



WINTER
Weekly

Reader

Volume 304, Issue 368, March 5th, 2020

The Plano Rotary Club
www.PlanoRotary.com

Mi CASA es Su CASA

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

March 5th

Johnny Lewis

75th Anniversary Update

Joe Camarena & Bob Kehr

*Plano Rotary Club Trivia
Challenge*

March 12th

Pete Havel

"The Arsonist in the Office"

*Fireproofing Your Life Against
Toxic Co-workers, Bosses,
Employees & Cultures*

March 19th

Broderick Allen

"Cyber Security"

*How it impacts your
everyday life.*



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Robert Kehr	Mar 07
Mark Johnson	Mar 10
Jamie Schell	Mar 18
Gary Garza	Mar 31



Prince Horné filled in for **JOE**FFREY **THE AWOL**, opening the meeting at 12:12 and calling upon **Kelly Palmer** for the Invocation and **Pradeep Samudra** for the Pledge. Greet-er, **Larry FLASH** Flannery, commented on the "amazing sweater day" celebrated by **Jo Via** and **Jessica Jackson** (a distant relation to last week's Mystery Man, "Bubba" Jackson). Jo said it was **NATIONAL MOTHER-DAUGHTER DRESS ALIKE DAY**.



Rick also served as this day's **SER-GEANT-AT-ARMS**, announcing no Visiting Rotarians. However, **Nancy Humphrey** had a guest, **Chip Stewart**, who looks for-



ward to the Club Motorcycle Jacket. **Larry Bisno** bade us welcome a mother of two RYLA daughters, **Tran Dang Le**. And **Maria Mott** gave notice of perennial guest, **Marco Solano**, soon to be a member.

Rick presented the Club with a new 100% Paul Harris Fellowship banner for the



year 2012-13 obtained by **Judge Johnny**. Rick said we'd only have to use a magic marker to update it for future years.



FLASH had an update on last week's parrot story. The foul-mouthed parrot, when informed of the visit of its owner's mother, inquired, "That sl*t?" In retaliation, the owner stuffed it in a freezer to cool off while contemplating the inadvisability of its outburst. After his mother's departure, he recovered the shivering bird, asking if it had anything to say for itself. It said, "No, but what did the chicken do?"

In **Joe Camarena's** dereliction of duty, **Bob Kehr** stepped up to introduce the day's speaker.

Jasmine Gleeson, Development Director, joined the team at CASA of Collin County in July 2018. CASA promotes and protects the best interests of children who have been abused or neglected. It trains volunteer advocates to improve the child's quality of life and serves as their voice within the court system to ensure they are placed in a safe, permanent, and loving home.

Jasmine has diverse experience in all aspects of development, including corporate sponsorships, grant funding, annual campaigns, and large-scale fundraise-

continued on page 2



ing events. Jasmine loves working with the advocates and staff at CASA. She enjoys being surrounded by dedicated, passionate people who wake up every morning to make a difference in the lives of children. The team never knows what the day will bring, whether heart-break or celebration, but they show up every day to continue fighting to make sure the children CASA serves are safe and cared for.

Eschewing the mic, Jasmine bellowed her presentation with a caution that her voice may not hold out due to the cold she's suffering. (A shiver of fear went through the audience, occasioned by an upcoming pandemic.)

She identified CASA as Court-Appointed Special Advocate, serving Collin County exclusively. She commented in passing that 27% of its workload involves the removal of a child from its inadequate home. Indeed, all such removals are served by CASA. A judge orders the removal and appoints CASA as temporary guardians.



Their advocates work by building a personal relationship up with the children whom they see at least twice a month. These are kids who've lost everything and for whom CASA advocates make a real difference in their lives.

CASA served 557 children in 2019, down a bit from the 597 served the year before. It picked up 212 new wards and closed 253 cases (out of a total of 355 involving 1,328 hearings and over 18,249 case hours) after 12-18 months on the books. One child was in the system for seven years before a successful outcome on *National Adoption Day*! A staff of 263 volunteers worked 21,000 hours, driving 261,000 miles, to serve as advocates.

She showed a video of endorsements from children and advocates alike. They declared themselves the "one true constant in a child's life" as they "fight for the best interests of the child." Referring to historical Plano she said that "even in a town of white picket fences," you can't "keep out addiction" or child abuse. So children are traumatized, and the removal from home and placing in foster care is further traumatizing. But removal is the only option when you smell a family's home filled with "dog feces and food bags" and other messes. These lead to emotional bruises as well as the physical ones. She asks herself, "What else is wrong with this child?"

Their "lawyers aren't as involved" as the volunteer advocates. We strive for "normalcy as if we were raising our own children." When you see an "eight-year-old explaining sexual abuse in a way no child could know," there's a strong motivation to give her a normal life. You "get to bring a little light."

"We play a small part in the bigger picture of a child's life." And part of that is countering the curse of low self-esteem. "These children think that they're not valuable." Instead, they "need a chance to set the world on fire." And to do that, "you need a big heart."

"These are good kids; they just need someone to fight for them." CASA has nine advocates serving 45 children.

John Caldwell asked what is done with 17-year-olds who have "aged out" of the system. Jasmine said that she did research on one subject and found a biological sister to make a connection.

272 cases ended in placement with families. And the "future can look better" with additional volunteers. She invited us to a volunteer orientation session on 3 April.

