



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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LAST MEETING: September 20, 2018

President Heck presided.

Thanks to Mike and Felix for setting up.

Glenn has Don's cards.

No Key Guest or other guests.

Announcements:

- Ducky Derby signup: Still need ticket sellers at the Paonia Park at Mountain Harvest Festival on September 29th. We still have a long way to go!

Program:

Emily Hartnett and Jim Brett were introduced as our speakers today. Emily is the queen of VOGA (Valley Organic Growers Association) and Jim Brett wears many different hats related to the natural foods in the North Fork area. Jim takes care of their website: www.vogaco.org. VOGA is a 501(c)(5) and 501(c)(3). They have 10 board members. VOGA was founded in 1992 and was formed to support growers, educate consumers and promote benefits of sustainable agriculture that provide fresh and regionally unique products.

VOGA promotes local sustainable agriculture. Their mission statement is to promote local sustainable agriculture by supporting and educating producers and consumers. They raise dairy goats, cows, pigs, chickens, etc. and have had a lot of challenges this year due to the water shortage. They create and support viable local agriculture, maintain and improve health of soil, air and water; and ensure production of nutritious good—free from synthetic inputs. They have a lot of certified organics.

The association includes small and mid-sized growers, ranchers, retailers and individuals who share our vision, including the Organic Education Alliance, Indigo Autumn, Lizzy's and Farm Runners in Hotchkiss.

VOGA does the "Know Your Farmer" program and holds educational workshops which are open to the public. Education is a big part of their mission. They have farm tours annually at the Western Culture USDA Dairy Farmstead which is a Grade A dairy on Rogers Mesa. There are 6 farms on the Farm Tour: Desert Weyr, LLC; Gray Acres, The Living Farm, Thistle Whistle Farm and the Western Culture USDA Dairy Farmstead, to name a few. They also promote hands-on education at the bee farms, the Animal Husbandry workshop and there is a hemp panel scheduled in March at the Paradise Theater. On March 30, 2018 VOGA did a seed school and seed swap at the Hotchkiss Library.

VOGA is involved in the Mountain Harvest Festival, farmers markets and also have demos and tastings. The Paonia Holiday Art Festival is the first weekend in December where they reach out to the community to increase membership. They have a Farmers Social which is every first Tuesday of the month from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. which is a night out for the producers and an opportunity to expand one's network.

VOGA gives scholarships. Emily got a scholarship from VOGA which is what brought her to Paonia. They get mini-grants for new equipment including helping farmers with rotational farming and fencing and animal welfare.

VOGA's biggest project is their Directory which includes their sponsors and supporting memberships, listings of all involved, a map indicating the general locations of VOGA members, a number cross reference guide, and the Regional Farmers' Markets. These directories are delivered all over the state and beyond. Membership is \$30 per year for individuals and \$50 per year for businesses.

VOGA advocates water quality, air quality, climate change, seismology, and see the oil and gas development as a threat.

They have made promotional postcards to keep people aware.

Emily encouraged everyone to support VOGA and buy local, become a member and come to the events.

Sarah mentioned that Karla Tschoepe is very excited and impressed with the number of young people interested in agriculture in our valley.

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

10/4/18: TBD

10/11/18: TBD

10/18/18: TBD

10/25/18: TBD



ROTARY'S PEACE PRYAMID – *A plan to change the world!*

There are many **worthy** endeavors and NGOs in the world but what differentiates Rotary from these programs is Rotary has a six step plan for bringing more peace and stability to the world. It starts with purifying water and teaching basic sanitation skills to communities. Once learned this knowledge leads to the prevention of disease. Through THE learned knowledge of basic sanitation and by providing inoculations, maternal and child health improves. Healthy mothers can then teach their children to read and healthy children can learn. Armed with literacy skills people can earn a living reducing unemployment and civic unrest. Economic prosperity leads to a more stable society resulting in more peace.

