

Issue 9 March
2015-2016 Rotary Year

Stephenville, Texas
Cowboy Capital of the World

Stephenville Rotary News



The 100% Club for Feb

Gene Atkinson
Jim Choate
Bob Collins
Bob Cranford
Malcolm Cross
Dave Dickerson
Ron Henry
Debbie Hummel
Rosemary Nagle
Ken Jones
Jerry Lee
Rosemary Nagle
C. J. Prater
Moumin Quazi
Steve Trogdon
Vernon Sweeney

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Rotarians Learn about the Political Party System

During this election year, the Club learned more about political party system and the methods by which the parties select their candidates for the various offices. Dr and Rotarian Malcolm Cross presented a program on the history and the process of the party system in these United States.

According to Dr. Cross the process of nominating a candidate is "long drawn out, and incomprehensible" ... involving caucuses or primaries" in all 50 states and the territories. The process of selecting candidates differs in the various states. In some states, informal caucus groups of party faithful select the candidates. In others, a primary election is used to select the candidates.



Since the Civil War, two parties have dominated the political system, the Democrats and Republicans.

The Democratic Party is the oldest and traces its heritage to Thomas Jefferson's Democratic Republican Party. The modern Democratic Party was founded in 1828 making it the older of the two parties. The Party's philosophy advocates social and economic equality. It advocates for a mixed economy by providing central governmental regulation. These regulations, such as the introduction of social benefits, support for the labor unions, moves toward universal healthcare, equal opportunity, and environmental protection, form the core of the Democrat party's policy.

The Republican Party is the second oldest party in the US to its greatest rival, the Democratic Party. The GOP (Grand Old Party) emerged in 1854 to combat the expansion of slavery and rose to prominence by electing Abraham Lincoln who guided the Union Army to victory in the Civil War.

It advocates a socially conservative agenda, including a smaller central government and more authority to the states, pro business laws, reduced government spending and regulation, lower taxes, and a strong national defense.

Rotary strives to be politically neutral. The Club will from time to time invite guests who favor one or the other political party. In my estimation, Dr. Cross gave an informative talk and did not advocate for either party. He also made it interesting by adding contributions of leaders from both parties, such as Abraham Lincoln, John Kennedy, Richard Nixon, Lyndon Johnson, and Ronald Reagan to his presentation.

Thanks to Dr. Cross for a very timely and entertaining program.

Intl Pres: K. R. Ravindran
Dist Gov: Troy Secord
President: Debbie Hummel
Pres Elect: Jerry Lee
Vice Pres: Matt Hallgarth
Sec: Carrie Pack
Treas: Jim Choate



Happy Birthday!!

Richard Sanders	Mar 11
Malcolm Cross	Mar 25
Andrew Jackson	Mar 15
James Madison	Mar 16

Vote!
On March 1!!

At our first meeting in February Rotarian Jerry Lee spoke to the Club about his job as Chief Appraiser for the Erath County Appraisal office. According to Jerry, the mission of all 250 plus Appraisal Districts in Texas is to provide a valuation service for the local taxing entities and to the taxpayer. Texas is one of seven states that does not have an individual income tax nor does it derive income from property taxes. It depends on sales taxes and taxes on specific businesses and industries for the bulk of its income.

Property values in Texas are based on current market prices for recent sales of like kind properties. The appraisal value of a property will be multiplied by the local property tax rate to determine the owner's tax bill. Tax rates are set by counties and school districts based on a yearly budget.

According to Jerry, he expects little change in property valuations over last year. Additions or improvements to existing property will cause upward adjustments in property values. Sometimes a decline in the local economy will cause downward adjustments in property values.

If a property is the principle residence of the owner as of January 1, then the home owner qualifies for a [homestead exemption](#) of \$25,000 in appraisal value from the school district. For persons [65 or older](#), the tax code in Texas requires school districts to offer an additional \$10,000 exemption. A veteran who is [100% disabled](#) because of a service-connected disability is qualified for a total property tax exemption on the veteran's residence homestead.

[Agriculture appraisals](#) lower the value of land owned by qualified farmers and ranchers. It values rural land based on the land's capacity to produce crops, livestock, or timber, instead of its value on the real estate market. This lower value reduces property taxes on the land.

