

the HELICOPTER



The Rotary Club of Pensacola District 6940 Club 4248

WEEK IN REVIEW 6/3/2025

Location: Pensacola Yacht Club

Date: 3 June 2025

Attendance: Approximately 74 members and guests

Past President Charles Beall called the meeting to order and led the membership in reciting the Four-Way Test. Rotarian Innes Richards offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Program:

Rotarian Olevia McNally introduced the guest speaker, **Sue Straughn**. She has been a cornerstone of Channel 3 News since 1973. She began her career as a clerk typist and worked her way up to become a Senior News Anchor. Viewers can see her regularly on Channel 3 at 11 AM, 5 PM, and 6 PM. Known as the heart of the community, Sue is deeply involved in numerous local organizations including the ARC Gateway-Escambia County Child Development Committee, Autism Pensacola Board of Directors, BRACE, Covenant Hospice Foundation Board, Sacred Heart Hospital Advisory Board, and the American Red Cross Board of Directors, among many others. She is also the founder of Communities Caring at Christmas, a beloved holiday initiative in the region. Sue has been recognized with multiple honors, including being named one of the 100 Most Influential People by INWeekly, one of the 10 Most Influential People by Climate Magazine, the Martin Luther King Jr. "Living the Dream" Award, and Ambassador for Education by the Escambia County Public Schools Foundation. When she's not serving the community or reporting the news, Sue enjoys reading.

Sue Straughn began her presentation by highlighting the importance of diversity in the newsroom—not just in backgrounds, but also in perspectives. While young reporters bring fresh ideas and energy, they often lack a historical understanding of the local community. Sue noted that it used to be typical for reporters in the Pensacola market to be in their third or fourth job. Now, many are coming directly out of school, a shift that was once unimaginable. This change can lead to small but telling errors, like incorrect road names, though it also fosters innovation and prevents the newsroom from becoming an echo chamber.

She described the newsroom's editorial meetings, held daily at 9:30 AM, where staff discuss what happened overnight, decisions from city council or county commission meetings, and statements from local leaders. Sue remembered a former colleague, Dan Shugart, who served as both the station's historian and sportscaster and added valuable perspective to editorial decisions.

Sue emphasized the newsroom's commitment to accuracy. She shared an example of a recent helicopter incident in Santa Rosa County that was inaccurately reported as a "crash" due to wording in a 911 call. Although the situation was a "hard landing," the word "crash" made its way into the story. The comment section was filled with feedback from pilots who corrected the terminology, illustrating how carefully the public watches. Sue encouraged community members to speak up if something seems inaccurate, saying, "Please let your voices be heard," and inviting people to call the news director or herself directly.

Known for her compassionate reporting, Sue shared how segments like Angels in Our Midst—while not always popular—can be deeply impactful. She asked the audience to clearly label story ideas in email subject lines and follow up by phone, as the newsroom receives hundreds of pitches each day.

Sue also addressed challenges facing journalism today. In response to a question about why so many reporters are now in their first job in the Pensacola Market, she cited low salaries. She pushed back on claims of liberal media bias, pointing out that Sinclair Broadcasting, the parent company of Channel 3, is "anything but...". She noted that some nationally syndicated "franchise" stories are required across Sinclair stations.

Sue shared a serious personal experience from January 6, when a man phoned her after hearing her story. He threatened her life and indicated he knew where she lived as he had been working on her air conditioning unit. The situation required police intervention, highlighting the real-life risks journalists sometimes face.

When asked by the former Mayor, Grover Robinson, to compare Pensacola's past and present, Sue **expressed concern** about Escambia County's progress in **education and economic development**. She voiced hope that the community could come together to address these challenges and pointed to promising developments in Santa Rosa and Okaloosa Counties.

Dr. Judy Bense asked if Sue had ever had a story she strongly believed in canceled. Sue said no.

Charles Beall closed the meeting by thanking Sue for her consistent service and dedication. He remarked on the value of Channel 3's continuity in the community and honored Sue as a Paul Harris Fellow, recognizing her longstanding service as a member of the Five Flags Rotary Club.

