



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 36 * April 28, 2008

Programs:

Today..... GSE Team France
May 05..... Excellence in Education Awards
May 12..... High School Aerospace Scholars
May 19..... Rotary Youth Exchange
May 26..... Memorial Day, No Meeting
June 02..... PE, Gary Johnson -- Shrimporee 2008
June 09..... Public Service Recognition Awards — EMTs
June 16. . Jay Wall / Crime in Houston and what to do about it.
June 23. Year end directors' reports
June 30..... Pres. Dick– Remarks & Awards
Installation of Officers & Directors fo 2008-2009

Say Happy Birthday to —

Dick Gregg III. April 4th
Ken Gurry. April 15th
Dennis Dillon..... April 22nd
Dick Meyer. April 30th

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.
- Springoree. May 8
- Texas Roadhouse Golf Tournament
- Monday, June 30 @ Bay Oaks CC
- RI Convention, Los Angeles. . . June 15-18 '08

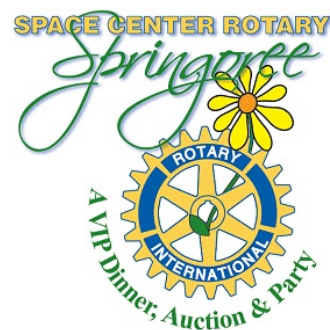
SCRC Fellowships 6:30 p.m.

May 06..... Chelsea Café 4106 NASA Pkwy
June 3..... Bay Oaks Country Club Pool Party,
Bring Grandchildren

Reservations required. Email Roger Donnelly
Ridonnelly@aol.com

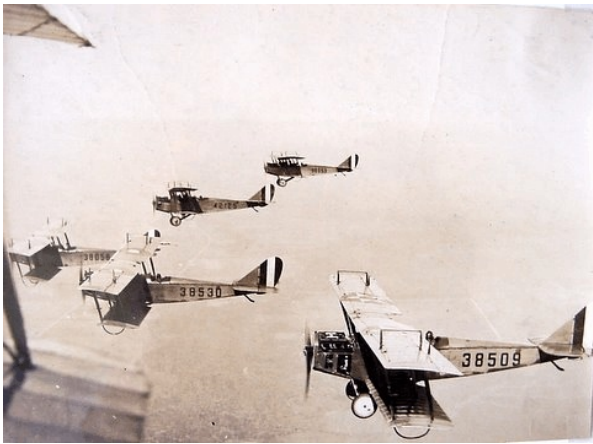


When: Thursday May 8th @ 6:30 p.m.
Where: Bailey's American Grill
2320 NASA Pkwy., Seabrook
What: VIP Event
Silent & Live Auctions
Dinner
Live Music by Jando
Connoisseur Club — Select wine
tasting from the wine cellar of
Mike & Rosie Hesse
Tickets: Event — \$100 per person
Connoisseur Club \$100 per ticket
Dress: Smart Casual





Pres. Dick pins our newest member, Shelley Smith, sponsored by Laura Godwin. Shelley is president of Trade Winds Pleasures, Inc. in League City which operates Maui Wowi Hawaiian Coffees & Smoothies. Welcome & get to know Shelley.



A flight over Ellington Base in 1918. This is a contribution by Bob Mitchell from his father's collection who was stationed there.

Dr. John Wilson introduced our speaker, David Thompson, attorney with Bracewell & Giuliani, who specializes in public law. Mr. Thompson's topic was Texas public schools and presented the following interesting statistics:



