

# Rotary Club of Arlington



# Hubcap

The Official Weekly Publication of the Rotary Club of Arlington

July 21, 2022

*In this edition: [Zoom Link](#), Randy Ford and J. Gilligan's, guest meals, and more...*

## Victoria's Vignettes



Rotary's International's Vision Statement is "TOGETHER we see a world where PEOPLE unite and take action to CREATE lasting CHANGE across the globe in our communities and in ourselves." As entities of Rotary International, our club along with the other 1.2 million Rotarians in over 35,000 clubs worldwide have been asked to help realize this vision by ensuring our Club seeks to contribute to achieving Rotary's strategic priorities and objectives, which include "Increase our Impact," "Expand our Reach," Enhance Participant Engagement," and "Increase Our ability to Adapt". In this spirit, our Club's board in each of our respective areas wrote their own goals to ensure our Club is aligned with Rotary International's.

One of the key ways our club has sought to implement RI's priorities is to "Leverage our Legacy". This idea has two fundamental elements to it. The first part – leveraging – is action-oriented and forward-looking: How do we build upon everything the club has done to continue to be a vital organization in the heart of Arlington? To this end, we will be focusing on programming this year to do such things as broadening our membership to reflect the diversity of Arlington, creating ways to engage our community and to raise awareness of Rotary and why it should be an organization of choice, providing opportunities for our members to get to know one another and put their own respective talents to work, and ensuring our club is ready for the next 100 years.

The second part of "Leverage our Legacy" is reflective and respectful of our "legacy" and of all those Rotarians who have preceded us and the

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## THIS WEEK AT ROTARY

Mark Rawlings  
**The Baker Hotel**

**COMING SOON**

*(Click any underlined Text to Learn More)*

July 28 [Kim Rocha](#)

Down Syndrome  
Partnership of North  
Texas

Aug 4 [Wendy Burgess](#)

Tarrant County Tax  
Assessor/Collector

## IT HAPPENED LAST THURSDAY

**BY LEE ANNE LAWSON**

Arlington Rotary Club July 14, 2022 Off site meeting at J. Gilligan's noon.

Victoria Farrar-Myers opened our meeting. Barry Bondurant led the prayer and pledge.

Vera McKissic led the singing of God Bless America.

Sheila Velasco was our greeter and introduced visiting Rotarians. I couldn't catch everyone's names, but Nancy Blinn and Vera McKissic brought guests but it was hard to hear the names. Graham Schadt brought his son, former club president, Greg.

Birthdays this week: Konstantin Maslenikov and Ify

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(Victoria's Vignettes, Continued from page 1)

impact our organization has had over that past century. So, in this 100<sup>th</sup> year, we will be striving to understand our history and how it has shaped who we are today. With this goal in mind, we will be beginning several action items this week. The "Last Laugh" will transform in to an "Historical Minute" during our meetings so we all can have a better sense of who we are as an organization. Don Mebus has agreed to be our official "Historian" and provide deeper insight into Rotary as an entity. Our own *Hubcap* will contain articles about our Club's history written by Club members who have been working hard over the last several years to gather information to share with us all.

*Victoria*

President, 2022-23

EACH ONE  
BRING ONE



## BOARD BITES

Our Club's Board met this past Friday, and here the primary items we discussed and actions that were taken:

- As previously noticed, fees will be added to transactions involving credit cards and ACH payments.
- The 2022-23 Club operating budget was thoroughly discussed and unanimously approved. Our Treasurer agreed to do a guest column for the Hubcap for the week of July 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, and a summary budget will be published in the Hubcap that week for all members to see.
- It was agreed that a District Grant Application for our available allocation of \$7,500 will be submitted. The Board unanimously approved that the required \$7,500 match will come from our unrestricted portion of our local Rotary Club of Arlington Foundation since the entire amount will be utilized for the Centennial.
- A separate budget will be prepared for the Centennial events.
- A Master Calendar will be added to the website with all club events on it. This will give Rotarians a chance to see all upcoming activities and service opportunities.
- A policy on Guest and Prospective Members meals was accepted.
- Club history, in celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, will be a focus this year at meetings and in the Hubcap.

