



# SPRING Weekly

# Reader

Volume 22, Issue 15, April 28th, 2022

The Plano Rotary Club  
www.PlanoRotary.com

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**April 28**  
**Gene Davenport**  
*RI Unity Programs*  
*4 Way Test*

**May 5**  
**Carole Greisdorf & Bobkehr**  
*Leadership Plano*

**May 12th**  
**Jo Via**  
*"Things are looking up at Plano Balloon Festival"*

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Daniel Askari	Apr 04
Rutledge Haggard	Apr 05
Robert Reed	Apr 07
Marco Solano Diaz	Apr 16
Chip Stewart	Apr 17
Porcha Maten	Apr 19



# Maid Marian Speaks Out

**H**e Who Shall Be Named Joe, commenced the Gaiety at 12:12, calling upon **Robert Reed** for the Invocation and **Jim Monroe** for the Pledge. We were missing a Greeter (again).

We were treated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Place winner of the 4-Way Test Speech Contest, **Kate Dawson** of JJ Pearce High School. Scoring sheets were distributed while the video was being wrestled with. It was suggested that Plano Chamber should be queried on the proper method of mating with their sound system.

Kate talked about Gender Equality which still has a way to go even with a female VP of the US. She was especially derisive of the notion that high profile examples of breaking the glass ceiling can lift and empower other women.

She cited **Margaret Thatcher**, the 1<sup>st</sup> female UK Prime Minister, as a counterexample, since she went out of her way to seem male with a lowered voice (and testosterone-laced policies). She even proposed legislation that favored women only 12% of the time.

Whereas Black Women represent the "highest percentage of the workforce," there are "only 3 Black Women" CEOs. So the concept of the high profile example ignores both sexism and racism.

Instead, she favors "intersectional feminism," which fosters sympathy for the dispossessed. She says that sexism costs India about \$32B annually, but that's dwarfed by the \$16T for the US.

"If ethics are not enough to persuade" nations to change, then "costs may be."

**John Caldwell** reminded us to write comments for our lower scores to aid the speakers, for example, he disliked her rigid stance. **Joe** liked her hand movements. **Maria Mott** liked her "very effective" comparisons. **Gary Garza** liked that she spoke slowly enough (for the Geriatric Club of Plano to follow).



**Janelle Twyford-Silvis** and **Joe** presented Plano Firefighters Association's **Tim Cullum** with a check for **\$500** for its cooperation with our Texas Blues & Red Hots BBQ.



**Johnny Lewis** reported on RYLA prep: the parents have met, a van has been reserved, and Plano Sunrise and West are cooperating with us to see it through.



Joe wanted to know if anyone had a brag on any sports team, in particular baseball. This led to a discussion of the pandemic's halt to butts-in-seats at baseball games. Maria Mott mentioned that her *Signs by Tomorrow* had created the cardboard audiences for some of those games!



Janelle then introduced speaker **Nancy Humphrey**, telling us that her credentials were “*yay long.*” She was speaking to us today from her perch on the PISD Board of Trustees.

And her 1<sup>st</sup> utterance was designed to rile up the crowd: “*What did you get in the mail recently?*” She didn’t have to tell us the answer: **property tax bills**. She told us about the **lie** promulgated by the Texas Legislature that with the upcoming Constitutional Amendment (May 7<sup>th</sup>) increasing the homestead exemption (which *Saint-ed Editor* voted against), “*school revenues won’t decrease.*” They must. Even though PISD “*is the reason many of us located here in the 1<sup>st</sup> place.*”

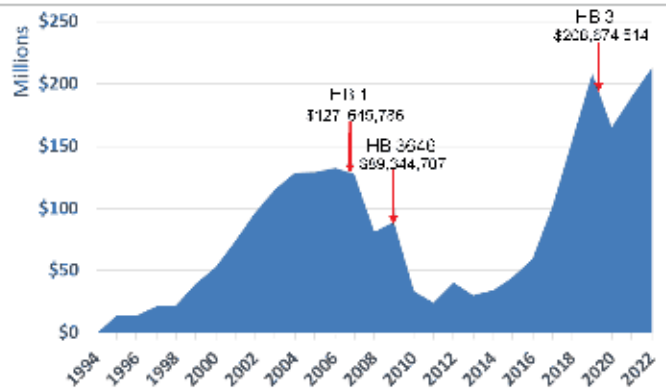
She went on to extol the virtues and accomplishments of PISD: enviable student engagement (better than out-of-wedlock), students succeeding in sports at the State Level, and recognition at national meetings. Then she shot us between the eyes with **ROBIN HOOD**, the dreaded re-



