



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: May 23, 2019

President Heck Presided.

Key Guest: No key guest today (Ed Bliss has key).

Visitors from DMEA

President of the Board of Directors of DMEA, Bill Patterson, (also a Rotarian) introduced the Board candidates:

Ken Watson from Montrose has one opponent,

Jock Fleming from Montrose has one opponent, and

Brad Harding (not present) has no opponent.

Ballots will be distributed May 28. The annual meeting is on June 20th at Hotchkiss High School.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

5th Thursday Dinner at Peggy's @ 6:00 on Thursday, May 30th. Sara donated a turkey and Peggy will get a couple of turkey breasts. Everyone can bring something to compliment the main course.

John Coombe announced the fundraising dinner on Thursday, June 6th at Salt Pollen as a recruiting device. He and Susie have a target of 50 people and they presently have 34 confirmed. There will also be a mini art auction—the picture is on the back table. John asked everyone to consider coming. It's \$75 per person and you can have chicken or fish and there will also be a vegetarian option. Credit cards are not accepted, only checks or cash.

The RPD Breakfast is June 13th and we will be serving 300 people at the Paonia Park. We need 2 more people at 6:00 a.m. at the Paonia Elementary; need 4 people for serving at the park at 7:30 a.m. and need 4 people for cleanup. We should be done by 9:30 a.m.

Felix announced that he donated 20 of his late wife's paintings to the Blue Sage. The pictures are mostly flowers. All proceeds to the Blue Sage. They can be viewed from 5 to 7 Friday evening.

Program:

Jackie Parks introduced Cheryl Oeltjenbruns (a Delta Rotarian) of the Abraham Connection Homeless Shelter. Cheryl has an MS in Social Work.

Cheryl belongs to the Delta Rotary Club, 4-H, and other clubs.

This Homeless Shelter is located in Delta and has been in existence for 11 seasons. They started at the First Baptist Church on Garnett Mesa in Delta and were there for 4 weeks, then went to the basement of the Methodist Church until 2016. They then got a \$320,000 grant to build a shelter and moved in December of 2016. They have beds for 32 people: men, women and families. They have washers and dryers, showers and an office for counseling. The Delta County Health Department says they need to expand and/or remodel to create a required pantry. Their seasons run from November 1st through April 30th. Last year they served 150 people and the ages ranged from 1 month old to 77-years old. Their hours are from 6 PM to 8 AM the following day. People come from everywhere—they've had coal miners who lost their jobs; single men; and people were also bussed in from Montrose until Montrose created their own shelter, however they still send some people to the Delta shelter. Operating costs are minimal because the Delta shelter is fully paid for. They pay liability insurance and have part-time staff. The Abraham Connection is governed by a 10-person board who oversees all operations. The board members fix meals, clean up, train and hire employees, carry shelter phones and perform intake. The board is very committed. The shelter is primarily volunteer-driven and the majority of volunteers are employed full-time. They want volunteers to feel safe with folks who come into the shelter. The shelter in Delta is open 7 days a week during 6-month season. They have 2 part-time volunteers for in-take and they assess if people are safe to come in. The in-take people alternate and work from 8 PM to midnight and a paid staffer works from midnight to 8 AM. Every guest must abide by 20 conditions in order to stay there.

The Abraham Connection is a faith-based organization but does not force their faith on the people staying. People staying also required to perform some simple chores, such as washing and drying the dishes, cleaning, dusting, mopping, etc. Also, no panhandling is allowed. For every 7 days in shelter, guests must participate in case management which is 4-hours of community service. The case manager is Linda Hanson and she is at the shelter from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. 2 staff members work with guests to get support services, Medicaid, ID cards, Social Security disability and mental health assistance. Their mission is to help people get back on their feet and into stable housing and jobs. They want to help people move beyond homelessness. There are always chronic people and depressed people. Case management is a big part of what they do.

James: Do 32 beds meet the demand?

A: They have only reached capacity a couple of times. They have cots and extra mattresses. When 25 show up it's very chaotic and very busy.

Glenn: How many homeless in Delta County?

A: A fair number. The 3rd or 4th Tuesday the guests are counted in the State of Colorado. The last count was 26 but there are a few that don't come in.

Ulli: How long can they stay?

A: People can stay the full 6 months the shelter is open, but tend to stay a couple of weeks.

Peggy: Any way of tracking success stories?

A: No, but lots of anecdotal evidence. Tracking system being required.

Felix: What is basis of financial support?

A: They receive no city or county funding. They got \$13K from DOLA. They apply and receive other grants. They get lots of support from the community.

Mike: What are the demographics of the guests?

A: It's mostly Delta County residents. Maybe 1/3 of the guests are transients. The majority are males, but they had 60 females this year.

Ken: What is the size of your budget?

A: \$45K per year.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- 5/30/19: Potluck (Peggy Szvetecz)**
- 6/6/19: Jon Vandenberg – West Nile Virus (Kevin Parks)**
- 6/13/19: TBD (John Coombe)**
- 6/20/19: TBD (SEI)**
- 6/27/19: Swearing in of new President and BOD**

