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Gary Spooner, Experiences in Romania



Our speaker today was Gary Spooner, Engineer with Ford Motor, who spent 5.5 years in Romania helping open a Ford factory. He shared his experiences in this “Land of Enchantment”, one of the poorer countries in the European Union.

The factory, located in Criova, was built in a facility previously owned by the Romanian government, Daewoo Motors and General Motors, but it went bankrupt in 2009. 4200 employees lost their jobs, but Ford was able to put the people back to work building cars and engines. Quality suppliers brought a support base into Romania such as Johnson Controls. Some of these were “just in time” suppliers such as seats, bumpers, and other structural parts of vehicles.

It was an opportune time in Spooner’s life to go to Romania. He could take his wife. His children were grown; they would not have been able to go because there was no schooling for them in that location.

He shared that General Motors had used kits to assemble cars, but Ford Transit Connect taught the workers to use the assembly line to build cars and engines. Most of the product stays in Europe, but the engine also has come to the US. The PUMA and ECO Sport are two vehicles built there, and the electrical vehicle will be also. The EcoBoost Engine is built for use there and the US. In the US it gets 54mi/gal. For five years in a row it has been named the Engine of the Year. After cars are built, they are sent by train to the Black Sea and then shipped. They are moved by truck from suppliers.

Spooner said he supervised 32 engineers and as part of their mission on their own time they would reach out to the local people to help them in ways that they could.

Gary stated that Romania is beautiful and steeped with history and is situated in a major crossroads in Europe which is a blessing and a curse for the people there. The country is similar in size to Montana and has a population similar to New York. The climate is similar to Michigan. Some of the best ski slopes are found here. There are oil fields, hot

springs, farm land, the Black Sea and the Carpathian Mountains.

Romanian is the national language, but there are many others used. We saw beautiful pictures of Orthodox churches. Castles are plentiful. His house was called a block. Their apartment had cement walls and was about 2000 sq. ft. There is one freeway from Bucharest, but work continues on building a freeway to access the whole country.

Some unique facts to know about Romania: The Danube River Cruise goes through Romania. Dracula originated in Romania. Vlad the Impaler, a real person, was written about in a book and thus became known as Dracula by the author, Bram Stoker. There are many gypsies, some very poor, and some very rich. There was a terrible Communistic dictator who wanted the people to have more children so he could get more money (from USSR?), but the parents had no way to support them. He stated there are hundreds and hundreds of orphans. In one city alone in Romania there are 20 orphanages.

Gary concluded his presentation by letting us view some beautiful arts and crafts he brought from Romania. (See pictures below.)

Next week’s speaker will be Lori McGoldrick speaking humorously and inspirationally about: “A Perspective on Family.”

“A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.” Albert Einstein

Meeting Minutes

Dale Willenborg, President, called the meeting to order at the Treynor Community Building. Present were 16 members and three guests: Stella Umphreys, Nathaniel Biederman, and Gary Spooner. Dale Willenborg led the Pledge of Allegiance and Steve Irvin gave the opening prayer.

Judy Guttau won the 50/50 drawing. Gary Guttau won the attendance drawing.

Jokes/Stories were shared by Bill Vorthmann, Jordan Campbell, Judy Guttau, and Keith Denton.

Some regular items were tabled until next Saturday.



Stella Umphreys was present to receive her \$500 Optimist Scholarship. She will attend Northwestern Christian College and study Nursing and play softball.

She was lauded for hitting a home run last night over the fence in left field.

She chose nursing because she loves to help people and to make them feel better. Her goal at the end of the day is to make people smile. We wish you the best, Stella!



Nathanial Biederman, who will be a Freshman at Treynor this year, was present to talk about his desire to bury a time capsule. The city has agreed to allow this to be buried in Treynor. Just a few key people will know its location. He is using a 4 ft. PVC pipe which will be sealed.

He is inviting people and businesses to contribute significant items. Silica packs will be used to absorb any moisture. His hope is that it will be opened in 50 years. The Optimists contributed an Optimist mug and a newsletter. Please contact Nathanial [this week](#) at 712-355-3317 if you have items or suggestions.

BUSINESS:

The Girl Scouts donated nine boxes of Girl Scout cookies in appreciation for being able to have the Can Kennel. It was decided to share these with speakers.

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Dues/Donations/Flag Money: Mail to Optimist Club of Treynor, PO Box 354, Treynor, IA 51575

Flags: Flags were put up after the meeting today. St. Paul Youth helped. SPY will also meet the Optimists at the Community Building at 6 PM Tuesday to begin taking down flags.

Flags will be put up Fri., June 25 for Treynor Days and the 4th of July and taken down July 5.

The meeting was closed with the Optimist Creed.

HUMOR

The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, BUT....mosquitoes come close!

Forbidden fruits create many jams.

Calendar

June 15 Flags will be taken down

Birthdays

June 16 Dale Willenborg
June 20 Jeff Jorgensen

Anniversaries

June 15 Steve and Jeannie Chambers
June 28 Mick and Judy Gutttau
June 29 Dave and Linda Danker

Programs

June Dale Willenborg & Judy Gutttau
July Kirk Vorthmann (first one)
Judy Gutttau (second one)
Doug Dillivan (last two)

Speakers

June 19 Lori McGoldrick, humorous, inspirational speaker
June 26 Aaron Terry, Ass't FB Coach IWCC
July 3 TBA
July 10 Alisha Hess, new Treynor business owner