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Uzomah, both July 14. I'm sure glad I had Sally's page of notes for the spelling! The anniversaries this week: Dixon Holman 4 years, and Earl Harcrow 13 years.

The first board meeting is Friday July 15<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 am at Legacy Financial.

Vera McKissic reminded those with red badges to schedule orientation.

Richard Urso announced what he called a hilarious comedy show at Theater Arlington, called "Black Comedy", urging us to get our tickets soon.

Clete McAlister reminded us that Sept. 3-11 is Field of Honor and think about being a sponsor, or buy a flag. See [www.arlingtonfoh.org](http://www.arlingtonfoh.org).

Barry Bondurant introduced Randy Ford, owner of J. Gilligan's, who was our host and speaker for the day. He provided delicious cheeseburgers and wonderful stories about the history of the establishment.

The following is an article that LeeAnne borrowed from the UTA Shorthorn:

*UTA alumnus Randy Ford opened J. Gilligan's Bar and Grill with \$10k worth of borrowed money on July 12, 1979, unaware of what his business would one day become.*

### Fun Facts

- Randy Ford was a member of Student Congress.
- Ford graduated with a degree in business.
- J. Gilligan's Bar and Grill is named after Ford's friend and alumnus John Gilligan.
- Ford has a framed UTA basketball jersey inside J. Gilligan's.
- Ford is a music enthusiast and was part of a band.

Along with owning businesses, Ford used to promote events. Famous for its signature St. Patrick's Day celebration, Irish Nachos and AT&T Stadium shuttle service, over the last 43 years, the business has changed in many ways but one — its love for UTA and downtown. "Students learned to drink right here," Ford said remembering the first years of him opening J. Gilligan's. "Guys got drunk and wanted to butt heads. Guess where they did it, right here." Fresh out of UTA as a newly graduated business student, Ford decided he wanted to own his own business. He first tried his luck with a bar and then a barbecue restaurant, neither satisfying his vision. After much trial and error, Ford said he chose to locate and open J. Gilligan's in downtown where he knew he would be closer to UTA, city offices and departments. The business started as a college bar but with surrounding development and growth, Ford had to adjust. Thankfully, he said, his previous business experience helped him establish a "sense of survival."

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### RECOGNIZING THE PAST TO INSPIRE THE FUTURE

As we enter our 100<sup>th</sup> year of service to our community and the world I hope we will all take pause to celebrate the accomplishments, greatest contributions and people who have made our club the forerunner of service it is today.

In the early 1920's Arlington was a settled little community on the transit line between the big cities of Dallas and Fort Worth. It was on this canvas that Rotary International was to make its imprint in Arlington.

In the coming Rotary year various members and their families will share stories, anecdotes and observations during the first 99 years.

The Centennial Steering Committee of Kurt Bartley, Victoria Farrar-Myers, Susie McAlister and Val Gibson started discussions over a year and a half ago with plans to inform and eventually celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Rotary Club on June 11, 2023.

A major project is in the works as a gift to the City of Arlington. Archives have been researched and will come forth as articles and talks given by the members bringing to life the history of our great Club. And finally a Gala in June of 2023 to celebrate our 100 years.

It has been said that there is no civic club in Arlington that can match the contributions The Rotary Club of Arlington has given to the community. We earnestly desire for this tradition to continue.

Stay tuned for more information that will make us proud of our Club and inspire us to continue the awesome service in generations to follow.

*Val Gibson*

**Centennial Chair**



**Women of Rotary celebrate RI President Jones.**

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Trademarked as an Irish bar and grill, J. Gilligan's brought the St. Patrick's Day celebration alive in downtown and established itself in the community within a year of its opening.

Within that same year, he bought a used fryer and started experimenting with potatoes topped with cheese, onions, tomatoes and jalapeños.

That concoction led to the creation of the Irish Nacho — a beloved local favorite.

Ford, however, admits to not being fully responsible for its addition to the menu. Without customer input, he said the Irish Nacho would not have made it to people's tables.

"A lot of the times if you listen to customers, customers will tell you what to do," Ford said.

Among those customers was former UTA professor Allan Saxe, who helped add the Allan Saxe Veggie Burger to the menu in the 1980s. Randy Ford, owner of J. Gilligan's Bar and Grill, speaks on the origin of the Arlington bar and the legacy he hopes to leave.

