



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023 YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

*Create Hope
in the World*

MEGAN TWEEDY CAN MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS IMPACT DRUG TREATMENT OUTCOMES?



Megan Tweedy is a community activist preventing death by fentanyl overdose. Following the death of her brother, Jeff Meyer, on February 24, 2020, she began speaking publicly about the personal impact of the opioid epidemic on her life.

She is an advocate for medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) in treatment, healthcare, and criminal justice system settings. She is an owner in a local fruit business.

Megan will discuss her personal journey with the stigma and shame behind the disease while helping us understand that this is not "other's issues." Statistically, seniors 65 plus deaths from suicide, drug overdose, and accidents rose 50% from 2019 to 2021. Overdose deaths for 65 plus rose from 3 per 100,000 in 2002 to 12 per 100,000 in 2021. It is not just a younger and midlife age issue; there are no social or economic boundaries to this drug.

FOR THURSDAY'S MEETING

Greeters – Linda DiLembo,
Alex Hodge

Invocation – Rick Pinnell

Sergeant-at-Arms – Nancy Leahy

Program – Rick Pinnell

Attendance – Matt Crow

Marble Draw – Lila Mowatt

FUTURE PROGRAMS

October 19th – Bale Breakers Social
4pm-6pm

October 26th – Classification Talks

November 2nd – Tammy Buyok,
MultiCare of Yakima

November 9th – Tom Heller,
Holocaust Center for Humanity

PROPOSED NEW MEMBER

Unless written objection is received by the Board of Directors by Friday, October 13, 2023, the following candidate will be elected to membership:

Molly Neal

Assistant Vice President/Trust Advisor

Baker Boyer Bank

Classification: Investment Banking

Proposed by: Brad Hansen

Endorsed by: Mary McFadden

MARBLE RAFFLE DRAW



We are down to 2 marbles in the bucket. Ticket sales from the next meeting will be added to the pot of \$3,570. The winning ticket holder has a 50/50 chance of picking the clear marble and winning half the pot. Bring extra money and share in the fun!

OPERATION HARVEST TOMORROW PUT IT ON THE PORCH!



YAKIMA ROTARY & BALE BREAKERS

We are going to Bale Breakers for our October 19th meeting. Instead of our regular meeting at noon, we'll be traveling to the brewery for an informal social gathering. Starting at 4pm. We'll have music, a short presentation by Bale Breakers, a 90 second vacation story from Mike Hummel, and lots of time to get to know each other.

A food truck will be present. Attendees will receive a ticket for food at the truck and two tickets for drinks from Bale Breakers. This is an adult only event. Spouses, significant others, and prospective new members are invited.

REVIEW

It was a beautiful day outside as we were back on the road at the campus of Yakima Valley College. Every meeting takes a group of volunteers to make it work. Out in the lobby, our greeters were students from West Valley High School, Davis High School, and Eisenhower High School; A.P. Peterson sold raffle tickets; and Jennifer Bliesner took attendance by sight. It was busy!

We mixed things up to start the meeting with our invocation first by Tressa Shockley and music following. We had Isarely Flores, who recently performed at the Central Washington State Fair, sing for us. She has an amazing gift. President Erin welcomed our guests, talked about the dedication of the Rotary Lighting Project held Monday night at Kiwanis Park, and made an ask for volunteers for the Healthy Futures Project. Mike Hummel shared that our October 19th program will be at Bale Breakers. And Randy Beehler made one last announcement about Operation Harvest - the big day is tomorrow. President Erin also welcomed Russ Myers back as our newest Rotary member. Russ first joined our club in 2002 and spent 18 years as a strong Rotarian and leader in our community. His time away from Rotary came as he entered retirement from his position as President and CEO of Memorial & Virginia Mason Hospital. He began his career as a pharmacist while earning a master's in healthcare administration. In 1989, he joined Memorial Hospital. He became President & CEO in 2014. He has served on many boards including Washington State Hospital Association, United Way, Capitol Theatre, Heritage University, and Central WA Family Medicine. He loves water and snow skiing, golf, travel, biking, and the Cougars. We are so happy to have him back! Rotary business ended with sergeant-at-arms by Doug Rich with a segment on how well you know your fellow Rotarians.

Sonia Rodriguez True had the honor of introducing Nikki Torres as our featured speaker. In celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month, Nikki shared her journey from farmworker to president of the Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, to state senator. She began by sharing some of the fun things she did growing up as part of her culture - celebrating Día de Tu Santo (saint name day), using butter and yogurt containers as Tupperware (you never know what you were going to find), and to always check the oven before turning it on (used for storage too) - before transitioning to her life story.

We all have people that have influenced our lives. For Nikki, there were two people who have had the biggest impact on her life: Martin Valadez Torres, the current director of the Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Col. Felix Vargas, a retired Army colonel and her campaign manager. Nikki is a first-generation Latina, a mother, grandmother of three, a Pasco resident for over 40 years, the middle of six children in her family, and grew up working agriculture alongside her parents. As a young girl she worked long hours picking fruit (cherries, apples, plums, and grapes). In 1992, she became a

teen mom at the age of 16. Her parents were disappointed; they had high hopes that she would finish school and do something with her life. Her parents didn't have much of a formal education but were very smart. Her mom had a sixth-grade education. Education was not an option for his dad. Her dad was one of 16; her mother was one of 11. They met in California; they both worked in the hospitality industry. They decided to move to Washington; they heard there were jobs here. In the evenings they studied for citizenship classes. They became citizens when President Reagan was in office as part of an amnesty program. At 8 years old, Nikki was their translator for everything. When times got tough, they stood in line for food and clothes, but never for welfare benefits. Her upbringing was a very tough love upbringing referred to as La Chancla. Her older brother served in the Marines, her older sister is a doctor, her little sister is a hairdresser, and her youngest brother is a commercial driver.

After having her daughter, she continued to go to school. It was very tough paying for rent and childcare and going to school at the same time. At the beginning of her senior year, she mentioned to her high school counselor that two of her friends were talking about enrolling in a youth program. Her counselor said no to the non-profit, told her she wouldn't make it, and she should drop out. Nikki met with the person running the program in Pasco only to find out that they were full. She shared her disappointment and what her counselor had said. The person said let me see what I can do. Next thing she knew, she was enrolled in the program and completed her GED. She attended Columbia Basin College and received support from the TRIO program. She was the first person in her family to earn a college degree. In 2015 she received her MBA. Her father did not get to see her walk for her bachelor's degree. She knew he was proud. It had taken him a couple of years to talk to her again after becoming a teen mom.

She met her mentor Martin Valadez Torres when he was President of Chamber of Commerce and she had become part of the board. After one of their meetings, he came to her and told her she would be board president one day - she said no way. The next year she became president. Sometimes people see something in us that we don't see - when someone tells you that you are worthy of a responsibility, believe them and do it. Martin also convinced her to run for city council. We all need people like Martin in our lives. Mentors, a youth program and TRIO gave her a hand-up to get where she is today without much family support because of her culture. She is the first Latina to serve the senate in Eastern Washington and won't be the last. She ended by sharing that the non-profit that changed her life was OIC of Washington. We all have a story about our journey. She hoped that hers encourages other women especially Latina and youth to take that next step whether it is a higher position at work or running for elected office.