

First thing - **NO MEETING NEXT FRIDAY.**

There were no guests today except for our speaker.

We sang Happy Birthday to Mike Fleming. He was born on Christmas Day. Happy Birthday, Mikey.

Our speaker was Kaleb Perdew, the Executive Director of the CLDI, Community Leadership Development, Inc. To say he is passionate about his organization and his job is a complete understatement. Good thing that I didn't have my checkbook with me.

Kaleb has been with CLDI for 6 years and the ED for the past year. CLDI was started by Dave Hagestrom who has been a fixture in the Christian community and South side for decades. He led Young Life meetings when I was in high school (And that was a long time ago.) I didn't get when CLDI was established but they are a non-profit looking to help the lives of people in the southside triangle. They do this through faith based counseling, addiction recovery, job planning, housing, and family support.

They focus on geography which is why they focus on the southside and the triangle. The triangle is roughly the area south of 1st Ave South, east and SE of State Ave and west of 27th St down to the women's prison area.

Dave Hagestrom had seen the problems in this area and worked hard to alleviate them. He started building homes and moving existing homes from the hospital corridor to lots in the triangle. He wanted to build affordable nice homes that people would want to live in and take care of. CLDI also mentored youth and built support networks. They are in the area schools everyday helping with recess, crossing guards, and lunchrooms working to support the kids.

They started Hannah House at some point. This is a sober living home for women recovering from addiction. The main part of their mission is to help get Moms back with their children. They presently have room for 15 and will gain 3 more spots in the coming year. They take baby steps to recovery. A woman could be in the program for well over a year before they go out and live independently. Nevertheless, they will always have a support network with them. Kaleb told us that recently there have been 40 graduates of the program and only had 5 relapses. Of those 5, all are back in recovery at Hannah House. That is a pretty good track record.

In the last few years CLDI has put \$16 million into housing and job training. 50 new doors of housing will be ready by January which means they will have a total of 100 spots for people to live in a nice affordable home. Rail Line coffee house is located on 1st Ave So and 29th St. They use that business to help train people to get out into the workforce and live their dreams. One example was a young lady who wanted to be a dentist. Through counseling she decided 10 years of schooling was probably too much, so they focused on a 2 year dental assistant program which she graduated from and is now a dental assistant, making good money, has benefits and a career path.

They also have started a Senior Living area that is just south of the coffee house. They have a group there that can support each other, have good camaraderie, and have a good place to live.

That is it for this week. Have a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and be safe.

NO MEETING NEXT FRIDAY.

Dave