

SENIOR WOODCHUCKS

WOE and lament for **Randy W. Dianne** has finally convinced him it's time to pack in the ballooning. (Montgolfier will turn in his grave.) He has taken his last flight in and sold the **PEACOCK** to a younger enthusiast. **Jo** will miss a Founding Father of the *Plano Balloon Festival*. But now, with his free time, he can devote himself to his new hobby: amateur astronaut.



SKIP JENKINS resumed his Sergeant-at-Arms duties, remarking that he and **Brad Shanklin** have recently returned from Brad's Walkabout Trials wherein he earned his **OUTFITTER'S BADGE**. Skip assured the company that Brad is now an accomplished fly fisher and ready to instruct others.



He helped us welcome several Visiting Rotarians, including **Judy Jackson**, and several guests, including



Alan Feigenbaum's sister, **Sue Bradley**.



Skip then noted he had it on good report that **Prince John's** phone went off twice during the last meeting (which Skip didn't attend). While he would fine John only \$1 for the first offense, it would be \$5 for the second. John, conveniently, had no memory of either offense.

John wished us all a **Happy Rosh Hashanah**, inquiring about the absence of **Howard**. **Scary Bob** explained that he was at Temple. John asked, "Then what are you doing here?" and **Scary Bob** told him that he was at Temple "all morning."

(Excluding, of course, the Rotary Board Meeting.)



Dennis Fuller reported giving an interview on KSKY AM660 to air from 6-7 pm on next (last) Sunday. He stumped for the Hendrick Golf Tournament!

Evelyn Molina announced that her Professional



Prince Among Men John opened the day's festivities at 12:16, ignoring **Scary Bob's** request for at least a half hour for his speaker's presentation. Fortunately, **CAPTAIN FLETCHER SHARP** was cognizant of the hour and finished on

time. Smarting from loss of control of the morning's Board Meeting (to an over-caffeinated

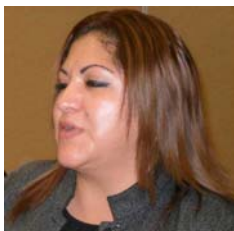


LE THE RADIANT), John exerted strict authority over our meeting, summoning Reverend **Mueller** for the Invocation and **Dennis Fuller** for the Pledge. ("Hi, Bob!") He thanked **Randy** and **Boyd Craig** for Greeting with the assist from **Tino Trujillo**.



Janitorial Service is hosting a *Business After Hours* at the *Heard Museum* from 5:30 to 8 pm on Thursday, September 16th. She invites us to check it out on the Plano Chamber web page.

Jessica Jackson cheerfully volunteered the \$1 fine for touting the *Plano Balloon Festival*, posters for which were available at the meeting for our businesses' windows.



It's scheduled for September 17-19 at Oak Point Park. Parking is \$10 at **Gary Mueller's** church or we can take the bus from the Archerwood Station. **LD THE RADIANT** asked if for our \$10 we get a 10% discounted admission. (No answer.)



Earnest Burke announced that **Judge Johnny** has granted him a change of name. His new name, taken until the Golf Tournament, is **Raffle Ticket**. Raffle announced that a book of raffle tickets for \$250 would earn Plano Rotarians a \$250 discount

toward a *Paul Harris Fellowship*. Judy Jackson noted that the Tournament dinner still needed raffle items, and we were to provide them or cash. We can drop them by her home the weekend before the event.

John reminded us yet again that we'd meet next Tuesday at *Heritage Ranch* for dinner rather than Thursday at the *Pitchfork* for lunch.

Scary Bob apologized that he would not be at the Tournament because he'll be at the Dallas County Police Academy. That out of the way, he introduced the day's speaker, Captain Fletcher Sharp. Capt. Sharp was himself a Cadet in the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). Since then, he has graduated from the Air Force Academy and served in the Air Force in Southeast Asia.

After the service, he ended up at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft (they of engine fame), where he serviced all 50 states, England, and Brazil before coming to Plano. He reentered CAP in 2002 and remained with it, rising to Cadet Programs Officer for the 15 squadrons of North Central Texas. So glowing was *Scary Bob's* introduction (best thing since sliced bread), that Capt. Sharp felt that the safest thing to do would be to sit down immediately. However...

"Fletch" told us that he had perused the Plano Rotary Club's website and discovered us to be "a *fascinating group*." And while he would like to tell us all about CAP, he'd confine his remarks to the cadet program. (*Scary Bob* had regaled us previously on its surveillance program.)



NYC Mayor Fiorello La Guardia created CAP one week before the outbreak of WWII. Its pilots sighted 173 U-boats near the US shoreline and even sunk 2 of them with bomb racks retrofitted on general aviation aircraft and sporting 100 pounders. It became a self-funding, nonprofit corporation in 1947, and its charter forbade it from engaging in warfare since 50 pilots had lost their lives in pursuit of that goal. Nevertheless, it is associated with *Homeland Defense* today, so, apparently, the *War on Immigrants* doesn't count.

