

Meet Our Speaker: **Donna Kinsey Blackburn**

Donna has been a teacher at Seminole Elementary for 30 years, and worked for Pinellas County Schools for 35 years. She plans to retire at the end of next school year, June 2016.

Donna has lived in Seminole for 50 years consistently, and attended all Seminole schools: Seminole Elem, Seminole Junior High, Seminole High.

Seminole Elementary School:

1911 - Campbell School was located on the north side of 74th Ave.

1914 - Plans were made to build a new brick schoolhouse.

1915 - Seminole Elementary was opened on the south side of 74th Ave. It consisted of 1 building, 2 classrooms, 2 restrooms, a stage, and a clinic.

2015 - Seminole Elementary is 100 years old. Seminole Elementary's original building is still standing today and is the oldest continually operating school in Pinellas County.



Orange Grove Elementary
Students of the Month:
Ellie Whaley
Madison Synder
Cecilia Leimbach

PROPOSED NEW MEMBERS

Ginger H. Hayes

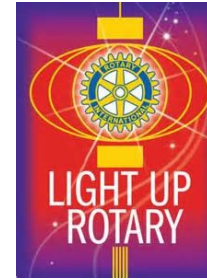
Proposed by Ed Lurie

Classification: Insurance-Marine

Tim Tran

Proposed by: Bob Castles

Classification: insurance-Property and Casualty



SEMINOLE SMOKE SIGNALS



ROTARY 2014-2015

Club Number 4289

February 4, 2015

PRAYER FOR TODAY: Help us, God, to use the gifts you have given us to do your will. Amen

**PROGRAM THIS WEEK: Donna Kinsey Blackburn,
Seminole Elementary's
Centennial Celebration**

**PROGRAM LAST WEEK: Cathy Naabe and Gary Marcus,
Seminole-SPC Toastmasters**

PROGRAM NEXT WEEK: Sweethearts Day

Upcoming Events:

February 18: Frank Edmunds, City Manager

February 25: Fire Chief Heather Burford

April 16: Golf Tournament

Rotary Club of Seminole Officers 2013-2014:

President Gerry Miller
President Elect Tim Ingold
Secretary Al Stephenson
Treasurer Mike McQuilkin
District 6950 Website - www.rotary6950.org
Website - www.seminolerotary.org
Rotary Club of Seminole P.O. Box 3313 • Seminole, FL 33775-3313

Sergeant at Arms Jim Woodworth
Bulletin Editor Jeff Graves/Ruth Berry
Past President Hank Houser

Intense summer program gives Israeli and Palestinian teens new perspectives

Students from Israel and Palestine sat together at a local art studio in Encinitas, California, USA, one day last summer, drawing portraits of one another and learning how to live in peace.

Kelly Mellos, an organizer of the project from the Rotary Club of Encinitas

Coastal, says that drawing someone who is sitting so close helps break down social barriers between the young people. "They see how many similarities there are between them," she says. "And they begin to understand we are all just people. There is a respect and trust that builds." The students were participating in a program run by Hands of Peace, which every year brings together Jewish-Israeli, Palestinian-Israeli, and Palestinian teens, along with local students from a variety of religious backgrounds, for 18 days of dialogue and team-building exercises. The 12-year-old organization, which began in Chicago, expanded its program to the San Diego area in 2014.

Professional facilitators lead the sessions, in which the teenagers learn about different cultures and religions and are exposed to a range of perspectives on the Middle East conflict. The program's goal is to have the students use what they learn to engage in peace-building efforts in their everyday lives and in their communities.

Rotary's involvement

During the program, the young participants stay with host families, some of which have included Rotary members. Rotary members also serve as volunteers and take part in community forums, seminars, and other peace-building events. The Rotary Clubs of Encinitas Coastal and La Jolla Golden Triangle in California and the Rotary Club of Glenview-Sunrise in Illinois provide financial support.

Mellos got involved after Scott Silk, a history teacher at Pacific Ridge School, a private college preparatory school, and now director of Hands of Peace's San Diego branch, visited her club two years ago while organizing the branch. Mellos developed the art workshop because she believes art has the power to bring people together.

"I teach them to look at the big patterns and shapes," Mellos explains. "It is suddenly as if you can't be too specific about a person's story; you are seeing the beautiful patterns that make them up. And then you are seeing each other as people, not as Israeli or Palestinian, not as narratives, but as creations."



"Jim and Gail Tatsuda began hosting student participants after a Hands of Peace volunteer spoke to the Rotary Club of Glenview-Sunrise in suburban Chicago. They have hosted four students, and have remained close to all of them. Gail, who is Jewish, recalls being touched when the mother of their second student, Mohammed, a Muslim from the West Bank, learned she had a bad cold.

"She had been calling every morning to talk to her son, but now she called to talk to me," Gail recalls. "She would say, 'Are you taking your honey and lemon juice like I told you? Are you taking it three times a day?' I would get off the phone and think: Here I am, this little Jewish woman, and I have a dear friend who is a Muslim Palestinian."

Mohammed later attended high school in Italy and then received a full scholarship to Lake Forest College, not far from Glenview. When he graduates, his parents plan to stay with the Tatsudas.

"Once these kids go through the program and meet each other, it's life-changing for them," Gail says. "I heard one of the kids asking one of the others, 'What if you see me at one of the checkpoints -- are you going to aim a gun at me?' And the other kid said, 'No, I could not do that. I would treat you respectfully.'"

Participants praise program

"It was really surprising to hear things I'd never heard before. The dialogues can be really hard, very intense," says Hagar, an Israeli teen invited back last summer to provide peer support to new Hands of Peace participants. "I thought the program might change how I see Palestinians, which it did. But I didn't think I would bond this much with the other participants. They are part of my life now; we talk all the time."

Alumni programs bring past participants together for seminars and workshops several times a year in Israel, providing them with a support network to pursue what they have learned. Inspired by the program, Hagar is working with a student from Tel Aviv to organize a soccer game for Israeli and Palestinian youth in Nazareth. They have spoken with city officials and soccer clubs, and hope to raise enough money to hold the event soon. "We want [the players] to understand they are humans and they have the same interests and enjoy the same things." Roxanne, a high school student in Carlsbad, California, was participating in last summer's program when news broke that Israeli ground troops were entering Gaza.

"No one was sure what was going to happen [in the program]," she recalls. "Would people start fighting, or break into their own delegations and not talk for the remainder of the trip? But then an Israeli girl stood up and bowed her head for a moment of silence, and then everyone else stood up. And then everyone started crying. We all came together that day and embraced each other.

"It was just incredible to see that, even though they all had family on different sides of the conflict, they had built friendships that could transcend all that was unfolding."