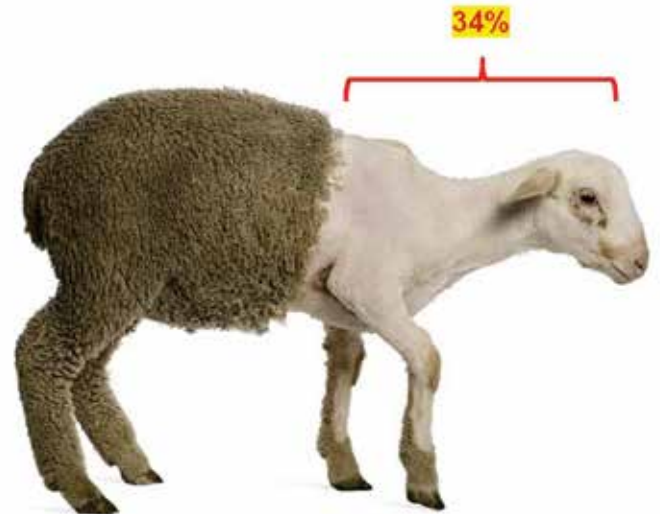
capture’s sobriquet. So far, Plano ISD has forked over **\$2.4B**, \$213M this year and still more the next. The original (1993) purpose was to shore up

impoverished ISDes, but the money doesn’t go there; it goes to the general fund, and an unknown fraction of it goes for its stated purpose. It’s just another cash cow. The extra burden is “*pricing young families out of a great PISD.*”

Whereas some 4K students graduated, the kindergarten enrollment is smaller, primarily due to a lower birth rate. The State assists ISDes based upon “*entitlement*” figured on attendance. Then the “*excess local revenue*” is siphoned away by **ROBIN HOOD**. So why, she asked rhetorically, not lower the tax rate, if there actually is “*excess revenue?*” For every 1¢ it’s lowered, PISD



loses \$3M! And in 2017-18, 27% was lost to **ROBIN HOOD**. About 33% stays in the General Fund. Recapture went down in 2019-20 but then shot up to 31%, 34%, and finally in 2022-23, 35%



today. As Nancy put it, we’re being “*fleeced*” and “*sheared.*” Or rather “*swindled.*” The **\$1.8B** skimmed off the top “*might be going to build a wall,*” for all Nancy knows. (Or going to reject woke arithmetic texts, or investigations of families affirming transgender children, or...)

In 2012-13, net revenue was \$431M. Today, in constant dollars, it's \$428M. So we've lost ground but gained recapture. Contracts with providers are tied to inflation (now at 8%), but revenues aren't. In 2008, the recession costs 220 PISD teachers their jobs as the district balanced its budgets. And those that remain are offered pittance to put up with loads of abuse. (Are YOU teaching Critical Race Theory to my children? What's that? It's only an advanced graduate school topic? Well, MY child is advanced!)

60% of recapture funds are coming from only 10 ISDes. And only Austin (with a higher disadvantaged load than we have!) is contributing more than Plano. At this point, John Caldwell piped up with *"I'm mad as Hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore!"* (Nancy tossed him a fish.)

Nancy told us that recapture scales with entitlement; that being fixed, *"we cannot lower the tax rate."* Due to *"severe poverty"* in Plano and Austin, PISD provides social services to the disadvantaged. And the icing on the cake is that TX is 44<sup>th</sup> in the nation for public education funding. Even so, PISD leads the nation in SAT scores (with 36% disadvantaged households). And the graduation rate in TX is 80%.

The State education formula, twiddled and tinkered with, determines "entitlement," but the growth of recapture doesn't change. So PISD is between the proverbial rock and hard place. That is not to say that there are no solutions to this dilemma, and Nancy offered same.



- **Need formula to reflect inflation and differences between cost of living between rural and urban areas**
- **Need limits on recapture** (*i.e.* limiting recapture relative to total revenue, etc.)
- **Refund recapture districts for amounts collected in excess of what is used for education** (*i.e.* return money to recapture districts instead of to the State's General Revenue Fund)
- **Money collected through recapture should only be spent on education.**
- **Property tax bills should reflect the amount of local taxes that will be paid to the state in recapture.**

(Of course, the State Legislature will die laughing at these proposals, but if they do so literally, maybe the next batch of legislators will do better. We can always pray, but this is Texas.)

Johnny Lewis assured us that we're heading into an inevitable recession, in which case, Nancy said, *"PISD would have to eliminate classes"* and RIF teachers. What she fears is that with the current \$12B excess in the State Budget, the legislature will fund vouchers!

Joe called a meeting of the Board following this one. Then he thanked Nancy, led us in the 5-Way Test, and let us off for good behavior at 1:04.



☞



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Thank you Toni Wilson

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**Guests**

Guest	Guest of
Tim Cullum	Janelle Twyford-Sivis

**Visiting Rotarians**

Visiting Rotarian	Home Club
none	

