

Meeting Notes 10-02-2007

President Tim Ferris called the meeting to order. Members joined in the Pledge of Allegiance, led by B J Gosnell, the 4 - Way test led by Dr. Ed Velayos and the Rotary Invocation led by Marvin Pollard..

Announcements and Business

Bob Leith introduced our guests. Kathy Bauer from Gainesville, Shelley Alexander and 2 Argyle Interact members, Luke Laird and Liz Fryer. Welcome guests !

Bob announced all the October birthdays and reminded all who had anniversaries coming up.

Tim Ferris informed us that Pete McCleskey's sister passed. We are all very sorry to hear the news and our prayers go out to him and their families.

John Rademacher announced that the school district gave the approval for us to go out to the 3rd grades to deliver the books. We will start with 4 schools and go from there. The plan is to label all the books that will include the 4 Way Test and deliver them in November. Thanks goes out to this committee. We know they have been meeting and working hard to make this happen.

Ralph announced that we have enough money in the budget to purchase a Shelter Box. Great news.

Tom Downey announced that there will be a chili cook off this Saturday with the proceeds benefiting Riding Unlimited. Everyone is invited and to come and experience the Barn Bash !

Brian Glenn reminded us about the poker night that will benefit the Nicaragua Project.

Program

Tom Downey introduced our speaker. Chuck Buttram is the Director of Business Development for the Habitat for Humanity's Bart's Barn.

Habitat for Humanity is the 3rd most recognized non profit in the country. It has a presence in 100 countries and in every state in the US. It is a Christian organization whose ministry is to eliminate sub standard housing.

There are a few misconceptions about Habitat for Humanity. First, the houses are not given to the families. The families must contribute 350-400 hours of sweat equity helping to build others homes in addition to helping to build their own home. When they take possession of their home they also receive an interest free mortgage.

There is a lot of time spent recruiting volunteers and sponsors. Whirlpool donates 2 appliances for every home built. That is pretty awesome.

Bart's Barn, besides being a fundraising tool for the local Habitat for Humanity, has also converted over 500 tons of materials that would have ended up in the landfill.

Another misconception is concerning where the funds go. All the fund raised locally stay local with the exception there is 10% tithe that goes to International.

Chuck encouraged us to take advantage of a couple of local eateries generosity. Applebees' is contributing 15% of the bill on the first Tuesday of every month. El Chaparral, on the 1st and 3rd Thursday, is contributing 10%. If you're going to eat anyway, help out Habitat at the same time.

President Ferris adjourned the meeting.

Important Dates:
Oct 27th Kinship Festival TWU
Oct 27th KDB Tree Giveaway
June 15th 08 Rotary Convention Los Angeles

A new look at global ethics and The Four-Way Test

Moral codes and ethics give us tools but also raise questions to be answered: How should we live? What is morally good and bad, right and wrong? Shall we aim at happiness or knowledge? Virtue or the creation of beautiful objects? If we choose happiness, will it be our own or the happiness of all?

And what of the more specific questions that face us? Is it right to be dishonest for a good cause? Can we justify living in opulence while elsewhere in the world people are starving? Is going to war warranted in cases where innocent people will likely be killed?

Ethics deals with such questions at all levels. The subject's core consists of the fundamental issues of practical decision making, and its major concerns include the nature of ultimate value and the standards by which human actions can be judged right or wrong.

For Rotary, The Four-Way Test is the cornerstone of all action. It has been for years, and it will be in the future. Of the things we think, say or do

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

The test is one of the hallmarks of Rotary. Since it was developed in 1932 by Herbert J. Taylor, who later became RI president, it has never ceased to be relevant. Its four brief questions are not based on culture or religion. Instead, they are a simple checklist for ethical behavior. They transcend generations and national borders.

As Rotarians, we should have The Four-Way Test in mind in every decision we make, all day long. Our utmost responsibility is to speak the truth, to be fair, to build goodwill and better friendships, and to do our very best in all situations.

Life is very turbulent today, and people all over the world are exhausted in their duties. Where are the dreams of a better world? Where are we? Who are we? What is our duty to ourselves, neighbors, and fellow citizens? Where are charity and our joint responsibility to humankind?

Now more than ever, we need a vision and knowledge of what is happening around us, a new view of cultural and religious phenomena, without dividing humankind into limited and subjective categories. That's the tenet for a

better world and a job for us Rotarians: not engaging in politics, but serving without any boundaries.

This happens through our programs, and it happens through acting as a guide for international coexistence, providing a forum for dialogue and discussion worldwide, giving perspective to views and models, finding new solutions using Rotarians' great knowledge and expertise, and having interfaith, multicultural, and ethical standards as guiding principles in all dealings.

No divine right can be vested in anyone to pronounce the final word or the ultimate truth. In matters of faith and religion, prescriptive morality should be avoided, as it often is the root cause of hostility and divisiveness. Global ethics is based on an interfaith mind and ecumenical way of living.

The one universal, unsurpassed principle expressed by nearly every major religion and values system is similar to the golden rule: Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Today, it is especially confusing to determine what is really right and wrong. But the fundamentals of Rotary are bound to universal ethics and humanity without any boundaries between race, religion, or ethnic background.

Rotary offers a possibility for solving ethical problems. Well-trained, well-engaged in social life, and with strong consciences, Rotarians must try to address these issues through Rotary's vocational and community service programs. People all over the world need more safety, tolerance, understanding, and love. They want to live in peace.

Tolerance, fairness, respect, compassion, and hope are particularly needed today. But what are tolerance and fairness? Are they only a question of sharing resources, rights, and obligations, or more a question of an ongoing dialogue? For an effective discourse, we have to identify the real problems, discuss them, and try to find compromises.

We should know what the human culture is made of, and what it means to different people and to the identity of other nationalities. The knowledge of other cultures, along with the skill to face the dissimilarities in our lives and lifestyles, seems to be a key point and the biggest issue.

Rotary, whose club members represent many cultures and religious beliefs and are committed to high ethical standards, can support mutual understanding and serve as a tool for peace. Rotarians and Rotary clubs all over the world — in small country towns and huge capitals, in the East and West, South and North — may provide enduring forums for peace discussions and together work for peace.