



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: June 14, 2018

Club President James Schott presided over the meeting.

Mike did the setup.

Francois played America the Beautiful as part of the opening ceremony and later Red River Valley for the group sing.

There were no visiting Rotarians today.

Guests today were two RYLA students, Sadie Miner and Jace Peebles.

Announcements:

- The Rotary Scholarship Pancake Breakfast is this coming Saturday. Randy made some requests for various assistance. Kathy and Ben stepped up. The Club is apparently expanding it's service portfolio into providing the valley with precious precipitation, as the first rain in weeks is forecast for the morning of the (outdoor) event.

Program: Edesia Community Kitchen

Greg introduced Mary George, founder. She said that she and John operated a commercial kitchen in Silverthorne for 25 years before moving to Paonia and purchasing a big warehouse. Their vision was to allow new people to get started in the food business without the usual up-front capital outlay for a commercial kitchen. There are now several regular tenants hosting pop-up restaurants, serving Caribbean food Friday night and Indian cuisine Sunday night. She and John also serve wood-fired pizza on Thursday and Friday nights. These have been active for a few months and are doing well, drawing a good crowd along with some "regulars". There is also a wholesale bakery that is just getting going as well as other specialty vendors. Their overall goal is to have their clients eventually become successful enough to outgrow Edesia and move into their own spaces.

In addition, they are working to become a community space hosting events for various non-profits. The space holds about 100 people, and they have hosted about 6 dinners so far.

They are in the process of developing their web site, which will include a calendar of events and offerings. They also have a small self-service area in front of the kitchen with some products available for retail sale, such as (occasionally) sourdough bread.

They have also been partnering recently with the Engage Project and Technical College of the Rockies and have installed some equipment specific to value added food manufacturing, including bottling, packaging and dehydrating equipment. The goal is to provide mentoring and to encourage food entrepreneurs. She is looking forward to bringing in more producers to take advantage of bountiful harvests by freezing, de-hydrating, etc. to prevent excess production from going to waste. She said they would also like to create a Farmer's Market if there is enough interest.

When asked about the possibility of pizza delivery, Mary responded that they would like to eventually turn their pizza business over to someone interested in taking it on, at which time delivery might become an option.

Greg asked if Kathy had any opinions as an experienced restaurateur regarding why The Flying Fork had not been sold. She said the sale will require a really good chef ready to take on a big project. She said she had all sorts of ideas for the property (none of which she was interested in taking on herself). She thought it could be interesting for someone to set up a charcuterie and/or a butcher shop to augment the restaurant. She said it is just a matter of finding the right person. There are locals available to help with financing if the right person shows up. Greg said he had talked with a chef recently that might be interested.

There are currently some zoning issues and contention with one of their neighbors, although another neighbor, The Silverleaf Development housing for seniors has been very supportive. Their location is currently zoned Industrial 1, which has meant they needed a "special use permit" for some of the activities. There are meetings with the zoning board and town council scheduled for early July. She said that they are considerate of their neighbors and do not host particularly disruptive events. Still, there is the possibility the zoning issues may curtail some of their activities. Support from the community (such as petitions) could prove helpful in that event.

She said that they are currently doing everything with the property they originally intended. Projects such as this take on a life of their own, she said.

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

June 21: TBA

June 28: Business Meeting

