



ROTARY CLUB OF PARADISE RIDGE NEWSLETTER

Serving the Ridge since 1946: WE ARE PEOPLE OF ACTION

Our Club Presidents: Kelli Gordon & Co-Pres. Sonny Ventimiglio

Web Page: paradiserotary.org

On Facebook: Rotary Club of Paradise

Our JUNE 11, 2026 Weekly Club Meeting

Volume 3, Issue 28

Past President and Past District Governor Pam Gray conducted this meeting.

Guests in Attendance: Chocolate Fest Originator Bill Hartley; Carol Peterson, Director, Chocolate Fest Board of Directors; Crystal Peck, Chocolate Fest Princess, Chocolate Fest Board of Directors; Margaret Kelly, escorted by Kevin K; and our Speaker, Chico Noon Club Rotarian and Executive Director, Chocolate Fest. Special Guests: Taylor Etchison (9) and Finley Etchison (7), Guests of Erika E., Principal of Achieve Charter.

HIGHLIGHTS:

PDG Pam began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a couple of brief requests. First, she requested that during Table Introductions, each table should pause to pose for a picture. It's a touch of recognition, noting Meeting attendance. Next, she asked PP Brian G. to come up with a few Father's Day jokes. He did, to wit:



Why did the Dad bring a ladder to the bar on Father's Day? *Because he heard the drinks were on the house.*



Where do daddy deer go for coffee? *Star Bucks.*



How should you celebrate Father's Day Brunch? *With toast!*

PDG Pam reminded everyone that the June BOD Meeting would be held the following morning at Cozy Diner, 7:30 AM and everyone is welcome. Breakfast is à la carte but the fellowship is free.

She continued by announcing the "4 PAINTERS, A PRINTMAKER, AND A POTTER" Exhibit at the Paradise Art Center will be happening beginning on Saturday. This is relevant because our Foundation Chair, Membership Chair, and PE Nominee, Mickey R., is one of the 4 Painters! We'll be making it the June Social and a Meeting of Record. So on Thursday, June 18 there will be NO Social and NO Lunch Meeting.

PDG Pam described a recent domestic ordeal during replacement of the great room television. After shopping to acquire the new family member, she told Brian, "You're going to need some help with installation." Referring to a list of locals who might be able to help, Justin M. was contacted and he came to the rescue. So our recently past AG deserves tons of Fake Bonus Points for being there when the need arose. Thanks Justin!

Major Recognition Time

PDG Pam received vital information regarding Both of our Co-Presidents. Kelli's daughter was crowned Chocolate Fest Queen over a month ago. She has not presented the opportunity to be fined for reporting this openly at a Club Meeting, an act punishable with Bells. Being crowned Chocolate Fest Queen is highly prestigious and deserves to be recognized.

In the case of Co-President Sonny V., notable public information is that his daughter completed 7 classes earning 5 "A+" grades and 2 merely "A" grades. Hmm...we need to know what happened and what Sonny hasn't said. This is an oversight(?) or intentional omission that deserves explanation and definitely a yet to be determined number of Bells.

Continuing into the Confession Phase, PDG Pam opened the floor for honorable Rotarians to confess. Pam placed a collection of Bells on a table along with an assortment of Rotary Pins. First was Tom B., who stated he has a Granddaughter who graduated from the Butte College Cosmetology Program last week.

We also had Guest Confessions! Taylor Etchison helped paint and build her new bed for her new bedroom. And her sister, Finley Etchison also helped paint and build her new bed for her room. Now they have separate bedrooms, which as you can imagine, has improved the domestic tranquility. Of course they each rang a Bell and claimed a Rotary Pin of their choosing.

Margaret K. confessed in place of Kevin K. because he is shy. She reported that during the previous weekend they hosted a Family Reunion of 30 people from Kevin's side of the family. Margaret reported that 2 Granddaughters graduated from 8th Grade, 1 Grandson completed 7th Grade on the Honor Role, and one of those Granddaughter finishing 8th Grade was named Outstanding Artist of her class.

