



# the Blastoff

Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Space Center  
 P. O. Box 58862, Houston, Texas 77058  
 Meetings Monday Noon at Bay Oaks Country Club  
 14545 Bay Oaks Blvd., Clear Lake City  
 Phone: 281.488.7888 \* Chartered 1964  
**Volume 46 : Number 23 \* January 14, 2008**



**January is Rotary Awareness Month. Read The Rotarian.**  
**Rotary Sites:**  
[www.Rotary.org](http://www.Rotary.org)  
[www.Rotary5890.org](http://www.Rotary5890.org)  
[www.SpaceCenterRotary.com](http://www.SpaceCenterRotary.com)

**The election of Officers & Directors for 2008-09 will be held at the club meeting on January 14th.**

**Say Happy Birthday to —**

Jack Lister. . . . . January 2nd  
 (Jack was not included in the previous issue)  
 Micki Czarnick. . . . . January 17th  
 Jean Walker. . . . . January 18th  
 Billy Smith. . . . . January 18th  
 Mike Brown. . . . . January 21st  
 Bob Mitchell. . . . . January 24<sup>th</sup>

**Programs:**

**Today: Dr. Al Bieser will speak about the effects of medication**  
 Jan 21. . . . . **Martin Luther King's Birthday, No Meeting**  
 Jan 28. . . . . **Rabbi Jack Segal** will comment on his book "Remember What You Still Have"  
 Feb 04. . . . . **Funeral Consumer Alliance of Houston**  
 Feb 11. . . . . **Drug Awareness Essays**  
 Feb 18. . . . . **President's Day, No Meeting**  
 Feb 25. . . . . **Pam Culpepper; "Family in Focus"**  
 Mar 03. . . . . **Presentation of Scholarships**  
 Mar 10. . . . . TBD  
 Mar 17. . . . . TBD  
 Mar 24. . . . . TBD  
 Mar 31. . . . . TBD  
 Apr 07. . . . . TBD  
 Apr 14. . . . . TBD  
 Apr 21. . . . . TBD  
 Apr 28. . . . . TBD  
 May 05. . . . . TBD  
 May 12. . . . . TBD  
 May 19. . . . . TBD  
 May 26. . . . . **Memorial Day, No Meeting**  
 June 02. . . . . TBD  
 June 09. . . . . TBD  
 June 16. . . . . TBD  
 June 23. . . . . TBD  
 June 30. . . . . TBD

**Events Calendar**

- Club Board of Directors . . . . . 3rd Tues @ 7 a.m.
- Endowment Foundation Board of Trustees . . . . . 2nd Tues @ 7 a.m.
- Rotary Foundation Comm. . . . . last Wed @ 7 a.m.
- District Leadership Institute. . . . . Jan. 19th
- Valentine Pancake Breakfast. . . . . Feb. 16th
- District Conference Galveston. . . . . April 24-27 '08
- Springoree. . . . . TBD
- RI Convention, Los Angeles. . . . . June 15-18 '08

**SCRC Fellowships 6:30 p.m.**

Jan 22 . . . . . **Dos Mos** 103 W. Bay Area Blvd.  
 Feb 12. . . . . **Tommy's Seafood Steakhouse** 2555 Bay Area Blvd.  
 Feb 26. . . . . **Abe's Cajun Market** 1080 Clear Lake City Blvd.  
 Mar 11. . . . . **Zio's** 820 W. Bay Area Blvd.  
 Mar 25. . . . . **Topwater Grill** 815 Ave O, San Leon  
 Apr 8. . . . . **Clifton by Sea** Clifton, Tx,  
 Apr 22. . . . . **Colosseum Restaurant** 16608 El Camino Real  
 May 6. . . . . **Frenchie's Restaurant** 1041 Nasa Parkway  
 June 10 **Bay Oaks Country Club** Pool Party, Bring Grandchildren

