



Help When Help Is Needed

BY CLARK KILGARD, CHAIR FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - ROTARY CLUB OF WESTON

IN ADVANCE OF NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK, Weston Fire Chief Harris Bouchillon addressed his fellow Rotary members. He spoke about the history of fire services, noting that in 6AD a series of fires was the occasion for the Roman Army to provide fire services. "When the army entered the home, if the owner was found to be negligent, they could flog him. I'm not saying we should do that here," joked Chief Bouchillon. He also pointed out that many of the firefighting tools in use today came from Roman times, including pikes and axes.

As a new member of the Weston Rotary, this event also served as the chief's "classification speech." Every Rotarian is classified according to their occupation. The classification speech is an opportunity for a Rotarian to

responses now are medical emergencies. Chief Bouchillon explained the two basic services of the fire rescue department. "Reactive Services" are responses to emergency calls. The quality of this response depends on the community. We are fortunate, as the City of Weston has an outstanding level of resources. "Proactive Services" include the work of the Fire Marshal, reviewing building plans before a building is occupied and inspecting it afterwards.

Chief Bouchillon said he would like to expand the area of public education by introducing programs in our public schools and by developing the CERT (Citizen Emergency Response Team) program which involves many members of the Rotary Club of Weston.

Sadly, thousands of lives are lost each year due to fires. Families are often left grieving after a tragic loss such as this. Licensed Social Worker and Grief Therapist Lisa Zucker addressed the Rotary Club of Weston about new models of grief and changes in the way professionals now view the grieving process.

"Grieving is more like a roller coaster than linear stages," she explained, noting that contradicts Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross's classic model of the five stages of grief. According to Zucker, grief is an individual process and everyone grieves differently.

Zucker explained that grieving can be a difficult process. Although the pain may lessen over time, the sadness does not necessarily go away. There are triggers, such as a song or a smell that cause persons to feel that they are regressing and not making progress. She explained that when you love somebody, you don't just have a designated period of grief and then you are over it. It is something that stays with you.

She shared with Rotarians some suggestions on how to help a friend who is grieving. According to Zucker, the number one thing that people do not want to hear is "I know how you feel." This grates against the concept that grieving is an individual experience. Every loss and every person is completely unique.

She said listening is a good way to help. Some grieving persons find it important to talk about the person who has died while others often refuse to do this out of the fear of making their friend sad. Grieving persons often



Grief Therapist Lisa Zucker talks to members of the Rotary Club of Weston about how to help someone who is grieving.

welcome stories that you can relate about the deceased. This allows them to see their loved one through someone else's eyes. Zucker pointed out that at times silence is also helpful. This may be difficult to accept, especially in our society where people are uncomfortable and awkward around silence.

When offering to help, be specific. Saying "Call me if you need anything," doesn't work. Rather, Zucker says tell the person, "I am going to the store, do you need anything while I am there?"

Finally, keep in mind that grieving is a long process. People gather immediately around a loss, but then disappear. A true friend will provide support long after others are gone.

The Rotary Club of Weston is recognized as one of Southwest Broward's leading community service organizations. Weston Rotary meets at Weston Hills Country Club every Thursday morning, year-round, from 7:30 - 8:30am to enjoy a buffet breakfast and a lively meeting program. For further information about Weston Rotary, visit our website at www.WestonRotary.org, or stop by our FaceBook Fan Page (Rotary Club of Weston) for the latest happenings.



Fire Chief Harris Bouchillon instructs a recent CERT class.

expand his/her audiences' understanding of their field.

Although being a firefighter is considered a noble profession today that was not always the case. According to Chief Bouchillon, before the Roman Army firefighting was the job of slaves. Slave owners would bargain with the owner of a house that was on fire, bidding lower and lower as the property burned. When a bargain was struck, the slave owner would order his slaves to put out the fire.

Today fire services have evolved. Two-thirds of the

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