



Summer
Weekly

Reader

Volume 126, Issue 186 August 27, 2015

The Plano Rotary Club
www.PlanoRotary.com

HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

UPCOMING MEETINGS

August 27

Dr. Yoram Solomon-
"Great ideas are NOT
accidental"

Sep 3

Texas State Senator
Van Taylor, with guests
- 2015 Legislative
Wrap-up

Sep 10

Introducing Dr. Bing-
geli (PISD Superinten-
dent) to City

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Camille Ussery	Aug 10
Kevin Hanigan	Aug 14
Mike Jobe	Aug 15
Reedy Spigner	Aug 20
Sarah Watkins	Aug 20
Michael Robnett	Aug 24



TENSIONS mount as we count the hours before we flee the wrecking ball. Club Administration fears the *Geriatric Club of Plano* will be averse to change, and the forced move will trigger defections. Prove them wrong; embrace the novelty. Plans are for us to receive even greater benefits than *Plano Metro*, which meets there on Wednesdays. They go through the regular lunch line (not really a disadvantage, considering their wealth of offerings), but the *Geriatric* is too large for that, so our meals will be offered in our room as they are now. So it is less of a change than you'd've thought.

PAPERWEIGHT PALMER corralled the kindergarten at 12:16, coaxed **LB THE REMAINING** to do the Invocation (interrupted by **Mark Geller's** ringing phone), and **Ryan Downey** to lead us in the Pledge. Ryan, an Eagle Scout candidate in our sponsored *Troop 1776*, was also our Greeter today as part of his Scout Service Project. Ryan may have been familiar; he was a Four-Way Test contestant.



SERGEANT BARBERA added his benediction to the Invocation dealing with the mild 76° weather outside. He noted no Visiting Rotarians and so invited **John Caldwell** to introduce his guest, **Judy ANNIE OAKLEY Vessels**, and **Mark Waterbury** to feed his two sons, **Quinn** and **Garrett**.

For **INSIDE THE ROTARIAN STUDIO**, Nathan nailed **Phil Dyer**, a native of Portland, OR, which elicited a vagrant "boo."

Phil's Dad moved the family to Plano 51 years ago to take a job at *Luminator*.

Phil claimed to have been a well-behaved child, part of a family with two sisters and a brother. The Four-Way Test prohibited him answering the question about being a good student, but he did complete a marketing degree at *UT* before going to work for *Dallas Federal Savings & Loan*. He's been with *Legacy Bank* since 1973, but he'd rather have been "a beer tester."



Favorite movie: *Dr. Strangelove*. Musician: **Jethro Tull**. Athlete: **Hank Aaron**. 1st car: "a **Ralph Nader** deathtrap, a 1960 Corvair." Meal: Tex-Mex. Beverage: "any good IPA."

He was ushered into Rotary by **John Longstreet** 15 years ago, and his favorite memory is of listening in rapture to the endless wisdom of **Randy Wright**. (Unfortunately, Randy was AWOL and missed the left-handed kudo.)

Kelly fêted the Rotary Anniversaries of **Satinder Baweja** (2), **Jason Kramer** (2), Nathan Barbera (9), **Kirk Bell** (11), and **Bruce** "been here a few years" **Glasscock** (25).

Nancy Humphrey arose to announce 29 October, for our Golf Tournament that needs sponsors and volunteers.

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John Caldwell then inducted new member (whom we recognized “because he’s wearing a tie”), **Anthony Miller**, an attorney <catcalls>, who was dutifully pinned by sponsor, **Jason Rice**. Kelly used the occasion to note that, had Randy been present, he’d have undoubtedly exhorted us to follow Jason’s lead.



Olin Jaye rose to introduce the program, which, he said, was to have been “*the History of the Plano Balloon Festival*.” He had envisaged Randy Wright recounting the early days, but we didn’t have “*the three hours*” to spare, so he settled reluctantly for **Jo Imelda Marcos Via** and **Jessica Jackson**. He told us, “*she doesn’t need any introduction, and I’m on her sh*t list anyway*,” then apologized for his “*language in front of an Eagle Scout*.”

Jo, holding the broken lectern mic aloft, said, “*This is not gonna to work for me*,” and vowed to be heard throughout the hall regardless. No one disputed her.

She told us that she and Jessica were the only paid staff; everything else is done by 1000s of volunteers. Then she launched, Randy-like, into the Festival’s history.



Peering over the lectern (having failed to procure a box), Jo told us of the first site of the Festival in 1980 at *Willowbend Polo Field*. That first run was made with Chamber involvement, and it featured tailgate parties and two (count ‘em) vendors. Nowadays it hosts “*100,000 of our closest friends*,” and makes Plano “*the Balloon Capital of Texas*.”