Funding comes from golf tournaments and Angel Trees.

John Caldwell asked about the volunteer process and was told that it starts with a mandatory background check. Then there's 35 hours of training followed by ride-alongs to familiarize participants with the legal process. A court hearing that results in being sworn in by a judge all insure that we're putting a child's life in safe hands.

Larry Bisno asked about the CAC, Children's Advocacy Center. He learned about play therapy and the forensic review process.

Judge Johnny, who once remanded children into CASA's custody, praised the group saying that we don't have enough foster families in Collin County. Jasmine confirmed that 72% of families are outside of Collin, including some in San Antonio, Houston, and even New York City! "There are not enough foster homes."

Maria Mott asked about the connection between CASA and *My Friend's House*. Jasmine told her that they are one of CASA's partners.



Rick then thanked Jasmine by presenting her with "the last multiport charger," and called for announcements.

John Caldwell leapt up to say that there's room for more judges at the Four-Way Test Speech Contest on 21 March at Plano Children's Theater at **SHOPS AT WILLOW BEND**. PISD speech teachers will train the judges. We apparently have many speakers

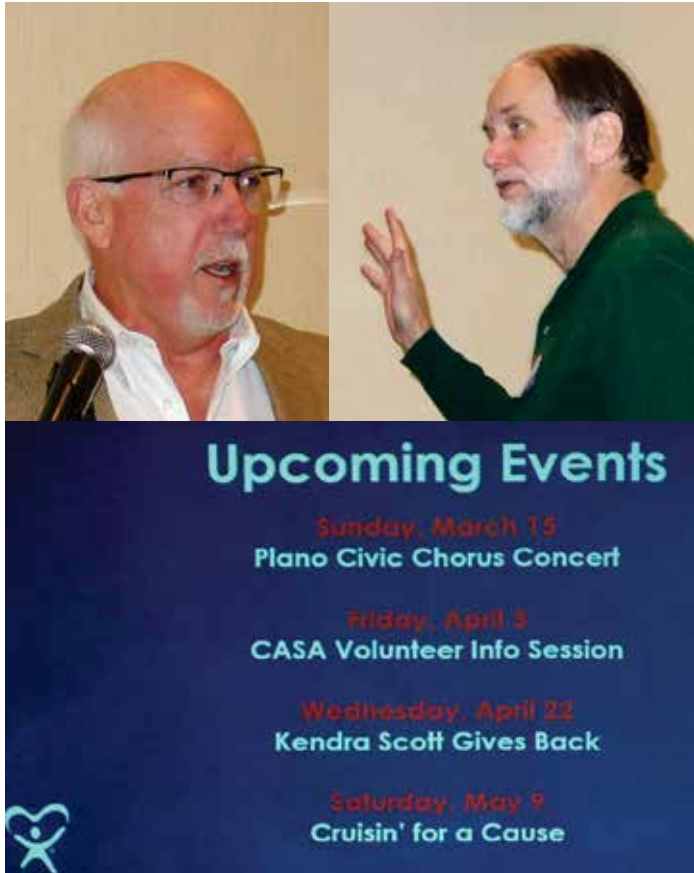
and facilitators, but we have lost a way. This is not the Five-Way Test. So we're to step up.

Since we finished so soon, Rick felt obliged to tell a joke, even though he's no Larry Flannery. He told of a time that he got to play golf with a caddy. After the last hole, he asked the caddy if he had any suggestions to improve Rick's game. The caddy recommended shortening his clubs. When Rick was clearly confused by that, the caddy explained that they'd be easy to fit in a trash can.

CRICKETS.

So he led us in the Five-Way Test and dismissed the assembly at 12:42.

This meeting's photographer was **Emma Smith**.



Marco Solano

Proposed by: Maria Mott

Classification: Restaurant Business

Marco was born in Martinez de la Torre, Veracruz, Mexico. He worked with his father on the farm where they planted and harvested lemons for commerce. He was President of the Martinez de la Torre Rotary Club in 2017 and decided to leave his native country to search for a safer environment. He studied to be a Chef, and took Electrical and Agricultural courses. He enjoys sports and helping the community through Rotarian projects.

NEW MEMBER PROPOSALS



Charles "Chip" Stewart

Proposed by: Nancy Humphrey

Classification: Electrical Engineer

Chip is a graduate of Texas A&M and works as an Electrical Engineer at Raytheon in the missile systems department. He has been married for 20 years to Lezlee and has 2 children.

He is a Boy Scout leader in Troop 1776. During his 3 years of service, he has matriculated 21 Eagle Scouts. He hopes to serve as The Chartered Organization Representative, so that the goals and aims of the Rotary can help guide the scout that our club charters.

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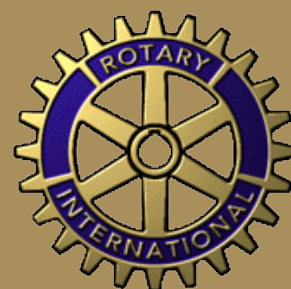
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Thank you Kenny Wilson

The Plano Rotary Club

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Guests

Guest

Chip Stewart
Trang Dang Le
Marco Solando

Guest of

Nancy Humphrey
Larry Bisno
Maria Mott

Visiting Rotarians

Visiting Rotarian

none

Home Club