## The Editor commented and you responded. This is what you said:

Here are my thoughts. I like the birthdays. If anything, it is a conversation piece. A door to greeting someone that you would not normally speak to, a conversation at your table you might not have otherwise. Mark Keesler is no longer a member. I don't think he's attended a meeting since we have been at Bay Oaks. Thank you for removing all the Sponsors. To me those pages and pages were like relatives who come to visit and over stay their welcome. I agree that sponsors are very important and believe in their recognition, but there should be a time limit. The paid ads(business cards) were meant to be a way to make the publication of the Blastoff self sufficient. I have mixed emotions about removing the Four Way Test and the Object of Rotary. Certainly we all should know these. I think about visitors who would learn a little more about Rotary if "the seed were planted". Like I said, mixed emotions. I like your emphasis on the Rotarian magazine and it's content. I've gone back and re-read an article because you mentioned it in the Blastoff. We have a lot of members, especially new ones, who don't get the connection between our club and RI ( go figure). In the beginning, the people mentioned in the Blastoff were just members of other clubs. I am amazed today at how many of those people I know, have met, or have traveled with to foreign projects. I truly value the relationship building. I could only hope we would have more home hosting of Rotary couples, but that is another conversation. A suggestion: I really like the ABC's of Rotary. At one time we used it for Rotary Trivia; a way to convey some little know fact or to re-emphasize a bit of info. I keep thinking of ways to inform, educate, inspire our members. Examples: The first Rotary club sponsored outside the United States was \_\_\_\_\_; the first Rotary club in a NON English speaking country was \_\_\_\_\_. Which Rotary club is located further west; The Rotary Club of Reno, NV or the Rotary Club of Los Angeles, CA. There are 135 Rotary clubs with the word "Tokyo" in their club names. Some little known fact might be a conversation piece.

Just a thought: When I was assistant governor, three of my five clubs had newsletters with great info. I was told they sent out a "Deadline Notice" for the upcoming newsletter. (Deadline for info submission to the newsletter is Wednesday 3PM...or Thursday 4PM) Sometimes people just need to be reminded. In closing, thank you for a great job these past couple of years. I truly appreciate your time and commitment. Kindest regards, Laura

Billy: I suggest that we have information on the various committees including the chairperson and scheduled meetings. I cannot remember the last time someone announced a committee project or a meeting other than our exchange folks. Marc Schneider

Billy, excellent newsletter, good content, relevant information. Believe you me, I have seen them all, and ours is the best organized. The challenge is to get the most people to contribute what they are doing. I found in my District Newsletter that happened only in direct asks. Also, I made it a REQUIREMENT of a grant of any kind that an article be written. DG Jeff Tallas has chosen to put everything on our district website (no newsletter at all) and if you want the information, you must go there. That works for some, but not all. Many clubs have no newsletter, which is a shame, because as you point out, a member might not be present to get the information. Thank you for your contribution to communicate news with our members. Take care, Suzi

Good comments on the News Letter. I agree that the things you mention should be deleted. Maybe each director or committee chair should make a few comments on their projects. Doesn't have to be long. Just a few words to keep us informed and maybe spark some interest. One per month would probably be enough. Also, with the International coming up in Los Angeles, maybe some highlights or special deals would spark some interest. How about a group air fare rate? Maybe a hospitality room or something special from our club or district?

Gene Tromblee

Billy: First of all, thanks for the effort and time it takes you to do the Blastoff. Secondly, you have made a difference and continue to do so. If someone wants feedback/comment, I like to respond so here goes: As a former member (as you correctly point out) receiving this by e-mail allows me to "keep up" with friends. So using e-mail is great for several reasons from my viewpoint as you are absolutely right on about the cost savings you provide the club. As far as "news", the situation of members is more important to me than the agenda, make up places, etc. as you point out. I would much rather read about how various members are doing, where they are now, and what they are doing than have that space taken up by the four-way test, motto, or other stuff since again you hit it on the head about taking too long to publish, transmit, etc. if staying with the e-mail approach. I agree with you 100% on getting minutes, thoughts, etc. to publish as "news" but if the committees/individuals do not provide it, then those news items (see #2) about people make even more sense. You are correct on who reads the Blastoff as people there attending probably average 20-30% I would guess as to ones that read it. People like me, anxious to learn news about old geezers we shared a lot of memories with, read it 100% of the time. We still take the Clear Lake Citizen newspaper to accomplish the same thing. I think you are right on as far as reducing some of the "stuff". My suggestion would be to use this forum to report on things you suggest (again provided they supply you minutes/results), report items from and about members, and if you feel so inclined, ask for items/articles/comments from no-longer members such as myself. Maybe having the opportunity to read something that definitely was not presented at a weekly meeting would stimulate readership. Keep up the good work Mr. Smith and thanks for allowing me to thank you for sending the Blastoff to me so I can keep up somewhat with people I care about, worked with, and shared with.

