



## **THE SPOKES SPEAK - GEARED TO SERVICE**

### **Rotary Club of the North Fork Valley**

**POB 1543, Paonia, CO 81428**

**WEB SITES: [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org) [www.rotary5470.org](http://www.rotary5470.org) [www.paoniarotary.org](http://www.paoniarotary.org)**

**Meeting Thursdays at Noon in the Paonia Town Hall**

**District 5470**

**Club 1180**

**Vol 54 Issue 21 June 9, 2016**

**LAST MEETING: June 2, 2016**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Board meetings are held at 3:00 pm the second Tuesday of each month. Club members are welcome to attend. Meeting minutes will be posted on the members only section of the website.

The Polio plus jars will be move to new locations, There is always one on the club meeting sign in table. Please fill them up.

The KPP dinner for Jamaica Outreach will be held at Delicious Orchards on June 13 at 6 pm. There will be a silent auction and entertainment from Davide Alderdice on drums and marimba. As this will be the only fund raiser this year for this charity, please come support it.

Please sell tickets for the pancake breakfast on June 25.

Ron Edmonson, the new owner of High Country Shopper and a former club member was the key guest.

A group of local folks has affiliated with a Denver-based organization, "A Little Help", to meet the needs of the NF Valley's aging population. They are looking for a part time employee to be the Branch Coordinator. The official launch of the affiliate will be late summer or early fall.

A 2006-7 Rotary Scholar, Naomi Ayers, graduated college with a degree in international studies and German, has been an Assistant Manager of a large Walmart on the Front Range, and has just taken on the full time job of motherhood.

Ed Bliss reported that he had been trying for some to get permits to put a pond on his property. Just recently two beaver ponds appeared. No permits needed!

**PROGRAM:** Randy Campbell introduced Monica Wiitanen, bread baker par excellence. She bakes in a wood fired, stone oven and was the driving force behind the Cottage Food Industry Act that allows small producers to sell certain kinds of products. She and her husband moved here 20 years ago. They bought a farm next to the Enormous Brontosaurus farm and named theirs, Small Potatoes.

There used to be farmers' markets along the roads that included bread and jams for sale along with fresh produce. But state regulations insisted that people have commercial kitchens in order to sell these "value added" products. Kentucky passed a cottage food law in 2003 that allowed products like bread and preserves to be sold without the cooks having access to commercial kitchens. Other states followed suit. Colorado passed its first cottage food act in 2015.

In an effort of participatory democracy, Wiitanen got to know State Senator, Gail Swartz, and then asked her to introduce a cottage food bill in the Colorado legislature. She did, but it failed because

some major agriculture interests opposed it. Swartz talked with all the opponents and she and Wiitanen crafter a better bill. I passed the second time with no opposition. (Wiitanen noted that it took 8 years and 64 rewrites before the 1964 Wilderness Act passed.) She said she had fun testifying by telling her story: “I am allowed to bake bread in a non-commercial kitchen and give it to friends and donate it to various causes, but I cannot legally sell it. That doe not make a lot of sense.” Apparently the legislators agreed. It is an example of how one person can affect legislation.

During the 2016 legislative session, the Cottage Food Industry Act was further clarified and pickled fruits and vegetables were added to the list of approved products. There are probably more products that could be covered by the act. Wiitanen says, “start where you can and build on it.”

Wiitanen’s business has boomed under the Act. It allowed her to start a business without a loan. It supports paid staff and some volunteers. The money she earns stays in the valley - she shops locally - and allows her to support local non-profits at a level she has been unable to do previously. She thinks perhaps thousand of small producers in Colorado are benefitting from this Act.

**ROTARY INTERNATIONAL:** The June Rotary theme is Rotary Fellowships. The benefits of Rotary Fellowships are: 1) They enable Rotarians to make lasting friendships outside of their own club, district, or country; 2) They contribute to the advancement of Rotary’s public image and identity; 3) They serve as an incentive for joining Rotary and for continuing as a member. Some Rotary Fellowships that may be of interest to our club members are: Amateur Radio, Bird Watching, Canoeing, Chess, Cooking, Cycling, Environment, Fishing, Home Exchange (More next week)

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

**June 9:** Paul Ramsey, A Little Help, organizing to serve seniors in the North Fork

**June 16:** Doris Danielson reporting on the board retreat

**June 23:** Annual business meeting

**June 30:** 5th Thursday - location TBA