Next it moved to **Randy Brodhead’s** Father’s airport, dallied a while at **Bob Woodruff Park** before settling in 1999 at the 700+ acre *Oakpoint Park* across from *Collin College*. “*It is the perfect place for us*,” as the College offers a large parking lot. “*But the urban setting can be tricky*” for the pilots. Indeed, one of the entrance requirements is evidence of having piloted in a city setting.

There are several necessary factors contributing to the success of the Festival, sponsors like **Ray Huffines**, the support of the *City of Plano*, vendors, suppliers, and volunteers. With this overview, Jo turned the (lack of) mic over to Event Director, Jessica, who, she warned us, “*loves numbers*.”



Jessica challenged us to guess the Festival annual budget, cautioning Bruce to not let the cat out of the bag. When we demonstrated that we hadn’t a clue, she told us that the \$1.6 M operating budget includes \$600 K of in-kind goods and services. The Festival uses three miles of fencing, 115 port-a-potties, and 250 tents, some larger than our meeting room. The generated power would serve 15 three-bedroom homes. There are 35 merchants and two stages of entertainment.

The Facebook page has 31,000 likes. She glared at us; “*Are you not aware*” of the Facebook page? Nancy Humphrey whipped out her smartphone to LIKE the page immediately.

The website generates ~5M clicks in the month of September for this “*family-oriented community event*.” It offers charities a venue “*to raise awareness*” and “*increase volunteerism*,” resulting in \$2.5 M worth of donations. Even the food services are staffed by volunteers, and all the participating organizations get a cut of the proceeds prorated by the number of volunteer-hours they muster.

She said we could “*sign up on our website*” and earn (“*unlimited food?*” one wag asked, no, instead) “*a highly-coveted staff parking pass*.” Among the many awards won is 2014 Partner of the Year from the Chamber.



Jessica concluded by saying that she started with the Festival in 1991, "*when I was 10,*" and the best part is that "*I get to work with my Mom!*" Someone cruel amended that to "*have to work with my Mom.*"

Executive Director Jo returned to tell us that in their 36th year, she sees parents who were brought to the Festival as children, introducing it to their own children. So it's generational.

Jessica asked those who'd been 15 times to the Festival to stand. Many did. 20 times? 25 times? Bruce remained standing, but Jessica said, "*He works for the City, so he doesn't count,*" not the most politic thing to have uttered to the hand the feeds.

Then she wanted to know who had never attended, and only **Dennis Högg** 'fessed up. That honesty won him tickets to the Festival.

Lenny wanted to know where they'd go in 5 to 10 years. Jo said more pilots need to learn to fly in an urban setting.

Kelly asked about the balloon entrance fee and was told it's \$50 but "*they get back \$200*" when they show to offset the expenses of hauling a balloon to Plano. The featured hotel is the Southfork, so they're negotiating furiously with the new management for 320 rooms.

David Bowman wanted to hear "*a great story*" associated with the balloons. Phil Dyer offered the one about the pilot who died of a heart attack! Camille offered up having to be lifted into a balloon as it ascended and wanted to know if the experience can be repeated. Jo said it's \$25 for a "*tethered ride.*"

Olin channeled a question ostensibly from Jamie Schell about booze at the Festival. Jo said alcohol didn't make for a "*safe family atmosphere,*" and people tend to be "*impolite*" when three sheets to the wind.

Then, changing the subject, she summoned Mary Jo and told how Collin College had honored scholarship donors at a recent event, at which Plano Rotary has not represented. So Mary Jo presented Kelly with his award, and the suggestion was made that he needs to be fined, for the buck stops there. "*What are the procedures for impeachment?*" one wag wanted to know.

Kelly offered Jo and Jessica one paperweight to share and offered the second to Ryan Downey. He told us that *ClubCorp* must approve our contract. He thanked Nathan, **Jamee**, and **Rick Horne** for negotiating that, led us in the Four-Way Test, and wished us well at 1:03.



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Guest of

Kelly Palmer

Mark Waterbury

Mark Waterbury

John Caldwell



INTERACT

Interact, the Rotary youth program, was launched by the RI Board of Directors in 1962. The first Interact club was established by the Rotary Club of Melbourne, Florida. Interact clubs provide opportunities for boys and girls of secondary school age to work together in a world fellowship of service and international understanding. The term, Interact, is derived from "inter" for international, and "act" for action. Every Interact club must be sponsored and supervised by a Rotary club and must plan annual projects of service to its school, community and in the world.

Today there are over 7,200 Interact clubs with more than 155,000 members in 88 countries. "Interactors" develop skills in leadership and attain practical experience in conducting service projects, thereby learning the satisfaction that comes from serving others. A major goal of Interact is to provide opportunities for young people to create greater understanding and goodwill with youth throughout the world.

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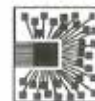
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