



The Spoke

October 5, 2016

Rotary



The 50/50 Final Drawing The Only Card Left



The 50/50 \$2,998

Last Week...13

President Steven Slachta brought us to order with a DING and “put your phone on silent”. Clara Anne Graham presented the invocation; Roger Brunswick led the Pledge of Allegiance; and Mark Generales recited the Four Way Test flawlessly.

Song Leader Wayne Hemstead with side man Jon McLeod on guitar led the singing of Looking Out My Back Door.

Bobbi Bird reported that the packing of two containers of supplies for earthquake relief in Ecuador would be completed on Friday morning.



Wendy Arsenault briefed us on Poinsettia sales. Last year the club earned about \$7k from the effort. The poinsettias will be sold at the Christmas Tree tent. The plants are \$18/each, huge and beautiful,

and make great gifts. Ordered plants may be picked up the day after Thanksgiving. Orders of 20 or more plants will be delivered.



Roger Brunswick said there were some changes in the times for distribution of dictionaries. However, he forgot the list and said he would fine himself \$1. He then reminded Donna Marcotte of an unpaid fine noting, “The Sergeant-at-Arms never forgets.” Oh well.

Roger recognized guests including Chris Patriccia, recently elected as School Board member from District 3.



It was Bill Banfield's birthday. He said, "with all the discussion about fines, I can think of nothing finer than being serenaded by the Sergeant-at-Arms." Roger took the challenge and rendered a fine version of "Happy Birthday, dear Billy."

Steven then announced that Bill Banfield had accepted the position of Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms.



Marjorie Ruback came forward to explain that this was to be the first of a two part program on the U.S. Constitution. She distributed a pocket copy of the Constitution to all attendees. She invited us "to keep it close. Whenever you have a spare minute take a look at it and refresh your memory of this very precious document."



Marjorie introduced our speaker, Absolute Law founder, Mike Chionopoulos. He practiced general civil law for five years, and was then appointed General Counsel of a public company traded on NASQ. His career was put aside for service in the US Army in the Middle East, where he was decorated for his service as an Infantry Officer and attained the rank of Major.

Upon his return, Mike was appointed as Judge and served on the bench until moving to Florida in the summer of 2007. In 2010, he founded Absolute Law in 2010 as a full-service firm by hiring associate lawyers with a wide variety of legal experience. Currently, he engages in a general civil practice, while focusing the majority of his work in family law and appeals.

Mike told us, “The Constitution is the most fascinating document I have ever had the opportunity to read.”

The Founders had convened to amend the Articles of Confederation to provide a basis for establishing a federal government that could provide for essential services but not one that could control us.

“The federal government has only that power that we give it. The 10th Amendment provides that powers not specifically granted to the federal government are reserved to the states and their people respectively.”

Mike’s topic was Separation of Church and State. The first clause of the First Amendment is:

1. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; ...”. Mike says there are hundreds of thousands of pages of court opinions that guide our interpretation of this phrase.

Mike says, “There are ‘strict constructionists’ who interpret the Constitution in it’s ‘plain and ordinary meaning’ and ‘not-so strict constructionists’ who are dangerous because, if they can read a right into the Constitution then they can read a right out of the Constitution. That’s frightening because the Constitution then is no longer a consistent document, but begins to sway with the political wind.”

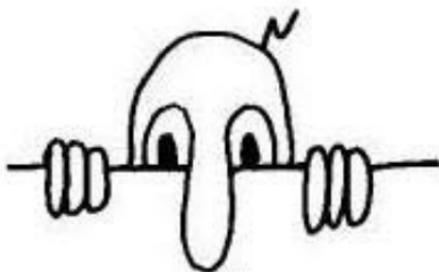
“To understand the Separation of Church and State issue, we need to look at the plain and ordinary meaning of the Amendment when written. The tests are: Did Congress pass a law?; Did it establish a religion?; Does it prohibit the free exercise of religion?

“The purpose of the First Amendment is not to protect the government from religion, it is to protect religion from the government.”

Mike asks, “How did we get from there to the point where we can’t pray in public places? These opinions, doctrines bear no relationship to the First Amendment. This is simply an activist bench with an agenda. Starting in the 1960’s we began to bastardize the Constitution. The First Amendment no longer has the meaning it was intended to have.”

Mike pointed out the apparent dichotomy of not being able to pray in public schools yet having government provided chaplains serving in the military.

He says that “ ‘The wall of separation between church and state’ was a concept based on ‘outcome based jurisprudence’. The First Amendment was never intended to protect the state from religion; it was never intended to stop us from praying in public schools; it was never intended to stop a judge from displaying the 10 Commandments; it was intended to protect religion from the state.”



50/50 \$2,998

1 Card, Joker

This Week Program

T. C. Bell
U. S. Constitution

**Ron Anderson drew the
A♦ for \$100**



The 50/50 is \$2,998

Birthdays

Juan Teodoro Oct 8

Rotary Sings: This Land is My Land

This land is your land,
this land is my land
From the California to the New York Island
From the Redwood Forest,
to the Gulf stream waters
This land was made for you and me

When the sun come shining,
then I was strolling
In wheat fields waving and dust clouds rolling
The voice was chanting as the fog was lifting
This land was made for you and me

This land is your land, this land is my land
From the California to the New York Island
From the Redwood Forest, to the Gulf stream waters
This land was made for you and me

This Morning's Invocation

Good and Gracious God, at the outset of our time together, we pause to acknowledge with gratitude, not only the tangible things we call blessings and by which life is sustained, but also the intangible realities by which life is enriched. We are thankful for ideas to explore, dreams to realize, work to do, and service to give.

We pray for help in using our vocations to serve others and not just ourselves. We do pray for others, the sick and sorrowing, the anxious and burdened. Grant health and comfort, patience and strength, peace and assurance to all who need these gifts.

For our own abundant blessings we give thanks, for food and friendship and for all opportunities open to us as Rotarians to make a difference for good. Amen.

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John F. Germ
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Ladd Waldo
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The Rotary Club of Estero

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Sergeant-at-Arms	Roger Brunswick
Asst. Sgt-at-Arms	Bill Banfield

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