



## THE SUNRISE CIRCUIT

Newsletter of the  
Stuart Sunrise Rotary Club, Florida



Stuart-Sunrise Rotary Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_ May14, 2015

[www.stuart-sunriserotary.org](http://www.stuart-sunriserotary.org)

The meeting was called to order by President Scott Simmons at 7:30 with 24 present.

Gary Damon led us in the Pledge of Allegiance and Vic Simonsen led us in the prayer.

Tom Whittington gave an update on the Be A Tourist in Stuart Raffle. Members of his publicity committee, Kathy Lockhart and Harry Lerch, met on Monday with P.R. professional, Jackie Holfelder of The Write Solution. A press release on the big Kickoff Gala at Stuart Toyota has been completed and is being distributed to media outlets by Jackie. The press release includes photos. Kathy has posted Belkiss Simmons' Gala photos on the club web site. Log on at the above URL to check them out.

Tom also urged all members to get a photo of any individual or business donating a prize. The photos can be utilized now and in the future to give positive publicity for the raffle as well as for the donating business. Donors may also be invited to speak to our club about their services or products. Many of our past speakers have been donors of Be A Tourist Raffle Prizes!.

Jane reported on our two Rota Kids clubs, which will be holding their final meetings of the school year during the coming week. Any Rotarians able to attend should call Jane at 334-3650 or at [hapmills@earthlink.net](mailto:hapmills@earthlink.net) for more details.

Tom again filled in for John as Sergeant-at-Arms, introducing guests and collecting happy bucks. Guests included John Bracken of New York state, Many happy bucks were collected by Jane, one honoring Tom for the many hats he is wearing (he was also filling it for Butch and Keith as treasurer at check-in), for Bruce Layden on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his high school graduation on long island, by Harry Pelton, who is off to Maine for five months of snow shoveling, and Chris Shoaf, off to discover new Rotary Clubs in Italy.

Our program today was led by Steve Klaassen, Owner-Operator of Colorado Palm and Jewelry, who was introduced by Sue Whittington. Steve is the son of American missionaries. He was born in Columbia, in South America, and only came to the US (to learn to drive) when he was 16. Growing up in Columbia made hi bi-lingual, equally fluent in English and Spanish. He finished school and college in Kansas, graduating with a degree in business. He applied for a job at Pizza Hut, and soon became an assistant manager and then a manager. He became involved in opening new restaurants for PEPSICO (now Yum Brands) and ultimately moved to Florida where he spent five years utilizing his bi-lingual and business skills opening Pizza Huts throughout South America. Steve gave us a new view of the pawn shop, particularly his own.

He met an investor who owned 50 pawn shops in Florida, and became interested in the business. His first experience was when he wandered into The Dome, a yellow dome pawn shop. The owner was a somewhat shady character with his feet on the desk chewing on a cigar. Steve quickly decided that he didn't want to be involved in anything remotely similar. When Colorado Pawn was the subject of a holdup several years ago, he offered to buy the store from the then owner, and Steve soon became the new owner, emphasizing new approaches to security, compliance and atmosphere.

He filled us in on many aspects of the business. Traditionally, pawn shops have been loan stores, filling in the need for small, short term, loans which banks don't care about. They play an important role in the community. He said that about 30-40% of his deals are purchases of goods (particularly jewelry, tools, musical instruments and other small valuables) and the balance is pawning, or holding them as collateral. The business is strictly governed by statute. Any customer selling or pawning any item must provide photo I.D. All transactions are reported to police and sheriff's offices on the web. Any items that may be reported as stolen are dealt with quickly by authorities, so that only 1% or 2% of the items have been stolen. Any item he purchases must be held for 30 days before being offered for sale, pawned items must be held for at least 60 days. His records indicate that 75% of pawned items are redeemed by the borrower. Carrying costs for pawned items are 20% per month. Borrowers receive a telephone call before pawned items are offered for sale. He and his staff have enhanced security, "buzzing in" customers after preliminary review. He and his store do not deal in fire arms.

Colorado Pawn & Jewelry is on Kanner Highway near Monterey. His phone is 283-3660, and his email address is [coloradojewelry@live.com](mailto:coloradojewelry@live.com) He welcomed any of us to stop by and pay him a visit.

The District Conference will be held at the PGA Resort in Jupiter June 19-21. Reservation deadlines are approaching. Information is available on the district web site: [www.rotary6930.org](http://www.rotary6930.org) PGA's phone number is 1-888-758-0945, #1. The event code is 14277.

50-50 Raffle tickets were sold by Jack Langhorne (last week's winner, Rusty, was late), and Paul Salazar won \$21 with the winning ticket; Harry Pelton won special prizes from Steve Klaassen.

Elmira advises that next week's program will be led by Nerissa Okiye, Martin County Tourism and Marketing Manager, who will be introduced by Sue..

Your editor today is Harry Lerch with assistance from Gene. Editor Dave Shoaf is still out of town hob-knobbing with his fellow Wizards in D.C. and will be welcomed with open arms upon his return next week.

Comments welcome [hwlerch@lerchearly.com](mailto:hwlerch@lerchearly.com)