



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: February 9, 2017

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Thanks to Jo Edmonson for hosting Casino Night at Shadescapes. The club netted \$3918, a little more than last year. Many thanks to Marsha Grant, Pam Bliss, Jackie Parks and others for the work they did to make this a wonderful event.

Felix Belmont wants to step down as club secretary. Somebody else needs to step up.

Give speaker ideas to Randy Campbell.

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

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

Taking tickets at PHS basketball games: Please sign up for 2/22 quarter finals.

Marsha Grant won the superbowl the football pool, so she received \$250 and our scholarship fund increased by \$250.

James Schott is putting together a membership survey.

PROGRAM: Betsy Marston introduced Kathy Welt, Environmental Engineer at West Elk Mine. Outside of her profession she has been involved in many activities. She has served for 12 years on the BLM RAC (Resource Advisory Committee), been Chair of Hopewest Hospice Advisory Board, and been involved with 4H and shooting sports. She graduated from CSU with a degree in environmental engineering then worked for the US Forest Service.

She started her coal mine career with Westmoreland Mine, worked at Oxbow Mine, then moved to her current position with Arch coal company. Arch went through bankruptcy, which was caused by poor business decisions and politics. The company and its local mine have overcome some challenges. However, sales have been poor over the last few years, as the mine had no long term contracts. It sells coal on the spot market month to month. In 2015 398 employees produced 5.2 million tons for sale. Employee numbers dropped to 323 by the end of the year. The mine laid off 100 people in 2016 and sold 4.1 tons of coal. In 2017, 223 employees have some 2 million tons so far. They work 2 eight hour shifts, 5 days a week, and produce more coal than 2 twelve hour shifts, 7 days a week.

Long term contracts in the 1980s helped the 3 local mines survive. Though electrical generation from coal will probably be here for another 50 years, cheap natural gas and new regulations caused many mines to close. Bowie Mine had to close because of a difficult mining situation. Oxbow closed because it would be too big an investment to both deal with the fire and replace the long wall mining machine. West Elk Mine survived the down turn in the market. The hope is that the market can sustain the current mines.

North Fork coal is the hottest burning, best quality, low sulphur coal, with essentially no mercury in it. The drawback is the cost to get it to market is high. There is nothing for the railroad to haul back to the valley, so coal transportation is expensive.

West Elk mine plans to expand toward Mt. Gunnison, but the Colorado Roadless Rule is still being debated. There is a 60 day stay of the Judge's order to allow the expansion for Congressional review. The Chief of Staff put in another 60 day delay. The mine has won prizes for reclamation. The operators have reduced the number of operational boreholes to vent methane from 15 to 2.

In a final note, Welt said the Obama administration regulations may be good for eastern mines, but they are impractical for western ones.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL: February is Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution month.

Rotary Peace Centers shape hundreds of careers in peace and conflict resolution. In 2001 the United Nations designated the September 21 as an annual International Day of World Peace "to be observed as a day of global ceasefire and nonviolence" according to a General Assembly resolution. The day's devotion to peace connects closely with what Rotary members have been fostering since The Rotary Foundation's mission to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace, was proclaimed in 1917.

Rotary's goal of worldwide peace and tolerance has been an unwavering pursuit: conducting global forums, hosting international peace symposiums, advancing peace through its 60-year collaboration with the UN, as well as grassroots initiatives such as the Rotarian Action Group for Peace.

But Rotary's most significant effort to wage peace is the Rotary Peace Centers program, established in 2002. Each year, the program trains some of the world's most dedicated and brightest professionals, preparing them to promote national and international cooperation and to resolve conflict. They include graduates of a two-year master's degree program and a three-month professional certificate program at Rotary's partner universities.

Today, more than 900 peace fellows are applying their expertise in various fields. They're settling border conflicts in West Africa, developing aid programs at the World Bank, drafting legislation to protect exploited children in Brazil, providing security for U.S. diplomats, and many other career paths devoted to peace.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

2/16: Member talks

2/23: Carol Newman, new ED of the Blue Sage

3/2: Dr. Ryan Marlin to talk about new health facilities in the N.F.

3/9: TBA

3/16: Paonia HS Swing Choir (their make-up for missing in December)

3/23: club business meeting, topic TBD

3/30: 5th Thursday: shall we do something different from the usual?

