

ROTARY O'PINION

Monday, August 3, 2015

Editor: Todd Hale

THIS WEEK: Jim Gleason, Secretary Manager of the Steele County Free Fair, will preview the 2015 fair and the preparations that are going on in these weeks before the fair, which opens August 18.

BIRTHDAYS: Tom Kuntz, Renee Lowery, Aug. 1, Troy Klecker, Aug. 2, Wes Kain, Aug. 5, Mark Mueller, Aug. 8, Bill Owens, Aug. 9

ROTARY NOTES

ROTARIANS Dennis VonRuden & Andy Michaletz were named as new members of the Board of Directors of the Owatonna Foundation.

From RI President K.R. Ravindran:

“The leaders of ROTARY INTERNATIONAL, zone, district and club levels have to maintain the highest standards in governance. The RI president and directors must serve the membership in a meaningful manner; zone leaders must deliver on the investment ROTARY makes in them; district leaders must provide dynamic leadership in the district and focus on transparency in accounting and timely reporting of financials; and club leaders must adhere to proper reporting functions and get their clubs onto ROTARY Club Central.

In ROTARY, our product is education, water, health and peace. It is hope and it is life itself. For this work, only our best is good enough. I ask you all to remember this...and to do your very best to be a *Gift to the World.*”

FAIR FACTS

As long as we're talking about the fair today, here are some interesting facts:

*This year there will be no poultry exhibits at the fair as a result of a directive from the State of Minnesota. there will also be no poultry exhibits at the state fair and at all other county fairs.

*There are over 100 volunteer superintendents that help produce the fair. Seventeen board members meet monthly to organize the fair. Their pay? \$1.00 a meeting...same as in 1918.

*Over 860 gallons of waste grease was collected during last year's fair.

*The Minnesota State Fair dairy show was held at the Steele County Free Fair in 1944-'45.

*Remember the steam train at the fair? It ran in the area of the current Fair Square Park in the 50's and 60's.

*Over 80 musical acts will entertain fairgoers this year.

*The 1943 SCFF was cancelled because of WW II. Gas shortages meant exhibits, entertainment, and the carnival couldn't get to the fair. It is the only SCFF to ever be canceled. Even during the polio epidemic the fair went on as scheduled. In 1874, the Steele County Free Fair was held only one day because of a grasshopper invasion.

*This year's fair will feature over 312 indoor commercial booths and 226 outside stands including over 100 food stands.

*In 1906, the fair was held in downtown Owatonna and the big thrill was the “Slide of Life” that sent fairgoers from the courthouse grounds to Central Park.

*The longest continuous vendor at the fair is Burke's Taffy. This is their 93rd year.

*Everyone goes to Tom Thumb mini-donuts. Sixty years ago, donuts were 10 cents a bag.

*Kottke Jewelers sponsored a watch drop from an airplane over the fairgrounds from 1967-1970. Ted Ringhofer, former fair board member flew his plane over the fairgrounds and Bill Kottke dropped the watch.

*Luverne Wanous will be coming back to the fair after he retired his musicmobile two years ago. He will be playing his concertina at entrances to the Four Seasons exhibit building. He is filling in for Hans Hohrman, the accordion man, who cannot be with us at the fair this year.

So anyway: I was working out in the gym when I spotted this sweet young thing. I asked the on-site trainer, “What machine should I use to impress that sweet thing over there?” The trainer responded, “Try the ATM in the lobby.”