



## Summer Weekly

# Reader

Volume 132, Issue 192, October 15, 2015

The Plano Rotary Club  
www.PlanoRotary.com

## DIFFERENTLY ABLE

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Oct 15**

District Governor Visit

**Oct 22**

"Hendrick Scholarship  
Foundation Presentation"

**Oct 29**

No Meeting  
"Hendrick Scholarship Golf  
Tournament"

### OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Richard Maucieri	Oct 05
John Caldwell	Oct 06
Justin Roche	Oct 07
Rick Horne	Oct 08
Jan Sullivan	Oct 10
Dennis Hogg	Oct 16
Janis Allman	Oct 18
Robert Botts	Oct 20
Gene Murray	Oct 22
Debbie Watson	Oct 25
Jessica Jackson	Oct 26
Marc J. Lewis	Oct 27
Casey Stewart	Oct 31

**B**UTTERING UP the Gleneagles staff, **President Paperweight** buddied up to **Ricardo Mancilla**, Maitre 'd of



(sic) our dining room. But he can't have been that impressive or he'd have earned a paperweight. Substitute photographer, **Randy Wright**, apologized for the washed out photos occasioned by the sunshine streaming through Gleneagles' windows.

Kelly opened the proceedings at 12:17, impressing **Earnest Mr. Wonderful Burke** into service for the Invocation and **Rick Boyer** for the Pledge. He called upon **SERGEANT AT ARMS Nathan Barbera** to welcome NO Visiting Rotarians but a few guests.



**Larry Bisno** introduced **Jodi Garrett**. **Randy Wright** welcomed **Dilip** Looking for Something to DO Assar. **Ean SECRET SANTA Sullivan** bade us welcome **Dawnetta Miller**. And **Rick Maucieri** told us he'd brought his anniversary partner, the long-suffering **Lovely Lori**.

Rotary Anniversaries were fêted next.



**Alan Murowitz (1) and Justin Roche (1)** were eclipsed by **Keith Bradley (44!)**



**Earnest** arose to read us the *Weekly Reader's* extensive list of October birthdays. He managed to misread **Jan Sullivan** as Ean, presumably because she's **MS. SECRET SANTA**, but Ean corrected

him...three times. There must be so many October birthdays because there are so many power outages in January. We sang **HB2U** which, by the grace of the Supreme Court, I can now identify as **Happy Birthday to You!**

**Janis Allman** reminded us of the **PLANO INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL** running in Haggard Park on Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>. All five Plano Rotary clubs will be represented at a single booth. She said it is a marvelous opportunity for make "the international and local communities aware of Rotary." Then she mentioned a recurring event every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday at **Rutledge's Party Barn**, but **Sainted Ed** didn't catch the reference.

**Nancy Humphrey** told us that while we've only managed to sign up ONE four-some for the **Hendrick SCRAMBLE FOR SCHOLARSHIPS**, others wanting to play can do so for the introductory price if they sign today. Last year we raised \$14K, but this year we've managed a shade over \$8K. So see **Nancy** or **Howard Matson** to sign up or sponsor!



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**CAPTAIN KIRK** filled in for AWOL **Bob Pikna** to do the honors, introducing the day's speaker, **Jim Leonard**, a member of the Board of Trustees of **EMPLOY ABILITY**, a Dallas-based non-profit that matches disabled workers with employers.

Jim Leonard is a 22-year veteran of **Frito-Lay/PEPSICO**, working in various Sales, Marketing, Category Management, and Operations functions. He currently works as a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, working across functions to improve productivity and efficiency.

Jim grew up in Texas and Oklahoma, earned a Political Science degree from University of Chicago, and has previously worked for McDonald's and Sara Lee.

Jim has been married to Traci for 20 years, and they have 17-year-old twin sons, Tristan and Nash, who keep them busy.

On 10 June 2006, the life of Jim and his family took a dramatic change. While on a family vacation, they were involved in a serious car accident. Thankfully, everyone was uninjured except for Jim. He suffered a broken neck and a spinal cord injury. After weeks of excellent medical care and months of physical rehab, Jim was able to rejoin his family as a high-functioning quadriplegic.

In unison with **Frito-Lay**, Jim was able to continue his career nine months after the accident. Since that time, he has successfully lead the development of a Foodservice Category Management Program, become a certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, and run a 6 LSS project that has saved **Frito-Lay** in excess of \$15M.

With the help of friends and family, Jim has resumed all family activities including coaching his sons' soccer team.

Jim doesn't let his challenges define him; instead, he leads the life he chooses.

