

Fall
Weekly

Reader

Volume 46, Issue 110 November 14, 2013

The Plano Rotary Club
www.PlanoRotary.com

UPCOMING MEETINGS

November 14

Todd Staples, Texas
Agricultural Commissioner

November 28

Thanksgiving-No meeting

December 5

Dr. Al Johnson
"The Wellness Revolution:
Take your Health into Your
Own Hands to Feel, Think
& Live Better".

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Smith, Lissa	Nov 03
Jaye, Olin	Nov 05
Jackson, Martin	Nov 12
Youngblood, James	Nov 22
Schwartz, Patti	Nov 29



EVERY
ROTARIAN
EVERY
YEAR

BATHED IN BLOOD

OFFICIAL photographer, *Scary Bob*, insists that you all adore his rotoscoped photos. The jury is still out on that assertion; I've heard from no one else in this regard. Comments (tally view)?



PRESIDENT KIRK kicked off the festivities early at 12:11, since the speaker, **Dr. Robert McClelland**, asked for an uninterrupted 45 minutes for his treatise: "Remembering JFK: The Day the President Died." Indeed, **KIRK** warned us to sneak out quietly, if we must, at 1 pm, because the Good Doctor would still be exercising the bully pulpit.

KIRK called (presumably hesitantly) upon **Larry FLASH Flannery** for the Invocation (which he acquitted with dignity) and **RANGER RANDY** for the Pledge. ("Thanks, *Bob!*")

HE thanked **Bob Pikna** for Greeting and usurped the **SERGEANT** role **HIMSELF**.



HE welcomed Visiting Rotarians **Wayne Paul Frank** (Grapevine), **Andrea Thompson**, **Marilyn Hinton** (both Plano Metro), and **Matt Shaheen** (Frisco). **Yoram Solomon** said he'd shown up at Rotary with a hooker, **Tammy Hooker** to be precise. **Chris Phillips** introduced wife, **Cathy**. **John Caldwell** asked us to thank **Robert King** who "pitched in" at the Golf Tournament. Someone questioned his knowledge of sport. And **Sara Akers** reintroduced her Dad, **Dr. J.R. Egelston**.



Casey Stewart was fêted on the occasion of his

Camille Ussery explained this year's radically different Angel Tree procedures: we are to become



continued on page 2

RINOs, donating funds for others to shop for, wrap, and give gifts to needy families designated by **The Y**. Actually, we are invited to donate and shop and wrap and gift for both children and their parents at that pinnacle of excellence, **Walmart**★. The gifting will occur on December 3rd at **Plano Children's Theater** for a performance of *Scrooge* at which there will be a poorly-kept surprise visit by Santa and (hearing it for the first time) Elf **Maucieri**. There were donation envelopes conveniently strewn about our tables.



CAPTAIN KIRK indicated that matching **HIS** \$100 wouldn't be a bad idea, and **HE** thanked Camille and her committee for their great work.

As (last) Monday would be Veterans' Day, Air Force vet **KIRK** led the Club in recognition of all former servicemen and women and families before leading us **IN SONG!**



Sainted Editor had assured Dr. McClelland that "*we aren't a singing club,*" and (although put to the lie) we demonstrated the essential truth of that by *struggling* through the service anthems to the lilting strains of *PSO* musicians **Glen Hummel** on trumpet and **Jay Majernik**, Principal Percussionist, on

snare.

David McWhorter gave the speaker's intro.

Robert McClelland, M.D., was born in Gilmer, TX. He graduated from *The University of Texas* with highest honors in 1950, and then graduated from the *UT Medical Branch in Galveston* in 1954.

Following an internship at the *University of Kansas Medical Center*, he completed his residency in general surgery at *Parkland Hospital in Dallas*. After finishing his residency in 1962, he joined the faculty of *Southwestern Medical School*, from which he retired in August 2007. The next month he was appointed a Professor Emeritus of Surgery at *UT Southwestern Medical Center*. He remains an active participant in various medical school activities, primarily those concerning medical student education.

Dr. McClelland was one of the *Parkland Hospital* doctors who were present in the operating room in the immediate aftermath of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in November 1963.

There's the old saw: *tell 'em what you'll tell 'em, tell 'em, then tell 'em what you've told 'em*, but Dr. McClelland doesn't have time for all that today. So instead he'll speak of only two days: November 22nd and 24th, the deaths of JFK and **Lee Harvey Oswald**, respectively, "*as much emblazoned on my mind right now as they were then.*"

As the dying President was being wheeled into *Parkland*, Dr. McClelland was screening a film about hiatal hernias. A colleague came to retrieve him, saying that all (four!) surgical personnel were to convene in the ER to attend a wounded JFK. He hoped it wasn't true and speculated that half the team, Drs. **Perry** and **Baxter**, would be at lunch, but when he shouldered past the 100 Secret Service and other Security Officers to Trauma Room 1, past **Jacqueline Kennedy**, he found two others present.

He was asked to hold the retractors while others explored what looked like an entrance wound in the front of JFK's neck. That put him behind the patient's head while Dr. **Jim Carrico**, the first physician to see JFK, inserted the laryngoscope followed by a breathing tube. (Carrico became Chief of Surgery at *Washington* before returning to that position at *UT Southwestern*. He and all the attending physicians except Dr. McClelland have since died.)



