

# EAGA Business Builder

Coronavirus update from the state...was blah blah blah; and the evil doer citizens may need to be chastises with directives again. Hope voters are not blind. **October 6, 2020**

## Today's speaker was Bob Rundle—The Kolache Factory



Mr. Rundle did not mention his state of origin, but it is assumed to be “not New Mexico”. We know that he lived in Missouri for a period of time since he received a BA Degree from that state’s university. He also lived in Texas for a period of time after that. Actually, it was a long period of time (about 30 years) that he lived in the Lone Star State, and nearly all of it as a Software Engineer in the Oil and Gas Industry near Houston. Don’t know whether the thirty years passed quickly, or not, but Bob and his wife were wise enough to gather their world and go west...at least a little. They moved to Albuquerque in 2004 with the thought of settling down in a place they could retire. Good luck with that retirement thing. Bob started a software company here and used his creative skills to develop a new something-or-other technique that became very desirable to one of the big boys. Mr. Rundle sold his company to a Fortune 500 Company—Baker Hughes, and stayed on as an executive with the company. He was the head of their office here in Albuquerque and it turns out that there were both good and bad aspects in that job. The good is that Bob was an important part of a large, well known company, and he was responsible for the operation of twenty software engineers and testers. The bad was that Bob was an executive for a large company and he was not used to the set attitudes, and rules and regulations of that type of entity. He was more familiar with being able to make decisions based on logic, understanding and the circumstances of specific situations. The executive job required that decisions, particularly personnel related, be based on things like “rule #7”, or “the policy stated on page 15 of the employment manual”. So it wasn’t too long before Mr. Rundle decided to move away from that dotted i’s and crossed t’s environment and into one that he allowed him to operate more comfortably. And Bob being Bob, the jump was made before the landing spot had been determined. Bob and his wife decided that he would not end up back in the software world. But what else was there? His entire working life to this point had been software related. He wasn’t just a coder, or developer, but also a creator, designer and an inventor of sorts. Mr. Rundle currently owns three software patents and has four more pending. (Yes, there are such things as software patents, and they are very different than the more commonly known software copyrights.) If you want to know more about software patents, you can speak with Bob, or you can Google it. We will use our time here to tell you how a recovering software engineer is able to make it through the next phase of existence. After a little thought and research, Bob decided, and surprisingly to him, his wife agreed, that he would do something in one of the world’s oldest professions. Not THE oldest profession, but something maybe in the top ten - restaurant operations. The next question had to be ‘what kind of restaurant business?’. Bob thought about a kind of food that he had often eaten in Texas, but was not common at all in Albuquerque. Kolache. That’s right Kolache. Those of you that are not of Polish or Czech or Slovakian descent may be asking “What the heck is Kolache?”. That seemed to be the most common sentiment whenever Bob would run the idea by his friends and associates. A majority of the time, Mr. Rundle was advised that his idea was not a good thing, and he would be better off moving on to something else. Being a software guy in his previous life did teach Bob that the greater the rejection, the better the idea must be. When an idea is constantly ridiculed, it is definitely something to be pursued. So the conclusion was obvious...full speed ahead. Another form of encouragement was by the franchising company. The application included a section requiring an essay, answering a question that was something like “What prior restaurant experience and knowledge do you feel would make you a good franchise operator?”. Bob’s answer —“Nothing”...and still they approved the application. So the Albuquerque Kolache Factory was off and running. That was five years ago, and some of you are still trying to figure out what is a Kolache...and how big of building and what technology do you need for a factory. One question at a time. The easiest one to answer is the one about a Kolache factory size. It can be tiny. Bob’s “factory” is located in one of the small shops in the strip center at the north-west corner of Wyoming and Paseo Del Norte. The ‘technology’ consists of dedicated humans that operate a 40 qt mixer with a similarly large, and quite menacing looking dough hook. And of course, an oven. The technology could also include the yeast (whether at \$2 a pound pre-Covid prices, or the \$8 per pound price at the height of the Covid frenzy) and the flour that Bob buys by the ton. The more difficult question is “what exactly is a Kolache?” It is a Czech pastry that was originally offered as a sweet desert at weddings and celebrations. Popularity, immigration, and time have increased the varieties to more than just the sweet, fruit versions. There are now many of what are referred to as ‘savory’ varieties as well. All have the signature pastry wrap, but the inner offerings range from eggs to meats to vegetables to a combination of any of that stuff (as well as the original cherry, apple, lemon or whatever). Now that he can actually open and sell things again, Bob’s bakery offers 25 different varieties. Business was really good before the coronavirus era, then revenues dropped 14% in March and 50% in April. By the end of May, Mr. Rundle was probably brushing off the old software engineer resume. But then regulations eased a little bit and business has been able to start back toward recovery. But getting back to a good level from 50% down will take a while longer, and reasonable government decisions. If you want to provide treats for your office employees, and you are looking for a better option than donuts, burritos, or bagels, you should check out the Kolache Factory. Mr. Rundle can give you at least 25 ways to wow your staff. Give him a call at 505-856-3430 to figure it out—and to place an order. He can also provide you with any information you want regarding the history of Kolache, any upcoming new flavors, why he doesn’t have a huge Texas accent after living in Houston for 30 years, and just how many of those great chunks of sweet, and savory, and delicious pastries does he eat in a week?

- ◆ Our next meeting, Tuesday, October 13th will be an in-person event at Rio Bravo Brewing. The meeting will be indoors and all the standard protocols will be in place. There should not be any guests invited to this meeting. Social distancing requirements will be maintained and masks will be required until you have been seated and are eating your breakfast. Food will be plentiful, but is not self-serve. Rio Bravo staff will be available to serve you both food and drinks. Please attend the meeting. It does take a bit of energy and some coordinated effort to have everything arranged in compliance with today's governmental requirements and mandates, and we should make sure that the work is not wasted. More importantly, it is an excellent opportunity to visit with fellow members in a face to face (mask to mask until seated with food) scenario. There will be great camaraderie and it will be a very enjoyable event. Please take the time and make the personal effort to attend.
- ◆ We need speakers for our meetings on October 20th and 27th; and for all of the November meetings. Please contact Mario as soon as possible if you can take one of the slots. The presentation need not be a huge production. Our members are interested in finding out about your company, or maybe some particular process you have been using to help your company not only survive, but be in a position for an even greater success post-coronavirus pandemic.
- ◆ Upcoming speakers:   October 13th                   Kit Turpen—Berger Briggs Insurance  
                                  October 20th  
                                  October 27th  
                                  November 3rd  
                                  November 10th  
                                  November 17th
- ◆ Jack Zipper lets us know the good news that Aaron Rogers has found an appropriate home near Comanche and Juan Tabo. He will be able to move in when he gets out of rehab.
- ◆ Have you noticed the number 2 paragraph above, and the soon to be empty list of upcoming speakers? It would be great if you could take one of the slots. Our members would like to hear how things are going in your particular segment of the economy. What new tactics have you employed to weather the pandemic storm? Any new amazing discoveries for how to proceed? What are your projections for the next year? Tired of the pandemic discussions...How about a particular bit of knowledge, or expertise that you may have in your personal history. We already know that our elite group boasts current and past members that have been (or still are): a Mash Unit Director; a Nuclear Scientist; very knowledgeable in operations of the SR-71 Blackbird spy plane; capable of providing mathematical instructions for drawing a square circle; a body guard for famous people; and more. Do you have interesting knowledge or uncommon talents or experiences that you can share?

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