



THE SPOKES SPEAK - GEARED TO SERVICE

Rotary Club of the North Fork Valley

POB 1543, Paonia, CO 81428

WEB SITES: www.rotary.org www.rotary5470.org www.paoniarotary.org

Meeting Thursdays at Noon in the Paonia Town Hall

District 5470

Club 1180 - Chartered 12/20/22

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LAST MEETING: October 19, 2017

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Kids Pasta Project dinner will be held on 10/30 at Delicious Orchards. We need 50 people to attend. Donation jars will be set out for our different projects instead of holding a silent auction. Make your reservation at kidspastaproject.org.

Greg Thompson won the football pool and donated his winnings to the scholarship fund.

November 30 will be a regular meeting instead of the usual 5th Thursday.

Nov. 3 is the next highway cleanup. Meet at the storage sheds at mm 6 on highway 133 at 9 am.

Your newsletter editor appreciated the club president's recognition of my efforts to keep you informed of Rotary matters.

Remember to feed the polio jar. Also, pay your dues.

PROGRAM: Jeff Skeels introduced Kathy Steckel and Katie Hedley, who updated the club on the North Fork Ambulance Association (NFAA). Steckel is the executive director of NFAA, having been an EMT for 21 years and recently completed training to the advanced care level. (The RC of the NFV has provided scholarship funds for the past two years to NFAA EMTs to receive this advanced training.) Hedley is the events and media coordinator for NFAA. The Assn has planned 28 events this year to educate the community about its services and encourage membership. Their meeting with us was number 15!

This being membership renewal time, they have devised a new approach to increasing the percentage of the local population who are members. They have launched a Powerful Stories Project with local residents sharing their stories to show the importance of the ambulance service. They are also sending out 2500 first class letters to non-members. They hope to increase the membership of NF Valley residents from its current level of 34% of the population.

While medicare pays for ambulance services, it sustains only a low level of cost re-imburement; private insurers are adopting a similar low level. Medicaid pays only eight cents on the dollar. To accommodate these low levels of insurance coverage, NFAA uses small vehicles and volunteers. While a central location for their service - Hotchkiss - instead of the three current locations - Hotchkiss, Paonia, Crawford - would generate cost savings, the NFAA Board of Directors has decided to maintain the current service locations so as not to increase response times that might result in a lesser quality of service. However, in order to meet increased costs, the organization decided to focus on increasing its income through expanded membership.

NFAA began in the late 1960s. Since then, 50% of calls come from members. Non-members pay 100% of the transport costs (~\$1200 - \$1800), while members have no cost once their insurance

deductible is met. NFAA accepts whatever the insurance company will pay. 38% percent of their calls come from people under 50, but only 9% of their members are under 50.

NFAA is considering asking for public funding. Just as our tax dollars pay for schools, fire departments, and law enforcement, shouldn't they also pay for emergency services? Club members seemed to be in agreement. The service currently gets grants to help pay for equipment and some salaries. NFAA has a \$600k budget and 50 volunteers, who are paid a modest stipend to be on call. With a possible \$60,000 deficit in 2018, Steckel encouraged us to not only become members, but to make extra donations to the NFAA, a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Colorado Gives Day on December 5, would be a fine time to make that donation.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL: October is Economic and Community Development month, one of Rotary's 6 major themes.

Rick Burns' thoughtful approach to Iraq and Afghanistan. Humanitarian Rick Burns, a retired civil affairs officer in the U.S. Army, has been helping people in the war-torn countries of Afghanistan and Iraq since 2003. He's seen a lot of good, but he's also seen what happens when good intentions go awry.

Take the fertile grounds of Arghandab River Valley in Afghanistan, for example. Burns recalls an initiative to help fruit exporters become profitable again after the war. Cold storage facilities were built, but because no one considered the country's spotty electricity, the facilities ended up being too expensive to maintain. "We really want to make the world a better place," says Burns, "but if we don't consider the outcomes of these projects, we can cause more damage than good."

He's seen similar failings at vocational training centers, where the unskilled and the unemployed receive training but not jobs. Then there are wells that fall into disrepair because no one planned for ongoing maintenance. Watching all this good energy and hard work go to waste is one reason Burns started his nonprofit, Karadah Project International. "I'd been whining and complaining for so long, I thought that it's time I do something," says Burns, who is a member of the Rotary Club of Atlantic, Iowa, in the U.S. The organization helps communities in Afghanistan and Iraq create international partnerships to help solve such pressing problems as hunger, poverty, and disease.

Burns is a big believer in partnerships. He says more gets accomplished when organizations are connected. So last March he arranged a conference in his hometown of Elk Horn, Iowa, and invited representatives from 30 nonprofits working in Afghanistan and Iraq to share their knowledge and resources. "Small nonprofits pop up in response to a need they feel passionate about," says Burns. "But we can do so much more if we all work together." [to be continued]

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Oct. 26 - Steve Smith, Media for Development International (Africa)

Nov. 2 - Steve Morris, West Elk Mountain Rescue

Nov. 9 - Chris Jacobson, Paonia Bread Works

Nov. 16 - Kristin Lynch, Western, Colorado Community Foundation

Nov. 23 - Thanksgiving (no meeting)

Nov. 30 -

Dec. 7 - Jay Bagley and Julie Bennett, Rubicon Roasting and Root and Vine