Jim rose to the challenge of presenting to a Rotary Club quite literally: his wheelchair elevated him above the level of the lectern. He had brought his IT assistant with him today: **Jessica**, a fellow Board member. She advanced his presentation.

He first dispelled the notion that he was here to discuss charity for those with disabilities, or, as he would rather have it, "*different abilities*." He was a hard-bitten, dyed-in-the-wool Capitalist, and if it weren't good for business, he weren't gonna to push it. However, he was here to advocate for giving the differently-abled meaningful jobs, not for their sake, mind you, but because it just makes hard-bitten, dyed-in-the-wool Capitalistic sense. So his 501(c)3, **EMPLOY ABILITY**, brokers jobs & seekers.

[www.employabilitydallas.org](http://www.employabilitydallas.org)



Ever since the 1991 Americans with Disabilities Act, employers are leery of yet another Federal interference with red-blooded, American business, and the concomitant hits to the bottom line. Jim seeks to show that the profit motive is fed regardless of the (damn liberal) charity motive.

**EMPLOY ABILITY** is guided by three strategies:

1. Value persons with different abilities.
2. Serve businesses.
3. Provide scholarships

And there are 31M disabled to be served (that's 10% of the US population). 1/2 of all veterans are classified as disabled (PTSD, for example), yet only 10% declare themselves so. (Perhaps that's carrying stoicism a bit too far; we're not Sparta, after all.)

But that 31M constitute "**the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest consumer group**," and they "*need to be your customers!*"

A recent amendment to the ADA (Act 503) has just gone into effect. It mandates that Federal contractors must "*make a good faith effort*" to have 7% of their employee base made up of veterans another (perhaps overlapping) 7% of the disabled. It has been "*confusing for employers*." Yet those who succeed in complying discover

- Higher attendance rates for all employees.
- Decreased turnover again for all employees.
- Productivity increases for everyone when the disabled are hired.

He cited the example of **Walgreens** which intentionally designed a new distribution center friendly to the disabled. They discovered a higher attendance rate for all workers and have since considered such retrofitting for the remainder of their facilities.

A second example involved a bank with Byzantine loan applications which found the accuracy of the information on them improved markedly after they consulted with a disabled focus group.

AllianceData discovered a 400% productivity increase for having hired a disabled mail clerk. The company had to scramble to find other things for him to do! They are now members of **EMPLOY ABILITY's** Board.

## BARRIERS

Our brains have been wired for millennia "*to be with people like us*." In a dog-eat-dog environment, sticking to your tribe makes survival sense. But that works against soliciting the help of those different from us unless there is a conscious effort to think about alternatives. Human Resource departments and hiring executives need to overcome their quite human prejudices.



## MYTHS

- Insurance rates will go up
- UNreasonable accommodations
- Sick day increases
- Disabled held to different standards.

Jim cited an example from his own company. The “reasonable accommodation” to his obligatory wheel chair was to raise his desk 8” so the chair would fit under it. This did not break **Frito-Lay’s** budget.

And the disabled don’t even want to be held to a different standard; that merely emphasizes their uniqueness.



Jim maintains that insurance rates don’t skyrocket nor do sick rates increase. But some accommodations are required for successful integration of the disabled into the workplace. For example, able-bodied workers must be educated about “the *etiquette of conversation*” with the disabled.

**EMPLOY ABILITY** can help broker matchups of disabled workers with businesses. They host seminars, refer businesses to appropriate agencies, help HR Managers earn certification points, all with little or no cost to employers. They will even send a job coach to ease integration who will return whenever the duties for the disabled change.

And then there are the tax credits: \$2,400 per year rising to \$9,000 for severely disabled requiring expensive accommodations. So all of this necessitates overcoming your brain’s wiring and applying good “business sense.”

Jim confirmed that **EMPLOY ABILITY** is a non-profit organization.

**Pattie Schwartz** wanted to know if veterans are categorized disabled through physical or mental challenges. Jim said that PTSD

commands an even higher tax credit than do physical disabilities, but even artillery-generated deafness is covered.



**Lenny**, not to be outdone by a mere wife, inquired whether it was large companies that were the most aggressive in hiring the disabled. On the contrary, Jim said, small companies do better. It’s the middle-level managers that constitute “the hardest nut to crack.”



**Jerry Kezhaya** commented that a skull-crush survivor has turned out to be the best janitorial help Jerry has hired. His disabled driver is even called “the Mayor of Plano.”

Janis Allman asked about possible changes in signage for “**DISABILITY PARKING.**” Jim said that the states might have higher standards than those set by the federal government.

**President Paperweight** presented his name-sake to the speaker and, hearing no announcements, led us in the Four-Way Test and closed the proceedings at 1:01.



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### Guest

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None

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