

B.E.C.O.N
March 29, 2024

Craig is back and led the meeting this morning.

Breakfast was egg & bacon muffin or egg and ham croissant.

Thanks, Bill Kennedy, for the prayer reminding us of Jesus' sacrifice for us on Good Friday and praises for Easter Sunday.

Guests & Announcements:

Speaker Sherlynn Stewart, Executive Director of Family Promise.

Bill Kennedy mentioned the Vietnam ceremony Friday at 12 noon. Monday 4/1 starts the month of Child abuse prevention. Reminded about the pinwheels and the ceremony at the Courthouse.

Mike Songer mentioned the Billings YMCA pro racquet ball tournament – Thursday 4/4.

Dina was not in attendance, but I'm sure she would have reminded everyone about the district convention May 3rd and 4th. Please search for the email that Dina has sent out with the application attached.

Board nominations: Larry nominated Whitney (she has not accepted yet) and Tara nominated Bruce Jensen and he accepted – previously nominated: Jeff Roach - accepted, Jesse McKee - accepted, Mike Songer nominated, but not accepted yet.

President elect –Tony nominated Tanya and she accepted.

Secretary – Bruce nominated Shannon and she accepted.

Foundation Board – 2 positions open – Dave Statton nominated Bill Kennedy and he accepted. Kim nominated Trina White and she accepted.

April 4th at Meadowlark is the District all club social.

Speaker:

At Family Promise her job is marketing and events. She helped start the West End Exchange, but currently is in the Rotary. Family Promise focuses on homelessness. There is a big misconception of what homelessness really is. A large amount of homelessness in Billings is families. Due to the increase in rent and other issues, homeless families have increased. Family Promise only works with families and not individuals.

Family Promise was started in churches and developed into Family Promise of Yellowstone. Their main focus is to help families out of homelessness. The programs are to help resolve the barriers that are preventing them from whatever they need. This is a transitional program to get them into housing. They have a 94% success rate of not going back to homelessness. Family Promise is 20 years old. They have helped over 5,000 families over those 20 years. They teach parenting and budgeting.

Some of these families are from generational poverty – living in cars, hotels or couch surfing. Homelessness increased 89% since 2007. Families with children are the fastest growing homeless

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population. Over 600 children are homeless in Yellowstone County. Many are not “low income” and can’t get help, yet not enough to cover the minimum required for housing.

Family Promise is the only community diaper bank in Montana, giving out 215,000 diapers last year. They can purchase them in bulk at \$0.17 each vs. the cost at the store. Anyone who needs them can come and get them, Tuesdays 3:30 – 5:30

It takes about 1,400 volunteers to run their programs. They only have 4 employees. They have 9 home churches for housing – 5:30 pm – 6:00am. Participants can stay for 1 week and then must rotate to the next church. There are volunteers who provide food for the families. They have volunteers who stay with the families to manage risk.

She had pictures displaying the various benefits of the program. They prepare them for success. They have built/purchased housing to help with this program. They continue to work on purchasing to help families with transitional housing. The families want to move on to their own.

They do work with single Veterans.

They have raised \$30,000 for fencing and playground equipment, so kids have someplace to play.

Their goal is to continue to help families. Please volunteer as they always need help.

Q: are you partnering with a group on Sioux Lane?

A: There are a few different programs, but they are not partnering with the development on Sioux Lane.

Q: how long are families generally in transition?

A: 3-4 months in shelter and then to the housing program, so generally about a year.

Q: after in their own home, how long can they come back for help (i.e. finances).

A: Forever.

Q: With the diaper drive is it more beneficial for people to donate money to so Family Promise can purchase at the lower cost vs. donating diapers purchased at the store?

A: Both are great and much appreciated. Some people/companies like to donate and get a picture with the large quantities donated. Otherwise, yes, the cash donation can go a long way to purchasing diapers.