



Today's Noon Meeting was the last one for the year, 2018, and although it's been a busy time for many of us, with Christmas "just around the corner", there were 21 members, plus two guests, in attendance. Jack started us off, as we joined him in saying The Pledge. John F. chose to lead us in God Bless America. Larry thanked The Lord for our fellowship, and he asked for His Blessing upon us as we endeavor to serve others.



Today, we welcomed guests, Sharon, lovely wife of Jack, and Peggy, lovely wife of Larry!

Pres. Jack gave an overview of the Club Calendar for January, 2019. Here is the slate of programs for that month. 1/7 Naples Ambulance with Linda Almekinder, 1/14 Continuation of I'm Not Dead Yet with Tom Hawks, 1/21 Club Assembly with The Membership, and 1/28 Senior Resources with Tina Bloom.



Jack presented some highlights from today's Board Meeting. Two new members are being proposed. Their applications are on hand. As a growing group of Rotarians and community members, we are going to be exploring additional ways

that we can be of service. A Service Project that was discussed was that of building "Mini Libraries" around the village, to encourage reading by all ages. These little libraries would be made of wood. Someone is needed to "spearhead" this project. We are looking for ideas! Election of Officers for the next Rotary Year will take place at the upcoming Club Assembly in January.

Jack read a note of thanks from Susan for the Christmas plant we sent her. Though she is convalescing, she will continue to do the books. We wish Susan a speedy recovery!



Speaking of Susan: Check out what she contributed to the Christmas Gift exchange last week, even though she couldn't attend. Skip got the shopping taking care of when he picked the huge bag on the stage. The photo above shows what it contained!!

Today's Program featured fellow Rotarian, Mike Joseph, who talked about the Naples Valley Visitors Association. Initially, Mike thanked John F. for his expertise in the use of technology, as we were being "livestreamed"! The NVVA has 45 members, (groups), of which Naples Rotary is a part. Back in 2010, this organization was started for the purpose of beautifying Naples, and since then its membership has grown! "Naples has many resources," Mike continued, "It is unique." He went on to add that Naples' main sources of revenue come from agriculture and tourism.



There are various monetary levels of membership in the NVVA, and its goal is to keep Naples viable and healthy. NVVA has a Facebook page, and its number of followers has grown! Not only through this means is NVVA made known to the public, it is advertised in seven different publications! Naples is truly a potpourri of enticements, ranging from golf courses, shops, and theater, to restaurants, wineries, and a distillery! These unique attractions offer a memorable experience for all who partake of Naples charm! Mike added that are two main events during the year that help to promote the NVVA. One is in February, and that is Vintage, Vines, and Valentines. The other is in June, and that is Busk and Balter. The February Event helps to beat the "Winter Doldrums", and the June Event helps to "kick off" the Summer tourist season. Also forthcoming, according to Mike, are three signs featuring Naples, and the Finger Lakes Region, which will be placed about town. After listening to Mike tell about our beautiful area, it certainly makes one glad to live in such a unique and wonderful place! Thanks, Mike!

In recent weeks, we've been combining the Fines and Happy Bills, and this has made things a little less complicated for this reporter! Many were pleased with Mike's interesting program on the NVVA. Nancy's, John's and Bo's phones went off during the meeting. (Bo's was during the Board Meeting!) Billy had missed a meeting. Frank and John were pleased with the Operation Santa distribution last Saturday. They appreciated all Skip's efforts. Mike didn't have his badge. Laurie was getting her stitches out!

The Ace of Hearts was up to \$56.00! Sharon drew Ticket #142, which was Pat's, but I pulled out the Jack of Spades!

Pat had a Win-Win for us today. Do you know why covered bridges were built the way they were? Many had some pretty good guesses, but the reason the bridges were covered was to make the cows think they were in the barn, so as not to get "spooked" when crossing the river! (Laurie says when growing up in Greenwood, their cows never got spooked by the waterways!!)

The Rotary Moment came when Jack showed pictures of the Christmas Party, and Operation Santa. There were over 30 young people from school helping us out this year!

Here are some other tidbits. Sharon and Jack had visited Al, and they had taken his gift to him. (Remember he got the snowman at the Christmas party?) Al always enjoyed the Gift Exchange! Billy reported that Alvaro is now with his second host family, The Almekinders! Sharon said that the folks in the nursing homes really appreciated the poinsettias from Operation Santa!

The next time we all will meet will be in 2019! We will be meeting at the VFW for our two Evening Meetings during January and February. Bo and I want to wish each and every one of our "Rotary Family" a Very Merry Christmas, and a Happy, Healthy New Year!

Just before "going to press," President Jack sent a photo of a Thank You Note from Al Mann, which he thought the members would like to see. Nice penmanship from our favorite Honorary Rotarian, isn't it!

