



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

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LAST MEETING: August 25, 2016

ANNOUNCEMENTS: President Greg sent around sign up sheets for tasks during the Ducky Derby on Sept. 10. High school students and Rotarians have sold 280 tickets. Sell more tickets!

The District Governor will be our program on 9/1.

A Little Help made a well-received presentation to the Delta Rotary. Nancy Wood will sell DD tickets. We should do something with the Delta club.

Feed the polio jar.

The Blue Sage is soliciting non-profit organizations to participate in the chili cookoff 9/23.

Our second September fund raiser will be a pancake breakfast on 9/25 during Mountain Harvest Festival.

A trust has been established to build a handicapped accessible home for the Hillman family. Please support this effort.

PROGRAM: President Greg introduced Randall Palmer, Principal of Paonia JHS and HS. His wife is a third generation Paonian. He reported on how well the school is doing. On the sports teams, he expects all of them to be competing at the state level this year. Teams have won 9 state championships in 7 years. The Swing Choir was the top competitor in the state last year. Newsweek has named PHS one of the top 500 in the country.

The school offers 9 advanced placement courses, some of which are taught on-line or off campus. Solar Energy International is presenting on-line courses to students in Paonia and Delta, who then go to the SEI campus for lab work. With only 11 teachers, Palmer needs to maximize his resources by offering on-line courses.

There has been hardly any turnover in teachers in the last two years.

While college is important for some students, it is not for everyone. Palmer's advice to students is "invest in yourself and seek an education that is worthy of you". The new councilor at the school helps students from 7th grade on develop their interests and skills. In an effort to connect classrooms with the work force, 7th and 10th grade students meet with adults to learn about professions. Here is an opportunity for Rotarians to participate.

Palmer was particularly pleased that one of last year's students received a Boettcher scholarship, and that recent graduates are attending Harvard, Penn State and Middlebury.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL: The Rotary theme for September is Basic Education and Literacy. In 2005, Razia Jan came up with a dangerous idea: to start a free private school for girls in her native Afghanistan. The Taliban were using extreme violence to keep girls from learning. In 2008, the year she opened the school, terrorists in the country -- armed with bombs, poison gas, guns, grenades, and acid -- killed 149 teachers, students, and employees in Afghan schools.

But Jan did not intend to let terrorists stop her. She approached Afghan Ministry of Education officials and persuaded them to donate a piece of land in a village 30 miles outside Kabul. Today, the Zabuli Education Center is in its sixth year and has a roster of more than 400 girls in kindergarten through ninth grade.

Without the school, many of the students never would have had the chance to receive an education. "I can feel a change happening in these girls and in this community," says Jan, who moved back to Afghanistan after building a successful tailoring business in Duxbury, Massachusetts, USA. "Knowledge is something nobody can steal from them." [To be continued]

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

September 1: Teresa Anson, Rotary District 5470 Governor

September 8: Alex Johnson, Executive Director of the Western Slope Conservation Center - the BLM Resource Management Plan currently in public comment period.

September 15: McKenna Palmer and Cyrus Malek-Madani - our RYLA attendees

September 22: Jason Cleckler, CEO of Delta County Memorial Hospital

September 30: "5th Thursday" at the Larios (no meeting on 9/29)

