



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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Guest Editor: Bain Weinberger

LAST MEETING: April 19, 2018

Club President James Schott presided over the meeting.

Announcements:

- Bob Lario announced that the ReMax Garage Sale in support of the North Fork Valley Christmas Party is scheduled for the 2nd Saturday in June (June 9th).

Ben Lehman brought guest Sarah Johanson, a potential new member. This is her third guest visit. Visiting Rotarian was Doris Barrón from Piedras Negras, Mexico. Ben Lehman ably provided translation. No Key Guest today.

Program: Business Meeting

Topic 1: Rotary Participation in Open Table – Discussion led by Sarah Bishop

At the March 22 meeting, the guest speaker was John VanDenBerg who is working to initiate Open Table projects in Montrose, Delta and Mesa counties. There are currently no Open Table programs in Colorado.

Open Table is a 15 year old not-for-profit organization aimed at helping people move out of poverty. It brings a group of 6-12 community members together with a person or family in need. Table members bring their intellectual capital, contacts and social resources together to help solve the problems keeping the recipient in poverty. It claims a 85-95% success rate for the 800 or so people and families who have participated. Open Tables are usually established by church congregations, but an organization such as Rotary could do so as well. North Fork Rotary would be the first Rotary club to do so if we did. It is estimated that there are roughly 200 families in the North Fork Valley in poverty. There is no existing organizational structure for Open Table in Colorado. John VanDenBerg would be available as a guide, but would not participate in each Table meeting. It would likely be up to each individual Table to find an appropriate recipient.

Participants have weekly meetings with the recipients, who are referred to as “brothers” and “sisters”. The agenda is driven by the recipients, depending on their individual needs.

The cost is \$500/year, plus \$10/month for each member. Members receive online training in the form of three 2-hour sessions. North Fork Rotary could start an Open Table ourselves, or in partnership with another

organization such as a church. We could also participate financially, possibly by means of a District Grant.

Why might we want to establish an Open Table? The Club has historically worked to raise money for scholarships as well as sponsoring and participating in relatively small community service projects which require little if any fund raising. Would the Club rather spend time selling tickets and managing events, or providing direct service to people in our communities? Open Table (and “A Little Help”) provide opportunities for such direct service.

One concern brought up is that, in the brochure, Table members are indicated as experts in various disciplines, such as “Transportation and Insurance”, “Housing”, “Finance”, etc., and that participants need to be such experts. However, this is not the case. What is important are the personal and community resources as well as life experiences that each participant brings.

Another concern had to do with the weekly time commitment for a year. Members felt the time required along with the number of people who would need to be involved would be overwhelming for our small club. This could conceivably be managed by partnering with other organizations (including A Little Help) to share the load. Some members liked the idea of providing direct service, while others thought financial participation more sustainable. There is already a concern that the club is trying to do too much, as evidenced by the problems the Club has in getting members to take on leadership roles. Participating in Open Table might require cutting back on other activities, such as the Ducky Derby, which might in turn require cutting back on Scholarships. Scholarships are seen as a core Club activity by some members, so this would be a controversial step.

It was decided that those interested in pursuing the idea of forming an Open Table (either alone or in partnership) could meet and continue the discussion. We could also invite John VanDenBerg back for another meeting. It is also up to the club to decide how we want to balance fund raising and event management against direct service.

Topic 2: Finances

Members had some questions related to the budget and spending for both the Club and the Rotary Foundation. Treasurer Bishop addressed the questions raised.

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- **April 26: Dixie Luke:** on water



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DIFFERENCE**

