

Fall  
Weekly

# Reader

Volume 92, Issue 154, November 20, 2014

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

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### November 20

Bob May -  
"Honoring the Negro  
Leagues: The Best Season,  
The First Ninety Days"

### November 27

Thanksgiving Holiday  
No Meeting

### December 4

Dr. Gerald Edelman -  
"Staying Fit & Young by  
Overcoming Your Secret  
Addiction to Sugar"

### December 11

Annual Holiday Party &  
"Christmas Cops' Coat Drive  
@ Haggard Party Barn, 7pm  
Plano Sunrise & NT Pioneers  
Attending. NO NOON  
MEETING

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Allan Murovitz	Nov 3
Lissa Smith	Nov 3
Olin Jaye	Nov 5
Martin Jackson	Nov 12
Patti Schwartz	Nov 29



# probability pets

**N**O SHAVE November has apparently taken off. A number of members (not counting those with perpetually hirsute countenances) are waxing hairy (not counting the distaff members who wax hairs). Spouses must be rolling eyes as they count the days until **CLEAN SHAVEN** January arrives.

### President Wonderful

gaveled our attention at 12:13, summoning **Yoram Solomon** to Pray and **Rick Horne** to Pledge. ("Thanks, Bob!") Earnest thanked



**Karen Sheldon** for Greeting and anointed substitute **SERGEANT-AT-ARMS Kelly Palmer**.

There being no Visiting Rotarians (Is it halitosis?), Kelly moved on to Guests. **Randy Wright** introduced former member **Carroll Burgoon** whom he described as the only one his acquaintances able to earn a comfortable living as an artist and writer. **Jerry Aris** welcomed new partner **Michael Couture**. (It would be irresponsible in *extremis* for Michael to name his 1<sup>st</sup>-born *Haut*.)



Earnest urged us to partake of the **Birthday Cake** on the dessert table in celebration of all born in November, and the non-singing club sang "**Happy Birthday, dear November!**" (Apologies to ASCAP®.) **Sainted Editor**, who suffers from terminal Sweet

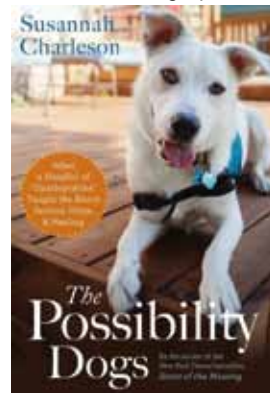
Tooth, has never had even a taste of the birthday cakes. He's too busy scribbling, and, by meeting's end, his short-term memory of the dessert has been scrubbed.



Member's attendance milestones were fêted including **Jerry Kezhaya** (6), **Larry Bisno** (2), and **Jo Via** (23).

Since the day's speaker, **Susannah Charleston**, had begged to stand and deliver early for fear of being late to a subsequent engagement, **Alice Hobbs** introduced her at this early point in the program. (As it turns out, her appointment was not terribly pressing as she ran us three minutes over the hour.)

"I had the privilege of hearing Susannah Charleston a few months ago and am pleased to introduce this best-selling author, radio and TV reporter, flight instructor, canine search-and-rescue team member, and Collin College professor to you today. Susannah



Charleston has written several books on the special bonds of humans and dogs. Her critically acclaimed books have been on the New York Times, Dallas Morning News, and Amazon bestseller lists, translated into several languages, and are available in print, e-print, and audio.



One book reviewer wrote Susannah's 'book, *The Possibility Dogs*, is an eloquent and heartwarming journey into the world of some very special dogs. Susannah is a great humanitarian who recounts her efforts to turn abandoned and shelter-bound dogs into special service dogs.'

Susannah and her service dogs certainly live up to our Rotary motto, 'Service Above Self.'



Her contact information is info@possibilitydogs.org and (214) 449-1061. She is Executive Director of **possibility dogs**.

She began with a poetic description of a fireman's tragedy. Call him Bob. He recalls the taste of grit in his eggs, a consequence of the previous day's sandstorm. He remembers "*the 1/2 moon chip on the edge, the toast, the coffee.*" He recalls "*wash me*" written in the dust on vehicles.

There was a flash and bang and the abandoned building, occupied by vagrants, took flame. A store clerk across the street smelled the smoke and called in the fire, a fire "*which kept ahead of the fire fighters.*" Adjacent to the involved building were residences that the two responding companies fought to save.

