

MEETING

Perry Rotary showed its dedication to community service today. Pres. Fred and Nancy M. presented \$1,000 to Perry, Letchworth and Warsaw school systems for student enrichment programs.

Then Pres. Fred presented a \$10,000 check to the Wyoming Community Hospital Capital Campaign. Campaign chair Janet Miller, co-chair Jim VanArsdale and hospital CEO Ron Krawiz accepted.

P. District Gov. Eric reported that a highlight of the District Conference was the performance of Sally's granddaughter Moira. She earned second in the singing competition. Sally was \$10 proud.

Pres.-elect **Queen Donna** represented Bank of Castile on the Channel 10 news. A \$5 fine was a mere pittance when compared to the notoriety earned with her first TV spot. 6 more weeks and the Queen takes over. Joy!

Nancy reported that husband Gerry has a new pickup, but she wasn't sure if it was a 4-door or 2-door. She finally determined there is a door for her and one for him. Sounds like 2. \$5 fine.

P.P. Jeff celebrated the graduation of one of children from Eastern Tennessee State Univ. and brought P. Fred a Tennessee Vols hat. He'd paid a fine previously.

Remember: Sat., May 19, from 8-noon is Perry Park workday

PROGRAM

"Remembering Rotary & Perry Knitting Mill" – Guestspeaker **George Traber**, a Perry Rotarian from 1949 to 1967, pointed out that things haven't changed much: Fines in his day were \$5 and \$10, and they still are. Since Mr. Traber had never given a classification speech, he used the opportunity to talk about the history of the

Perry Knitting Mill, founded in 1881. His grandfather began working for the mill in 1892 and bought out a Mr. Tuttle's interest in 1917 to assume full ownership.

Grandfather Traber was called the "Henry Ford of the textile industry" in an article at the time. He conveyORIZED the 400,000-square-foot mill and ran it for nine months during a depression without making a sale. Once the depression ended, he was poised to sell all the goods on hand while other mills had closed.

Mr. Traber spoke a good deal about attempts to unionize the mill. Local farmers (at least they were dressed in the stereotypical bib overalls of farmers) once ran union organizers out of town.

In 1959, Mr. Traber became president of the mill. Competition was fierce and over the years, business declined. In 1966, a New York City banker asked the mill to pledge its inventory. In return, he guaranteed the mill would be in business at the end of the year. In July, the banker pulled the money, and Mr. Traber had to sell the mill.

It was a terrible time in his life, believing that he had let a lot of people in Perry and neighboring towns down, he said.

"Looking back at Perry, it was one of the grandest times," Mr. Traber said. "It's said, 'You can move out of Perry, but you can't move Perry out of your heart.'"

*Note: Future president **Queen Donna** may be somewhat responsible for the decline of the Perry Knitting Mill. She worked there as a 17-year-old until **P.P. Nelson** fired her. Why? "I thought a job was something you showed up to when you felt like it," she said. Maybe that will be the rule for Rotary come the end of June.*