

Spoke
Rotary Club of Englewood
February 9, 2021 at 12 pm

Presiding: Lisa Wisotsky
Recorder: Carol Schults

This meeting took place on Zoom with about 75 participants.

Visitors:

Guests: Judy Aronson- Social Studies teacher at the H.S. with 16 students that were from the DMHS Diversity Club, the Black Students Union and the Racial Justice Task force. Presenters Thomas Monroe and Michael Spengler. Other guests included Gloria Thweatt-Draper, Jack Feinstein, Ike Patch, Roy Isen, Lisa Honig-Andrea, Miles Feinstein, Rayna Lee, Olga Correa, Alison Le, Timmy Zhang, Maya Maguski, Kyla Ginsberg, Sreeja Satish, Christine Salazar, Olivia Hong, Tsean Mattoo, Marc Youhana, Hannah Ferrer, Dr. Helen Tinsley, Marsha Campbell Young, Gloria Thweatt-Draper, Steven Berrios, Lyndaura F., Yoshi N., Shatenia, Chris Butcher.

Inspiration: Donovan gave today's inspiration regarding the evolution of abolishing slavery.

Speaker:

Today's presentation was about the integration of the Englewood Public Schools.

There was a Q & A among the Moderator, Phyllis Brown-Edwards and Thomas Monroe and Michael Spengler, who were students at Dwight Morrow High School at the time of integration initiatives.

In the 50's, one of groups against integration was "save our neighborhood schools". The parents in the 1950's noted the difference between the reading levels of the different elementary schools in town. They discussed the events that preceded Brown vs. Board of Ed.

Englewood had four elementary schools. The schools were integrated since 1880's. The town was gerrymandered and schools were somewhat segregated until 1963/1964. Michael Spengler's father as a writer for The Record and he wrote editorials about integration.

The High School on Engle Street (next to the current library) was integrated prior to the opening of Dwight Morrow HS. There were some impressive guests that came to Engle Street HS like Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks.

Mark Spengler discussed his views of the high school. He noted that the city is integrated but the high school is not. He noted that some years ago that DMHS tried to become a regional HS again and the subsequent battles with neighboring towns' schools. The Academies was created as an offshoot of these events. Thomas tried to inspire the current students listening to "just keep pushing" to be the most that each student could be.

Tom Monroe (also known as Moose) not only attended Dwight Morrow High School with Mike Spengler, he worked there as a coach and teacher, as well as working at the middle school. Tom Monroe is well known for his historical knowledge of Englewood's 4th Ward and showed original documentation about the time of integration.

Dr. Helen Tinsley talked about her experiences as a child of parents who attended Englewood schools, who attended the schools herself and saw her children attend the schools during talks about regionalization. She had four children that had different experiences at the various schools.

Mike Spengler talked about his integration in the 60's and the cross-fertilization between the students. He didn't feel any micro-aggressions between the different groups at the schools during his time at school.

Old Business:

Janet Sharma discussed the idea of a \$1300 bench with a plaque honoring George Milne located near the Englewood Boat Basin, since he loved the spot down by the river.

There will be an Ad Hoc Chairs and Board meeting right after this meeting.

There are volunteer opportunities for people to help different food insecurity groups.

Happy Dollars:

- Many Happy Dollars for the presentation today. It was a great collaborative effort of different individuals.
- All happy dollar checks are to be mailed to:
Kathy Silberstein
20 Hidden Ledge Road
Englewood, NJ 07631

Or to PO Box 412, Englewood, NJ 07631