Lorena Torres Romero

Saxe would visit J. Gilligan's and often bring his students but would only eat lettuce and tomato or sometimes nothing at all. So one day, Ford said he decided to call Saxe on the phone to make him a proposal.

Later, Saxe came to J. Gilligan's to make his decision among three to four burger samples that Ford had cooked for him. Finally having something on the menu that Saxe would enjoy ordering, Ford named the burger after him.

Cheryl Mitchell, museum studies assistant professor in practice and alumna, said waitressing at J. Gilligan's helped her put herself through college.

On one of her last shifts before moving to London for her master's degree, Mitchell said she fondly remembers a talk she shared with Ford.

"He came down and said to me, 'You can always come back,'" she said. "Even if it didn't work out, you always have a home here."

Mitchell said what's great about J. Gilligan's is the "family environment" that Ford established among the community, not just its workers.

It's something that has expanded to her own family as well, with her son working the same tables she did back when she was a student. Alumnus Jackson Jinks said he remembers how "revolutionary" his first black-and-blue beer drink was at J. Gilligan's.

Jinks said he would see friends from school that he didn't normally get a chance to catch up with, which made the nightlife experience unique.

"I hope I can find another bar like that in the future," he said.

The business's location and proximity to UTA plays a major part in determining the community that the business attracts, Mitchell said. But people continue to come to J. Gilligan's even after graduating or leaving Arlington because of the welcoming environment that Ford established.

"Randy is as much a part of the downtown as downtown is a part of him," she said. "I don't think that you can have one without the other at this point."

Ford has done a lot for the city, Mitchell said. For residents, students and the people who work here.

"Every successful downtown has that one place that's always been there," she said. "New ideas come and go, but old favorites always stay."

With 40 years worth of milestones and a memory dedicated to each hanged photo inside J. Gilligan's, Ford said locating in downtown near UTA was the best thing to ever happen to his business.

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Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

**Nelson Mandela**



Rotary  
Club of Arlington

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"Why did J. Gilligan's Bar and Grill make it?" he said. "It's because [of] the people, the community." Victoria Farrar-Myers presented Mr. Ford with a book in his honor to be donated to Webb Elementary School.

The last laugh was given by Dan Blumberg. Our next program, July 21 will be back at the 1<sup>st</sup> Methodist church. The speaker will be Mark Rawlings, and his subject will be the renovation of the Baker Hotel. 🍷



### BIRTHDAYS

Bob Cooke Birthday Fund  
July 17 — July 23

**July 17** Joan Church

**July 17** Jean Hood

**July 18** Mary Jean Moloney

**July 20** Brian Anderson

**July 22** Stephen Zimmer

Our club has a tradition of writing birthday checks to the **Rotary Foundation** in the amount of the number years they are celebrating (or rounding it up a little higher if they chose). The gift sent to the **Rotary Foundation** goes into a pool that eventually funds our club grants and also earns you points toward your next Paul Harris pin. Checks can be mailed to Sally Hopper, 3409 Viscount Drive, Arlington, TX 76016. (Please note this is the **Rotary Foundation** not the Arlington Rotary Foundation. Thanks!)

### GUEST AND PROSPECTIVE MEMBER MEAL POLICY

1. Lunches for all guests of Rotarians should be paid for by the club member.
2. Prospective members should have an expectation that their first meal will be covered by their sponsor. Meals thereafter shall be the prospective member's responsibility and/or the sponsor.
3. The speaker and one guest shall be covered by the Rotary Club of Arlington. The names of such shall be provided by the President-Elect (or designee) to the caterer for billing to the Club Treasurer.



### CONGRATULATIONS!

Rotarians celebrating their club anniversary of "Service Above Self."

**Carolyn Mebus** 16 Years July 20, 2006

**Konstantin Maslenikov** 2 Years July 23, 2020



Everyone loved Randy Ford's telling of his history in the restaurant business.



The Rotary Club of Arlington  
PO Box 121045 Arlington, Texas 76012 – [www.ArlingtonRotary.com](http://www.ArlingtonRotary.com)

Founded May 29, 1923 – Charter Number 1493 – Issued June 11, 1923 – District 5790 – Club 1763

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**IMAGINE  
ROTARY**