

Meeting Recap Date: September 8, 2022

Attendance

Beth McConn
Carol Keplar
Casey Robbins

James Beetham
Jeff Keplar
Jeremy Penrod

Matthew Gullion
Mike Springer

Prayer, Inspirational Moment:

Jeremy shared an opening prayer.

Rotary Minute:

James offered a Rotary minute about getting started with Rotary by setting up for the meetings every Wednesday night after church, liking the group, and deciding to join Ossian Rotary. Thanks, James, for having a helpful Rotarian spirit and joining us.



Welcome to our Newest Member Mike Springer

We welcomed into Ossian Rotary as our newest member, Mike Springer, superintendent of Northern Wells Community School Corporation. Mike has been married 29 years to Arabella (Belle) Springer, who teaches first grade at Ossian Elementary. Together they have four adult children and they are anticipating their first grandchild in late-September.

This is Mike's 29th year in public education. Previously, he served schools in Avon, Goshen, and Wawasee, Indiana, as well as Rantoul, Illinois. This is Mike's third year serving as the superintendent at Northern Wells Community Schools.

Mike appreciates the work of Rotary, and he wants Northern Wells Community Schools to partner with Rotary.

Mike was commuting every week from Avon, where his daughter attended her last year of high school. He and his wife Belle have now moved to The Flats in Bluffton and plan to build a home in Ossian in the near future.

A warm Ossian Rotary welcome to you, Mike; we are thrilled to have you join our Rotary Club.

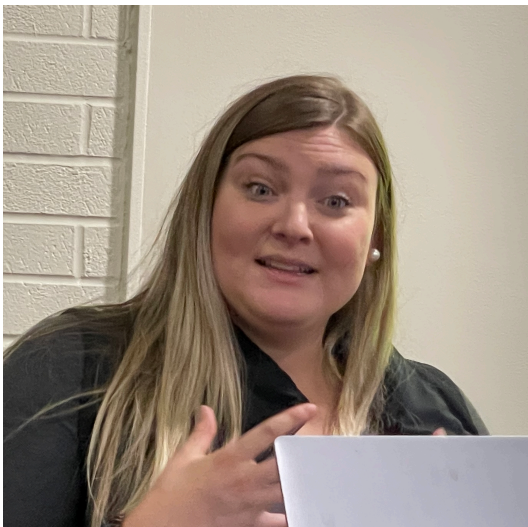
Weekly Announcements

- 9/15 Ossian Rotary will assist Ossian Revitalization at Ossian Days by helping serve the annual Pork Chop dinner. Carol has the sign-up sheet.
- 9/27 Ossian Health has Golden Girls Night Out and Fashion Show.
- 10/3 there will be music at the Plaza in Bluffton.
- 10/8 1-4pm at First Baptist, Ossian, is their Fall Festival with chili, hotdogs, and fun.
- 10/8 is the Chili Walk and a concert in Bluffton.

September 15th Assignments

Greeter: James
Prayer / Welcome Thought: Casey
Member / Rotary Minute: Mike
Wrap-up: Paris

Our Speaker this Week (thanks to Beth for this recap)



Audry Dudley is the Tourism Coordinator for Wells County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development.

Audry was born and raised in Bluffton and did a college internship with the Chamber of Commerce and Bluffton NOW where she helped reinvigorate the Farmers Market, among other things. She has since joined the paid staff as the tourism coordinator.

Audry explained that tourism isn't just what you normally think of associated with vacations, but also includes people coming to Wells County for sporting events, staying in a hotel for a family event such as a wedding, camping trips, and anything else that brings people to our county. Three things important to our visitor economy are to embrace both the tourists and the residents, focus on the place and not the person, and

improving the quality of the place. This involves looking at what attracts visitors, our infrastructure, and services that cater to the needs of visitors and residents.

One way that we could improve tourism and marketing efforts for Wells County is an Innkeepers Tax. This is NOT a tax for residents or businesses but is a visitors' fee. Currently we have had some funding to help with tourism, the website, the books, marketing and branding but we need something more sustainable. Out of the 92 counties in Indiana we are one of only 13 that do NOT have this tax in place. Using the number of rooms available in Wells County and the average cost per room it has been calculated that at 50% capacity for the year the visitors fee could bring in approximately \$93,000 per year.

Currently Audry is focusing on revitalization, community events, arts and culture, branding, website (visitwellscounty.com) and social media. Any events that we have going on in the community can be submitted to Audry at visitwellscounty@gmail.com for promotion.

We recited the 4-Way Test to end the meeting.

Upcoming Speakers

- September 15 – Rhonda O'Reilly, Karing for Kids
- September 22 – Dillion Traynor, Matt Matters
- September 29 – Donald Steininger, Craigville Depot
- October 6 – Jody Heaston, Quabache State Park
- October 13 – Belinda Zinko, Elzey-Patterson-Rodak Funeral Home
- October 20 – District Governor Tim Gibson (board meeting to follow the meeting)

Executives & Directors

President	Jeff Keplar	Director	Kathy Boles
President Elect	Jeremy Penrod	Director	Matthew Gullion
Treasurer	Carol Keplar	Rotary Foundation	Jeremy Penrod
Secretary	Paris Feters	Membership	Carol Keplar
Assist Secretary	Beth McConn		

Club Information

Meetings Thursdays at 7:30 am

First Baptist Church of Ossian, 1001 Dehner Dr., Ossian, IN 46777