When at last it was extinguished, the grim task of searching for victims began. Firemen were five-deep into their search when a weakened wall collapsed upon them. Bob recalls seeing his buddy die a yard away, but, damaged as he was, it may as well have been a mile. Even as he penned this account, Bob was having difficulties coming to grips with the tragedy. But he relaxes as he touches his service dog, *Kaskah*.

A victim of PTSD, Bob now panics at any loud noise, he becomes disoriented, and could lose his way. *Kaskah*, a Psychiatric Service Dog, senses his distress and puts her head on his hand or leads him to a safe place.

There was no such classification until the mid-90s. *Kaskah*, and others like her, treat "*invisible disabilities.*" They treat mental health issues like agoraphobia (fear of open spaces), leading their companions back indoors...like a guide dog for the emotionally blinded. And they "*change someone's life.*"

She told us of another patient whose anxiety disorder led her to pull out her hair. Each episode is preceded by a tremor of her hand that her dog senses, triggering a response from the animal to demand attention unobtrusively (affection), distracting the patient, and short-circuiting the episode. The patient, thus calmed, is now able to attend college.

Other dogs treat physical disorders. Brooks Labrador Retrievers can sense blood sugar levels in diabetes patients before a meter does. It is especially comforting to parents of Type I infants who might otherwise succumb to nocturnal hypoglycemia. A non-invasive, blood-sniffing dog ensures the parents a restful night's sleep.

Service animals test for markers of other conditions like prostate cancer, Addison's, and Crone's disease.

She told us of another PTSD patient who couldn't move because his brain didn't recognize his limbs. But, because it's almost involuntary, he could reach down to pet Neo, his German Shepherd, and that act "*reconnects*" him.

Susannah decried some public reactions that denigrate those with invisible disabilities. A store owner refuses entry to a service animal because "*no one who is not blind deserves a dog.*" That owner is now the subject of a Federal lawsuit under the ADA.



Service animals are now closely defined by the ADA; they are mostly dogs but sometimes horses are employed for physical support in balance problems. Such definitions are useful because "*There are fake dogs out there,*" by which she meant fake **service** dogs. Indeed, she has been approached by those wishing to categorize their pets as such so that they can accompany them everywhere; such requests are met with an icy rejection.

Functionally, the "*litmus test*" for a service animal is "*how the dog behaves in public.*" The "*public access standard*" is that the animal "*will behave in a civilized manner. People should never know the dog is there.*" Businesses are entitled to reject even service animals that are not in control.

Setting the standards a bit low, one can obtain "*credentials*" for a dog if it exhibits "*85% predictability*" in its actions. The jobs they perform should not be obvious at first glance. Blood-sniffing dogs, for example, might subtly lick their companion's fingers to signal a change in blood chemistry. Doing so "*opens up*" a person's life.

Pet owners might say, "*My dog is just a dog,*" but Susannah maintains that "*a positive relation with your animal does good,*" lessening anxieties, raising oxytocin and serotonin levels. Even if it's not a service animal, "*your dog is saving your life a little bit each day.*"

She concluded with an update on Bob the ex-firefighter. *Kaskah* has given him the confidence to advocate for disaster management, speaking before crowds of thousands.

She referred to her 2<sup>nd</sup> book about rescue dogs. It too is available on Amazon.

Earnest gave her not only our "*highly-coveted*" perpetual calendar but also a book donated by Randy's guest, Carroll Burgoon.



Foundation Chair **John Caldwell** rose to remind us of our 100% Paul Harris Fellow Club status and to recognize new donors. **Jason Kramer** became our newest Fellow and **Randy Brodhead** got his Paul Harris+2 pin.

**Camille Ussery** noted *Angel Tree* donation envelopes on our tables



and told us that the Burgoon book, *The Ode to Joy Journal*, would be the gift for us also for each \$100 donation.

**CAPTAIN KIRK** explained that we vote on the 2015-16 Board composition in December. Our By-laws stipulate that the three former Presidents nominate the Treasurer so we should see **KIRK** about nominations for Treasurer who is in the Line of Succession for the Presidency but we should see **Kelly Palmer** for nominations for the rest of the Board. Applications must be in writing, and the deadline is December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Randy Wright said that he was seeking "extra symphony tickets."

Earnest led us in the Four-Way Test and struck us (roundly about the head and shoulders) out at 1:03.



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## Guests & Visiting Rotarians

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Carroll Burgoon  
Michael Couture

### Guest Of

Randy Wright  
Jerry Aris



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