

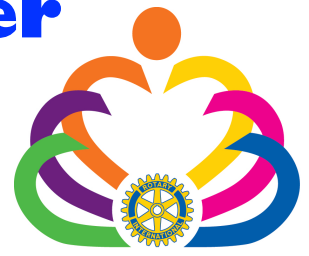
February 2, 2012
Groundhog
Edition



The Rotary Banner

East Alton Rotary Club
Chartered Oct. 28, 1971 District 6460

www.eastaltonrotary.org



Reach Within to Embrace Humanity

CLUB OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

David Miller

PRESIDENT -ELECT

Eric Barger

SECRETARY

Lori Palmer

TREASURER

Cory Gallivan

DIRECTORS

CLUB SERVICE

Paul Hoover

VOCATIONAL SERVICE

Brad Lavite

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mark Allison

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

Rod Croxford

NEW GENERATIONS

Rhonda Pluester

SERGEANT AT ARMS

Rick Hooks

BANNER EDITOR

Larry Lacher

CLUB ARCHIVES

Rick Hooks

FOUNDATION OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Erin Phillips

TREASURER

Mark Speciale

SECRETARY

Rose Sebastian

A Whole Lot of Shakin'

Chris H. introduced his guest, Larry Ringerring, director of Madison County Emergency Management Agency. Larry spoke to the club about disaster preparedness, especially if we experience an earthquake on the New Madrid or Wabash faultline.

An 8.2 earthquake along the New Madrid faultline would probably cause 4000 deaths. Historically, we are overdue for this size of a quake. It would result in collapse of bridges, broken pipelines, downed powerlines, water plants would be offline and communication would be lost. Even dams could burst.

Larry's job is making sure that the county is prepared for all kinds of emergencies, from storms to major catastrophes. 99% of all disasters will be handled locally, so their preparedness is essential to our safety.

Still, Larry encouraged each family to be prepared for disaster. Every family should have a disaster plan to care for themselves for 3-5 days without any other services. Classes are available at LCCC to teach you what to do to respond to an emergency. Information is also available at: <http://www.mymadisoncountyma.org/>

News, Notes, and Nonsense

Our solo guest last week was Michael Ringerring who was there to support his brother, our speaker. Total attendance was twenty-three. The menu was ham and mac & cheese.

Red was back with two shiny new stints and feeling fine. Chris entered with briefcase in hand, gladly surrendering it to president Dave. Brad P. arrived late enough to sit all alone. And Brad L. was sporting a brand new set of crutches, having had surgery for an old "war wound."

The president announced that anyone attending an Interact meeting would be awarded a makeup. All members would be welcome to pop in on our RHS Interact club.

Our club will be sponsoring two RHS students to RYLA and the Wood River club will sponsor two from EAWRHS.

Eric served as bag-passer for sub-SAA Joe who received donations from those not signed up to work the BB tournament, from late folks and from Red and Diane who share good news: Red for his successful stints, and Diane for \$1000 raised at the quarter auction for the Boys and Girls club.

Red and Corey took a shot at the \$141 in the 50/50 pot and left only with shiny new cards.

MAKE UP SITES

MONDAY

NOON

•Wood River—St. John UCC, WR

•Jerseyville—Peace United Church

6 PM

•Alton—Godfrey—Alton Sports Tap

TUESDAY

NOON

•Collinsville—Holiday Inn

•Granite City—Niedringhaus Methodist

•Highland—Michael's Restaurant

WEDNESDAY

7 AM

•Bethalto—Red Apple

NOON

•Goshen—LCCC Center, Edwardsville

THURSDAY

NOON

•Riverbend—Mac's Time Out Lounge, 315 Belle St.

