

Rotary



BE THE INSPIRATION  
2018-2019

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- Sep 27**  
**Brian Loughmiller**  
"Collin County Bond Election & Better Roads for Collin County"
- Oct 2nd**  
ALL ROTARY CLUB SOCIAL WHIRLY BALL PLANO  
(SEE BACK PAGE OF READER)
- Oct 04**  
**NO NOON MEETING**
- Oct 11th**  
**TBD**
- Oct 20th**  
MEALS OF HOPE  
GROUP ROTARY SERVICE PROJECT  
(SEE BACK PAGE OF READER)



ENDPOLIONOW

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Clay Curtis	Sep 10
Hubert Aaron	Sep 17



# SUMMER Weekly

# Reader

Volume 256, Issue 321, September 27th, 2018

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

## ROUGHIN' IT!



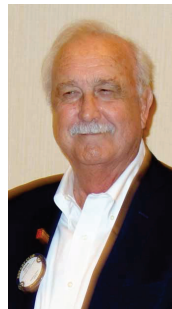
**REATHLESS**, as **Jerry Aris** might have it. That was how he described today's speaker; her rapid-fire story-telling forbade the taking of breath. And her animation was caught even in the still photos taken by today's (surprised) substitute cameraman, **Hubert Aaron**, who will think twice before sitting at **Sainted Editor's** table.

In the dual absence of **Carrolyn the Petite** and President-Elect **Jeff Beckley**, Past Prince **Rick Horne** opened festivities at 12:12, persuading **Johnny Lewis** to give the Invocation and newly-minted member **Janelle Twyford-Silvis** to lead us in the Pledge. In the multiple absences (there's a lot of that going around) of current or past **SERGEANTS-AT-ARMS**, **Rick** took up the mantle, multi-tasking to beat the band. That was simplified by the additional absences of any guests or Visiting Rotarians, save the speaker, **Andra Watkins**.

Challenged for banter, **Rick** plaintively inquired, "**Dr. John? Dr. Mark?**" how goes the **FANTASY FOOTBALL LEAGUE**? But he got no assistance there except **Mark Johnson** currently with a tenuous hold on to first place.

Someone inquired as to the health of **NOTRE DAME'S** team, and he said, "*There's lots of excitement!*" because they beat **MICHIGAN** and are "*on a roll*" to an 8<sup>th</sup> ranking.

In a fortnight, they play **USC**, so We Will **C**.



With no more monkey business at hand, **Olin Jaye** arose to introduce the speaker. He had actually been struggling with whether or not to embarrass the speaker with the following, but his worse angels got the better of him. It seems that her first love wasn't authorship but rather musical theater. That was squelched by a

mother who "*was convinced she'd end up starring in porn films.*" Then he proceeded to his standard level of insults. She was born in a "*small village outside Nashville,*" and "*earned an honest living as a CPA*" until she devolved into "*a business consultant.*"

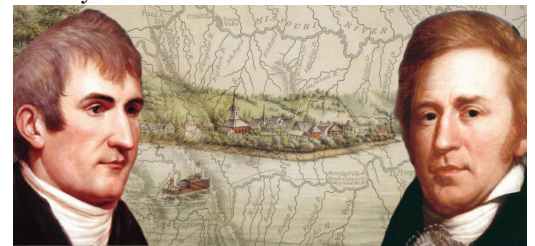


Now she lives in Charleston, SC.

Since he was not audible even in this intimate setting (sad that the Club fits in it), he was admonished to use the mic, whereupon he broke into a rendition of "*Strangers in the Night.*"

**Andra** took the mic from him and remarked that she is indeed a Rotarian from *The Rotary Club of the Southeast*.

15 years ago, she and her husband were married, and, perhaps hoping to start a tradition, they read a book out loud to one another. (She recommends it as an antidote to social media on smartphones.) The book was a history of the **Meriwether Lewis and Wil-**



**liam Clark** expedition to map out the western territories. She remembered having to memorize their exploits in school but then forgetting it all aggressively after the test.

