



FALL  
Weekly

# Reader

IMAGINE  
ROTARY

Volume 22, Issue 33, September 22, 2022

The Plano Rotary Club  
www.PlanoRotary.com

## *When the Men Were Gone – Marjorie Lewis*

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Sep 22

Be an Angel

Sep 29

RYLA Students Share  
Their Experiences

Oct 6th

Nancy Humphrey  
PISD Bond Updates

Oct 13th

Graciela Katzer  
Executive Director – Plano  
International Festival

### SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Hubert Aaron

Sep 17



**9/15 meeting** At president **Janelle's** request, **Johnny Lewis** gave the invocation and **Peggy Fenwick** led the pledge. Sgt at Arms, **Mike McCormack** welcomed **Eleanore Knox**, (who has applied for membership) and **Rick Horne (who is returning)**.

**Joe Camarena** put money in the bucket be-cause the Iowa Hawkeyes lost 7 - 10 to Iowa State.



**Nancy Humphrey** was Rotarian of the month. Nancy has been a PISD trustee for 11 years and will speak about the PISD bond election at our club meeting October 6. Nancy also arranged to have us meet at a PISD facility when the air conditioning went out at the Prosperity Bank building this summer.



**Bob Kerr** was the Plano Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Person of the Year!



Our speaker was Marjorie Herrera Lewis, author of "When the Men were Gone".

During World War II, many manufacturing jobs in the US were transferred to women while the men were fighting overseas. One iconic example is "Rosie the Riveter". In Brownwood Texas, a woman became the football coach; we learned her story.

A cross between "Friday Night Lights" and "The Atomic City Girls", "When the Men Were Gone" is a debut historical novel based on the true story of **Tylene Wilson**, a woman in 1940's Texas who, despite extreme opposition, became a female football coach before her students headed off to war.

Football is the heartbeat of

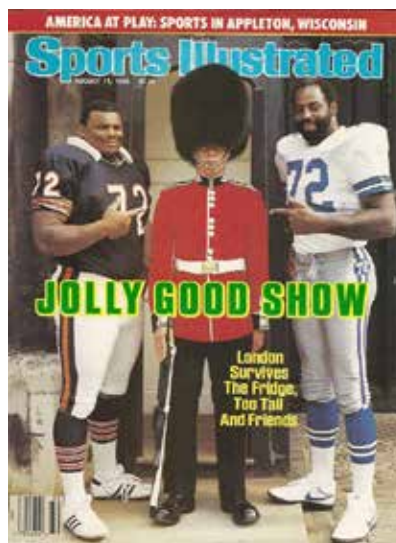
Brownwood, Texas. Every Friday night for as long as assistant principal Tylene Wilson can remember, the entire town has gathered in the stands, cheering their boys on. Each September brings with it the hope of a good season and a sense of unity and optimism.

The war changed everything. Most of the Brownwood men over 18 and under 45 are off fighting, and in a small town the possibilities are limited. Could this mean a season without football? But no one counted on Tylene, who learned the game at her father's knee. She knows more about it than most men, so she does the unthinkable, convincing the school to let her take on the job of coach.

Faced with extreme opposition—by the press, the community, rival coaches, referees and even the players themselves—Tylene remains resolute. And when her boys rally around her, she leads the team—and the town—to a Friday night and a season they will never forget.

The author, Marjorie Lewis, also knew what it was like to be a woman in a man's world. In the 1980's she became the Dallas Cowboys beat writer for the Forth Worth Star-Telegram, becoming their first woman sportswriter. Her editor asked how she would cover the team; she replied: "They are professionals, but they are also people." When Tom Landry learned that Marjorie would be covering the Cowboys, he spoke to the team for 15 minutes about their proper conduct. They were to stay in their uniforms until she was finished, then they could shower and change.

She told the story of covering training camp at Thousand Oaks. It was the first week of camp and all the draft picks and free agents were trying to show how good they were for the coaches. The practice ended and Marjorie Lewis was walking down the tunnel to the locker room. She heard football cleats on concrete and slowed down. A free agent came up to her and declared: "You don't belong here!". She replied: "I saw you in practice and you don't belong here!" He was cut the next day.



In 1986, the Cowboys and Bears had the first ever NFL game in England. The pre-season game was held in Wembley Stadium. After the game (Bears 17 – Cowboys 6), Marjorie headed to the locker room for her interviews.

A British police officer stopped her. "You're not allowed in there!" Marjorie told him she was allowed in the locker room, but he wouldn't budge. After a few minutes, Tom Landry came out to see what the problem was. He told the officer: "She's one of us and can come into the locker room." The officer still would not budge. Tom Landry's idea was to have the football players, such as Tony Dorsett and Randy White, come out one at a time for their interviews. Marjorie also needed to interview a few Bears, such as William (The Refrigerator) Perry. Mel Renfro got them off the Bear's bus and had them individually talk with her. If you treat professional athletes like people, they will respect you.

During a chance encounter with a grandniece of Tylene Wilson, she immediately knew she wanted to write a biography about this unsung Texas pioneer. Marjorie was a reporter, so started researching. She had lots of help from the high school, two libraries, and the town's unofficial historian. Unfortunately, many of the football records were lost in a 1962 fire, so she decided to write an historical novel based on what was available, including interviews with residents who knew Tylene Wilson. Both the coach and the character wore a dress, pearls, and heels to practice and the games. She dressed that way because she wanted to be known as a teacher and administrator.

Marjorie found that writing a novel was different than writing a biography. In a novel you need

to supply the answers, such as a character's motivation. In the bio of a deceased person, the author doesn't know the answers.

Marjorie became knowledgeable about football because of her reporting and book; she was on the football coaching staff of Texas Wesleyan University when they reintroduced football in 2017.

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The **Board** met after the regular meeting and discussed future events, especially the 10/6 return to Gleneagles. We have met our minimum lunch quota of 25.



**Eleanore Knox**

**Proposed by:** Johnny Lewis

**Classification:** Physician

# NEW MEMBER PROPOSAL



**Rick Horne**

**Proposed by:** Janelle Twyford-Silvis

**Classification:** Retired

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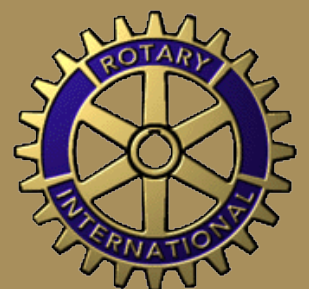
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Thank you Toni Wilson

The Plano Rotary Club

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Guests & Visiting Rotarians

Guest

Eleanore Knox

Guest of

Johnny Lewis

Visiting Rotarian

Marjorie Lewis

Home Club

Southlake



SEPTEMBER 2022  
YEARS OF SERVICE

JEFFREY BECKLEY | 6 YEARS

ROBERT KEHR | 3 YEARS

JANELLE TWYFORD-SILVIS | 4 YEARS