



BE THE INSPIRATION  
2018-2019

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**May 30th**  
**Judge Chris Hill**  
State of the County Collin County  
update

**June 6th**  
**NO NOON MEETING**  
(1st Thursday of the month)

**June 13th**  
**Sonu Varkey**  
Inspirational Magic



## MAY BIRTHDAYS

Huffines, Samuel	May 01
Priest, John	May 05
Parr, Chris	May 06
Matson, Howard	May 11
Palmer, Kelly	May 20
Dean, Mary Jo	May 27



# WINTER Weekly

Volume 277, Issue 342, May 30th, 2019

# Reader

The Plano Rotary Club  
[www.PlanoRotary.com](http://www.PlanoRotary.com)

## Damn Mosquitoes!



**T**HREE seconds after offering his point'n'shoot to **Hubert Aaron**, ~~Sainted~~ Editor received an offer from **John Caldwell** to be *Photographe du Jour*, but the die had been cast. Nevertheless, evidence of interest in the job is encouraging.

**Carolyn the Petite** commenced the festivities at 12:12, calling upon **Blair Ritchey** for the Invocation and **Peggy Fenwick** for the Pledge. She credited **Joe Camarena** with Greeting and substituted **Rick Horne** for **SERGEANT NANCY** whose AWOLity denied her a three-straight attendance.

Rick mangled our Visiting Venezuelan's name, **Georges Przytulski**, but only because his name is Polish, one assumes. He managed **Randy Wright** (*Plano East*) all



right. **Mary Jo Dean** introduced her Chief Nursing Officer, **Sandy Haire**, she of the



brunette persuasion. **Jamee Jolly** welcomed Chamber VP **Kellie Marsalis**, and **Sara Akers** bade us welcome her Developmental Assistant, **Charlotte Forcht**.



**Janis Allman** begged indulgence to note a "mystery guest" occupying a vacant chair at her table. His/her dinner went uneaten. Someone called away without lunch?

At the prompting of several members, **Jamee** revealed her resignation from the Chamber's Ex. Dir. position to take on that of Senior Director of **PISD's** Education Foundation (to a round of applause).

**Rick** (Sub. **SGT.**) **Horne** chose relatively new member **Peggy Fenwick** to harass with **3 Minutes of Fame**. **Peggy** was born in Camden, AR (midway between Shreveport and Little Rock), pop. 12K and declining. She earned her accounting degree <one lonely cheer> from *Southern Arkansas U.* She joined Rotary to expand her community outreach and for our exceptional people, of course. She's been in Plano for seven years.

Her favorite food is a salty Margarita with a taco chaser. Her favorite musician is **Elton John**, so Rick surmised that she'd be going to see *Rocketman* sans **Kim Jong Un**. A secret that she'd like to share with Rotary is that she has multi-generational grandchildren, spaced **25 years apart**. (And you'd thought no woman would ever admit to such a mathematical *faux pas*!)



**CAPTAIN KIRK** rose to thank all and sundry for successful **CITIZEN OF THE YEAR** events. It was well-attended (despite *Sainted Editor's* forgetfulness), and the 2-3 minute résumés on each student, delivered by their Principal, necessitated **COTY** over two nights. **KIRK** is getting the four erroneous trophies redone. Sponsorships covered the costs, and the "feedback from the Principals was strong." (And positive, one presumes.) Sara Akers lauded **KIRK** saying "your service means so much" to this, "our signature event." **KIRK** responded, "This could be you next year!"

Rick Horne touted *Sam's Gift*, our summer donation to the Plano Food Pantry. He exhorted us to support it with donation\$ or food over the next two weeks. He said, "We have no need for shoppers. Online is the best thing since sliced bread." **Justin Roche** suggested he'd have to take Rick out into the parking lot and have "a discussion" about online shopping!



**Carolyn the Petite** called out **Olin Jaye** to introduce speaker **Ben Harris**, saying that she's been "following Ben's journey over the years."

Olin said that Ben began his journey as "a drug dealer," oops, he meant, "in the pharmaceutical industry," after which he joined HCA Medical City Plano as VP for Business Development.

Harris was instrumental in the growth and development of key emergent and elective service lines including Neurosurgery, Spine, Orthopedic Surgery, Robotic Surgery, Surgical Oncology, Cardiovascular and Women's Services. Additionally, *Medical City Plano* opened the *Brain & Spine Hospital*, achieved one of the first Comprehensive Stroke Center designations in the State of Texas, and opened the region's second dedicated burn unit. He also helped improve physician satisfaction ranking to the top 3% of hospitals in the country.

MCP became one of the few Level I Trauma Centers in the N. Texas area. Harris was promoted to COO of *Medical City Las Colinas* in February 2016. He oversees hospital operations and development of the 100-bed full service medical facility with more than 550 physicians and 450 employees. The facility is Irving's first *Primary Stroke Center* and is the only facility in the city to achieve an "A" patient safety rating.

He's almost a native Planoian. Among many active roles in our community, Harris served on the Plano City Council for 8 years, concluding his service due to term limits in 2017. This *Leadership Plano* grad has served the community on the boards of many organizations, including Plano Chamber and LP. Harris received a BA in Govt. from UT and a MBA from *Dallas Baptist*. He and his wife, Abby, live in Plano with their 2 beautiful children.