But *Undaunted Courage* was different. It went into the nitty gritty. It told of the Native American proclivities, shared with the Inuit, of encouraging the explorers to sleep with their women to "*steal their powers.*" And, as 20-somethings, they were sanguine about "*having their power stolen that way.*" So she and her husband haven't forgotten this history, aggressively or otherwise. Instead, they soldiered on, finishing the book.

continued on page 2



Indeed, had that been the version presented in college, Andra declared that she would have majored in history! Alas, when Lewis & Clark returned with their journals filled with couplings to put the *Kama Sutra* to shame, their editor redacted all of those, convinced that George III readers would be scandalized.



Andra waxed eloquent on Lewis' demise. Word had it that he had committed suicide on the **NATCHEZ TRACE**, being unable to "handle being a politician." The coroner reported that he shot himself first in the head; that not working (!), he shot himself next in the stomach. As unlikely as that sounds, the opposing theory, that he was done in by the legions of folk who wanted him dead, never took hold. "People in D.C. can't take a side."

Nevertheless, he died "in the middle of nowhere in 1809" and folks kindly "threw him in a dirt hole" which was scavenged by animals who dug him out. Then they put him "in a deeper hole with trash on it" to discourage predation. Later he was exhumed and buried properly with a monument.

She said that "suicides are losers" and "only winners write history," so Captain Lewis was never awarded what Andra considers his earned accolade: **America's First Scientist** (unseating **Benjamin Franklin**). She aimed to rectify this insult by writing a historical fiction, calling it a "paranormal thriller," about what he might have accomplished were he but given the chance.

There is no such category in the lexicon of the "100 book publishers" where she submitted *To Live Forever: An Afterlife Journey of Meriwether Lewis*. She excused her categorical perversion on the grounds that it can't be a history, because you "can't make stuff up in a history."

Finally, a publisher in the Carolinas agreed to handle the book, but they were too small to distribute it. She was stuck with selling a white elephant that "**Oprah** wouldn't endorse and *The New York Times* won't review." So she settled on a publicity stunt: walk the **NATCHEZ TRACE**.

The **NATCHEZ TRACE** isn't like the Adirondack Trail. It's 444 miles of asphalt, covering over a 10,000-old animal track, adopted by Native Americans. She figured "after I staggered across the finish line, I might have sold 1,000 books" and maybe even made *The New York Times* book list! And "how hard is it anyway?" Being a "girly girl," she wanted to spend each night in a B&B. So she "needed a wingman," which couldn't be her husband who had to work "his stressful job" in order to "pay for my stupid proclivity to write."

Each of her girlfriends, seduced by images of *Thelma and Louise*, was up for it until ordered off it by their husbands. So she had to settle on her "gassy, old" (fart of a) 80-year-old Father, whom she despised. "You're just waiting to die" in his recliner "with the TV turned up," because he wouldn't wear a hearing aid. She made it sound idyllic.

He refused.

But then she had a revelation. "You know how you like to tell your stories to strangers?" Well, he could get out on the road with tons of them, eating things "fried to death" and regaling captive audiences (much like ours). He "couldn't wait to get started."

Starting out on 1 March 2014, she blogged and slogged her way for two days before hitting a stretch of 20° temperatures and swampy terrain. Her blog's audience urged her to pack it in, but she'd been promised an interview at a famous author's bookstore if she finished on time, so she tackled the unforgiving pavement and windstorms blowing her into traffic, "walking like CP30." The "physical agony was nothing compared with living with my father."

Somewhere between mileposts 165 and 167, she developed stomach cramps and became violently ill. Using a bush as a toilet, she found she had only two squares of toilet tissue, so she "washed my butt" with **Gatorade**, which she vigorously failed to endorse.

In pain, she sat in a field, confident there'd be no interview, and she could go home "happy to be a failure." But that's when "**Roy Watkins** came to find me in the field." But before her rescue, she sat surrounded by a Nature in Spring. A deer had walked with her. Thousands of birds were on the wing. Being in the (near) wild had been "a magical experience."





