

**Porta-Rota-Call**

**by Molly Chase**

**October 2, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 p.m. by President Randy Orwig

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Four Way Test was recited.

Our invocation was by Paul Carlson.

There were no guests for our greeter Mark Bieling to introduce.

Chad Schuring introduced our speaker, Tom Thimes. He is a WMU graduate and is currently at their College of Aviation. He truly enjoys student outreach. He began in the fall of 2009. He is making the college a destination program for students all over the country.



He is very passionate about his career. The program is a hidden gem in Kalamazoo. The program began in 1939. WMU is the 9<sup>th</sup> oldest collegiate aviation program in the United States. They are in their 85<sup>th</sup> year of their aviation education program. They are recognized as one of the top aviation programs in the country. There are currently nearly 1100 aviation students when counting double majors. There is a huge demand for pilots right now. About 25% of the students are mechanics to maintain the aircrafts. He compared aviation to The Wizard of Oz and what happens behind the curtain that wok behind the scenes to make sure that planes take off smoothly. Without those people, planes would be grounded. Over the last 15 years, they have grown enrollment by 80%!

The College of Aviation holds 5 National Championships. Their women's group holds two collegiate championships. Their alumni are from all over the world. There is a lot of diversity in careers from their program.

3 years ago, they opened their new facility in Battle Creek. The reason they are there is due to the Battle Creek International Airport. They have turned that airport into one of the busiest in the state. Their use of that airport rivals Detroit Metro and Chicago's O'Hare Airport. They now house 11 classrooms.

They offer accelerated programs for students as well. They work with Delta and United Airlines as well as AAR Corp. They have great relationships with other companies in the aviation industry. 58% of students are Michigan residents. 42% are out-of-state or international. Their aircrafts are impressive and include 28 Cirrus Aircraft, 2 Cessna 150s (Sky Broncos). Aviation brings billions of dollars to the State of Michigan.

Tuition for this program is higher than traditional college programs in part due to 5 flight labs. Tuition is \$16,000/year. \$30,000/year with room and board included. Flight students are also going to spend about \$80,000 to get all of their training completed. In total, they will invest about \$200,000 in their education. Students interested in becoming air traffic controllers are encouraged to enroll in the air traffic control school through the FAA. A senior captain working for Delta or United can make up to \$350,000-\$500,000/year.

They launched a UAV certificate program this year that involves drones. They tell their students that automation will most likely affect air traffic in the future. As far as improvements for people that fly, supersonic flights will be happening in the future. If companies can get their CEO to a meeting in China and back in the same day, that will make air travel even more valuable.

Announcements:

- District Foundation raffle tickets are \$25 each. Check should be payable to Rotary District 6360 Foundation. Give cash or checks to Roy or Jose by October 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Miller Auditorium fundraiser is ongoing. We receive \$10/ticket per ticket sold. Information was on the tables.
- There is a box at the front table for Helen Driver. She lost her home in the tornado and the rebuild has been challenging. Please donate if you would like to participate in purchasing her a gift card and flowers.
- October 17- Blood Drive sign up
- October 24- World Polio Day- Rotarians are encouraged to attend City Council meeting Tues October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00 & lighting up Senior center in purple lighting.
- October 30- Lunch & Learn- invite guests. The end of January and the end of April will the next time these events take place.
- Bell Ringing and PCC Holiday Volunteer sign ups were passed around.

No birthdays or anniversaries this week.

Happy bucks and fines collected by Sergeant at Arms Pete Marsiglia from Matt Semelbauer, Randy Orwig, Jen Maynard, Mary Hall, Art Roberts, Steve Rodia, Shirley Johnson, Jose Santamaria and Chris Buckley.

50/50 drawing: Bo Snyder won \$44.

Ace of spades drawing: Bill Crown, Bonnie Granado, Mary Lou Wright, Patricia Randall, John Crandall, Travis Grimwood, Pat McGinnis, Randy Orwig, Tom Thimes, Nikki Miller, Karen Foster, Dan Bunker, Jose

Santamaria, Jim Martin, Jen Maynard, Mark Bieling, Ginny Dell, Chris Buckley, Bo Snyder, and Erin Raschke did not find the ace. Congrats to Art Roberts on winning!

Next program on October 9<sup>th</sup> will be a Casa Amparo update by Bonnie Granado. This is a girl's orphanage in Mexico that we continue to support as one of our International Areas of Focus.

Meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm by President Randy Orwig.