

Kiwanis Club Meeting 4/21/2026 Recap

Featured speaker Jennifer, a representative from the ReUnited program. She detailed how the collaboration between United Way and local Sheriff's offices uses scent kits and bloodhounds to locate missing individuals, specifically those with autism or dementia. The group watched a demonstration of K9 Remington tracking a scent and discussed the effectiveness of 'AngelSense' GPS. Additionally, members finalized plans for an upcoming family picnic at Judd Park and reviewed the slate of club officers for the next term.

* Reunite Program Overview *

- **Collaboration and Purpose**

- A partnership between the Lee County Sheriff's Office and United Way, started in 2019.
- Designed to reduce search time for high-risk individuals who go missing, including those with autism, dementia, or mental health challenges.
- The program has been used successfully over 150 times since its inception to bring individuals home safely.

- **Registration Process**

- Families can enroll online, in person, or over the phone.
- Information collected includes names, physical descriptions, and updated photos.
- Data is stored in a secure database accessible to 911 dispatchers and the Sheriff's Office to expedite emergency response.

Scent Kit Technology

- **Functionality and Use**

- Participants receive a scent kit containing a specialized surgical pad used to collect the individual's scent.
- Scent is collected from high-friction areas like the armpit or back of the neck; deodorant does not interfere with the scent collection.
- Kits are stored in sealed containers and can last up to 10 years if kept in a temperature-controlled environment.

- **Search Efficiency**

- In the event of a disappearance, K9 units (specifically bloodhounds) use the kit to immediately begin tracking the individual's unique scent.
- Bloodhound testimony is admissible in court, and the dogs can track scents even if a person has entered a vehicle.

Alternative Tracking Options

- **Project Lifesaver**
 - An older radio-frequency-based technology still used in some areas like Cape Coral.
 - Relies on batteries and user maintenance, which can lead to failures if the device is removed or batteries die.
- **GPS Solutions**
 - **AngelSense** was highlighted as a top-tier GPS tracker for families who prefer real-time electronic location monitoring.
 - Some trackers may be covered by Medicaid or specialized service programs.

*** Club Announcements and Business ***

- **Officer Slate and Elections**
 - Second reading of officers: President (Tom Mere), Vice President (Bill Hogg), Secretary (Kathy Woolston), Treasurer (Jim Thompson), and Directors (Kelly Santo and Jennifer Walker).
- **Upcoming Events**
 - **Family Picnic**: Scheduled for May 9th from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM at Judd Park or North Fort Myers Community Park.
 - **District Convention**: July 30th - August 2nd in Orlando. The club will cover registration fees for delegates.
- **Community Projects**
 - **Bench Project**: Benches have been varnished and are awaiting name plaques for final delivery.
 - **Joy Drive/Food Drive**: The club is actively collecting items and participating in a peanut butter and jelly drive for the Boy Scouts.
 - **Scholarships**: Scout scholarship amounts will be finalized by next week following their fundraiser.