

The Weekly Reporter



Rotary Club of Batesville

Chartered November 17, 2009

Tuesday, Apr 18, 2017

The meeting was convened by President Nikki Hutchinson. All recited the Pledge of Allegiance and Vicki Kruse gave the invocation.

Club meeting:

- ❖ Indianapolis Indians Fundraising Event
 - As of Apr 17, 28 tickets have been sold.
 - The flyer for the event is being sent to the Chateau Assisted Living and Greensburg Rotary club.
- ❖ The donation to the Batesville Police Dept of \$500 for a security camera was delivered by Margie Walke.
- ❖ The \$500 donation to the Food Pantry was delivered.
- ❖ District Conference
 - Nikki Hutchinson and Mike Kruse will give a presentation on the Critical Issues forums held in Batesville.
 - The District Conference schedule was passed out at the meeting.
 - The Batesville Rotary Club will put together a basket worth \$50 of gardening items for the auction at the District Conference. Thank you to all who donated items for the basket.
- ❖ Pet Adoption Day
 - The event will be on April 29 from 11 AM – 2 PM in the Kroger parking lot.
 - Volunteers are needed to set-up at 10 – 10:30 AM.
 - May need volunteers to walk the dogs.
- ❖ Critical Issues Forum
 - Scheduled for April 20 at Hillenbrand Industries with the same agenda as the first forum.
- ❖ District Grant Application
 - Nikki H. and Mike K. met with Charlie Raab and Cathy Martini concerning the Spirit Store where shirts and school supplies will be sold.
 - The club will assist in the store build and provide adult support during the project.
 - The club is in need of the business plan from the school in order to complete the grant application.
- ❖ District Governor visit is Aug 29.
 - Motion to move the Aug 29 meeting from 6 PM at a restaurant to noon at the library by Donald Mobley and seconded. Motion passed.
- ❖ Interact Service Project
 - To raise \$10,000 to pay for a well in a developing country through an organization called Hands 4 Others.
 - Have a walk for water event. People will carry a bucket of water from Brum Woods to Liberty Park. Along the way will be stations where walkers can read about the lives of families having to get water this way each day.
 - The BHS Interact Club is asking our club to provide booths at Liberty Park.
 - June 10 from 8 AM – noon.

- A planning meeting is scheduled for Wed April 19 at 5:30 PM in the Teacher's Lounge at BHS.
- ❖ For the next meeting, the following committee chairs for the 2017–18 year will be filled (Foundation Chair, Membership Chair, and Publicity Chair). If you are interested, please let Donald M. or Nikki H. know.
- ❖ April 25 Social Dinner will be at China Wok at 6 PM.

Tuesday, Apr 18, 2017

Critical Issues – Heroin the Silent Victims

Over 70 people attended Heroin Epidemic: The Silent Victims, a Critical Issues Series program, April 20 at the Batesville Casket Co. Doll Plant Conference Room.

Sponsored by the Coalition for a Drug-Free Batesville, Batesville Rotary Club, Batesville Area Chamber of Commerce, Batesville Casket Co., *The Herald-Tribune*, Hillenbrand Inc., Margaret Mary Health, Southeastern Indiana Voices for Children and WRBI, the event featured four panelists – Justin Rowland, Indiana Department of Child Services Decatur County family case manager; Tonya Ruble-Richter, Southeastern Indiana Voices for Children executive director; Sarah Brichto, Children's Advocacy Center of Southeastern Indiana executive director; and Ryan King, Ripley County Circuit Court judge – who gave their insight into how drug use impacts children and family members.



Rowland explained, "Anytime a call for abuse or neglect comes in we start with an assessment and go over the allegations and assess the situation. We go into the home and make sure the children are safe and work to get the truth and decide what to do. Sometimes it takes a while because we're deciding whether or not to open a case.

"If we do open a case, we work to get the family hooked up with services, such as outpatient or inpatient services, therapy Unfortunately, sometimes we have to take the children from the families. If they are in foster, relative or kinship care, our goal is to get them back to their families

"I started this job about three years ago, and since then there has been a lot of changeover. When I started, there were nine caseworkers in Decatur County, and now there are 19. Drug use is a big part of that. These types of cases are the longest lasting because drug use is so difficult to overcome. We can get a lot of re-occurring cases because parents relapse." Caseworkers deal with 30 – 35 children at a time.

He stressed, "For those family members who are using drugs, we have to help them find legal financial income because there's frequent job loss and lack of support, as well as lack of supervision, which leads to dangerous situations. For example, a child may be by himself for four to five hours because a parent has overdosed. For a child to see that, it's traumatic.

"Incarceration leaves children without parents Addicts may act out, so domestic violence is huge. We're dealing with a whole range of issues. There's no one good answer to solve this problem.

"Some kids have behavioral problems and have to go to residential facilities. We don't have a lot of foster families."

In 2015, Indiana was the second highest state with children in care.

Ruble-Richter has been involved with Voices for Children, which serves Ripley and Jefferson counties, for about eight years, starting out as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer. She said she moved from north of Cincinnati to Madison because she thought it "was like Mayberry. I had no idea what was going on right under my nose until I was a CASA volunteer."

Speaking to those in attendance, she emphasized, "Without community support, we can't do a darn thing. I'm so thankful you guys are here."

The director explained, "I run a volunteer advocacy program where people from all different backgrounds come and advocate for a child who is in the system. There are millions of different kinds of abuse.