•Edwardsville—First Christian

FRIDAY

NOON

•Troy, Silver Creek—Pizza Man

To locate a club where you are visiting check: <http://www.rotary.org/en/AboutUs/SiteTools/ClubLocator/Pages/rid>

Upcoming Events

2-4: Riverbend Rotary Trivia

2-18: Basketball Tournament

2-23: Board Meeting

3-10: WR Rotary Trivia night

4-28: Combined Meeting

PROGRAM

TODAY

Paul Hoover

NEXT WEEK

Dwynn Isringhausen

Tom Gibbons

Il. States Attorney

BIRTHDAYS

2-4: Mark Speciale

East Alton Rotary Club

P.O. Box 56
East Alton, IL 62024

Service Above Self

The Four Way Test

- *Is it the Truth?
- *Is it Fair to all concerned?
- *Will it Build Goodwill and better Friendships?
- *Will it be Beneficial to all concerned?

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.eastaltonrotary.org

Like us on Facebook

See our blog at:

eastaltonrotary.blogspot.com

Board Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2012

Our club checking account balance as of 12/31 was \$440.10

Joe and Brad L. are coordinating the Basketball Tournament

The Lawn and Garden show has been cancelled.

Combined meeting with WR and Bethalto was scheduled for the evening of April 26.

We will send two RHS students to RYLA at a cost of \$195 each.

There was interest expressed in partnering with the RHS Interact club for projects.

There was interest expressed in having a club quarter auction.

Next board meeting is Feb. 23.

Schools Repaired in China through Rotary

I have a fondness and an aptitude for numbers, which helps – and, as I discovered through Rotary, a passion for putting my skills to work for causes I believe in. As the club's international service director, I was charged with reaching out to join forces with clubs in other countries.

Bruce Stinson, past president of the Kowloon North club, had already made friends with Sai-Hong Choi, past president of the Rotary Club of Macau, and had visited impoverished Du'an County in southeast China in 1999. He'd been moved to tears by the condition of many of the area's rural schools – the roofs and walls had collapsed, and there were no desks or seats, he reported. The Macau club lacked funding, and that's where we stepped in.

I knew that it would be something of a gamble to make our way through the Chinese regional bureaucracy and ensure that the money we raised went where it was intended, but I'd been gambling successfully for most of my adult life. As I got to know the Chinese government officials in Du'an, my level of trust increased. They turned out to be sincere and honest and grateful for our help.

The government agreed to put up half the money if we put up the other half – a total cost of about \$60,000 to rebuild each school. To me, this seemed like a slam-dunk, and thanks to the success of my business, I was able to donate a substantial amount of those costs on my own.

The Kowloon North club teamed up with the Macau club to build the first three schools in the region, and since then, our district's clubs have been able to fund many more. Putting the money into bricks and mortar assured us we were creating something of lasting value, that the money wasn't being frittered away. It was my kind of

gamble.

For me, one of the most rewarding results of these service projects is to watch my perceptions bump up against reality. I expected China to be a tyrannical place, even brutal.

But my Rotarian colleagues and I learned a few things as we watched the Long'an middle school in Du'an being transformed from a dilapidated building into a functional structure. I asked the headmaster about discipline. "Do you spank students?" I wondered. He looked at me incredulously. "Spank students?" He was shocked at the suggestion. Teachers and administrators are forbidden to employ physical punishment, he explained. "They do that in your country?" It was inconceivable to him that we could even think that was possible. So much for my concern about social protectors.

Now, about 11 years after the first schools were rebuilt, Du'an has become a thriving region. When we visited in 2008, schoolchildren no longer looked at our cameras in awe; they snapped digital photos of us with their smartphones. There had been an amazing upsurge in prosperity. Our first school project was dwarfed, in a good way, by high-rises all around.

Did I ever expect to become involved in so many projects, or to meet my wife, Vivian, in the Rotary Club of Kowloon North – she is a past president of the Rotary Club of Peninsula Sunrise, Hong Kong – and to marry for the first time at age 53? I wouldn't have laid odds on any of those things happening.

But computer programs, even mine, have serious limitations. They couldn't have predicted the adventures I've had or the personal rewards that have come my way through Rotary. I donate to The Rotary Foundation because I believe in its mission.

Just For Fun

A man was on a beach when he discovered an old lamp in the sand. He rubbed it and a genie popped out. The genie said "I will grant you three wishes. The only condition is that you cannot wish for more wishes." "Alright," said the man, "I wish for more genies."

Q. How many psychiatrists does it take to change a light bulb?

A. Just one, but that light bulb really has to want to change!