



THE Rio Rotarian



HELEN MADERE BRIDGE

"Having fun helping others...watering the rosebuds"

-Dr. Ted Schulz

Welcome

Pres. Dave calls the meeting to order at 7 a.m., tackling both the Pledge and Grace. Stretching for a song, Jimmy Mac modifies Albert Hammond's, "It never rains in Southern California," appropriately leaving off "Southern." After a dry run, he asks the Club to join him. It would have paid to have an auto tuner.

Guests & Visiting Rotarians

Ruthie Gleason, Asst. Gov. from the Aurora Fitzsimmons Rotary Club in Denver, CO drops by; while Tony Coito is welcomed back as a Guest of Molly. She's few moments late and spins the wheel—opting to put the flag away, rather than paying the fine.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Jay has no report, so asks whether anyone knows where the "gambling strip" is in Nevada. Apparently, it's in Paradise, 4 miles outside of Las Vegas.

Birthdays & Celebrations

We sing "Happy Anniversary" to Rob, who celebrates his 37th anniversary to Sue, who is also celebrating her birthday on 2/17.

Committee Reports

- Patrick reports that our Golf Tournament is coming along well, and passes out flyers.
- Cub reports that Tequila Y Mas is on schedule for 7/27.

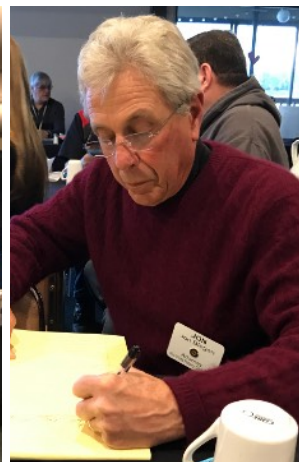
Sports in. School out.

The Varsity Boys Basketball team lost in the first round of playoffs to Woodland Christian on Wednesday; and girls lost on Thursday, in their second round. In soccer, boys lost in their first round of the playoffs to Delta. Veep Brooke loses her voice cheering for RVHS.



VP Brooke Okamura and Destanie Rendon attend Rotary despite no school.

The Vice Versa dance was a success, but Brooke walked home in the rain, and blamed her innocent father. Destanie, had a fantastic time with her date, a boy that also attended Camp Royal this past summer. Schools back



Treasurer Jay has no financial report, but delivers a trivia quiz; while Jon diligently captures the essence of the meeting.

in session this coming week.

The Two Faces of Afghanistan

Gil Labrie, welcomes back Ben Neely, a Civil Engineer in his office, but also a man with a boatload of interesting stories. Today, Ben talks about his deployments to

Afghanistan, and the wildly different experiences he has while stationed in Kabul versus a rural area.

During Ben's first deployment as a Northern Kabul Resident Engineer, he found that the people were positive, and felt that he was bringing positive change to the Country. People were educated, and most

Committee Reports

- Charter Night is March 9.
- Molly reports that Principal Turk is thankful for Camp Royal spots, and will encourage students to apply.

Announcements

- Jimmy Mac spoke with Principal Turk at the HS. While they could not use the funds for the Vice Versa dance, they can be used for Prom. Jim asks donors whether they are willing to redirect their donation to Prom.
- Pres. Dave reports that Soroptimist has asked for sponsorship of their Human Trafficking Program on 2/22 at the Veterans' Hall. While the Club does not take action, Gil, Gene, Edwin, Jim, Rob and Jon each offer \$100 towards the program.
- Patty reports that our Charitable account is short on funds and asks members to settle-up. Statements will be handed out next week.

Confessions

- Jon confesses that he forgot to ask members to take photos in Edwin's absence last week. He offers \$25 to the General Fund.

Marble Draw

Serdar has the lucky number, but draws a clear marble.



Newsletter Team

Edwin Okamura, Jon Blegen

spoke multiple languages, including English, Russian, Farsi and other local languages. In spite of this, they always traveled in two armored SUV's with armed personnel. If one were attacked—they'd have a backup.

For Ben's second deployment, he was sent to a rural coastal town, where the atmosphere was very different. Despite him building infrastructure for the town, they were not welcomed by locals. During this deployment he was responsible for a large police station. Interestingly, the standards were so poor, that when Ben was asked to rebuild the station, they were on their 17th iteration. Cost to the American taxpayer: \$2-8M.

Unlike, Kabul—where they would not need to disguise their profession—in this rural town, the contractor would tell locals that they were teachers to avoid conflict. During one commute, a bomb was detonated in a culvert very near their vehicle. This was but one example of the tough conditions he worked in.



Gil Labrie introduces Ben Neely.



Ben Neely delivers another fascinating presentation.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

DATE	SPEAKER/EVENT	PROGRAM CHAIR
February 22	Faster Internet Coming?	Edwin Okamura
March 1	I-Program Round II	Serdar Gurel
March 8	No Meeting - Charter	Dave Mason
March 15	Update on AFS	Molly Coito
March 22	TBD	Hector De La Rosa
March 29	TBD	Gene Resler