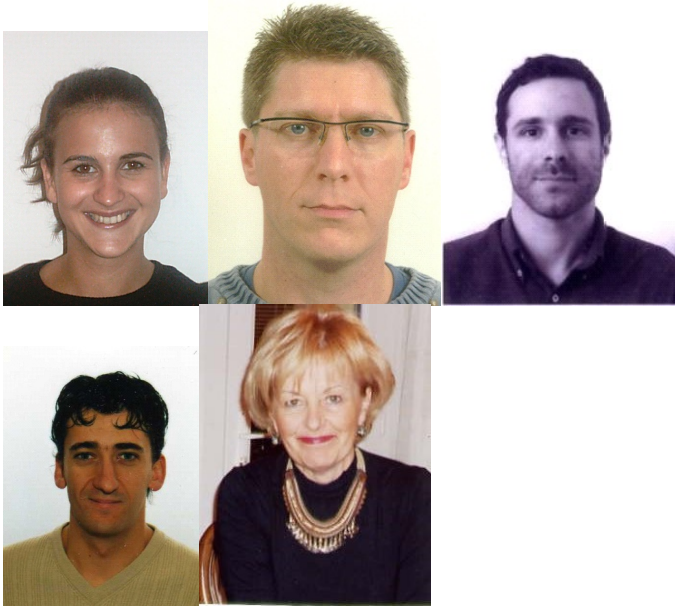
- There are >4.5 million students in the Texas public school system.
- 80 to 90 thousand new students enter the system each year.
- The system employs >615,000 including >310,000 teachers.
- State & local revenue for schools is \$37.8 billion in the current year.
- The ethnic mix includes:
 - 46.3% Hispanic
 - 35.7% Anglo
 - 14.4% African American
 - 03.6% Others

He also talked about the "hidden tax". As property values increase the state contribution to school districts decreases, which amounts to an indirect and concealed state property tax. The revenues go into the general fund and not to the schools. For the period 2008 – 2009 the estimated amount equals \$1.8 to 2.0 billion.

Laura Godwin encourages everyone to purchase Springoree Raffle Tickets. Travis Vermeer of Ben Bridge Jewelers, Baybrook Mall, has donated a ladies Omega Constellation wrist watch valued at \$3,095. Tickets may be purchased at \$10 each or 6 for \$50. This may not be the exact watch, but will serve to give you an idea until Travis sends me a picture.



French GSE Team (District 1700)



The pictures of the French GSE Team:
clockwise from upper left —
Cécile Ronfot (journalist)
Jean-Yves Arnould (systems engineer)
Lionel Lainard (humanist coaching/aerospace-electrical
technology)
Loic Bastard (electrical household repairman)
Marie José Caire (Team Leader)
not pictured: Julie Moliner (project coordinator)

The Aggie Muster —

You may not be an Aggie from Texas A & M, but you must appreciate the tradition. Here is a description of the 2008 Aggie Muster in Baghdad. It was sent to a friend of mine who served in the Air Cavalry flying helicopters in Viet Nam. It was sent to him by a comrade in arms. If the idea of me including this in our newsletter offends you, please stop here

and read no further, but if you can put aside any college rivalry and prejudice for a brief time, this should tell you a bit about why Aggies are so proud to be one and, yes, sometimes obnoxious about it. When you attend Texas A & M, they infuse you with maroon blood and teach you the long held traditions that make the school so special to those that got there. You are never the same. Muster is the most solemn and sacred of all Aggie traditions, but it is a time of joy and happy remembrance. It is celebrated in more than in places worldwide, with largest ceremony on the Texas A & M campus in College Station. It is a time for Aggies to pause and remember their college days, the victories and defeats won and lost upon the drill field and classroom. But, more especially, it is a time to remember our fallen comrades by a roll call during which Aggies in attendance announce present for those who are not. It is celebrated along with the celebration of Texas Independence from Mexico on April 21st.

Howdy Ags!

Last night was Muster night here in Baghdad, and let me tell you, it was an amazing experience. Muster ceremonies in Iraq are usually small affairs of just two or three people - when they happen at all. It's sometimes hard to find other Ags around, and when you do, getting an organized function together is next to impossible. Nonetheless, that's exactly what a group of determined Aggies accomplished. Last night, a group of about 20 Ags got together for what we think is probably the largest muster ceremony ever held in Iraq. I was hoping that there would be a Muster on my base here, but unfortunately no such luck. Nonetheless, after digging around, I found out about a group organizing a muster at the U.S. Embassy. The problem is, the Embassy is 10 miles away, on a road winding through the heart of Baghdad. So, after getting permission from my commanding officer to get some time off work, I put on my body armor and hopped onto the old armored Bus and headed to the green zone. The trip was a bit nerve-wracking, but in the end passed without incident (both ways). I spent the rest of the afternoon getting a tent to sleep in and doing a couple of errands around the IZ. I was a bit late for Muster, but most of us were. At 6 p.m., I was waiting by the pool - yes, the folks in the International Zone live right - when the alarms went off. They'd gone off an hour before and it was a false alarm, but you never take chances. So we ran to the bunker and quickly got under cover. Sure enough, a few seconds later, we heard a loud boom off in the distance. It was indeed some kind of indirect fire, but it apparently missed the IZ and landed in a civilian area. After they gave us the all clear, I grabbed dinner and went to the room where Muster was being held. Most of the other people had been delayed the same as me, and when everybody eventually showed up, there were about 20 of us. Most of the folks were Army, and there were a couple of Navy folks like me as well. There were three civilians, including two who worked at the Embassy. One of them wasn't an Aggie, but was an Aggie Mom attending her first Muster. Most of them had been in the Corps, but there were two of us - myself included - who had been non-regs [*editor note: a non-reg is an Aggie not in the corps*] who had joined up after 9/11, or in the case of another of us, after Somalia. We'd taken over a conference room and there was a laptop hooked up to a slide projector at the head of the room, displaying slides of life at A&M through the years: The Corps forming a line on Simpson Drill Field in the 1940s. The Band doing a Block T. Lawrence Sullivan Ross [*editor's note: Lawrence Sullivan Ross was president of Texas A & M College in the late 1800's. There is*

a statue of him on campus where the student body gathers at night in silence when a student dies. "Silver Taps" is played and there is a 21 gun salute]. A photo of Bonfire in 1955, with the old teepee shape. One of bonfire in a more modern era, like the ones I worked on. Corps march-in. Elephant Walk. The Ross Volunteers [*editor's note: an elite drill team of juniors and seniors*]. An old photo of Kyle Field. As we took our seats around the table, we silently watched these photos while eating dinner. A couple of Army guys started talking. One mentioned the Corps company he had been in. Another guy across the room gave a short Whoop! As the photo of the Corregidor Muster came up on the screen, one of the older guys mentioned that his father-in-law was in that picture. And here he was, in Baghdad. Finally, the ceremony got underway, and we all went around the room and did introductions. One Navy Captain (O-6 for you non-Navy folks), said that he remembered his time fondly. "I majored in the Dixie Chicken and Dudley's Draw." "And you probably graduated with honors," another officer threw in. An Army Major got up and gave the history of Muster, recalling the original celebration of the glorious Texian victory at the Battle of San Jacinto in 1836. How that evolved into the Muster we know today. How the 1942 Muster on the embattled Island of Corregidor had forever imbued the Muster tradition with a more sacred, higher meaning. It was the same story I'd heard before in musters in College Station, Uvalde, Oyster Creek, Dallas and in the Texas House of Representatives Chamber in Austin. Thinking about all those musters I had attended reminded me of how enduring and widespread this tradition has become. Finally, Col. George Brinnegar, '82, the organizer of the event, got up and gave the keynote address.

"I'd like to welcome you to the 2008 Aggie Muster in Baghdad," he said. "The fact that we're doing this means a lot to Aggies all over the world, and I know that they're with us now."

He talked a while about his time at A&M, and the lessons he learned from the old sages in the Ag department. And then he talked about the subject that was on all of our minds, but which had hardly been brought up: the war.

"This year, 2008, is no different than 1942," he said, recalling the men on Corregidor. "And Aggies again are the tip of the spear. We are at war, and it is a war with serious consequences for the world. Tonight, Aggies are gathered here, as well as in Afghanistan, Korea, Kosovo, the Horn of Africa, and of course, in College Station. "We are the Aggie Spirit, whether we are in College Station or in the Green Zone. It lives and dies with us. That is why we're here tonight, because there is something bigger and more important than us."

With that, we calmly stood and held our candles before us. The list of names we read was not just those of fallen Aggies from the past year, but we also read the names of all Aggies who have died in Iraq and Afghanistan in the last few years. There were dozens of them. As their names were called out, we all realized the cost, and how these brave men and women, our brothers in arms, had sacrificed everything for their America, for Texas and their way of life. The way of life that we were celebrating tonight. I called out "here" whenever they came to a 1st Lieutenant, since that's my rank. Ditto to the 2nd Lieutenants as well. As the names were read out, they were a cross section of Aggieland. Old and young. Male and female. Enlisted guys who probably had held dreams of returning to finish a degree, and officers who had put their bright futures as graduates on hold in order to serve their country. When all the names were read, and all the candles were lit, we stood at attention as Silver Taps was played on the laptop computer at the front of the room. In quiet, subdued notes, we sang "The Spirit of Aggieland." Muster, indeed, is so meaningful because we all know that someday Muster will be called for us as well. Maybe not soon, but someday. Whether we succeed in life, or whether we fail. It's all the same, and Muster will be called for us. If we serve, it will be called for us. If we don't, it will be called just the same. For the oldest, whose years at Aggieland are just a distant, but happy memory, it will be called. For the youngest, claimed perhaps in a tragic accident which cut their lives short, it will be called. In war and in peace. It will be called for us all, the greatest and the least. That's what muster is all about. Gig' em.

Leadership by Rotary: *Sharing Rotary success stories with other Rotarians*

Fellow Rotarians, Rotary may be the greatest organization of leaders in the world. With 1.2 million Rotarians in 170 countries, we have an incredible asset of talent, wisdom and know-how in one organization. It all started with Rotary's Founder Paul Harris, whose 140th birthday was celebrated on April 19, 2008. Paul Harris is well-known in Rotary, but what most Rotarians may not know is that Paul Harris made his main contributions to Rotary as a young man. He was only 37 years old when Rotary was founded. He was only 44 when his two year term as President of the International Association of Rotary Clubs ended in 1912 (later in 1922 renamed Rotary International). After 1912, Paul Harris had no formal position in Rotary. He was the Founder of Rotary and continued to influence and inspire Rotary for the rest of his life, until he passed away in 1947. It is my opinion that Paul Harris vision has created the spirit in Rotary as we know it today. Here are some examples of Paul Harris wisdom:

- ***A well ordered mind is a possession more valuable than unlimited riches.***
- ***It is just as easy to acquire the habit of speaking kindly as it is to acquire the habit of speaking unkindly.***
- ***Perhaps dreaming is not so bad if one dreams good dreams and make them come true.***
- ***Rotary brings out and develops the best there is in men.***
- ***The Rotary of today is different from the Rotary of yesterday and the Rotary of tomorrow cannot, must not, be the same as the Rotary of today. Rotary will continue to evolve.***

Rotary Global History Fellowship publishes a weekly newsletter called *What Paul Harris Said*, which many thousand Rotarians read every week. It provides inspirational quotes by Paul Harris every two weeks. You can sign up for this newsletter free of charge at www.whatpaulharrissaid.org. Rotary Global History Fellowship is probably the most successful fellowship in Rotary with approximately 1 million visits every year to their websites at www.rotaryhistoryfellowship.org, www.rghf.org and www.rotaryfirst100.org. Rotary Global History Fellowship has a lot of information about Paul Harris at the following links:

You can read about the life of Paul Harris at www.rotaryfirst100.org/presidents/1910harris/paulharris/index.htm. Believe me, it is a very interesting life.

Paul Harris was a prolific writer all his life. You can read many things that Paul Harris wrote at www.whatpaulharriswrote.org.

There is more information about Paul Harris at

www.rotaryfirst100.org/presidents/1910harris/ and

www.rotaryfirst100.org/presidents/1910harris/paulharris/gateway/index.htm

There is also a recording of a speech by Paul Harris, which he made during the Rotary Convention in Boston in June 1933. You can listen to it at

www.whatpaulharriswrote.org/library/1933.htm

When you listen to this speech, you will notice how optimistic Paul Harris' was, which is remarkable as his speech took place at a time when both Hitler and Stalin were in power and America went through its deepest depression in history. Despite this reality, Paul Harris held up a strong vision of tolerance, peace and friendship to be realized through Rotary. I believe that being able to present a strong vision, which inspires others to make it a reality, is what great leadership is all about. Hitler, Stalin and the Great Depression are all gone, but Rotary is still going strong.

Here are some examples of visionary statements by Paul Harris:

- * ***The spirit of tolerance which has made it possible for Rotary to form a worldwide fellowship of business and professional men will make all things possible.***
- * ***Rotary allows ordinary people to do extra ordinary things.***
- * ***War is always a ghastly blunder, even the winners loose.***

At the Rotary Convention in Chicago in 2005, I met Retired Professor Robina Quale-Leach from Albion, Michigan. She knew Paul Harris when she was a little girl at the age of 12 in 1943. Paul Harris and his wife Jean used to rent a summer house next to her parents. Paul Harris tried many times to convince Robinas father to join Rotary, without any success. Little did he know that he convinced me instead, said Robina. So in 1990, when her local Rotary Club accepted women, Robina was able to Rotary. During 1943, Robina asked Paul Harris what he thought about the ongoing World War Two. Paul Harris responded to her that he looked forward to the end of the war, so that Rotary

could be revived in Germany, Italy and Japan. Paul Harris also told her that he would like Rotarians around the world to make sure that such a war would never happen again. Later in November 1943, Rotary sponsored a conference in London with ministers and observers from twenty-one governments. This group began laying plans for what was to become UNESCO. During the foundation of the United Nations in 1945, forty-nine Rotarians helped to draft the United Nations Charter in San Francisco and many of the international delegates from around the world were Rotarians. At the beginning of the organization conference of the United Nations in San Francisco, the United States delegation invited Rotary International to appoint consultants. Twelve prominent Rotarians served in this capacity with resulting influence on the humane aspects of the Charter. Rotarians at San Francisco helped re-write the preamble (We the peoples rather than we the states). The U.S. government had called upon Rotary to become involved in the founding process during 1945. The Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. wrote:

"The invitation to Rotary International to participate in the United Nations Conference as consultant to the United States delegation was not merely a gesture of good will and respect toward a great organization. It was a simple recognition of the practical part Rotary's members has played and will continue to play in the development of understanding among nations. The representatives of Rotary were needed at San Francisco and, as you well know, they made a considerable contribution to the Charter itself, and particularly to the framing of provisions for the Economic and Social Council."

Upon founding the United Nations, Rotary became one of the original 42 Non Governmental Organizations that were invited to participate. Rotary still maintains this position. I believe that a strong positive vision is necessary in order to get great things accomplished. Paul Harris once wrote: In the battle between the cants and the cans in Rotary, the cants have never won a single permanent victory to my knowledge. The broad visions, the nobler purposes have always won.

Happy 140th Birthday to Paul Harris! His spirit lives on and I believe that it will continue to influence Rotarians for many years to come.

Yours in Rotary Service,

Matts Ingemanson

Chairman 2004-2006, Rotary Global History Fellowship

District Secretary 2005-2006, Rotary District 7230

District Chairman, Public Image Committee 2005-2006, Rotary District 7230

District Chairman 2002-2004, Group Study Exchange, Rotary District 7230

If each Rotarian contributes \$100 per year to the Rotary Foundation. Rotary would, with its 1,221,920 members around the world, collect \$122,192,000. One hundred dollars per year is only 27 cents per day. I have not yet met a Rotarian, who could not afford such an amount. These 27 cents per day would help Rotary make an even bigger difference in the world. You can read more about the Rotary Foundation at www.rotary.org/foundation.

You can conveniently make a tax deductible \$100 donation to the Rotary Foundation via the Internet at the website https://riweb.rotaryintl.org/donor_xml/contributionmenu.asp