

## Rotary and a Father's Courage, The Legacy of Qudrat

**Jim Graham**, former fighter pilot, business executive, Rotary leader, and humanitarian was our speaker. Jim told us this story of a heroic Afghani father, his son, and the great response by Indiana Rotarians.

In February 2005, a little baby, Qudrat, became big news in Indian-apolis. The 14-month-old boy was flown from Afghanistan to Indiana for life-saving surgery. His heart was not working properly. Indiana doctors fixed it. Qudrat, who had virtually no motor skills, little strength and weighed ten pounds before surgery, gained nine pounds and became a strong little boy after the procedure.

Sadly, when Qudrat and his father **Hakim Wardak**, returned to their home country in April 2005, there was an unexpected and heart-wrenching turn of events. Qudrat died suddenly. Roberta and Jim Graham took the news hard because Qudrat and his father had lived in their Brownsburg home for three weeks before returning to Afghanistan.

But Qudrat's death, while sad, was not the end of the story. In fact, it was the beginning of a legacy. When Qudrat's father

was staying in Indiana, he noticed something the Taliban forbids in Afghanistan.

"When I visited America, I saw all women could read and write," said Hakim Wardak during a phone conversation from Afghanistan. "I see that educated women would be big improvement for our country."

When Hoosiers raised \$13,000 and donated it to his family, Wardak first recovered his five children that he had given away because of starvation. Wardak then used the money to study two years of medicine and education at Pesharwar University in Pakistan. After graduation

Wardak built a six-room school on 1.5 acres in northern Afghanistan and named it after his son. **The Qudrat Wardak school was funded entirely by Hoosier Rotarians and a variety of churches.** Wardak is the headmaster.

Not all of the classrooms have desks. Some of the children sit on a concrete slab. In this area of Afghanistan, Where 99% of the women are illiterate, the Qudrat school gives girls a chance to learn. "He devotes everything he has to educating women and children. Children, both sex-

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es. **They're combined in the same class," said Graham. "They don't segregate them and they all have the opportunity for education."**

Graham says Wardak once had to flee the area because the Taliban threatened to kill him because he was teaching girls. Wardak also supervises an adult female literacy program in five villages, spends time farming and runs a clinic providing medical care, advice and medicine for children.

"It's a tribute to Hakim because he's a person of such high character, intelligence and dedication to improving the life of women who have been downtrodden.

Under the Taliban rule, he saw terrible things," said Graham. "I was absolutely amazed at what he did with the \$13,000 that the Hoosiers have given him."

**Who would have thought that the sad death of a boy we all knew would have such an impact on hundreds of children we don't know.**

"In that part of Afghanistan, if it wasn't for Qudrat, there would be no schools there. The girls would have no opportunity," said Graham.

**Qudrat's legacy is living, thriving and growing half a world away thanks to the love of a father and the generosity of Hoosiers.**

## LAST MEETING

President **Tom Briers** presided. Week 32. **Susan Hill** presented the invocation; **Roger Brunswick** led the Pledge of Allegiance; and **Donna Flammang** recited the Four Way Test loudly and clearly. **Ron**

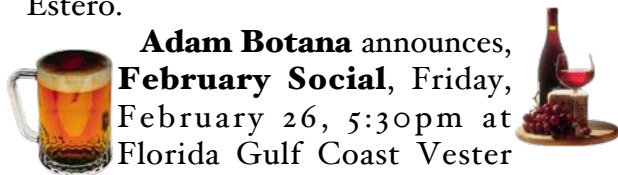
**Anderson** led the singing of *I've Been Working on the Railroad*.

**Don Manley** rose to honor **Jason Dolle**, Founder and CEO of Testimonial Tree and winner of both the Judges "Most Investible" and Audience "Best Pitch" Awards at VenturePitch SWFL.

The Pitch series is part of the Tamiami Angel Funds' e.co initiative, a Southwest Florida community based effort to build a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem from Sarasota to Naples. Jason will also advance to compete for \$50,000 in cash and prizes at Startup Expo in Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Tom reminded us of the RLI meeting in Port Charlotte on **February 20th**. The club will reimburse registration costs.

Tom reported that **Kenny King** has had a knee replacement and immediately after phoned to say, "I'm alive and well". He will be rehabbing at the Life Care Center in Estero.



**Adam Botana** announces, **February Social**, Friday, February 26, 5:30pm at Florida Gulf Coast Vester Marine Field Station on Bonita Beach Rd. **Beer, wine and appetizers provided.**

### Membership Drive Meeting

On February 17th, we will have a distinguished panel to discuss "Water and Florida". That will also be a **Membership Drive** meeting. **Bring a prospect**. Tom is hoping 150 members, guests, and prospective members will come. This is a hot topic and a good subject to interest prospects.

## VOCATIONAL SERVICE MOMENT



**Susan Schmitt** presented her Vocational Service Moment. Susan retired 6 years ago from a career of selling advertising for magazines. However, she calls herself a “trunk show specialist” offering personal wardrobe advice and superb offerings of designer garments for discriminating women.

Retirement has allowed Susan to spend more time on her favorite volunteer activities. She has been in Rotary since December 2008, has chaired the Poinsettia

sales, and is the club’s representative to Rotary’s Camp Florida. She is a member of the Camp Florida board of directors and previously served as a board member of the Heights Foundation in Ft Myers.

Susan is proud of her ability to “connect the dots”, getting the right people together make things happen. She says, “I’m loving to be retired and loving the opportunity to give back to the community. It is a blessing to have the chance to spend more time doing volunteer work. I highly recommend it in retirement.”

**THIS WEEK PROGRAM**  
The Revs Institute  
Preserving Automotive History

The Revs Institute for Automotive Research, Inc. in Naples, Florida is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization. Revs presents the **Collier Collection** of over one hundred significant automobiles built between 1896 and 1995.

The automobiles on display at Revs are some of the rarest and most important cars ever built at anytime, anywhere. They are the ones that variously blazed technical pathways, redefined aesthetic standards, made history, and changed the world



**Rotary Club of Bonita Springs**, chartered November 3, 1978. The Club may be contacted through its mailing address P.O. Box 474, Bonita Springs Florida 34133. You can reach **The Spoke** through its email [BonitaSpoke@aol.com](mailto:BonitaSpoke@aol.com). **Scott Gerrish** issue editor.

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# Sara McCallum

drew the 9 ♠ to win \$5



## The 50/50 is \$500

The 4-Way Test  
of things we think, say or do.

Is it the **TRUTH**?

Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?

Will it build **GOODWILL** and  
**BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?

Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all  
concerned?

Your finances. Your future. *Our focus.*

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## Rotary Sings: Let Me Call You Sweetheart

Let me call you sweetheart  
I'm in love with you  
Let me hear you whisper  
That you love me too

Keep the love light glowing  
In your eyes so true  
Let me call you sweetheart  
I'm in love with you

## Birthdays

*This Week*  
Rev's Institute,  
Preserving Automotive History

**Bobbi Bird Feb 14**  
**George Cohan Feb 15**

## This Morning's Invocation

O God, we gather once again as men and women committed to the values espoused by Rotarians everywhere, values and virtues desperately needing to be infused in our culture.

We believe the qualities which characterize Rotarianism at its best have their origin in Your will and purpose. We pray, therefore, for divine assistance as we seek to so integrate them into our social, business and professional structures, that they become the accepted basis for behavior.

Bless now the food provided for our use and enjoyment, and use the congeniality of our fellowship as a winsome witness to the quality of our togetherness.

Accept our gratitude for all gifts and challenges which come from Your hand. Amen.