

McAROTA

2005 ISSUE - 2

Rotary Club of McAlester, Oklahoma

Club Number 2484

(Organized October 14, 1914 - Chartered in 1915 as Club Number 164)

Weekly Meetings Tuesday at noon

The Meeting Place 104 East Choctaw, McAlester, Oklahoma, USA

Survey Is About AAP Environmental Restoration Work

Two officials of EA Engineering, Science and Technology took a survey of club members, June 21, about environmental work at the McAlester Ammunition Plant.

Called an AAP "Community Relations Plan Update," the survey was presented by David P. Mercadante, an engineer from Sparks, Maryland. With him was Alex Johnson, a "project manager" with EA Engineering, from Lewisville, Tex. Johnson said he was being transferred to Seattle.

The survey questions started with asking how long "have you lived in this community?" That was followed up by asking, "Does the community benefit from the proximity to the installation? (AAP,) and "How would you characterize the relationship between the community and the installation?"

Next, the survey asked "how familiar" club members were with the installation "and what it does." And it asked, "Do you have any concerns about the installation? If so, what are they?"

The questionnaire then asked how "sensitive" the local area is to "environmental issues," (on a scale of 1 to 5.)

Then the survey asked "how or where" each member received most of his or her information about the AAP environmental program.

"What organizations or individuals do you consider to be the most credible when it comes to the environmental restoration program?" the form asked. "Least credible?"

Question 10 asked, "Do you have confidence in the Army's ability to implement environmental cleanup at the installation?" And a follow-up question asked, "If no, how can the Army's credibility be improved?"

Subsequent queries asked what people know about the history of community involvement in the restoration and what would be the best way of providing information on the plant's environmental work. "(Public meetings, letters, fact sheets, workshops, open houses, service organizations, speakers? How frequently?"

Question 14 said the AAP previously had "canvassed the community regarding the formation of a Restoration Advisory Board to review environmental issues and advise on clean up activities" The survey asked, "Would you like

to be considered for membership?" and "Who would you recommend?"

It then asked, "Are you aware of the information repository available for public use?" And what should be in them and "are these locations convenient for you?"

The final question was "Do you have any questions" about the AAP Environmental Restoration Program," and if you have any in the future, "how would you like the installation to respond to them?"



Gorman Is Installed As Rotary President

McAlester Rotary Club installed Richard Gorman as its 94th president, and installed other new officers and directors at its June 20 meeting.

Past President Bruce Hall installed Gorman, as well as Brett Smith as President-Elect; Ann Owens as Vice-President; and Jim Henley as Secretary-Treasurer.

Installed as directors were Steve Brock, Doug Helt, Ashley Lerblance, Clem Santine and Jim Elliott.

Retiring president Ronnie May reviewed the club activities for the past year and thanked those who worked on them. He mentioned Exchange Students, Meals on Wheels, Bell Ringing at Christmas, the Italian Festival, the Flag Project and the Dictionary Project for third graders. He also thanked Jim Henley and Gary Boyd for the help for the club. May will also be on the board.

President Richard presented a Past President's Plaque to Ron and thanked Bruce Hall for "an excellent job."

Richard told of attending the Rotary District training for new club presidents. He said there are over 2,000,000 Rotary members in over 32,000 clubs in 166 countries. The theme for this year is "Service Above Self."

Richard said the McAlester Club has a "long and rich tradition." He invited "everybody's input"

for new project ideas. He suggested a social gathering and said several members thought we should continue "Fireside Meeting." He also mentioned the possibility of a committee

to contact members, and said a number want to see “humor and fun back in our meetings.”

He quoted a pastor of the Boston Avenue Methodist Church, who spoke at the PET meeting. “Don’t think less of yourself,” he said. “But think of yourself less.”

The new president said we should think of how “we can serve our community and our fellow man.”

DAC Official Talks About City’s Future

The recent BRAC closures of military facilities should mean 3,119 jobs in Oklahoma, if the list remains as it is, according to Doug White, an instructor with the Defense Ammunition Center, (DAC) at the McAlester Ammunition Plant.

White said he was not speaking as a DAC official in his talk to the club July 5, which centered on recommendations to solidify the economic base of the McAlester area.

One of the BRAC changes will change the Army Reserve Center on South Street, to an “Armed Forces Center.” That usually means the addition of the Marines and Navy to the Army Center, White said.

McAlester also should gain from BRAC actions at ammunition depots in Texas.

The Defense Ammo Center was moved here in the late 1990s from Savanna, Ill. Its members train personnel and set safety regulations for the handling of all military ammunition at all U.S. military facilities.

There are two views about the future of McAlester, White said. One is that it will never change. The other is that it already is changing rapidly.

This area certainly has the “opportunity,” White said. Its economic development is a “signal” to other industries, he said. The McAlester area has the terrain and geography. It is “anything but dry and flat.”

White said he noticed the natural beauty when he came into the city from the north, during sunset one evening. In addition, people who are interested in this area will notice “how friendly the people are,” White told the club

members.

“My family and I have been made welcome” in businesses, churches, and civic clubs, he added.

The DAC official said in his personal opinion, he would recommend more street repairs, more “urban renewal” in downtown McAlester, “more green space,” making Choctaw Street a “focal point” of more civic activities, a recycling program, more shopping hours to encourage more shopping at home, and a local arts council. He commended merchants’ efforts to encourage shopping at home.

White also recommended more non-smoking regulations. The Department of Defense has “an aggressive non-smoking program,” he reminded.

McAlester has rail and airport transportation and is close to Tulsa, Muskogee and Texas. The city is “at a turning point,” he said. The challenge is to become a “world class city” and to keep its “small town charm.” White pointed to Davenport, Iowa., Athens, Ga., and Estes Park, Col. as similar cities which have succeeded in such a change.

White served 22 years in the Navy before joining DAC, and came here from Athens, Ga. He reviewed activities of the Rotary Club and said it had played a part in the city’s development.

Attendance Visitors, and Handshakers

There were 52 at the July 5 meeting. Margaret White, wife of the speaker, was a guest of John Freeman, program chairman. Joe Tate was the guest of Robert Miller.

On June 28, there were 50 present. Shirley Fleming was a guest of Shayne Javersak; Wayne Stipe was a guest of Don Brumley; Dorothy Chatenay was a guest of Jack. So was Sidney Winnett.

There were 45 at the June 14 meeting. Mike Lowber handed a buck to Cliff House and had a chance to write it off.

On June 28, Phil Brenner was the handshaker, and Shayne Javersak got either a dollar or a Rotary Centennial Coin. On July 5, Jim Thompson got a centennial coin from Carl Filskow, because Carl couldn’t spend it.

District 6110 Dates

September 16-18, 2005District Conference, Inn of the Ozarks, Eureka Springs
September 16th,2005DG Ed’s 4th annual Rotary Foundation Golf Outing
September 21-25, 2005Zone 28-29 Meeting, Memphis, TN
February 16-23, 2006International Assembly, San Diego, California, USA
March 6, 2006RYLA Applications Due
March 17-18, 2006Presidents-Elect Training Seminar (P.E.T.S.), Peabody Hotel, Little Rock, AR
March 30-April 2, 2006The 16th annual RYLA camp
June 11-14, 2006International Convention, Malmö, Sweden/Copenhagen, Denmark