Thanks, Bill Predmore

I love the newsletters. You do a great job. Becky Reitz

Billy: Thanks you for all the work you do for the News Letter. I liked your article about the changes, and agree with all of them. I think our News Letter looks far too commercial because of all the advertising and very little news. And we have to blame ourselves (surely not you) for the lack of contributions. I receive several news letters from Rotary Clubs here and abroad. The best ones are those which bring a lot of inside info about club activities, members' personal news and activities of the District and other Clubs. We should, for instance, ask individual members, especially new one, to give a short presentations about themselves, their business and/or families and community engagements. Have you seen the weekly letter of the Bellaire Club? If not I can send it to you. It is a prime example how to keep members informed about their Club's activities, especially if you have been missing meetings, as I do because of my frequent travels. Thanks again and the best for the New Year. Yours in Rotary, Hilmar Zeissig

I truly appreciate receiving and reading The Blastoff - my hats off to you! I'm certainly aware of your challenges as Editor. You brought up some valid points - I wonder if you will get any responses? Sheila Self

Billy: The Blastoff as is fits my needs -- more NEWS is good to have especially membership/previous members personal news -- hospital, deaths etc. I agree news -- no reruns. I look for the meeting speakers and any notices -- you have them covered. So Bottom Line -- Thanks for doing a great job -- no complaints or corrections. Dick Meyer

In this issue, there is a profile of our newest member. I am going to encourage you all to share yours so that we may come to know each other better. There is not enough time at meetings to do so. I am requesting each of you to email me your bio or profile, e.g., where you grew up, your higher education, military & job experience, spouse, children, grandchildren, etc., accomplishments you are proud of, hobbies & interests, other organizations. Common ground may be discovered with other members. This is not a difficult thing. A few minutes with an email will suffice. This will bring us closer together as Rotarians and citizens of the community. It might even encourage some business relationships. After all, that was the beginning purpose of Rotary in 1905. In a small community, this happens almost automatically, but in one of our population and area, we may only see each other at meetings, the Shrimporee and a funeral. Help me out here, please. Since I don't like to ask others to do what I am not willing to do, mine is included in this issue. Billy

**Billy Smith** — Born in Kilgore, Texas, raised from age 5 in Liberty, Texas. Graduate of Liberty High School, Texas A & M University (BS Mechanical Engineering) & University of Houston Bates College of Law (Juris Doctorate). Married to Jayme, five children & five grandchildren, two dogs, one cat & a very talkative parrot. Resident of Friendswood since 1977. Began career as an engineer with Armco Steel of Pittsburgh, PA, then joined family business (father & uncle founded Kemah Hardware & Supply). Started private practice of law in Clear Lake City in 1970 with Jordan, Davis, Barlow & Lacy; later Barlow, Lacy, Smith & Pollard. Founded Smith, Pollard & Suarez, then Smith, Pollard & Lowes (yes, Bill Lowes). Finally, became solo practitioner in 1987, sharing offices with Bill Lowes, which continues to date. Of counsel to Barlow, Jones & Brust, LLP primarily for estate planning & probate matters. Board Certified in Estate Planning & Probate Law, Residential Real Estate Law & Commercial Real Estate Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Eagle Scout with two palms & Order of the Arrow. Member of Texas Bar Assn., Houston Bar Assn., Texas Aggie Bar Assn., & Texas Academy of Probate & Estate Counsel and College of the State Bar. Adjunct instructor of Property Law at University of Houston – Clear Lake Campus (15 years). Joined Rotary in 1974 as member of Space Center Rotary Club. Chair of various committees, director & officer including President (1990-1991). Founding Chair of SCRC Endowment Foundation (10 years); presently a Trustee. Paul Harris & Floyd Boze Fellow. Member of Ascension Episcopal Church, Houston, Lay Eucharistic Minister (30 + years) & Bethel Bible Study Teacher since 1987.



