

North Notes

Spokane-North Rotary Club

January 27, 2024

- **Jan. 27:** Noon luncheon at the Bark. Speaker: TBA.
- **Feb. 3:** Noon luncheon at the Bark. Speaker: Mark Stark, Glover Middle School principal.
- **Feb. 10:** Noon luncheon at the Bark. Speaker: Paulette Burgess, public defender.

Announcements:

- **Bill Simer** said the board approved sending \$500 to help others in the areas damaged by the massive Los Angeles fires. One source is the Altadena Rotary Club. Bill said the board asks that other club members consider contributions to match or surpass the initial amount. Lenore Romney will send links to club members.
- **Laura Zahn** and **Steve Boharski** said about 45 people were served Jan. 24 for the dinner at the Ronald McDonald House. Thanks to all who participated, especially the McKorkles.

Happy Bucks:

- **Art Rudd** was \$5 happy to share a lottery prize.
- **Amy Jo Carlson** was happy for “five pounds of sunshine” during an MLK ski weekend at Red Mountain in Canada.
- **Teresa Flegel** was happy for a recent “love the come sit with me” experience.
- **Lenore Romney** was \$5 happy for the Ronald McDonald tour and dinner. **Jerry Logan** added a dollar to that.



A Paul Harris award and challenge

John Mailliard, the club's Rotary International Foundation board member, and a 30-year-plus Rotarian, has amassed a large cache of points for Paul Harris Fellowship awards and wanted to share that wealth.

Thus, at the Jan. 27 club luncheon, John added some of his "points" to confer Paul Harris status to board members Michelle Fossum and Steve Bergman.



John said at his previous Rotary club in California all members were Paul Harris Fellows and he suggests that we consider doing that here. Fellowship status is given to members and others who contribute \$1,000 to the Rotary International fund in Harris' name.



Welcome, Alexia!

At the Jan. 27 luncheon, club President Steve Bergman did the honors to induct our newest member – Alexia Johnston.+

Steve didn't have to travel very far to recruit our new member – Steve and Alexia both are attorneys who work at the Cooney Law firm.

"Alex" is a Gonzaga Law University grad, following her bachelor's degree from the University of Idaho.

Alex focuses on family and employment law.

A local podcast for investigative reporting

While newspaper circulation in print editions has declined, some on-line journalism outlets have grown to continue investigative reporting.

Trying to fill the need locally and in the Inland Northwest is "Range," a podcast founded in 2020 by Luke Baumgarten.

Luke shared his thoughts with the club at the Jan. 27 luncheon.

A Chattaroy native and Gonzaga grad, Luke worked briefly in Sandpoint and then for eight years at the Inlander as a writer and editor.

Thinking that "Spokane was suffering downtown in 2007-08," he went to Seattle for a year, calling that effort "unfortunate." He said that "journalism didn't pay," Luke tried advertising for 10 years, but still felt a need for investigative reporting in the area.



He cites the work of the late Bill Morlin and Jess Walter and the S-R's work of the Ruby Ridge coverage in North Idaho as investigating examples.

Enter the new age of online reporting like the Range, which now lists a staff of four.

Luke says The Range is "a media organization for people who love the Inland Northwest and want to make it better."

On his website, he describes the Range as a worker-cooperative that empowers working people with civic education and people-centered investigative reporting." It is owned by the Spokane Workers Cooperative.

The Range is listed on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Reddit.

It uses Signal, a free open-source messaging app; Protomail, "an encrypted e-mail for whistleblowers and tipsters;" and Mailbox, to store physical documents at 304 E. Pacific.

At the luncheon, Luke did not discuss specific investigative reports. He said the work focuses on the Spokane area but extends "from central Washington to the Idaho Panhandle and even Western Montana."

"We want to hold government responsible and give the tools it takes for people to be fair. We try to be objective and fair," he said, adding the language is consonant with Rotary's Four-Way Test.



Luke added: "We are not trying to replace the Inlander or the Spokesman-Review. We provide a vital and missing lens to the great reporting happening in local newsrooms."

Still to be determined is how big a "Range" there is here.

Bulletin editors: Chuck Rehberg and Scott McKorkle. Photos by Janine McKorkle and Melinda Keberle.

A final thought...

About 150 attended the celebration of life for longtime Spokane-North Rotarian Bert "Bub" Belles, Jan. 25, at The Hangar Events Center.

Each was given a note of remembrance with one stanza of this poem by David Romano:

*When tomorrow starts without me, please try to understand,
That an angel came and called my name and took me by the hand.
The angel said my place was ready in Heaven far above
And that I'd have to leave behind all those I really love.
But when I walked through Heaven's Gate I'd feel so much at home,
For God looked down, smiled at me and told me "Welcome Home."
So when tomorrow starts without me, don't think we're far apart,
For every time you think of me I'm right there in your heart.*