

TABLE HOPPING

Written by BJ Shawn

I would like to be a bit less global today, in giving thanks.....if I might!

When I became a member of the Rotary Club of Petoskey, my mentor, Moon Seagren, a warm and welcoming soul, sat with me for 4 to 6 weeks, and then bounced me out of a very secure cocoon.

She said that a principle of Rotary was to connect with all the members of the group, and I was on my own. I was to remember to rotate, or as I used to call it in high school.....table hop!

Table hopping was WAY out of my comfort zone, not knowing anyone, really...the dentist sounded good!

Now, I have to say that it has been truly a rewarding experience, and I thank Moon and you for making me feel this way!

I have met and been welcomed by so many of you. I have exchanged ideas, laughed and cried with a mayor, a funeral director, school superintendents, creative, visionary, art-center directors, a beautiful marketing maven, a remarkable leader who replicates a Vogue magazine ad every week, a school board president, past law students of my Dad's, a volunteer fireman, a dedicated protector of our waters and a tireless advocate for global early education.

During the last 8 years of table hopping, I have been inspired by a dedicated business counselor, educated by an expert in substance abuse, secured a fabulous space for my business through a supportive landlord and enjoyed exchanges with a true advocate of the geriatric set.

I've had the opportunity to share empathy with those of you dealing with elderly parents, been assisted in educating my staff with the assistance of a supportive public safety officer, retained an attentive company to hydrate my staff, and had a chance recently to share ideas with a wife of a member in regard to an event for HER charitable organization... and I've had a blast doing so.

I have received your support in my business and have been truly impressed watching your families grow up soooo beautifully.

I have joined forces with some of you to fight for causes that we truly believe in, even though we don't agree on everything!

I have bonded with some of you and your wives and husbands in a deep and fun-filled friendship

And I have been truly inspired by the heroic life and death struggles of some of you, your wives and your children.

I am honored to be part of this Rotary club. I thank you for taking me out of my comfort zone to mingle and be welcomed, educated and inspired .

Table hopping was the LAST thing I ever saw myself doing years ago, but it has turned into one of my favorite things to do.

Not only do I get to be charitable with you,... you have allowed me to get to know you.

I give thanks to all of you and... to Table Hopping!!