



Rotary Club of Dalton Newsletter

<http://www.daltonrotaryclub.org>

This Week:

February 3
Graham Fox
"Vertical Integration, Risk Management & the Weather: A Dirt Farmer's Perspective" - Andrew Moore, Resaca Sun Feeds, LLC

Upcoming Meetings:

February 10
Director Program
Dr. Bill Underwood - President, Mercer University

February 17
Robert Smalley

February 24
Kevin Harris

Professor Tom Mullen, Dalton State College

By: John Hutcheson



Club Officers:

David Aft
President
Jason Parker
President-Elect
Frank M. Hogshead
Secretary, Treasurer
Chuck Dobbins
Immediate Past President
Bruce Satterfield
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Kevin Brunson
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Dr. Tom Mullen, Professor of Political Science at Dalton State College, spoke to the Club about conditions in the Middle East, focusing on Syria, Iraq, and the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). He noted that while the regimes of Hafez and Bashar al-Assad in Syria and of Saddam Hussein in Iraq provided their people's stability in exchange for the sacrifice of democracy and any right of political dissent, there was relative freedom in both countries for religious minorities such as Christians and unorthodox Muslims, so long as they posed no political threat. This gained the Assad and Saddam governments' strong support from these groups, who became crucial to their retention of power and who have suffered acutely since its destabilization or destruction.

When a coalition led by the United States overthrew Saddam Hussein in 2003, it purged the leadership class of all his supporters, thus creating a power vacuum that has never really been filled. The "Arab Spring" revolt against Bashar al-Assad in 2011 did not remove him, but instead led to ruthless repression and civil war. Unlike such disorders in the past, newly created social media revealed this one to the world in great detail, and the U.S. was strongly pressured to assist the rebels. Though initially inclined to do so, the Obama Administration ultimately bowed to public resistance to further American military involvement in the region. Thus another power vacuum developed, with a variety of radical groups playing dominant roles in the opposition. The most organized and best financed of these was ISIS, which Saudi Arabia strongly supported as a vehicle for reducing the influence in Syria of the Saudis' archrival, Iran.

Professor Mullen argued that the best policy for the U.S. would be to avoid giving the Syrian rebels more than humanitarian and minimal military support and to work mainly for a stable, though weakened, Bashar regime. America should also reach a working arrangement—modus vivendi—with the Iranians, who despise ISIS and don't want it to succeed in either Iran's client state of Syria or in neighboring Iraq. As shown recently in Paris and Brussels, ISIS sympathizers are a growing danger to U.S. allies in Europe, and American collaboration with Iran would be a practical, short-run response to a common

enemy, similar to the relationship between the U.S. and the Soviet Union during World War II. The Saudis and Israelis would object, but American policy must be guided by American interests, not theirs.

February 3rd Birthdays & Anniversaries

<u>Member Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthday</u>
Hoskins, Douglas (DOUG)	3-Feb
Shirley, Rudy Mckey (RUDY)	4-Feb

<u>Partner Birthdays</u>	<u>Member Name</u>	<u>Birthday</u>
Minor, Laura	Minor, John Thomas V	3-Feb
DeLay, Avalee	DeLay, Scott G	6-Feb
Adcock, Diane	Adcock, Don W.	7-Feb
Brunson, Cindy	Brunson, Kevin M	8-Feb

<u>Member Anniversaries</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Years</u>
No member anniversaries this period.		

<u>Wedding Anniversaries</u>	<u>Partner's Name</u>	<u>Anniversary</u>	<u>Years</u>
No anniversaries this period.			

Four Way Test

