



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

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LAST MEETING: December 1, 2016

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Glenn Dahlgren won the football pool.

The 11/19 bell ringing for the Salvation Army brought in lots of donations.

The Paonia Chamber of Commerce encouraged all of us to become members.

The election of Directors and Officers will be 12/15 as well as a discussion of the action plan.

Casino night will be January 28, 2017 at Shadescapes in Hotchkiss. It will be a dressy affair.

There will be a silent auction. Bring auction items to Jackie Parks.

The club's facebook page is up. Put some posts on it.

The Parks will host a Christmas party on 12/15. (There will be a club meeting this day as well.)

There will be no meetings on 12/22 or 12/29.

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

PROGRAM: Ulli Lange introduced John Poulos, a local coal mining engineer. He has been in the business since 1977 and at West elk mine since 1985 as a ventilation engineer. At Ulli's invitation, Poulos gave an inspiring presentation at Cherry Days, which he presented to the club again. He emphasized the hazards of underground coal mining. One has to watch the roof and walls for potential failure, and even the floor can bounce. Other hazards are gas, dust, smoke, and floods. However, mining is much safer than it used to be, with fewer injuries than occur in farming, fishing and even office work!

After his presentation, there was an active discussion about current and future coal mining in the valley. Bowie mine is looking into new methods of coal gasification, and is currently applying to the state for permits. Lange suggested that coal liquefaction might replace ethanol as a fuel.

The recent federal decision concerning the roadless area in the North Fork Valley has made Poulos hopeful about future mining in the area. The West Elk mine has re-hired 20 miners, because the export market was up, but then it dipped again - that is just the way it is. The mine is selling coal to cement plants in this country. It is high BTU, low sulphur thermal coal. It costs more to ship the coal than to mine it. The disadvantage of North Fork coal is it can only be shipped out of the valley by rail in one direction. Elsewhere the coal can be shipped in at least two directions.

One interesting note is that there are not one but two Poulos families in the valley. John is the son of Pete Poulos, the former barber in Paonia. Tom Poulos, of the other family, owned buildings on the east side of Grand Avenue, such as the Paradise Theatre, as well as Poulos park. Each family immigrated from Greece and shortened their different names to Poulos. An interesting bit of local history.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL: December is disease prevention and treatment month. In 1994, Marion Bunch lost her son to AIDS. It was early on in the U.S. AIDS epidemic, and the stigma surrounding the disease kept her from talking about her son's illness with anyone but family members.

"I never thought I'd do anything about it until one day, three years after his death, I felt a tap on the shoulder, and a voice in my ear said, 'Mom, get up and get going; you haven't done anything, and it's been three years,'" she recalls.

Within a year, Bunch, a member of the Rotary Club of Dunwoody, Georgia, USA, proposed an idea to her club, and through Rotary began connecting community and professional leaders who shared a passion for disease prevention. This was the start of Rotarians for Family Health and AIDS Prevention (RFHA), a Rotarian Action Group.

In May, the group held its third annual Family Health Days in Africa. Rotarians from 365 clubs fanned out across Uganda, Nigeria, and South Africa to help medical professionals and government workers provide free health services to 250,000 people. The event included polio and measles immunizations, dental and eye clinics, and family counseling and screening for HIV, diabetes, hypertension, breast cancer, and cervical cancer.

"The reach of this is so phenomenal because of the presence of Rotarians all across these countries who felt emotionally connected by working together as one force on one project," Bunch says.

In South Africa, 225 Rotary clubs participated at 160 sites; in Uganda, 65 clubs supported 120 sites; and across Lagos and Ogun states in southern Nigeria, 62 clubs supported 70 sites. Two Rotary Foundation Global Grants provided funding to send vocational training teams to Uganda and to pay for bed nets that will help prevent malaria in Nigeria.

"The heartbeat of the health care system must be prevention of disease and the promotion of health rather than [trying] to cure disease, to fix it after," says Dr. Aaron Motsoaledi, South Africa's minister of health. [to be continued]

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

December 8: Paonia High School Swing Choir

December 15: Board elections; discussion of action plan

