

EARLY BIRD WEEKLY



NewbergRotaryEarlybirds.org

November 10, 2022

Youth Exchange: last week Michelle presented Pili with her birthday gift from the club. No, the gift was not us all singing happy birthday, it was an actual gift. A necklace of Oregon's state shape with a heart in the middle.



But wait, there's more!

All our inbounds are being treated to a concert on the 12th at Portland's Hawthorne Theater to see Echosmith.

Who's [Echosmith](#), you say? Well of their 32 releases, their single, [Cool Kids](#), went triple-platinum and peaked on Billboard at 13 and stayed on the charts for 23 weeks.

The Sierota sibling band is based out of Chino, CA and formed as an indie pop band in 2009 and signed with Warner in 2012.

Fun Fact: Rod Federwisch was their principal having served Chino Valley USD from 1993-2016.

Braver Angels

Our program last week was Elise presenting Braver Angels.

Elise broke the meeting with one of Lincoln's most quotable musings, "I don't like that man. I must get to know him better."

From [Braver Angels'](#) website, here's a snippet of their purpose statement.

"If you're heartsick about the rancor tearing us apart. If you believe that your opponents should not be your enemies. If you believe that America's best days can be ahead of her. You need Braver Angels and we need you."

Elise says that Braver Angels also aligns with Rotary's goals in ways in that we both provide service to others and promote world understanding, peace and goodwill.

Affective Polarization is the phrase of the day. Affective is a college word for emotions and attitudes. Polarization, according to Merriam-Webster, is a state in which the opinions, beliefs, or interests of a group or society no longer range along a continuum

but become concentrated at opposing extremes.

In plain terms, and as it relates to society and politics, it's not so much the issue itself but how we treat each other over the issue.

Many "Braver Angels" began their affiliation because family members had stopped talking to one another.

Braver Angels' deepest core objective is not alienating but engaging those with whom they may disagree.

Red and Blue are ideologically equally represented but practically skewed toward Blue. While they are seeking greater representation from Red a conundrum has arisen where more and more people no longer identify with Red or Blue.

By the way, according to the all-knowing internet, Red = Republican and Blue = Democrat is only about 20 years old. Previously the color could change based on which news outlet was presenting party maps. [The protracted 2000 Presidential election](#), W. Bush vs Gore, settled in coverage by prominent news sources to our current color identifier.

Braver Angels is attempting to build a house united and put the house divided behind us.

The principles of Braver Angels has its root in couples therapy. Bill Doherty, a family therapist in Minnesota practice for over 40 years, is the creator of the Braver Angels' foundation workshop.

He didn't intentionally model Blue vs Red after couples therapy. But you bring to the table what you're equipped with, right?

The movement began following the Trump v Clinton election cycle with an assembly of 10 Trump and 11 Clinton supporters in South Lebanon, Ohio. The goal was simple. To see if Americans could still disagree respectfully but still find common ground.

It was a group of republican and democrat, Americans and immigrants, black and white, Christian and Muslim.

Once these people knew where each others' opinions came from they became more able to see one another, not as stereotypes, but as countrymen and neighbors.

Formed as Better Angels, its name changed in 2020 to Braver Angels. Another Lincoln inspiration, to find the courage needed to pursue a more perfect union, "with malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right."



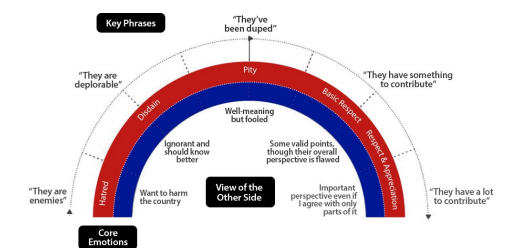
The movement saw explosive growth in the midst of the pandemic and social conflict during that time.

The desired result of Braver Angels is to reduce affective polarizations and see one another as individuals, not faceless enemies. Not to try to change people's minds or views on issues they hold dear, but encourage their ability to bridge political polarization.

Elise introduced a six part group activity: Recognizing My Inner Polarizer.

1. How often do I find myself thinking about "those people" on the other political side without much regard for the validation among them?
2. How often do I find myself aligning mainly self-serving or negative motives to the other group - and mainly positive motives to my group?
3. How often do I find myself focusing on the most extreme or outrageous ideas and people on the other side, thereby making it hard to see how a reasonable person could remain in that group?
4. How often do I find myself comparing the *worst people* on the other side with the *best people* on my side.
5. How often do I feel a rush of pleasure with friends when we ridicule "those crazies" on the other political side?

Following was an enlightening self-assessment dial.



Join the Braver Angels effort at [BraverAngels.org](#) or text "BA" to 66866.