

Winter
Weekly

Reader

Volume 100, Issue 162, February 12, 2015

The Plano Rotary Club
www.PlanoRotary.com

UPCOMING MEETINGS

February 12

Kris O'Connor -
"The Hidden Dangers
of Older Garage Doors"

February 19

"Annual Black History
Month Program"

February 26

Paula Land -
"Silence isn't Golden: How
to Make the Most of your
Hearing"

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Lynne McLean	Feb 01
Jason Kramer	Feb 07
Karla Oliver	Feb 13
Doyle Dean	Feb 19
Jim McGee	Feb 20
Dennis Fuller	Feb 22
Chris Henry	Feb 23
Carrolyn Moebius	Feb 27
Kyle Walters	Feb 27



That's Amy Poehler???

YORAM SOLOMON is successfully challenging **Sainted Editor** for the rôle of class clown. He rose to the bait of the last *Weekly Reader* to include his photobomb on his **Facebook** page despite any hay his opponent may make about a sense of humor being only appropriate for a liberal. That's the mark of a brave politician in Texas' equivalent of Orange County.

President Wonderful opened the meeting early at 12:09, cognizant that he had a full agenda. At meeting's close, we went over by 60 seconds, and Earnest, noting that **Sainted Editor** would take him to task for that transgression, said he'd add his penance to the Fine Bucket. **Sainted Editor's** not that unreasonable; indeed the early start was reason enough to excuse tardiness as "A" for effort. Earnest can now safely recover his extra \$1, but, of course, he won't.

Earnest persuaded **David McWhorter** to pray and **Brad Keith** to lead us in the Pledge. ("Thanks, **Bob!**") He thanked **Karen Sheldon** for greeting and summoned **SERGEANT-DU-JOUR Kelly Palmer** to duty.

We had no Visiting Rotarians beyond the migratory one to be inducted today. **Janice Allman** welcomed a member of the Board of Directors of **PLANO CONSERVANCY**, **Candace Fountoulakes**, challenging **LB THE RADIANT** to "say her name three times." Without a moment's hesitation, **LB** replied, "Her name. Her name. Her name."



Yoram welcomed **Scott Chang**, **Dennis Högg** introduced **Maurice Jones**, and **Rick Maucieri** bade us greet **Mike Jobe**, VP of Operations for the Dallas **Y**.

Earnest presented **Mark Geller** with a Paul Harris Plus Three pin for a \$4 K contribution to the Rotary International Foundation.

Randy Wright was summoned to induct an escapee from a



Churchland, VA, Rotary Club, **Howard Matson**. Howard was PR Director of his Club, so, as Randy put it, "We must live up to his expectations." Then he asked us to leap to our feet and welcome our newest member.



Attendance pins were scored by **Mary Jo Dean** (20), **Jim Monroe** (19), **Ean Sullivan** (26), **Sarah Watkins** (6), and **John Caldwell** (2). In addition, Mary Jo received a 20-year certificate to hang proudly in her office.



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Mary Jo returned to the podium with **Camille Ussery** to tout the 70th Anniversary of the Club this year. They have been tasked with developing a recommended Service Project to mark that milestone, and, noting that Plano has no playground facilities appropriate for disabled children, they have proposed funding such equipment for the newly-renovating **Jack Carter Park**.

In as smooth a segue as we've seen, **Rick Horne** introduced the Director of Plano Parks & Recreation, **Amy Fortenberry**. He began by listing all the reasons families and businesses relocate to the City.



- 4th safest city in the U.S.
- 10th healthiest city
- 3rd best-run (**Bruce** beamed inwardly)
- Top-of-the-line *PISD* and *Collin College*
- Early adopter of high tech
- *City of Excellence*
- Among four finalists for a national gold medal award for its parks

And, since the talk today focused upon athletic facilities...

- 83 parks spanning more than 4,000 acres
- 70 miles of paved trails
- 69 athletic fields from cricket to balloon landings
- 8 swimming pools
- 5 recreation centers from squash to snooker
- 4 arts and cultural centers
- Pecan Hollow Golf Course
- High Point Tennis Center

All of this is due to the steady hands of our two guest speakers (including **Robin Reeves**, Chief Park Planner) who are "*out standing in their fields*," but consented to come indoors today to address us.

Amy Fortenberry is a Texas Tech graduate who majored in Recreation. She is also a graduate of the first class at NRPA's Director School and one of the first professionals in the country to pass the Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE) Exam. Amy has 24 years with the Department. She is responsible for managing 185 full-time employees and 465 part-time employees. Amy also oversees 42 full-time employees at the Convention Center and Convention and Visitors Bureau. She is responsible for a budget of \$21 M in operating funds along with \$25 M in Capital Improvement.

Her strength includes consensus-building along with collaboration and developing partnerships with the residents of Plano. These rela-

tionships have allowed Plano to provide outstanding services for its residents at one of the lowest tax rates in the DFW area. Amy maintains her Lifeguard Instructor Certificate and teaches an occasional Lifeguard Class and CPR/AED classes to city employees.

Amy is married to a Fort Worth fireman and has an adorable 6th grade daughter, who likes to fish.

Joining Amy today is the "World's Greatest" Chief Park Planner, Robin Reeves. Robin is another Texas Tech grad with a degree in Landscape Architecture. Robin has been with the City for 31 years.

