



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2022 YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

*Imagine
Rotary*

ANDREW HOLT, JONATHAN SMITH & AMY MARTINEZ WHAT'S NEW IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & THE WORKFORCE



Andrew Holt is a native of Southern California. A graduate of UCLA, he began his professional career in radio broadcasting in Pennsylvania, Oregon, and Walla Walla as both a DJ, sports reporter and announcer, and interviewer. He then transitioned to a downtown revitalization and Chamber of Commerce professional working in both Walla Walla and Dayton.

Holt took over as CEO of the Downtown Association of Yakima in May 2017. He oversees downtown Yakima extra maintenance services including the flower program, special events such as Downtown Summer Nights, and works to improve the economic health of downtown business. He is known and respected throughout the State for his Main Street Management skills and accomplishments.



Amy Martinez has over 20 years of workforce training experience and is the CEO of the South Central Workforce Development Council (SCWDC). She directs all program operations, local area strategic planning, leads business development efforts, and is responsible for the oversight of an annual operating budget in excess of \$12 million. Throughout her tenure with the SCWDC, she has successfully performed key functions that include the development of grant proposals, procurement of service providers, administrative policies and procedures, monitoring, and development and implementation of discretionary programs.

Ms. Martinez has developed close professional relationships with federal, state administrative, and policy staff and is often consulted when considering new pilot or project programs. She has excelled in working with business, labor, and community partners as evidenced by the growth of youth and adult apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, the development and establishment of the Columbia Gorge learning center for drop-out youth and adults, and the bi-state workforce collaborative to develop seamless workforce programs between Washington and Oregon for business and worker customers.



Jonathan Smith is a Certified Economic Developer with seventeen years of rural economic development experience. His key accomplishments include successful recruitment of national and international companies and assisting local businesses with expansions and exporting projects. Smith has helped over twenty-five companies locate or expand new operations. These companies have invested over \$1.6 billion in facilities and equipment and have created approximately 1,700 jobs.

Jon also has experience with infrastructure development and has helped secure over \$40 million of grant and loan funding for job-creating projects. This includes funding for rail, water, sewer, roads, and electrical infrastructure. Some of his most rewarding work has been coordinating workforce development programs between businesses and educational institutions. These training programs result in hundreds of local residents receiving the training and skills they need to be successful in local family-wage jobs. Additionally, Jon has worked with small businesses and rural communities to help develop main streets and spur business growth in distressed areas.

Smith is a past chair of the Washington Economic Development Association and a board member of the SCWDC, Yakima SHRM, the local professional HR Association and serves on the Transportation Policy Board at Yakima Valley Conference of Governments. He has a master's degree in Communication & Leadership Studies from Gonzaga University and a bachelor's degree in Public Communication with a minor in Economics from the University of Idaho.

FOR THURSDAY’S MEETING

Music – Bola Suriana
Greeters – Sara Watkins, Paul Larson
Invocation – Dottie Hildebrand
Sergeant-at-Arms – John Cooper
Program – Linda Kaminski

FUTURE PROGRAMS

November 3rd – Rikki Cooper & Kevin McCarthy, White Pass Ski Area
November 10th – Peggy Ludwig, Veterans Day Program
November 17th – Jeffrey Callaway, Training the Next Generation of Fermentation Scientists

LIVE AUCTION SPOTLIGHT

APRIL IN AUGUSTA



Four people will be among the finest professional golfers and their most privileged fans when they become the owners of this three-night 2023 Masters Golf Tournament package. You will arrive Friday, April 7, 2023 and depart Monday April 10, 2023; during which time you will stay in a three bedroom two bath private home in Augusta, Georgia; make use of four Saturday tournament badges and four Sunday tournament badges, receive four souvenir Masters chairs, and have parking within walking distance to the entrance tunnel. Airfare, meals, and car rental is not included; but the accommodations, badges, and souvenirs are priceless. And undoubtedly there will be a few mint juleps and good old-fashioned Southern cuisine to enjoy. This package is well above par and will give you bragging rights for years to come.

Donor: Friends of Rotary

Value... \$32,000

REVIEW

The celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month continued as Peter Finch introduced the West Valley Ballet Folklorico dancing group from West Valley Middle School and Innovation Center. eek. They were fantastic! Sheri Bissell shared poem from Erin Hanson called *A Bookshelf for a Heart* in honor of our program speakers.