Hi Billy: You have done a very commendable (and thankless) job and turn out a really quality newsletter. It primarily shows me something about your personal commitment to Rotary. As for what interests me in the newsletter, I check it for the speakers we have scheduled, for events, photos of events and the little bit of information you have been able to round up. I hardly take notice of the ads, although people do pay for those so I suspect they should continue, and there is some convenience in having a reference on where to make up when you are in that situation. I also notice errors, like your photo caption of the Sound Waves indicates they are from Clear High School (like I mentioned before). I think you could do a couple of things that probably won't take much of your time. Get a copy of the history of Rotary, one of those jubilee like commemorative books with lots of photos, and extract snippets of Rotary history (including scanning their photos) that might get newer Rotarians to more deeply understand the real purpose of Rotary through knowing some of its past. Second: solicit opinions and comments and suggestions and let them be submitted to you with the option to request anonymity when you print them. For example, I have heard from a fair number of people for some time now that they do not like meeting at Bay Oaks. The room can't be darkened. We still get squeezed into a small space at times. They run out of food. Etc. I have also heard people say they would prefer to go back to the Hilton and just make the best deal we can with them. But these comments are never likely to reach the officers ears. So the club could be helped along by some sort of feed-back or sound-off section. I've heard people comment on how we are spending our service funds, on how we collect these funds, on what kind of speakers we have, on what kind of meals we have (example: if you come around 12:10, you pay \$15 but may have run out of some of the dishes already). People don't like griping or making waves, but there are some concerns within the club that might be addressed by encouraging people to send you their comments. You could print some in the newsletter, or just pass them along to the officers. But your newsletter might provide this means of communication. And some of it will be positive and reinforcing as well. I also think you might ask the Youth Exchange committee to solicit a profile with photos of their home, and/or personal remarks from our student exchangee's, with contact information on where they are staying so others may get involved. I like the idea of having a "club assembly" in your newsletter instead of as a meeting. Ask the president to request a written report from each director regarding his committees, and pass it along to you to publish. I would prefer to read this all during the year than hold one big meeting on it. You know how I am. I'm long on ideas. But you asked. . . . Good job! David Taylor And, Happy New Year!

Bill, I for one have truly appreciated the little information I found in the Blastoff. I agree with you that the Directors and officers should get behind the Blastoff to let the members know what the Board or their committees are doing or not doing, or what they would hope to do. The Board of Directors are elected to represent and serve the members. I believe that it is necessary that the members of the Club be made aware of all Club activities in order to re-energize this Club. The lack of information from the Board to the members makes this a dull Club. Election of officers and Board members is near and those running for positions should be made aware of their duties to the CLUB and to the MEMBERS. This might be a good time to spell it all out in the blastoff prior to the elections. In my opinion you have truly exemplified the meaning of a "good and active Rotarian". Vic Maria

Thanks for your comments and encouragement. I wasn't looking for accolades, but they are appreciated. Comments are always welcome. If you do not want your name associated with them when published, let me know. If, in my opinion, they are not suitable to share with everyone, I will exercise my editorial judgment and forward them to someone who should be the recipient. This is our newsletter, not mine. Let's make it a great one and one worthy of the time to publish and read it. Billy



At the January 7th meeting, SCRC members, Geoff Atwater & Stan Galanski, joined by John Nadolski, Program Director of Living Water International & District 5390 Chair of Water Projects, presented a most interesting and stirring update of the Bolivian water projects in which SCRC is an active participant. Described were four projects including a water well at Concepcion, north of Tarija, Aranjuez (150 meters deep); dam for the village of Aramasi in the Andes west of Cochabamba, which will provide year-round irrigation for crops; water management system in Aramasi (waiting on a RI matching grant) & another dam in Aramsi which will be 17 meter high and 32 meters wide (waiting on a RI matching grant). The next trip to the projects will be in June 2008. Anyone interested in participating should contact Stan or Geoff. This truly is an example of the adage: "Give a man a fish and he eats one day or teach him to fish and he eats for life." Water supplied by the government cost residents approximately \$50/month, while water supplied by these projects is free. Formally, residents were fortunate to harvest one crop per year, now they harvest two; some produce excess over their own needs and make money selling the surplus. Stan related that he took his two daughters on the trip. They each bought a purse woven by the local women that is designed like the newly popular messenger bag. When they returned and took their purses to high school all their friends wanted one. To date, about 30 additional bags have been purchased for \$10 each and sold to the classmates for \$20 each. What happens with the \$10 profit? The Galanski girls send it to the Bolivian girls school where a new Rotary sponsored water well will be drilled. Isn't this great? Dick & Suzi show a woven item that was presented to President Dick



by Geoff & Stan. This is very nice work. Maybe you would like a purse for your special girl(s). Let Geoff or Stan know. You can help your girl and the Bolivians who so desperately need the assistance. This is an earned assistance, not a handout.

**SCRC UPDATE**  
**The Board of Trustees met on Tuesday January 7th and the Treasurer reported that assets are currently valued at**  
**\$168,310.00**

**VALENTINE PANCAKE BREAKFAST**  
**When? Saturday, February 16th**  
**Where? Nassau Bay Baptist Church**  
**Cost? \$5 each or 5 for \$20**  
**Menu? Pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage patties, hash browns, biscuits, cream gravy, coffee, orange juice, fruit & more.**

**ROTARY TRIVIA**  
**What U. S. president was born in 1882 and was an honorary member of the Rotary Club of Albany, NY?**  
 See page 15 of the January Rotarian.

