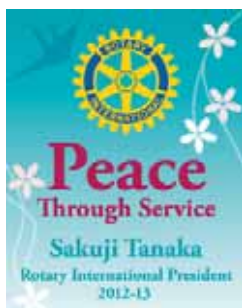


Summer  
Weekly

# Reader

Volume 9, Issue 54, September 6, 2012

The Plano Rotary Club  
www.PlanoRotary.com



## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**September 6** - Hendrick Scholarship Foundation: Marcy Wilson & Student speakers  
**September 13** - How to Protect Yourself from Identity Theft: Officer Christopher Biane, Plano Police Department  
**September 20** - No Lunch -Fundraiser @ Haggard's Barn Dinner, Entertainment, and Live Auction 6:30 pm  
**September 21** - Golf Tournament @ Prestonwood Country Club, The Hills Course  
**September 27** - Business Lessons Learned from the Fast Lane - Scott Black, President, TimePiece Public Relations

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

|                     |        |
|---------------------|--------|
| Sullivan, Ean H.    | Sep 04 |
| Foor, Joe           | Sep 14 |
| Ortiz, III, Octavio | Sep 16 |
| Aaron, Hubert       | Sep 17 |
| Esparza, Hugo       | Sep 28 |



# The 13<sup>th</sup> Step

It always seems as if our meetings are out-of-order, but this day, it was literally true. We held our meeting AFTER the talk, because the speaker had to be elsewhere at 12:30. Indeed, the original speaker had a more severe conflict, so instead of a treatise on Generational Conflict, we had a confessional from a former addict. Well, there's no such thing, according to AA precepts. Even if you've not partaken in decades, you're still to consider yourself an addict; it's apparently part of the treatment to humiliate yourself to the grave.

LENNY THE LAMPLIGHTER opened Group Therapy at 12:14, inviting **Joe Foor** to share with us his thoughts on Invocation and **Herb Hoxie** to lead us in the Pledge. The rest of our meeting was postponed, and **Chuck Morgan** arose to introduce our speaker, **Michael Fowler**.



Formerly with *Phoenix House of Texas* and *Caduceus Out-Patient Addiction Center*, Michael Fowler is a licensed chemical dependency counselor who currently works with *Caron Texas*. His professional experience includes admissions director, clinical supervisor, and safety director. He sits on several boards, including the *Chemical Awareness Resource Education Board* and the *Think Ahead Group* at the *Center for Brain Health*.

Today Michael is going to share his compelling personal journey from addiction to recovery. Many of you may quickly identify with Michael as either the parent of one who struggles, or perhaps even the one who has struggled with the disease of addiction.



Michael will explain how growing up in a loving family with means and opportunities did not shield him from this terrible disease.

Intimately familiar with AA protocol, he began, "*Hi, my name is Michael Fowler,*" but he left off "*and I am an addict.*" He paused, and when we didn't catch the call-and-response, he said, that at this point, he was used to hearing, "*Hi, Michael!*" He said that he had been clean and sober for 8 years now.

He grew up "*south of here,*" in a community where he "*wanted to be accepted.*" So he excelled at all sports: basketball, football, baseball, etc. When one of them turned on him and broke his arm, he took up tennis, gaining a statewide ranking and college invitations. His Father thought he would become the next **John McEnroe**. So he valued tennis over school, getting off the latter at 1 pm to practice the former until 7 pm. He'd heard about senioritis, but he missed out on that fun, training all the time that he wasn't at a tournament.

One morning, he decided to see what he had been missing and dived immediately into cocaine, trying to buy it by check when, to his amazement, the dealer only wanted cash. Before the week was out, he'd taken his first drink and his first toke. And he wanted more.

He liked being intoxicated as the drugs imparted a "*feeling of belonging.*" He was particularly bad at concealing his addiction, and his family tried to remove him from "*bad influences,*" but he readily found others.

Finally, at sixteen, his parents, teachers, and Principal all stepped in to guide him into a 12-



continued on page 2



Step Program which seemed to work. He remained sober throughout high school, and worked to *"get my life back together."* But when he made it to a college tennis team, he figured he'd earned a treat. He took a beer and slid back into his old drug habits. They became his *"main priority."* He became a career recidivist, bouncing in and out of institutions from age 18 through 30. Although he attended *"the best treatment centers"* and was treated *"by the best doctors,"* none of it took because he was *"not interested in helping myself."*

During this time, his Mom had remarried. His stepfather, **Alan**, was an advocate of "tough love," who became the father he needed. So around age 29, the family rescues stopped. He became homeless but blamed only himself for his predicament. He tried a ruse of escaping Hurricane Katrina, even though he was not in its path, and when his family refused, he made the decision no longer to indulge his chemical dependence. He knew that others, including his family, looked upon him as a cheater and liar, and that realization pushed him into sobriety.