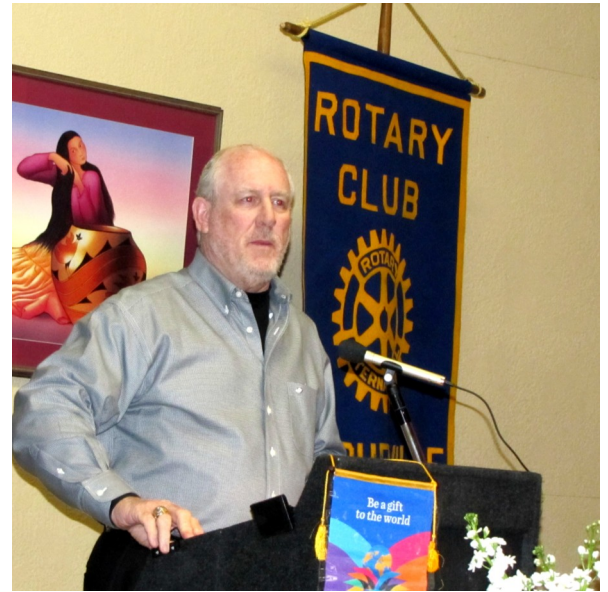
Thanks to Rotarian Jerry Lee for his informative and entertaining program.

[Dr. Cecilia Marugo-Puello](#), a native of Colombia and Assistant Professor at Tarleton State University and Eloisa Bustamante, Tarleton Graduate Student from Dublin, recently presented a program on a proposed trip to Cartagena, Colombia.

The proposed trip for Eloisa would begin in mid-June and be a 4-week course to work with the Children's Catholic Hospital and a cancer treatment house in Cartagena, Colombia. She would receive credit hours for her work with the medical treatment facilities and would receive the benefits of complete submersion in the language and culture of the Colombian people.

Colombia lies in Northern South America between Panama and Venezuela and the Caribbean Sea. Four decades of strife between leftist rebels, drug smugglers and far right paramilitary militias have left a history of violence and devastated the economy. The average Colombian lives on \$7300 dollars per year.

In recent years, the violence has subsided and many drug smugglers have located to others areas and Colombia has been determined safe for travel. These areas need all the support and help they can get from Rotary. Thanks to Cecilia and Eloisa for a wonderful program.



Rotarian Jerry Lee talks to the Club about his job as Chief Appraiser for the Erath County Appraisal District.



Dr Cecilia Marugo-Puello, Assistant Professor at Tarleton State University talks about living conditions in Colombia.



Eloisa Bustamante, Graduate Student at Tarleton State University talks about her proposed 4 week study program to Cartagena, Colombia.

Some time ago, our Club saw a need to support our firefighters by providing bottled water to the fire stations in Erath County. One of the most dangerous aspects of a firefighter's job is that the firefighter becomes dehydrated during the stress of fighting a fire. They lose the ability to think clearly thereby exacerbating a hazardous situation.

Rotarian Rosemary Nagle saw a need to supply our firefighters with water they could take to the fire site. She began by receiving donations from Club members.

Rotarian Richard Sanders applied for additional district grant money to partially fund the project. Other Rotarians have stepped up and provided all local fire stations with an ample supply of water. Just another example of Rotarians seeing a need and stepping up to meet a challenge! Thanks to Rosemary, Richard and all the Rotarians who have helped with this project.



Albert Ray, Chief of the Lingleville Volunteer Fire Department receives 27 cases of water donated by club members.



February Student of the Month Hannah (right) pictured with her father Alan Lindsey.

The Club recently honored our February Student of the Month Hannah Lindsey. Hannah has been on the A honor roll for three consecutive years. She is a member of the National Honor Society and the National Art Honor Society where she has served as President of both organizations.

Extra curricular activities include serving on the Student Council. She is an active member of the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), a national organization which provides personal

growth and leadership development for students. Hannah was also selected as a SHS sweetheart and homecoming court nominee.

In the community, she is a active member of the Bluff Dale Baptist Church youth group where she spends time visiting nursing home residents in the area.

After graduation this May, Hannah will attend Hardin Simmons University in Abilene where she will major in Physical Therapy Exercise Science with a minor in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Hannah is the daughter of proud parents, Kerri and Alan Lindsey.

As Flag Coordinator Gene Atkinson states it so well, we are entering the Flag Season—the time of the year when we will be our busiest posting the flags. Schedule is as follows:

Presidents' Day	Monday	February 15
Memorial Day	Monday	May 30
Flag Day	Tuesday	June 14
Independence Day	Monday	July 4
Labor Day	Monday	September 5
Patriots' Day	Sunday	September 11
Veterans' Day	Friday	November 11

Happy Birthday to Rotary!

Our 1.2 million member organization was started by Paul Harris in Chicago on February 23, 1905. His vision was to start a service organization where professionals with diverse backgrounds could exchange ideas and form meaningful life-long friendships. Congratulations to all Rotarians around the globe for sharing his vision !