

## Reporting Meeting of 27 July 2020

### Calendar of Events

<b>This Week:</b>	7/27	Black Lives Matter – Walter Thorne
<b>Next Week:</b>	8/3	Saratoga Plan – Maria/Alex
<b>Coming Up:</b>	8/10	To Be Determined
	8/29	Golf Tournament – Holland Meadows

**Note:** Regular ZOOM meetings are held Monday Evenings at 6:00 pm. Check your e-mail for ID# and Password, as well as the phone number you can use to phone in if using your cell phone to participate.

*Please give suggestions for future programs to Dan Stec*

*Find us at bhblrotary.org and on Facebook*

*“Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves”.*

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Gregg announced that the club will be moving forward with a Chicken BBQ fundraiser similar to last year. The food will be prepared again by Spartan Catering of the BH/BL High School. We are still working on logistics, but it will definitely be curbside/takeout with no inside dining. The date of the event will be Thursday August 27<sup>th</sup>. We want to make this a whole community event. We are looking to presell tickets and if possible, take pre-orders/payments.
- Mike Brewster led Happy Dollars. There was shared good humor and it was nice to hear how our members were doing.

### BLACK LIVES MATTER Walter Thorne

Our club had the pleasure of hearing Walter Thorne further talk about the Black Lives Matter movement and his own thoughts and opinions. Walter has a very unique background and stated that he understands all viewpoints in regards the movement because of his background.

Walter's parents moved to Ticonderoga in Upstate New York from New York City when he was very young. His father worked in the Law Enforcement/Corrections facility in the area. He grew up in an almost entirely white area but said that his family was respected in the community. He grew up with many friends and said he did not really see racial differences until high school and more so in college.

Apart from his father working in law enforcement and growing up in upstate New York, he further has multiple family viewpoints as he stated that his loving wife is white and he has two mixed-race children. Apart from their two children both spouses have a child from a different marriage one of whom is black and one white. Walter described the difficulties as a black father in a mixed marriage and having to explain race and the differences society places on his children.

His focus and thoughts centers on living and teaching Love, Unity and Empathy to his family, friends and others wanting to know more about Black Lives.

He became more involved in spreading awareness as most of the country did as well, after the death of George Floyd. He noticed that his white friends were unsure how to respond and interact with him and he wanted to teach and raise awareness so that friends and individuals of different races don't face awkwardness when trying to talk about and end racism.

He went over a few questions that he usually gets from white friends and the answers he gives. One question he routinely gets is, "How did we get here? How did it get this bad right now?" Apart from the country and world on edge about coronavirus, he says this is not new and has been happening a long time for black individuals. It is only new for you. There has been a long history of black individuals having racial encounters with police that have caused anxiety and fear.

He also stated that he does not personally believe in kneeling during the national anthem but understands why individuals choose to do so. He also said that probably is the right way to protest so as to not cause violence and destruction. He says the Black Lives Matter movement has changed and does not have the same actions across the different areas. He says he supports Black Lives Matter but not necessary the political movement organizations based on it.

He also says that saying "Black Lives Matter" does not mean that they matter more than other races or ethnicities it is more like saying that Black Lives Matter "Too." Yes, all lives matter but the movement is about drawing attention that black lives did not seem to matter during some police brutality cases and in other societal interactions. He says it has not been that long since the civil rights movement of the 1960's and that our country still has a long way to go, but he believes in the future if we all focus on living with Love, Unity and Empathy for ourselves and one another.