He has dedicated himself since to *"helping others"* with their addictions from the position of one who has been there, done that, got the tee shirt. He apologized for the absence of a practiced speaking performance, as this was his first public address. Apparently, speaking at Rotary is the 13<sup>th</sup> Step.



As there were no questions for Michael, **LENNY** presented him with the **ONCE IN A LIFETIME** dog tags and commended him on the *"courage to change one's life."*

The speaker gone, he adjourned



to the meeting, calling **Jason Rice** as the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Month to duty. Jason welcomed **Sarah Hill**, a Rotarian from *North Texas Pioneers*, the antithesis to the Geriatric Club of Plano. He then surprised Sainted Editor, scribbling away on his *iPad™*, with a call to introduce a guest. Chris stumbled to his feet and said simply, *"Please help me welcome John Timm,"* which offended **LB THE RADIANT**. **LB** asked, *"Is that all?"* Chris arose again to confront **LB**, who smiled and added, *"Our Father?"* Bested, Chris resumed his scribbles.



**Jessica Jackson** earned an eight-year (Perfect) Attendance pin.

As **Michael Baldwin** and **Mike Robnett** had deigned to attend, **LENNY** wished them a **Happy Birthday**. He started to wish **Ean Sullivan** a **Happy Birthday** but then noted that it would be next week, finally deciding to finish it because Ean will be out on 5810 business next week.

**Casey Stewart** was given the apparently unwelcomed opportunity to give a Classification Talk, noting that that was one of the penalties for taking out a back page ad. He promised not to be as emotional as **Kelly Palmer** was the week before. He was recruited to Rotary by Ean Sullivan some eight years ago. He has been with *American National Bank* for 17 years, retaining the same phone number and email address for all that time. He surmised that few people can make that claim!



He has been running the bank as its President since 2003. But many people, including several in the room can make that claim.



He grew up in Mineola, TX, earning his Bachelor's degree in Fraternity Life at East Texas State University. He has a wife, **Cathy**, and three children: a toddler and two teenagers. *"One wants to be with you all of the time while the other two don't."*

**LENNY** announced that **Jamie Schell** was to be Plano's *Citizen of the Year*, and **Octavio Ortiz** has been named *Outstanding Corporate Citizen of the Year*. It is as **LENNY** has always maintained, he says. *"Our Club is special because of our service to the community."*

There followed a Paid Political Announcement by **Nancy Humphrey** and **Bill Wray** on behalf of the Hendrick Golf Tournament coming up on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. She stumped for volunteers to sign up for the event and foursomes to sign up for golf. We are to see either **Alan Feigenbaum** or **Randy Wright** for those. We see **Lynette** instead to sign up for the dinner.



Bill told us that we have been assigned to four-person teams to rustle up sponsorships. We are to see **Jeff Frauenheim** if we want an explanation of that! Nancy warned us to hurry to gather our foursomes as *"we may sell out."*

**Lee Dunlap**, noting Randy's return from Colorado, wanted him to report. Randy said that he'd bring the banner next week.

Since we were considerably shy of the hour, **LENNY** recommended that we break into convivial camaraderie groups and enjoy the many benefits of fellowship until 12:51 when he finally led us in the Four-Way Test and belled us out.



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**Know someone who would  
make a great Rotarian?**

**Invite them to be your guest  
at Rotary!**

### The 4 Way Test:

*Of the things we think, say, and do:*

1. Is it the truth?
2. Is it fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build goodwill & better friendships?
4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

### Guests & Visiting Rotarians

#### Guest

John Timm

#### Guest Of

Chris Parr

#### Visiting Rotarian

Sarah Hill

#### Home Club

North Texas Pioneers

### Member NEWS

#### New Member Proposal:

John Yeung  
Classification: Restaurant  
Management

Proposed by: Jo Via

#### New Member Proposal:

Timothy B. McCord  
Classification: Signs Printing  
Proposed by: Randy Wright

#### New Member Proposal:

Kevin Hanigan  
Classification: Banking  
Proposed by: Keith Sockwell

#### AWARDS:

**Harold Sullivan Award:**

Randy Wright

**Athena Award:**

Camille Ussery

**Fred Moses Award:**

Richard Butterly

**Business Executive of the Year:**

Gary Base

**Kersey Can Holder:**

Vance Bryson

**Citizen of the Year:**

Jamie Schell

**Outstanding Corporate**

**Citizen of the Year:**

The Shops at Willow Bend (Octavio  
& his team)

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