

EAGA Business Builder

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Today's speaker was Jason Rockwell—Rebel Road Hot Rod Garage



Mr. Rockwell was born in Tijeras, just outside of the big city of Albuquerque. He didn't really live there very long though. Jason's father was an aspiring musician and, in order to have a better chance for getting to the big time, moved the family to Smyrna, Tennessee (just outside of the big city of Nashville) when Jason was still pretty young. The family's new home was on a 5 acre piece of land. And it had a separate 2 car workshop too. Having a dedicated place to work on cars was a great thing for Jason because at 9 years old he already knew that building / repairing / restoring vehicles was going to be his life. At first, Jason's Dad was away from home a lot as he traveled to get his music career going. But in relatively short order, Dad gave up the road life in order to spend more time with his family. The two Mr. Rockwells became very good buddies and worked together a lot. There was a 1947 International truck wasting away on a lot near the Rockwell home and Jason could hear the truck calling out to him whenever he passed by. Finally, one day, Jason and his Dad stopped to look it over and the owner sold it to them for \$25. Jason just knew that he could restore that truck to its old state of grandeur. He became so interested in fixing the truck, that school began to suffer. In an effort to redirect Jason's focus a bit, Dad made him a 'deal'. If Jason would concentrate on school work more; would graduate high school and go to college, Dad would give him the truck. That was a good incentive and Jason did start to work a little harder to get through school...but the truck was still a pretty high priority. Imagine the challenges that Jason's parents must have had trying to encourage the youngster to pursue his dream, but not be out of control about it. At one point, Jason's father brought home some magnetic signs that read "Rebel Road Hot Rod Garage". They were probably meant as encouragement for what could occur if the now 12 year old Jason would organize his energies to have a proper balance between automotive work and other 'necessary' growing up endeavors. The young Mr. Rockwell didn't take it that way though. He was ready to open a hot rod garage...Now! Dad may have thought that more learning was the best route, but Jason felt that he had enough learning. Besides working with Dad, Jason had already educated himself by regularly watching HorsePower TV and pouring through hot rod magazines. (Whenever he was sent to his room for 'time-out', Jason was ready to endure the punishment by reading his magazines). He was sure that he was ready for some hands-on projects. Jason put the signs on the family vehicle in order to get the word out. It actually worked as he hoped. Folks asked where the shop was; and would the Rockwells be able to help work on the person's vehicle. From Jason's perspective, life was good. And he was actually doing pretty well by the time he was 16. Jason's dad even bought a 1966 Buick Skylark convertible for them to restore. That was a fun project...until it wasn't. One day Jason didn't properly put away some of the equipment when leaving the shop. The building caught fire and it was well in progress before anyone realized what was happening. [He notes that a garden hose is not the best method of putting out a raging fire in an automotive shop.] The building was destroyed, along with everything inside. Jason's father didn't talk to him for many days after that. Fire related or not, a few months later, the elder Mr. Rockwell decided that the family was moving back to New Mexico. Jason thought that to be a very bad idea. He was starting his senior year of high school; he had a girlfriend; he had some roots, and he wasn't ready to leave it all. Jason was so determined to stay in Tennessee that he even tried the 'emancipation' route. That didn't work and soon Jason was in Rio Rancho. He enrolled in high school and was quickly advised that he would not be graduating that year. It seems that Tennessee requires fewer credits to graduate than does Rio Rancho. He was told to expect it to take at least two to 'catch up'. From Jason's perspective, that was not an option. He had plans that didn't include being 'the old guy' of the class by the time new senior year rolled around. And as we have learned, the young Mr. Rockwell can be very creative, and very determined. As far as he was concerned, the new plan would be to drop out of school, get a G.E.D. then head on to Laramie to attend WyoTech for his already planned higher learning. (Wyo Tech offered a range of automotive related technology programs). Doing a little research, he discovered his plan was indeed an option, but would require him writing a document explaining why he wanted to drop out of school. Jason agonized for days about what to write, but finally put something together and took it to the school counselor. The counselor said that Jason's logic was good, but his research was slightly flawed. The paper was not necessary, nor was any other excuse needed. He was now 18 years old, so could just drop out of school whenever he wanted. Done! He dropped out; took appropriate courses at CNM to get a high school diploma...and made a \$48,000 commitment to attend Wyo Tech. Then another bump in the road. At Wyo Tech he found himself in a room with 70 class clowns and a teacher—and the course materials were on subjects that he, for the most part, already knew. So he got good grades, concentrated on the marketing courses and completed the program. Then another bump. The year that Jason was to graduate, the school lost its accreditation. He was declared to have earned a degree in "Specialized Technology". Not really the 'Wow Factor' diploma that he had hoped to present to potential employers. Back in NM, Jason found work at a couple of different shops, but was still planning to have his own business sometime soon. It was at this point that Jason's life took a turn, leading him to a very high plateau—before casting him into a deep crevice. