



## ***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: March 28, 2019**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Ping Pong tables in Canada (an article in the Rotarian magazine).

April 17<sup>th</sup> there will be a presentation at Hotchkiss Memorial Hall for A Little Help.

May 4<sup>th</sup> is A Little Help Service Saturday.

The Delta Rotary Club will have a fund-raiser the second week of June at the Delta Golf Club.

Mike brought Key Guest: Randy

New key holder: James Schott

#### **Program: Ranching in Western Colorado**

James Schott introduced Robbie LeValley who has for 23 years been the Regional Range and Livestock director of Central Western Slope.

Ms. LeValley gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the history of agriculture and ranching in the central area of the western slope of Colorado. Here are some highlights of that presentation:

For four generations the LeValley's have won the Management of Ranching Lands and Grazing Lands award.

Agricultural Innovation is the norm in the history of grazing lands.

Many have heard of Eagle Rock Shelter – 8000 years ago, evidence of maize being grown.

Spanish Exploration 1765.

Rivera Expedition noted very little pasturage and almost no water. The area was filled with cactus.

Dominguez-Escalante Expedition 1776.

The North Fork has a good deal of rock.

The area receives 5-40 inches of precipitation annually. The soils are saline.

The Utes were here from 1400-1881

In 1880 there were 6,000 horses; 30 mules; 150 cattle and 5,000 sheep in the area.

1870's: agriculture to support miners

1870-1890 – cattle came to western slope to support the miners.

Innovation has always been part of this area:

- Early ditches
- Early marketing of the area
- Evolving crops
- Seed crops
- Early adopters
- Niche marketing: sweet corn
- Organic farm to table.

1882 - Early Agriculture. Irrigation started through the Central West area. The Gunnison Tunnel was created to provide irrigation. Irrigation changed the entire area, allowing cultivation of crops such as:

- Wheat
- Alfalfa
- Potatoes
- Onions
- Sugar Beets

Early Agriculture:

1893: Thousands of cattle died from a winter storm.

The Gunnison River at Sapinero was recognized as the dividing line between sheep and cattle country.

1920's-1930's – An extended drought impacted landscape.

1934: The Taylor Grazing Act was established.

1940's: Production was encouraged to support the war effort.

Wilson Rockwell wrote that approximately 150,000 head of cattle roamed Delta County.

Ranchers paid a personal property tax on cattle until 1972 when cattle were exempted.

Colorado Ag Stats indicate there were 32,000 cattle in Delta County.

There was no historic evidence of stirrup high grass in the Dobie's because the soil isn't deeper than 20 inches.

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- 4/11/19: DCMH: Jason Cleckler, CEO and Jacque Davis, head of Marketing and Communications (Marsha Grant)**
- 4/18/19: TBD (Mike Heck)**
- 4/25/19: TBD (Ulli Lange)**
- 5/2/19: TBD (Bob Lario)**
- 5/9/19: Business Meeting**
- 5/16/19: TBD (Norm Lewark)**
- 5/23/19: TBD (Jackie Parks)**
- 5/30/19: Potluck**
- 6/6/19: TBD (Kevin Parks)**
- 6/13/19: TBD (John Coombe)**
- 6/20/19: TBD (SEI)**
- 6/27/19: Swearing in of new President and BOD**