Then they explored the possibility of damage to the carotid artery (in the neck that feeds the brain) while McClelland discovered the right rear of Kennedy's skull was missing just as his cerebellum fell out! At this point, everyone stopped eating their lunch.

That the back of the skull had been blown away suggested a frontal shot immediately. But with his cerebellum gone, the President could not survive. His pulse and blood pressure were strong, so "*he was not technically dead,*" but it wasn't long before the cardiogram flat lined, and they made the call. "*Mac, you can stop now, because he's gone.*"

The Trauma Room was packed with many people, most of whom should not have been there, but they dispersed as soon as the President was declared dead. But in doing so, the cart with his body was thrust against the wall, trapping Drs. Baxter and McClelland, so they were reluctant witnesses to what happened next.

The door opened to admit **Father Hubert**, a Catholic priest there to administer the last rites. He moved to the corpse's left ear and began, "*If thou livest,...*" but Dr. McClelland could hear no more. The door opened again. This time *Jacqueline Kennedy* entered and stood by Father Hubert, inquiring if the rites had been administered. "*Yes, I have given him conditional absolution.*" She winced slightly at *conditional* but moved to exchange rings with her husband. At no time in Dr. McClelland's presence did she lose control as portrayed in a drama of the assassination. Instead, she moved to the exposed foot of the President and kissed it goodbye, then left.

With everyone gone, the doctors were free to extricate themselves and exit the room, moving to the nurses' station. People ask Dr. McClelland what he felt while working on the President, and he always tells them that you think during the event but feel afterward.

They met the Forensic Pathologist, Dr. **Rose**, charged with performing the autopsy on murder victims. He told them that the *O'Neill Funeral Home* had placed the body in a casket on the original gurney and, flanked by Secret Service and Ms. Kennedy, had prepared to wheel it out. Dr. Rose had moved to intervene, telling them that Texas Law required that he perform the autopsy, but the Secret Service agent, who was unencumbered by a machine gun, walked him up, lifted him bodily out of the way, while the procession proceeded to the *Naval Hospital* where Jackie had requested the autopsy take place. (The President had been a Navy vet.)



The following Sunday, while he was preparing to lunch with his family after church, the TV announced that **Jack Ruby** had shot Oswald. He told his wife that he must return the *Parkland*, and she replied, "*Who is Oswald? Oh, we'll see you later.*"

He and the Chief of Surgery approached the ER, where **Ms. Nelson** presided over this admission as she had the President's. In "*a voice that shattered glass*," she announced, "*He's in there*," pointing to Trauma Room 2, across from 1, and two days prior had held **Gov. Connelly**.

Had Oswald not cringed away from Ruby, the bullet would have passed "harmlessly" through his abdomen. But his posture, when shot, placed his aorta at the target. Such wounds usually lead to immediate bleed out and death, but fortuitous clotting (here everyone pushed away dessert) permitted him to survive to the ER. They were about to place the clamps on the injured vessels when Oswald suffered a heart attack, and 20 minutes of heart massage could not sustain a beat.



Detective **Jim Leavelle**, in the ice cream suit, told of having bent down to the wounded prisoner, telling him that he was gravely in-

jured and asking if he had anything to say. Oswald shook his head and carried his motivations and the identity of any coconspirators to his grave. He had maintained, "*I didn't shoot anyone. I'm just a patsy*," an assertion that his daughter is trying to prove to this day.

Dr. McClelland confided, "*I'm not going to get into that bag of worms.*"

A reluctant **Chief Justice Warren** was assigned the chairmanship of the commission that bears his name and which promulgated the "*lone nut theory*." 75% of Americans didn't buy it. In 1978, the *Select Committee on Assassinations* studied the JFK, RFK, and MLK murders, concluding that a conspiracy was the probable explanation though it involved neither Cuba nor the U.S.S.R. Its report won't be public until 2029, so **Sainted Editor** has to survive until he's 88 to read it!

When asked if he was called before the *Warren Commission*, he said that he'd been interviewed for 30 minutes by **Arlen Specter**.

Responding to a 2nd question, Dr. McClelland indicated that, today, Oswald's wounds would have been survivable but not JFK's.

Dr. Perry gave an interview indicating his belief that the neck wound had come from the front. A Secret Service agent threatened him not to ever say that again, and he did not. Subsequent forensics showed that the neck wound *had* come from behind.

Alice Hobbs asked what the agent said and who was behind it. Dr. McClelland paraphrased the theme of **James Douglas's** book, *JFK & the Unspeakable Truth*, to the effect that it was Kennedy's persistent denial to the military of a nuclear first strike that irritated General **Curtiss LeMay** and precipitated the plot to kill the President.

Someone asked and was told that the blood-stained shirt on display was McClelland's from that day. He also maintained that Zapruder's film can be interpreted as a head shot from "*the picket fence*" (the Grassy Knoll).

CAPTAIN KIRK offered him the Rotary Clock, led us in the Four-Way Test, and released us at the advanced hour of 1:14! Most of us had been riveted by the tale for the entire time.

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