Why did you become a Rotarian? Who was your sponsor? What has most motivated you to continue in Rotary? How long have you been a Rotarian? In your opinion, what is the most important/impressive thing that Rotary does/has done both in the community and in the world? This is important information. Share your experience. This information can be used in recruiting new members. Have you ever attended a Rotary club meeting in another country? What was that like? Do you have a favorite Rotary experience? Come on! This just takes a brief email response to [billys@sbcglobal.net](mailto:billys@sbcglobal.net). Let's create some excitement. Do you know that **Vince Lipovsky** has been a member of SCRC for 43+ years? Sometimes we fondly kid Vince when he shares because he doesn't know when to quit, but he has some very interesting stories to share about his days as a Marine fighter pilot in the WWII South Pacific campaign, followed by flying the Banshee jet reconnaissance aircraft in Korea. He also met Charles Lindbergh. Ask him about the day several Migs jumped him over North Korea while he was taking pictures and his aircraft was not equipped with guns or any defensive armament except piloting skills. That very airplane is on display at the Naval Air Museum in Pensacola, FL. I saw it last year and brought Vince some pictures. Vince (among others in our club) is a real hero and a treasure. I have sat with him at many meetings and urged him to share his experiences. Ask him about his experience of having the tail shot off his Corsair and ditching in the Pacific, floating for hours in his small raft until rescued. **Floyd Boze** is another treasure. At almost 90 years young, Floyd has a record of nearly 60 years of perfect attendance. Is there any one of you who thinks he or she will be able to match that. Floyd has attended Rotary club meetings in many countries and has shared with me and others many great stories. If you are interested, ask me to share a Floyd Boze experience when he was a U. S. Air Force Colonel with the occupation forces in Germany following the end of WWII. You older members know that SCRC is a treasure trove of outstanding individuals that have and still live our motto of Service Above Self — people that most of us would never have known, but for Rotary. There are many stories of past and present members that should be shared with our more recent members. Rotary is the greatest services organization in the world. If Rotary ideals ruled the world, there would be no war.

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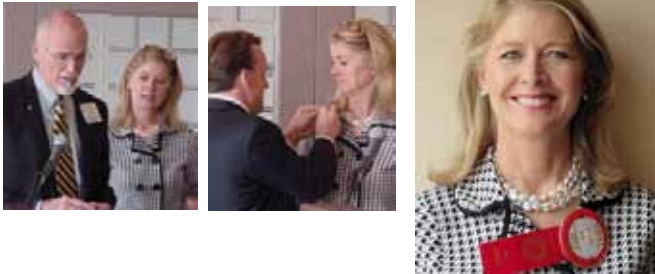


**The following have been nominated by the  
Nomination Committee:**

President Elect..... Gary Johnson  
 Secretary..... Marilyn Musial  
 Treasurer..... Jon McKinnie  
 Sgt @ Arms..... John Wilson  
 For Director: *(elect 3)*  
     Rae DeCastro           Bill Geissler  
     Richard Hergert       John Nugent  
     Denise Platt

Further nominations will be accepted from the floor on election day, but you must have obtained prior

**Newest Member: Sheryl Berg**



Sheryl Berg is a mom, business owner, community activist and volunteer. Hailing from the state of Minnesota and the University of Minnesota, she graduated from the great institution in Austin, meeting her husband, Stuart, in graduate school. Having a Master's Degree in Speech Pathology and Audiology she has worked as a Speech-Language Pathologist for 27 years, the last 5 ½ as owner of her own private practice, Bay Area Speech Language Learning Associates, on Bay Area Boulevard. It employs a staff of 17, including other Speech Therapists, an Occupational Therapist, Dyslexia Specialist and tutors.

Sheryl's children are Garret, Grant and Caroline, all college students until 2 weeks ago. Garret graduated December 15 from another great institution out in Lubbock, Texas with a degree in Public Relations. Grant, also at the same great institution, plays football for the Red Raiders and enjoyed a great bowl win on New Year's Day in Jacksonville. He will be graduating in May with a degree in Economics and Finance. Caroline, is studying photography at the University of Houston.

Sheryl serves in the leadership of the Harris County Republican Party, volunteers at her church and is a member of the Assistance League of the Bay Area and the Clear Lake Chamber of Commerce.

**Welcome Sheryl!**

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