Today, CAP boasts 57,000 members, some at overseas air bases. The eligible age-range is 12-18 but can extend to 21 under special circumstances. Adult CAPers are called "senior members," and they are subject to background checks by the FBI. In Texas, there are 3400 members composed of 1800 adults and 1600 cadets, and admirable 9:8 ratio of supervision. There are five groups in Texas, Group 2 being under Fletcher's charge.

CAP is structured like the USAF, down to the rankings and (marginally altered) uniforms. Cadets join at BASIC and move up by passing exams. Advanced cadets mentor new ones.

Since their cadets are in school, CAP is there as well, sponsoring a program on the *Principles of Flight* that includes *Model Rocketry*. A couple of Dallas Middle Schools have such a program.



If cadets attain the rank of **CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT**, they are eligible to enter the military with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant at an E3 pay grade. However, if they start as early as 12, they might rise to the rank of Cadet Colonel.

To do that, they must receive the highest award the CAP can make, the **Genl. Carl A. Spaatz** (German pronunciation: "schpaah'ts") Award. If they then volunteer as CAP Officers, they receive the rank of Senior Flight Officer. While only 0.16% of cadets are so honored, up to 15% of the Officers at the Air Force Academy were once CAP cadets.

All of the cadets, however, endure a "*mini boot camp*" for 6-9 days in the summer. (Indeed, there are so many to serve, that the camp has to run twice.) Chaplains are available to talk terrified cadets into staying, assuring them that they are not uniquely unqualified.

The camp is run by the cadets themselves with Senior Members acting only as advisers and counselors, and trying to do as little of that as possible. They are headed by a Chief Tactical Officer, a post Fletch holds. But the most fun he has is when the parents come to pick them up 7 days later, watch them pass in review, in step, and use "*Yes, Sir!*" and "*No, Sir!*" liberally. He says, "*It blows parents away.*"

Following the encampment, cadets are eligible for special events like the CyberPatriot Program during which they must clean up intentionally bug-ridden computers. They become competent hackers. They also can learn to fly with 98% soloing at 16! And this is after only 10-12 flight hours with an instructor. (How many did it take you, Kirk?)



There's also the International Air Cadet Exchange wherein foreign cadets are hosted in American homes while the American cadets are home-hosted overseas. It is a three-week program in the summer. In Texas, the exchange cadets get three flights in a C-130 (a cargo turboprop) and a visit to the State Legislature in Austin (thrill of a lifetime).

The "Blue Berets" are cadets who volunteer for duty at the giant Oshkosh, WI, air show. That airport becomes the busiest in the world for the duration of the show, and cadets help park and guard airplanes. FAA controllers vie with one another over the rights to land two aircraft **SIMULTANEOUSLY** on the **SAME** runway! (One lands short, the other long. Being small aircraft, they don't need the whole runway.)

Should any of our members be interested, if you can walk, talk, and move around, you're qualified. (If you fly, are you over-qualified?) There are height, weight (you must fit the uniform), and even grooming restrictions (no beards, so ~~Sainted~~ Editor need not apply).

Capt. Sharp left brochures detailing other programs such as *Fly a Teacher*. Fletch said that while he has the greatest respect for *Boy Scouts of America*, the Civil Air Patrol is comparable. Indeed, the two organizations share some programs.



Being self-funded, CAP is looking to a veteran fundraiser like *Scary Bob* to raise the squadron treasuries from about \$3,500 to something that will support all of the cadets in the encampment (at \$185 per cadet) via scholarships, if necessary.

Kenny Wilson wanted to know the endpoint of cadet progression. The ultimate level is the Spaatz Award leading to a (distinguished) military career. Representative **Sam Johnson** awards it locally.

Gary Base asked who funded the search and rescue missions of the CAP. The USAF funds

them but not the training exercises that prepare for them. And the latter cost \$29 plus aviation fuel. They train now in Cessna 182s with a large glass cockpit. Indeed, CAP is Cessna's largest customer for that aircraft.

Someone pushed **Ean Sullivan** forward for his having flown (*"in the back seat of an F-4,"* he admitted...and with **Reeves Davis** on occasion), and Capt. Sharp reiterated that CAP welcomed all volunteers.

He mentioned that there were 110 cadets at the Alliance Air Show, finding lost children, securing aircraft, hosting bounce houses, regulated the "water schedule," and staffing the VIP enclosures.

Prince John said that he learned to fly in the Air Explorers, *"but there's a reason I'm not flying now."* He offered Capt. Sharp *What's Wrong With My Hair?* to sign for *Memorial Elementary*. He thought it particularly appropriate since the speaker was bald. Way to rub it in, John.

He reminded us of our Moveable Feast next week then Gubernatorial Candidate **Bill White** on the 23rd and **Bill Boyd**, Past President of RI, on the 27th. On both days, we'll have a doubled meeting room for the anticipated crowds. Looking even further ahead, John asked us to put December 9 on our calendars for the Holiday Dinner Party (with the other Plano clubs) at **Rutledge's Party Barn**.

After leading us in the Four-Way Test, he triple crowned the bell, moving us out at 12:55.