Ron J. revealed that one of his Granddaughters graduated from High School in Elko, NV and has already been accepted by Montana State University to participate in the Welding Program. Also, last weekend Ron traveled to Oregon and attended a dinner theater with a daughter from Mt. Shasta.

Lastly, Brian G. is soliciting funds for his Granddaughter's (2) Cars Fund. Really. Both of these girls are 15 going on 16 and are dreaming about driving. Anybody with spare change should contact Brian.

PDG Pam spontaneously asked, "Next Thursday at Lunch Time?" *She did receive a "No Meeting" response.* She continued with reminders about upcoming events:

- * Music on the Green at Magalia Community Center (Flyer Attached)
- * Grand Re-Opening of Paradise Elementary School (Flyer Attached)
- * No *Pizza & Beer* Club Meeting on July 2nd - too close to July 4th
- * Paradise Parade of Flags on July 4th (Flyer Below)
- * Next Thursday At Lunch Time - No Lunch, No Meeting!

PDG Pam noted that some equipment is missing from Rotary Storage, the Container at the Elks Lodge. Banners, Corn Hole backstop nets, etc. She says, "They might be in your garage, so please check."

Jim J. stood to point out the similarities between the badge he was wearing and the badge PDG Pam was wearing. Comments on the order of vintage design and age concluded with PDG Pam saying, "Yes, so we're the same age." And Jim's response was, "Thank you, thank you!" Continuing, Jim inquired as to whether Pam was the 2nd or 3rd woman to join the Club. Pam explained that before she joined the Club, RI had decided to allow women to join and that she and Vicky Ashe (wife of the Terry Ashe), joined on the same day. They were number 3 and 4. Also, Erika E.'s father was PDG Pam's sponsor.

PDG Pam reminded us of the Club Meeting schedule for the coming Rotary Year. For each month: Weeks 2, 3, & 4, there will be regular Lunch Meetings. Week 3 WILL NOT be a Social Meeting, rather, it will be a regular Lunch Meeting with a Rotary Focused Program. Week 1 will continue to be an Evening Meeting at Mt. Mikes's. Pam concluded by asking, "What are we doing at 1:00 PM on the 5th Thursday in July?" Answer: Going to the Grand Re-Opening of Paradise Elementary School!

Paradise Parade of Flags Good Recognitions from the Team Captain (Me)

It was a short time between Memorial Day and Flag Day. Even so, we had outstanding participation during both the morning and afternoon endeavors. I'm grateful for the attendance by: Lacey W., Steve C., Ron J., Tom B., and Travis B. in the AM; Lacey W., Ron J., Maureen W., Phoebe H., Tom B., Mickey R., and Travis B. in the PM. Also of note, Lacey brought along husband Eric, while Maureen, Mickey, and Travis brought along their sons. With all of this help, both sessions were completed quickly and smoothly. I really do appreciate all the help.

THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM:

Our Program was presented by Debbie LaPlant-Moseley on the subject of the Paradise Chocolate Fest. Casey T. provided an introduction. Debbie's history includes President of Chico Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, President of the Downtown Chico Business Association, was Board Member of the Boy and Girls Club, and being a key visionary in the establishment of the Downtown Chico Thursday Night Farmers Market. In addition she has been a dedicated Rotarian for many years, belonging to the Rotary Club of Chico Noon.

Debbie began by expressed her gratitude to the Paradise community for their participation in the Chocolate Fest over the years since it's inception. The Chocolate Fest begin in 2006 with an inspiration of Bill and Pam Hartley, owners of Joy Lynn's Chocolates, here in Paradise. Bill presented the idea at a meeting of the Boys and Girls Club Board during which Debbie was present. Carol Peterson was also a Board Member in attendance. Bill's intent was to create a fun, family celebration to bring people together to support local youth. Of course no one at that time imagined what a legacy event they were creating.

Part of the vision was to raise money to support local youth programs run by local civic organizations. A Chocolate Queen contest was imagined whereby contestants would solicit votes with \$1.00 per vote donations. One of the earliest contestants was Alice Smith, a long time prominent civic leader. She was 90 years old at the time. Her try for the crown was unsuccessful. Undeterred, Alice remarked, "If I live to be 100, I'll run again." At the age of 100 she did run again, and won! She raised \$20,000 that year.