"This is the sixth year in a row that child abuse numbers have gone up in Indiana 93 percent involve some kind of substance abuse. In Jefferson County, 25% of all babies born are drug affected.

"A CHINS is a Child in Need of Services. That means there's a case that is substantiated and the child was abused by a caregiver. It requires court intervention The number of CHINS (in Ripley and Jefferson counties) has increased 300 percent over the past three years. In 2005, a law was passed in Indiana that every CHIN has a CASA volunteer.

"These kids are struggling, and the problem is affecting everyone The amount of drug use during pregnancy is significant," and babies are being born exposed to these drugs. "The effects go on for years and years. School officials talk to us about an influx of kids with significant behavioral issues, and this affects the entire class, the education these kids are receiving and resources. There are therapists who work with 90-some kids. In a small rural area our resources are strapped. We're trying to address this, but efficiency is in question. We can't handle the volume

"We are focused on the child. Sometimes the parents step up and say they want help and do the things ordered in court, but sometimes they fall back and can't do it. It's a very sad thing when you see a parent who wants to fight the addiction and can't.

"Then there are families who don't want to address the addiction. They take drugs over their child because they just aren't able to overcome it. The majority of cases that end parental rights have to do with substance abuse issues."

Currently there are 151 children on a wait list for a CASA volunteer in Jefferson and Ripley Counties, which have 59 volunteers.

Brichto said prior to the opening of the Children's Advocacy Center of Southeastern Indiana, "we found that children were being re-traumatized each time they were interviewed by someone (prosecutors, DCS personnel, law enforcement) in abuse cases.

"We try to bring all the investigators together and the non-offending caregiver. We have two forensic interviewers who wear earbuds (when interviewing the children) so they can communicate with investigators to make sure everyone gets all questions answered."

She revealed the difference between the CAC and CASA. "We are at the front end of the investigation, pre-CASA. We're trying to find the truth behind the investigation (and) we try to get a child's statement that we record.

"Most of the children we see are victims of sexual abuse We only really see the child for that one time, in their crisis mode." She announced that of the eight counties that the center serves, "our biggest customer is Dearborn County, but Decatur County is catching up."

Regarding the heroin epidemic, Brichto reported, "I haven't seen a whole lot of increase in sexual abuse cases, but I have seen an upsurge in neglect cases and an uptick in violence I've noticed a whole lot more grandparents are taking care of their grandchildren. They don't really have any guardianship rights, but our victim advocate has been helping them find resources they need."

King observed, "There are a lot of children who are victims because their parents are using meth or heroin." He said many people may have seen on Facebook or on the news where "a law enforcement officer found a car where a child was in the back seat and the adults in front had shot up.

"This is not something that only happens in someone else's neighborhood. This is the kind of thing we are seeing here in Ripley County When I first took the bench, there was a mother in a hotel that overdosed. Upon investigation, there was no paternity established, so when the mother passed away, there was a parentless child.

"To me that makes this a big deal There are some cases where parents are so addicted to meth or heroin that threatening to take their children away is not much of a deterrent. They don't even show up for court I say meth or heroin because it keeps going from one to the other (as the most common or dangerous drug of choice). I see as much meth as heroin right now, and they're probably equally as bad.

"Frequently, I've ordered parents to do drug screenings, counseling, have contact with DCS ... and if they don't, they lose their parental rights Some of these are not bad people, they're just addicted. The drugs are so powerful, nothing else matters If you can't get them cleaned up, you can't do much with them.

"Finding an answer for this (solving the drug problem) is difficult. If there was an easy answer, this would be an empty room.

"We've had some success and have gotten some people off the drugs, but relapse happens quite often. It's a constant battle that DCS and law enforcement are battling."

In 2013, 33 civil cases in Ripley County involved a CHINS. In 2014 - 49 cases, in 2015 – 83 cases, in 2016 – 115 cases, and in 2017 45 cases to date involved a CHINS.

Other info

- Persons can report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the DCS hotline at 800-800-5556.
- CASA volunteers are always needed. Persons who want to volunteer in Ripley County can contact Ruble-Richter at 812-599-2630 or tonya@voicesforchildren.net. Kelly Bulmer is the Franklin County Court-Appointed Special Advocates for Children recruiter. She can be reached at 765-547-1493 or casarecruit@franklincounty.in.gov.

Coming Programs/Events:

Note: If you just can't make it for a whole lunch hour, please try to come for the 2nd half to support our speakers. Thanks.

- Batesville Memorial Public Library **on the first and third Tuesdays @ noon and on the last Tuesday of the month at China Wok at 6 PM for a dinner social.**

Words to Inspire:

"I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; I will not refuse to do the something I can do." - Helen Keller.

Other Notes of Interest:

- ❖ Websites: Our club: <http://batesvillerotary.wordpress.com/>
- ❖ District: <http://www.rotary6580.org/>
- ❖ International: <http://www.rotary.org/>
- ❖ KIVA loans: http://www.kiva.org/team/batesville_rotary



- 1st Is it the Truth?
- 2nd Is it Fair to all concerned?
- 3rd Will it build Goodwill and better Friendships?
- 4th Will it be Beneficial to all concerned?

The Rotary Club of Batesville meets Tuesday at noon, at Batesville Memorial Public Library in Batesville.

Local clubs to make up attendance:

Greensburg	Monday 12:00 Noon	Country Club
Rising Sun	Wednesday 12:00 Noon	Grand Victoria Casino
Shelbyville	Thursday, 6:15 p.m.	Fiddlers' Three