So she advocated pulling our heads out of our bad days and marveling at our good ones.

She finished her walk on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and gave the talk at the book store. Then she started work on her second book: *Not Without My Father*. “We all have people like my Dad” who drive us insane. But we’ll have regrets if we let that insanity separate us. “Let’s turn that ‘I wish I had’ into ‘I’m glad I did.’”

The challenges continue. Her Dad is “in and out of hospital” and “my eyes are going blind,” but five weeks in a car with “a gassy, old man” taught her to appreciate the moments they had together.

He now wants to ride a horse across Mongolia! She’s afraid of horses, “but I’m taking lessons.”

She’d earned the right to hawk her books, promising to donate a percentage of sales to Rotary Literacy Projects. Cash would be acceptable but she takes checks and has a Square (credit card reader).

Olin asked how her relation with her Dad had changed. She said, “I’m never going to change my Dad, so I changed my attitude toward him.”

Rick Horne, a hiker, asked if she’d done 15 miles a day. Andra said yes, that it took her five hours. And she’d found a Lewis & Clark nickel en route that she placed on Lewis’ grave. The trace was shut down in 2018 due to budget cuts.

**Charles Milby** asked if she’d found anything valuable en route. Had she been quick, she would have said, “My humanity.” As it was, she said she’d found only empties of alcoholic beverages.

When asked why it was called a trace, she said that it had been traced out by animal migrations.

**Kelly Palmer** said that he’d been on it with a motorcycle. “It was a fun thing to do with the grandkids!”

Jerry Aris wanted to know the weight of her backpack. Fifteen pounds.

In response to a question about altitude changes, she reminded us that it’s in Tennessee, thus “only a few feet.”

Johnny Lewis said the speed limit is only 50 MPH for the 444 miles “with no commerce.”

Kelly wanted to know if she had any further comments on Lewis & Clark. She said that Lt. Clark was never paid for the expedition. Lewis & Clark were in the Army together.

Someone commented that Lewis got the commission from *Thomas Jefferson*. Andra said that Lewis had been on his staff.

**Prince Horne** gave Andra our itty bitty USB drive, announced that the Board meeting would convene directly after our luncheon meeting, led us in the Four-Way Test, and gonged us out at 12:55.



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Thank you Kenny Wilson

### The Plano Rotary Club

P.O. Box 864316

Plano, TX 75086



## Guests & Visiting Rotarians

### Guest

None

### Guest of

### Visiting Rotarian

None

### Home Club

## Proposed Member

All members,  
please bring a  
guest with a  
serving heart!

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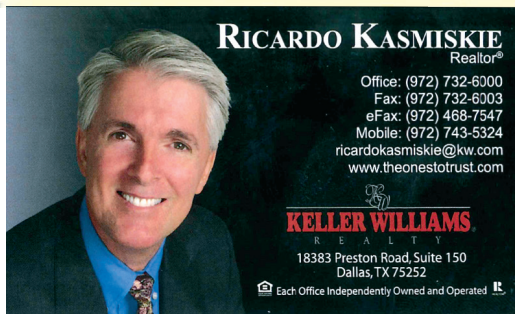
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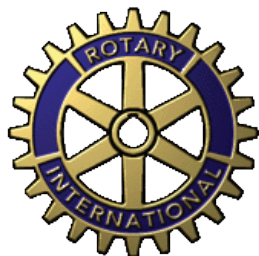
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SERVING  
HUMANITY**



**Oct 2nd- Whirly Ball Plano**

3115 W Parker Rd, Plano TX 75023

\$25 per person includes playtime, pizza, beer,  
wine and soft drinks!

**Meals of Hope**  
Communities coming  
together to end hunger!

**Oct 20th** – Meals of Hope Group Service Project

Christ United Methodist Church - 3101 Coit Road  
Plano TX 75075

Please plan to attend this month's service project from  
10:00am - 1:00pm on Saturday October 20th