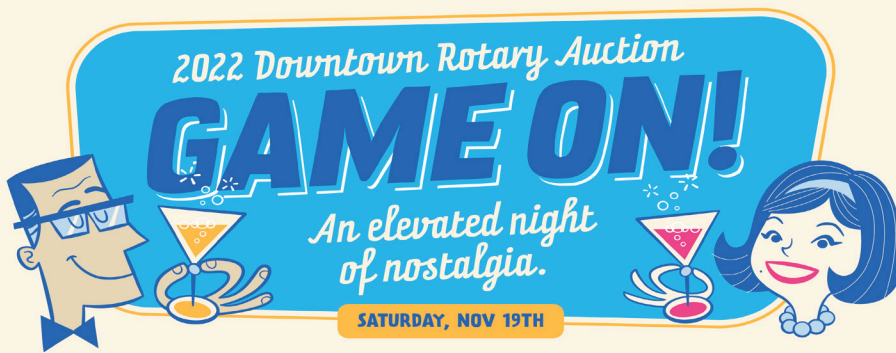
Brad Hansen and Sonia Rodriguez True followed with two new member introductions. Brad introduced Bobbi Carey. Bobbi was born in North California and moved to Yakima in 1994. As a child, she spent time traveling back to spend time with family. She graduated from East Valley High School, YVC, and Southern New Hampshire University with a degree in Business Administration. She worked at Memorial Hospital for 7 years before becoming a stay-at-home mom. Once her son started school she returned to work. Today she is a real estate today is mortgage loan officer at Homebridge Financial. She loves spending time with her son, and you may see her on a dirt bike occasionally. Sonia introduced Jessica Humphreys. Jessica is the Yakima County Superior Court Director. She was born in the Yakima Valley, grew up in the North Fork of Ahtanum, attended West Valley High School, and worked several jobs to put herself through YVC and WSU. She began working at the County in the clerk’s office all while obtaining her bachelors and master’s degree and being mom to 2 small boys. She eventually moved to Superior Court and was appointed to her current job in 2018. When not working she likes to travel, hike, camp, and restore old furniture. We welcome them both to Rotary!

Books come with a lifelong love of reading, bringing imaginations to life, and learning new things. It was a real treat to have authors Alli Frank and Asha Youmans as our program speakers. Alli and Asha met while working Berkshire School, a preK-5 independent school in Seattle. They formed a friendship that led them to write not one, but two books together with a third one on the way. There are one of the only Black and White co-authors in the history of publishing. Their presentation was a conversation with Jennifer Bliesner moderating; she did the greatest job. The first question was about how Covid helped or hurt the launch of their first book *Tiny Imperfections* in 2020. They launched with one of the big publishers, Penguin Random House. They had travel booked from coast to coast with flights, hotels, and events. Asha bought new clothes that have never been worn to this day. May of 2020 was also a time of social reckoning. They were writing about race, class, privilege, and parenting; that conversation going on in the world. Publishers and bookstores were putting out lists of books for people to ready. There were some phenomenal books on the list, the majority were non-fiction and focused on learning about different races, cultures, and religions through the exploration of trauma. They entered into writing knowing that they wanted to make people laugh and to expose the joy and love within every cultural group through fiction. The blessing of launching in Covid was they already had a conversation going; it may have been happenstance, but it cemented their work forward on their second and third books.

Movie rights and their second book *Never Meant to Meet You* were part of the discussion. Before *Tiny Imperfections* hit the shelf, they were approached by Netflix and Regina King’s production company. Covid came – they were picked up quickly and just as quickly dropped. They have a new set of agents in Hollywood that are shopping around the second book and there’s already interest in television and film for that and their third book. They pin interest as a very broad term. Interest in the second and third books has caused many people to go back and pick up their first. *Never Meant to Meet You* is the story of two women who didn’t intend to become friends, a Black Southern Baptist kindergarten teacher and a White Jewish book editor. Circumstances brought them together, and in the process, realized just how similar they are. We all judge people; the story of humanity is one were we see things through the lens of our race, religion, class, and privilege. In the end there are things that tie us together because we are simply human. In writing it allowed Alli and Asha to explore the topic of grief, not necessarily from losing someone but through the wider lens of the loss of routines, community, and for some, jobs that we all experienced during Covid.

Their writing process, they agree on every word, piece of punctuation, and every sentence. They don’t divide up writing between them (with one writing about White people and the other writing about the Black people). They have disagreements. When the disagree they allow each other the grace of space to sit with what they maybe didn’t know; it becomes a teaching moment between them. They get through the process until they both agree.

As a teacher, Asha shared that it is a magical thing to be invited into the lives of other families. She has never met a rich teacher; the richness comes in the hugs that you get and the experience of growing that is very innocent in how they view the world and very honest. Kids point a lot and say things out loud. Curiosity is an innocent thing; you can tell when it comes from good intentions. Asking questions out of curiosity stop when they learn that it can be scary or slap their hands for saying it that they stop. We tell kids to dare to be wrong and to make mistakes; at some point we don’t allow that kind of grace from adults anymore. In addition to their mission to bring humor into storytelling they hope that people enjoy their books and characters, and that the adults who read their book become willing to put themselves out there with someone who might not seem like me on the outside – to be curious. We are living in a culture that when you say or do the wrong thing you get judged at your very worst moment rather than all your best moments. We need to reach out to enjoy each other’s differences and perspectives. It was a great conversation! They brought smiles, laughter, and the challenge to think differently and to give grace. The best indication of the program was that the books available to purchase were sold out.



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