Meeting minutes submitted by Nicole Gislason.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ROTARY

Today, Tuesday, June 10, we meet at Pensacola Yacht Club.

RSVP now for the Change of Command Installation Banquet. This year our banquet will take place next Tuesday June 17th at Heritage Hall located at 130 E. Government Street. Doors open at 5:30, and the program starts at 6:15.

We will continue to stream our meeting using Microsoft Teams; however, changes will be made due to poor wi-fi reception at PYC. You will no longer receive visual video of the meetings but will be able to listen to the announcements and hear the speaker. The link to join will be sent out in the same manner as before. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these changes, please let me know. 850-434-0684.

To increase the membership of our club, we will continue to offer three free lunches for potential new members.

Promote your business by placing an ad in the Helicopter. Your ad will run for a full month each week. Business card-sized ads are \$25.00, a 1/4 page is \$50.00, and a 1/2-page ad is \$75.00. To place your ad, send the prepared document to cbidwell@pensacolarotaryclub.org stating the size of the ad you wish to place. **Proceeds benefit the Rotary Club of Pensacola Foundation.**

To pay your quarterly Rotary Club dues with a credit card/debit card go to <http://www.pensacolarotaryclub.org/payment>. Please note a service charge will be applied to your payment.

2024-2025 Club Officers

•President	Henry Roberts
•Past President	Charles Beall
•President Elect	Allison Hill
•Secretary	Randall Richardson
•Treasurer	Lori Nesmith
•Communications Officer	Betty Roberts

Bulletin Information

Web Site: Pensacolarotaryclub.org
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Clubs Available for Makeup

Five Flags	Pensacola Bay Center	Mon.	12:00 pm
Gulf Breeze	Legends at Andrews Institute	Tues.	7:00 am
Milton	The Hangar Restaurant	Tues.	12:00 pm
Seville	Seville Quarter	Tues.	5:15 pm
	meets every other Tuesday		
Cantonment	St. Luke's United Methodist Church	Wed.	12:15 pm
Perdido	The Point Church	Wed.	7:30 am
Pace	Stonebrook Village Country Club	Thur.	7:00 am
Cordova	Gulf Coast Kid's House	Thur.	7:00 am
Suburban West	Pensacola Yacht Club	Thur.	12:00 pm
Navarre	Broussard's Cajun Restaurant	Fri.	12:00 pm
Pensacola North	Hancock Bank, Creighton Rd.	Fri.	12:00 pm

District Governor

Mike Tatem
<http://www.rotary6940.org>

Assistant District Governor

Cliff Schornak

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Birthdays for the week of
June 10 thru June 23

John Trawick – June 11 – born in Atlanta, GA, in Rotary 27 years, Paul Harris Fellow

Dennis Barnes – June 13 – born in Pensacola, FL, in Rotary 20 years, Paul Harris Fellow

Margaret Stopp – June 15 – born in Binghamton, NY, in Rotary 23 years, Paul Harris Fellow +8

Frank Yeager – June 18 – born in Dayton, OH, in Rotary one year

Terry Terrell – June 21 – born in Seattle, WA, in Rotary 25 years, Paul Harris Fellow

Jock Mobley – June 22 – born in Thomasville, GA, in Rotary 29 years

Greeters and Ticket Sales

June 10

Greeters: Madison Currin and David DelGallo
Ticket Sales: Pete Doyle

June 24

Greeters: Cedric Durre and Lindsay Durre
Ticket Sales: Lee Elebash and Bill Fleming

Prayer/Pledge And Sunshine

June 10

Prayer/Pledge: Grover Robinson Sunshine: Craig Hindsman

June 24

Prayer/Pledge: Charlie Sherrill Sunshine: Al Coby

Program Schedule

June

10 - Ed Wonders, RYLA
17 - Change of Command
24 - Jerry Maygarden, Rotary International Foundation Orientation

Meeting Schedule

June

10 - Noon Regular Weekly Meeting at Pensacola Yacht Club and MicroSoft Teams
1:00 Board of Directors Meeting
17 - Change of Command Banquet at Heritage Hall at Seville Quarters
24 - Noon Regular Weekly Meeting at Pensacola Yacht Club and MicroSoft Teams