



The Spoke

Women in Rotary



Last week **Dave Shellenbarger** presented an interesting history of Women in Rotary. From the time of its founding in **1906 until 1989 Rotary was an all male organization.** The admission of women was long debated, and resisted, by many members.

In 1977, the Rotary Club of Duarte, California invited three women to join. They submitted first initials only with the applications, were discovered, and the **charter was revoked when the "all male" bylaw violation was revealed.**

The club filed a lawsuit in 1978 in California courts. In 1983, the California Superior court **ruled in favor of Rotary International**, upholding gender-based qualification for membership in California Rotary clubs. The case moved to the Supreme Court.

On May 4, 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court **ruled that Rotary clubs may not exclude women** from membership on the basis of gender. **In 1989**, the Rotary Council on Legislation **eliminated the requirement that membership in Rotary clubs be limited to men.**

By 2010, the number of women members was approaching 200,000.

Our club now has 16 woman members. The first woman president was **Diane Lepola** in 2000 followed by **Nancy Ross, Stephanie Kissinger, Bobbi Bird, and Sandy Hemstead.**

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Trustees of The Foundation of The Rotary Club of Bonita Springs

Nancy Ross, President; Jim Dati, Secretary; Richard Garner, Treasurer; Ray Faubion, Ed Houck, John Mathes, Guy Quinn, Trustees

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Sandy Hemstead** presided. New member **Mike Poff** delivered the invocation; **Stephanie Kissinger** led the Pledge of Allegiance; and prospective member **Paul Gavin** read the Four-Way Test.



We had a special treat when frequent visiting Rotarian **Peter Ferner** of Starnberg, Bavaria bugled a Bavarian Hunter Call as a Happy New Year greeting to the club.

Song Leader **Ron Anderson** led the singing of *Puff the Magic Dragon*. Ron is trying to introduce one new song per month into our song book. Let him know your favorites.

Sargeant-at-Arms George Cohan honored birthdays of **Peter Zahner** and **Ron Anderson** and announced that **Don Manley** had made a \$1,000 birthday gift to the Gift of Life.

19th Annual Reverse Raffle

George Cohan announced the Reverse Raffle will be Saturday, March 14th. There will be 400 tickets sold at

\$100. The prize for the last ticket **not drawn** is \$15,000. In addition, a ticket gets a sit-down dinner for two, open bar all night, music and dancing. This is **great value** for a nice evening out with a chance to win BIG.



George is passing out tickets to each club member. Members are expected to sell or buy a minimum of three tickets. Here's President Sandy showing her tickets.

George claims **"I wouldn't have any gray hair if it weren't for the Reverse Raffle.** This is my last year as chairman."

John Spear - Women in Rotary

John Spear was club president 1988-89 the year after the Supreme Court ruling. "I also think Rotary actually opened up membership for women ... although it sort of evolved rather than was a dramatic change in policy.

It was an interesting time in Rotary, the end of the 'old school' organization that I saw my father participate in starting in the 1950s but not yet the younger and far more diverse organization it is now."

How do you invite someone to join Rotary? Just ask

By Bill Wittich, past president of the Rotary Club of Laguna Sunrise, Elk Grove, California, USA

“Those who know me call me the Starbucks Guy! That is because I spend way too much time and money in my local Starbucks. But the truth is Starbucks is my best location for attracting new Rotary members.

Let me give you an example of a recent Sunday. My wife, Ann, and I are both Rotarians and we enjoy our tall Skinny Mochas. So sitting there we watched a young woman arrive with her computer and she was dressed for business. Both of us asked the question, “Is she a possibility for Rotary?”

Well, she looked like a Rotarian. You know what that means. She was a young business woman and seemed friendly at that. I asked my wife which of us should talk to her about Rotary and she said that she found the last one, so it was my turn.

I simply approached her and asked “why are you not a Rotarian?” She smiled and said that she had heard of Rotary but really did not know exactly what they did or were. I gave her a copy of our club flyer and invited her to be our guest for breakfast at the country club next week. I asked her for her e-mail address and told her she would be receiving our club

newsletter later that day.

Basically, we were starting to build a slow, but friendly, relationship with her and simply invited her to breakfast. The next Wednesday morning, guess who showed up at our Rotary club meeting?

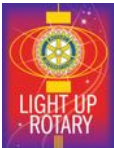
All we did was to be aware of who was enjoying our morning Starbucks with us and we just offered them an opportunity to network with the movers and shakers in our town. At the meeting, she heard about all those service projects that our club is doing, and her eyes lit up.

Well the following week, we had a new excited Rotarian who told us that prior to our visit at Starbucks, she had never understood what Rotary was or did.

I guess **the key to membership is to ask.**”



Thanks to **Brian Olitsky** and **Carl Nickel** for their work on the sign-in desk.



Rotary Club of Bonita Springs, chartered November 3, 1978, meets every Wednesday at Bonita Bay Club. The Club may be contacted through its mailing address P.O. Box 474, Bonita Springs Florida 34133 or its website www.bonitaspringsrotary.org. **The Spoke**, the Club's official newsletter, is published weekly throughout the year (except when the Club is in recess.) You can reach the Spoke through its email riverchip12-spoke@yahoo.com. **Scott Gerrish** issue editor.

Last Week: New Member Michael Poff drew the K♣ to win \$5



The 50/50 Now
\$2,368

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?

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Rotary Sings: Give My Regards To Broadway

G. M. Cohan

Give my regards to Broadway;
Remember me to Herald Square.
Tell all the gang at Forty-Second Street
That I will soon be there.
Tell them of how I'm yearning
To mingle with the old time throng.
Give my regards to old Broadway
And say that I'll be there 'eer long.

This Week:

**Debra Haley
New Horizons**

*It's A Birthday
Celebration!*

**Gary Colecchio Jan 18
Bob Rosier Jan 19
Majorie Rubacky Jan 19**

This Morning's Invocation

Dear God, whose existence we humbly and gratefully acknowledge, within whose providence we have been held since last we gathered here, and from whose beneficent hand we have received bounties unnumbered, bless now this gathering with Your Presence. Be with us at these tables that our fellowship will be wholesome and meaningful, and that the noble purposes of our club will receive our renewed commitment."

In all of life's interactions, help us to cleave to everything true and fair, and to unselfishly seek to benefit others in the spirit of good will. We pray in the name and spirit of the Lord whose example we have been challenged to follow. Amen.