Ben began with a photo of his farewell to the City Council in June 2017. It included a shot of his entire family before they took a trip to Big Bend in early August. By late August, he had the symptoms of the flu. However, he



was scheduled to go dove hunting on the opening day, September 1<sup>st</sup>, so he went to see a doctor to ensure that wouldn't be interrupted.

The doctor thought antibiotics inappropriate since he diagnosed Ben's problem as viral. But he let him go hunting anyway. Out in West Texas in his double-wide, he awoke at 2:30 am unable to get out of bed on 9/2. He was paralyzed, but he got to his cell phone and flashed its light to awaken his brother at 5:30. They drove him to Vernon where he spent 8 hours in an ER. The initial diagnosis was dehydration, but, two bags of fluid later, they thought a spinal tap in order. Uncertain as to the level of care in Vernon, TX, Ben was medically evacuated via chopper to MCP whereupon a spinal image proved his paralysis was due to **transverse myelitis** or loss of nerve sheaths in the spine. MCP spent the next six weeks (of two of which he has no knowledge) "just tryin' to keep me alive." He was on a ventilator all that time, unable to breathe. It was in *Lifecare Hospital* that he was finally able to come off it. He was in a facility where "other patients had had car wrecks. I had a mosquito bite." A massive team of people brought him back, justifying the slogan "if you live north of 635, you never have to go south of 635 for healthcare."

By his 39<sup>th</sup> birthday, he was ready for therapy, "a long process!" Ben teared up showing us a slide of his child's card saying, "Daddy's trying his hardest. -Walker"

He was grateful to Jamee for staying with him in hospital so his family could go out on a holiday. He was grateful too for **Nathan's** having brought him BBQ! He returned home for the first time 3/7/18 to a "**WELCOME HOME, BEN**" sign. He returned to work in a motorized wheelchair, grateful for the mobility. He became emotional again at a photo of his children manipulating his legs up the stairs. On 5/13/18, he took the wheelchair out in public for the last time at an *Eisemann* event. And things "are getting back to normal." But that involved a re-examination at the Dept of Motor Vehicles! He admitted to "a healthy skepticism of government, even though I worked in City government," but that skepticism melted when the examiner stated that his driving score "was the highest I've ever given anybody."

After three months recuperation at home, he was ready to go back to work. He started at 2 days a week, then progressed to 3 days a week until about 3 months ago. He even went on a family vacation to Colorado last summer (using the Free World's supply of repellent, I'll wager).

Through the ordeal, he became steadily more hirsute, but he's bringing "my beard back this weekend." (If Abby lets him, surely.) And he has since shared his thoughts on his medical experiences with the Care Team at Medical City Plano. He left us with the following thoughts:



1. **Wear bug repellent outdoors!** He assumes he was bitten in Plano (one of five cases that year), but it could have been Big Bend.
2. Others thoughts and prayers “are so impactful!” He hadn’t believed that before. He can “never repay for all the things done for me and my family.” Gratitude was “not a strong suit of mine” prior to the illness. He realizes now how important are all the jobs in hospitals!
3. Attitude applies across the board; “the better the attitude, the better the results.”

And even being here to talk it out with us has been therapeutic.

He whined about not having “a six-pack now,” and said that his grip strength is slowly returning. But he can’t run, his neck has about 20° scoliosis tilt, and he can’t raise his left arm.

He was asked how work had changed, and Ben said that he’s lived the motto, “Every Action. Every Patient. Every Time.” And he had one negative reaction to a “jerk” of a respiratory technician. He reported to the staff that a single negative interaction “flavors an entire stay.”

Mary Jo asked about shoulder therapy, and Ben told her, “We don’t know what will happen,” but he feels a tiny flex in his abdomen, so the fabled six-pack may return!

John Caldwell asked about a vaccine. Ben said there is none. West Nile is too rare, and research attention is focused on Zika. He said it’s not contagious; you can only contract it via the bite of a female mosquito, so “*she got me!*” Hackles were raised on the distaff.

Rick Horne asked about sense of taste. Ben said his first taste of scotch after the illness was awful! He feared mightily. Olin asked if it might be used as a preventative?

Jamee inquired about communication when paralyzed. Ben said that not being able to talk had its amusing moments, as when he hit the nurse call button, and she responded, “How can I help you?” He thought “still *can’t* talk!” Not being able to breathe is scary. When he signaled to rehab staff that he needed

a bedpan, their response was, “We don’t do that here. The saving your life part is over.”

Carrolyn was “grateful to you for sharing your story. Whenever I saw Ben, I remembered his smile!” Then, through tears, she led us in the Four-Way Test and released us at 1:06.



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Thank you Kenny Wilson

### The Plano Rotary Club

P.O. Box 864316

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## Guests & Visiting Rotarians

### Guest

Sandy Haire  
Kellie Marsalis  
Charlotte Forcht

### Visiting Rotarian

Georges Przytulski  
Randy Wright

### Guest of

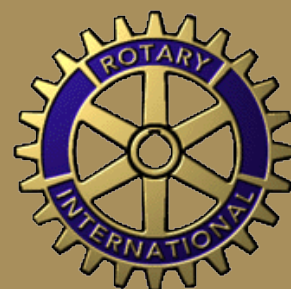
Mary Jo Dean  
Jamee Jolly  
Sara Akers

### Home Club

Venezuela  
Plano East

## Proposed Member

Members please  
bring a guest with  
a serving heart



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LET'S RELAX AND GET  
HAPPY TOGETHER

Saturday, June 15 7:00 PM

The Plano Rotary Club  
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The more the merrier!