



# The Spoke



Our speakers were Janet Martin, interim Executive Director, and Trish Leonard, President of the Board of Directors of the Wonder Gardens. They described the progress that has been made and the plans for continuing improvement of the property including plans for a \$6.5 million capital campaign starting this fall.

This spring, the Bonita Springs City Council

nature and see Florida's wildlife in an intimate way, something that many parks cannot provide.

In mid-2013 the park closed briefly for the first time and that could have been the last chapter in this great story. Instead award-winning local photographer John Brady took over management of the Gardens and is determined not to let it become another extinct attraction.



unanimously approved a loan of \$3.5 million to the newly established non-profit group, the Bonita Wonder Gardens. The loan will act as a down payment on the property which is privately owned by the Piper family. The Bonita Wonder Gardens have agreed to a 2 percent interest rate on their loan over a period of three years. Should the loan default, the city will then inherit the property and earn the right to sell the gardens to another party.

Established in 1936, Everglades Wonder Gardens is one of the last survivors of Florida's Golden Age of roadside attractions. The 3.5-acre lush botanical jungle has been a focal point of Bonita Springs since Bill and Lester Piper created the facility to rehabilitate injured animals. The Gardens remains a place for visitors to enjoy

The staff and volunteers focused on preserving this landmark while updating it with new flora and fauna. The Gardens have been reborn with elements such as dozens of bromeliads, a butterfly house and five large staghorn ferns in addition to legacy specimens, including old growth kapok, shaving brush and African mahogany trees. Nestled among all of this greenery and flowers are new and updated animal exhibits such as a flamingo pond, alligator pool with 40 gators, duck ponds, and turtle and tortoise exhibits.

Steve McIntosh described the place the Wonder Gardens will have in the development of Downtown and says, "This is an important project for Bonita Springs. Please get behind the Wonder Gardens and make it succeed."

## LAST WEEK MEETING

President **Tom Briers** presided, week 2. **Wayne Hemstead** presented the invocation; **Roger Brunswick** led the Pledge of Allegiance; and Past President **Gerry Myers** recited the Four Way Test flawlessly. **Ron Anderson** led the singing of "Yankee Doodle Dandy".



**Sara McCallum** called **Juan Teodoro** to the front to receive a Paul Harris Fellowship given to Juan by **Brian Olitsky** who wanted to "get Juan started".

**Sandy Hemstead** reported that a \$150k Global Grant for Gift of Life had been approved.

**Bobbi Bird** announced the nominating committee for the Foundation Board of Trustees recommends adding **Sandy Hemstead** and **Stephanie Kissinger** to the current board. The recommendation was moved, seconded, and voted.

Tom noted that the club had been involved in lot of activities over the 4th of July weekend. He said, "Some of our newer Rotarians just blow me away with their participation". He thanked **Brad Piotrowski, Paul Gavin, and Susan Hill** for their efforts.

**Roger Brunswick** was Sergeant-at-arms for the day. Roger threatened fines for talking, cell phoning, or moving around during the speaker's time and \$2 for scooting.

**Rick Barber** confessed to being late.

Roger organized a birthday shout out to Rick Barber and **Anthony Scrocco**. Roger was working without his teleprompter so President Tom had to remind him to introduce guests.

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Rotary Club of Columbo, Sri Lanka

## District 6960 Governor

Cyndi Doragh  
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## Area 3 Assistant Governor

Sandra Hemstead  
The Rotary Club of Bonita Springs

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President-Elect	Steven Slachta
Secretary	Jon McLeod
Treasurer	Bob Lombardo
Sergeant-at-Arms	George M. Cohan III
Assoc. Sgt.-at-Arms	

## Board of Directors

Sandra Hemstead, Tom Briers,  
Steven Slachta, Jon McLeod

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Kae Moore

## 2014-2017

Frank Mazzeo, Peter O'Flinn,  
Susan Schmitt

## 2015-2018

Joe Murgalo, Jon Shaw,  
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## Trustees of The Foundation of The Rotary Club of Bonita Springs

Nancy Ross, President; Jim Dati,  
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Houck, Stephanie Kissinger, John  
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**Rotary Club of Bonita Springs**, chartered November 3, 1978. The Club may be contacted through its mailing address P.O. Box 474, Bonita Springs Florida 34133. You can reach **The Spoke** through its email [BonitaSpoke@aol.com](mailto:BonitaSpoke@aol.com). **Scott Gerrish** issue editor.

<b>President</b>	<b>Thomas B. Briers</b>
<b>President-Elect</b>	<b>Steven Slachta</b>
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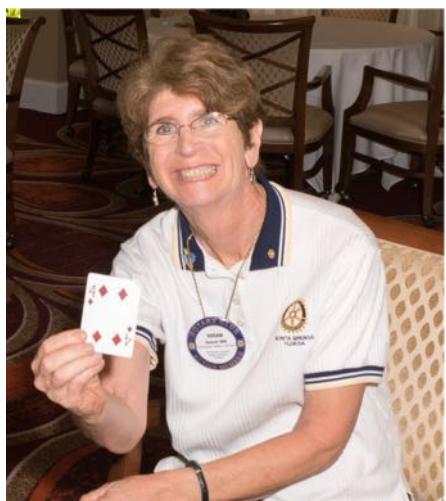
**Treasurer**

**Bob Lombardo**

**Sergeant-at-Arms**

**George M. Cohan III**

## Last Week: A surprised Susan Hill drew the 4♦ for \$5



**The 50/50 is \$895**

The 4-Way Test  
of things we think, say or do.

Is it the **TRUTH**?

Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?

Will it build **GOODWILL** and  
**BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?

Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all  
concerned?

Your finances. Your future. *Our focus.*

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## Rotary Sings: *In The Good Old Summertime*

In the good old summer time  
In the good old summer time  
Strolling through the shady lane  
With your baby mine.  
You hold her hand, and she holds yours,  
And that's a very good sign,  
That she's your tootsey, wootsey  
In the good old summer time.

### This Week

**Mary Lynn Ziemer**  
**Living a Joyful Life**

### *Birthdays*

Frank Mazzeo July 10

Ira Hawk July 13

Dawn Colecchio July 14

Stephanie Kissinger July 14

## This Morning's Invocation

Good and gracious God, as we gather here today, we are grateful that we can be lifted out of ourselves and our private concerns to share with others in a fellowship of like-minded people. May the good-spirited banter between us, the fun of being together, and the awareness of a camaraderie in a common cause, enrich our lives.

Jolt us from lethargy about the world and our own community by a vivid awareness of the needs we can help to meet. We seek no glory for ourselves, only the good of the community and world we are privileged to serve.

We thank you for the physical food, and social fellowship enjoyed here today. May some good ensue from this experience for ourselves and others. Amen.