



## ***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 - Chartered 12/20/22

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**LAST MEETING: July 26, 2018**

President Heck presided.

American the Beautiful sung by the membership.

Felix, Mike and Randy set up the tables and chairs.

No Glenn, no Don's cards.

No Visiting Rotarians

Key Guest: - Deirdre Morrison (Stefan)

New Key Holder: Bob Lario

#### **Announcements:**

- Pres Barb Heck passed around old Rotary books from 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary dated August 11, 1972. Interesting information inside.
- September 25<sup>th</sup> the League of Women Voter's Day need help with getting people registered to vote. There is an application available now to register on your phone.
- For 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday, on August 30<sup>th</sup>, we will have a pot luck outside at the Paonia Museum. Bring chairs.
- Discussion about the coal miner mural on the side of Ben's building. Ken Knight from the Town of Paonia is willing to take down the coal miner mural which is on 4' x 8' plywood boards if someone has a trailer to store it in until the water damage under the mural is fixed. James has a stock trailer for storage. Ben doesn't want the mural put back up because he'd like something fresh. It was decided to take the mural down and take it one step at a time as some believe that the mural belongs to the building that it's on; others believe that it's a landmark in the Town of Paonia.
- Randy Fisher, who has done the accounting for Rotary for years, has moved to Tennessee.
- Ed was very happy with the Jamaica KKP outreach.
- Bill, Ulli and Sarah attended the Cedaredge Rotary meeting last night for Polio Eradication. Meeting was very interesting.
- Sarah: Ducky Derby sign-up sheet now available.

**Program: Larry Wilkening, the new mayor of Hotchkiss**

Bill introduced the speaker: Larry Wilkening, the Mayor of the Town of Hotchkiss.

The Wilkening family moved to Crawford from San Francisco in 1958 to a 2-story rock home on Highway 92. He attended Crawford Elementary and Crawford Middle School and graduated with his twin brother in 1968 from Hotchkiss High School. His sister and his wife, Sherri also graduated from HHS.

He graduated from Colorado State University in 1972 with a degree in business administration, with an emphasis in accounting. After college he returned to Hotchkiss and went to work for Independent Lumber Company, the start of a 43-year career in the building products industry. His career took him away from the North Fork valley but he returned in 1996.

In 2015 he retired but didn't lack something to do—he started going to the Hotchkiss Town Council meetings. Larry found the “dynamics and diversity of small town government to be very interesting”. When elections came up in April, he was elected the Hotchkiss Mayor. As Mayor, he deals with barking dogs to billion-dollar water projects. The 2<sup>nd</sup> day on the job he signed the note for a million-dollar water tank! The water tank is 450 gallons and had federal dollars involved so along with that brings all kinds of regulations to deal with. They finished an affluent line to the sewer – a mandate from the EPA.

They have town meetings once a month and their meetings are not contentious.

In November, the Town of Hotchkiss will have a measure on the ballot asking voters for permission to sell the shop building at 222 W. Bridge Street because it is old and outdated and they've outgrown it as well. They do have a place to move to—out where the old sewer plant was North of the river.

The Town has hired a 4<sup>th</sup> police officer. There are 940 people in the Town of Hotchkiss.

Because Highway 133 goes right through the middle of Hotchkiss, they needed traffic control. CDOT installed flashing lights on all 3 entries into the town. In May, 2018 there were 8,500 cars per day that traveled through Hotchkiss and in June, 2018 there were 9,000 cars per day. The highest speed in June was 60 miles per hour in a 25-mph zone!! The average speed through town is 35 miles per hour. They are issuing tickets because they have to control the traffic so watch your speed because going 5 miles over the speed limit will cost you \$160.00!

There have been a few economic developments—they've made a few changes here and there. The community real estate is moving and having high speed internet has helped. Farm Runners started their business and the Chamber of Commerce has taken more of a role for economic development. The Chamber has taken the lead in getting a grant for a survey as to how business can improve and be more attractive. It's easy to get complacent. Another issue is the fair grounds. Farm to Fiddle Festival is happening at the same time as the Delta County Fair. Other than that, “Hotchkiss is clicking right along”.

Someone purchased the Coyote, which is a landmark with a story. Larry is not sure what the plan is for that property at this time.

The Town of Hotchkiss has adequate water to maintain through the end of the year. A lot of the irrigation water is private wells in Hotchkiss. The water table is high so some use sup pumps and others have to use domestic-treated water and they are on a rotation basis—those with odd addresses water on odd days and those with even addresses water on even days. If we don't get significant moisture to start replenishing reservoirs and significant snow fall, every municipality will be in deep trouble! Some consumption comes from the dispensary—where you pay for water.

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

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

August 2: Judy Livingston from the Paonia Historic Society will take us on a "Virtual Walk" through Paonia, showing photographs and telling stories of the original buildings and what was housed in them.

August 9: Randal Palmer, principal of Paonia High School, will share what's up for the coming school year and what he'd like help with!

