



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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Bain Weinberger – Guest Editor

LAST MEETING: December 6, 2018

President Barb Heck presided.

Visiting Rotarians:

- Brad Coleman. He is a retired attorney and was County Attorney. Now he is a municipal judge. Visiting from the Delta Rotary Club. The Delta Club is having a Christmas raffle fundraiser. \$20/ticket or \$50 for 3 tickets. Only 1000 being sold. First prize is a \$4500 vacation package. Second prize is a grill package worth about \$1000. Third prize from Homestead Meats.
- Assistant Governor Sam Kevan also visiting today.

Announcements:

- James volunteered to be point person for how to fund Rotary. Looking for other members to discuss funding issues. Ulli volunteered as well as Pam.

Program: Oxbow Mining LLC

Kevin introduced Mike Ludlow, President of Oxbow Mining LLC. He said Mike is a great outdoorsman, participating in hunting, hiking and fishing. He has been in mining for 45 years. He was living in Steamboat Springs until 2011.

Mike started by explaining that Oxbow Mining is a privately held company owned by Bill Koch. It is a worldwide company producing sulfur products, energy products and industrial materials.

Most of the coal being mined now being produced in Wyoming. It is lower quality coal than that found in the North Fork Valley, but it is more efficient to mine.

Coal is used primarily for generating electricity. It is also used to steel production. Natural gas is producing more electricity than coal now. Wind and solar have also grown.

The South has largest demand for electricity in the summer. Colorado is fairly dependent on coal for power generation. However, there has been a large drop in last five years in the amount of coal used to generate electricity. Colorado still gets more than 50% of electrical power from coal. Coal production in Colorado has dropped by half in the last 10 years.

Some Colorado coal production ends up being exported. There are only two ports in the West capable of exporting coal, which is a bottleneck. Difficult to permit new facilities due to fear. Production in Asia is increasing. Australia is a big exporter of coal to Asia.

North Fork Valley mines produced 15 million tons of coal per year at one point, but that has been declining. The only producer left is West Elk, producing about 5 million tons this year.

As for US Coal in general, more market erosion is on the way, largely due to power plant closures. No coal plants currently under construction and none anticipated. All new construction is gas.

In 2008 wind power was small percentage of total generation, but has been growing rapidly.

Electricity is still being generated with methane byproducts from Oxbow Mine.

There has not been a large growth in power consumption. LED lighting and other efficiencies are helping reduce consumption.

Carbon Dioxide from coal generation is a major problem.

After coal production, mines are required to have a reclamation plan for the mine.

- Elk Creek mine coal handling facilities removed in 2017 and the ground put back to original.
- Mine portal bench has been removed as per reclamation plan.
- Coal storage pad has also been removed.

Bowie probably closed for good. It has been maintained with the idea of eventually reopening. The mine, equipment and miners are all good. There is no market for North Fork Valley coal, though.

Final Thought:

Everything we have comes from the earth! Don't stop what we are doing, but continue to get better at protecting our planet.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- 12/13/18: John Poulos – Arch Coal Co. (Kevin Parks)**
12/20/18: No Meeting
12/27/18: No Meeting
1/3/18: TBD - (James Schott)
1/10/18: TBD - (Peggy Szvetcz)
1/17/18: Krista Dudley - Formation of a Threshold Choir in Paonia (Greg Thompson)
1/24/18: TBD – (SEI)
1/31/18: 5th Thursday Pot Luck