Debbie emphasized that the Chocolate Fest is all about people. The volunteers are people, the attendees are people, local and Paradise visitors. The beneficiaries, the youth, are people. Many of the volunteers are youth who learn leadership, responsibility, service, and discipline while they participate. There were over 270 volunteers, young and older, that made the 2026 Chocolate Fest a success. The second largest group of volunteers from an organization was from the Paradise Rotary Interact Club.

Debbie presented an excellent collection of slides which included credit to volunteers, Chocolate Fest history and evolution, beneficiary focus, and more. The Chocolate Fest, Inc. website offers details that are way to extensive to list here. There were an estimated 4,000 visitors to the 2026 Chocolate Fest who boosted the Paradise economy, supported the vendors who came from as far away as Ft. Bragg and Oregon. A couple of those distant vendors are already signed up for next year!

Debbie was generous in her recognition of support. She thanked Tom B. for employing his stage management skills on the Fest's two stages. She delivered pointed thank you's at Rotary Club of Paradise for its long time support with direct donations and sponsoring multiple Queen and King Candidates over the years.

Two important aspects of the Chocolate Fest should be remembered. Every dollar donated directly or as votes for Chocolate Queen & King goes toward locally directed programs that support Youth On The Ridge. The founding charter statement of the Chocolate Fest was "To create a signature community event that would celebrate Paradise while supporting local youth."

Rotarians the World over subscribe to
THE ROTARY FOUR-WAY TEST
of all we think, say, and do.

1. Is it the TRUTH? 2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOOD WILL & BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

PROGRAM SPEAKERS ON THE DATES LISTED BELOW:

6/25/26 - Ev Duran - Introducing The Redesigned Club Web Site

7/16/26 - Pres. Mellissa C. Reports on the Rotary International Convention

7/23/26 - 4H Club, Bill Taylor and 2 Members Describe Paradise 4H And How Rotary Can Help

Because we have a lot going on in the next month and a half, I've included a summary of Club Meetings and Events graciously provided by Executive Secretary Pam. Read carefully!

Thursday, June 18 - NO Lunch Meeting.

Thursday, June 25 - Lunch Meeting

Saturday, June 27 - Rebuild Paradise Sunset Party. 6 - 8 p.m. at Paradise Community Park.

Contact Ryan to help (970) 278-7360 (Wear your Rotary shirt.)

Thursday, July 2 - Holiday Weekend Blackout, No Lunch Meeting.

Saturday, July 4 - Parade of Flags Event - Contact Donn to help with flags (530) 520-7974
(Wear your Rotary shirt.)

Thursday, July 9 - Demotion Dinner. 5:30 p.m. at PRPD. Contact Pam to sign up.

Thursday, July 16 - Lunch Meeting. Come hear Melissa's Rotary International Convention Report and celebrate a New Rotary year.

Thursday, July 23 - Lunch Meeting

Thursday, July 30 - 5th Thursday, normally dark. Instead, come to the Grand Re-Opening of *Paradise Elementary School*, 1 p.m. (Wear your Rotary Shirt)

THE PICTURE PAGE





The Sweetest Impact of All

★ 21 YEARS OF INVESTING IN LOCAL YOUTH ★



EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP

Since 2006, the Paradise Chocolate Fest has distributed more than \$440,000 to youth-serving organizations throughout the Paradise Ridge.

Those funds have helped provide scholarships, recreation programs, sports opportunities, educational enrichment, leadership development, library programs, scouting activities, and countless experiences that help local youth learn, grow, and succeed.



RECREATION & ADVENTURE

The true success of the Festival is not measured in pounds of chocolate—but in lives touched and futures strengthened.



EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT



YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES



Thank You for Sharing Our Vision of **Supporting Youth** on the Paradise Ridge.

21 YEARS ♥ \$440,000+ INVESTED ♥ THOUSANDS OF YOUTH SERVED ♥ COUNTLESS LIVES CHANGED

