For Vietnam Veterans, coming home was NOT the same as welcome home. Vietnam Veterans are the most active group of vets today. The VA system's lack of willingness to care for Vietnam Veterans forced those them to challenge the system. They were rejected by other veteran organizations. The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars did not want to accept them. They said they were not in a war, had done bad things in Vietnam, and had bad reputations. They created own organizations: The Vietnam Veterans of America, the Council of Vietnam Veterans, and the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. They were responsible for the passing of the Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974 that led to the establishment of Vet Centers and clinics all over the U.S. not just for the Vietnam Vets but all veterans and their families. They pressed for the recognition of PTSD and got it recognized as a mental health issue. They were instrumental in for the Ongoing National Agent Orange Campaign and the recognition of Blue Water and Brown Water Navy service as Vietnam Veterans so they could receive compensation for mental or physical injuries.

Today every plane bringing troops back from combat zones is greeted by Vietnam Veterans welcoming them home. Vietnam Veterans of America say Never again will generations of Veterans abandon Another.

What is here is just a small bit of what Rick, John, Russ, Msgr. Ecker and Neil shared with us. I encourage you to watch the recording for yourself. Thank you to each of them for sharing their stories and the emotions that go with them.



THANK YOU TO
OUR ROTARY
AUCTION SPONSORS!

PLATINUM



Delta Dental of Washington

GOLD



SILVER



Morgan Stanley

BRONZE



Quinn & Aaron Dalan



For more information on how you can get your company's name added to the list,
please contact John Cooper at john@visityakima.com.