Robin manages projects within the Park System and oversees \$20-25 M in projects annually. In his spare time, Robin likes spending time with his wife and three kids, ages: 4, 10, and 12. They have thoroughly tested the soccer fields and playgrounds in the area. In the summer, they enjoy boating.



Amy explained her bandaged head as a result of all her outdoor activity..."*too much sun.*"

She told us that Plano's first park was *Harrington*, established in 1887, 81 years before the Department came into existence. With the exponential growth of the City, beginning in the 70s, Plano's parks are part of an aging infrastructure. They are lagging behind City growth.

The first parks were part of PISD; indeed, her 1st job was with the *Vines Recreation Center*, where the most stressful part was rearranging the furniture each day to satisfy the teachers in that joint-use facility.

She showed us a slide of City park facilities, a Master Plan Map as a patchwork of light and dark green, the latter acquired, the former intended. The latest acquisition is *Los Rios Golf Course* obtained last year. More information is available at www.PlanoPark.org

Although she needn't have sold us on the benefits of parks and recreational facilities, she enumerated

1. Healthy activities
2. School readiness
3. Respite for caregivers
4. Sense of community
5. Cleaner air and water
6. Wildlife refuge
7. AAA bond ratings tied to Quality of Life
8. Economic impact via sports tourism and arts
9. Corporate business relations

And lastly, she made a vigorous denial of the scurrilous suggestion that excellent parks singlehandedly secured the **TOYOTA** relocation. Bruce winced.

Next, Amy called upon Robin Reeves who spoke of a study of regional athletic facilities across Frisco, Allen, and McKinney. Cooperation among them ensures completion of trail connections across municipal boundaries. The Saigling House, constructed in 1905, has recently been purchased from *Collin Intervention for Youth*, and plans are underway to make it an Arts Center (adjacent to Haggard Park opposite the Cox Building). Oak Point Nature & Retreat Center is to be expanded significantly to include meeting



and retreat space, bird watching and kayaking classes. The associated Oak Point Recreation Center will receive 5000 square feet of exercise equipment and locker room space. Construction will begin this summer.

The Carpenter Center Natatorium will add a swimming pool with water slides and exercise lap areas. Also due this summer.

120 acres near **Rutledge's Party Barn**, bought in 2009, will be developed like the Arbor Hills Nature Preserve. And there are proposals expected soon (hint, Ms. Fountoulakis) from conservancy groups for the restoration of the Collinwood House, built in the 1860s.

A stage structure will be added to the parking lot of McCall Plaza by fall 2016. It will facilitate outdoor events.

At last we arrived at Jack Carter Park, and our ears perked up. It is 30 years old and showing its age, so a new pool will be established at the south end and the old one removed from the north end. The new pool will have deep diving and a wave running facility. A climbing wall for teens wanting to leap off into the deep end must surely keep the Risk Assessment Office up at nights. Plans call for completion by May 2016, so we have to hustle to outfit the playground replacing the old pool. Robin called the universal accessibility unique to the area.



Funding for this renovation comes from the 2013 Bond Election but doesn't include the accessibility envisioned by Plano Rotary.

Future projects include renovation of Liberty Rec Center, expansion of the Senior Center, development of Moore Park (on Chaparral Road), and a Dog Park on the east side.

Amy concluded the presentation with "a *shameless plug*" for our utilization her facilities. \$150 per year (\$115 for seniors) is a small enough price to pay for "the best parks" and



access to the Rec Centers. Events like **Hal Ketchum** in March or **Jimmie Dale Gilmore**, in association with Parks & Rec, can be found online at www.planostages.com

Patti Schwartz asked about the inconvenience of parking lot closures while McCall Plaza is under construction. Yep.

Larry FLASH Flannery asked about formulae relating population to these facilities. Amy said there were standards which she amended to "guidelines." At one park per square mile, no one is more than 1/2 a mile from one. At present, there is one park per 15,000 residents.

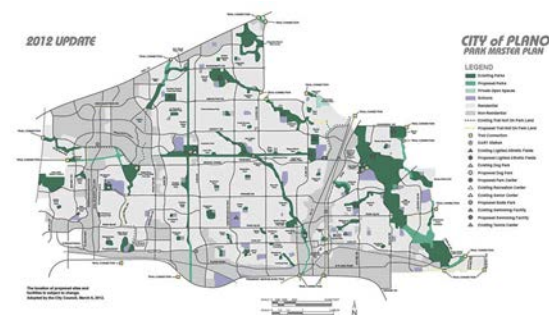
Rick Maucieri inquired about Chisholm Trail and was told that it currently terminates at the Mall, but consideration is being given to extend it into Richardson.

Earnest awarded them both our highly coveted perpetual calendar.

Camille returned to the lectern to tell us a tale of the gratitude of a parent with a special needs child after the City installed a swing appropriate for the child in a park near them.

Mary Jo noted that Plano Rotary's "footprint" would be associated with this accessible playground, indicating our commitment to the community.

After leading us in the Four-Way Test, Earnest ended the meeting at 1:01.



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Guests & Visiting Rotarians

Guest

Candace Fountoulakis

Scott Chang

Maurice Jones

Mike Jobe

Visiting Rotarian

None

Guest of

Janis Allman

Yoram Solomon

Dennis Hogg

Rick Maucieri

Home Club

Next Social:

Tuesday, February 27th @ 5PM

Socials are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 5PM and will count as a Rotary make-up.

Please Contact Bob Pikna if you have suggestions for events.

Email: bpikna@bizsvcs.com or Phone: 214-417-1487

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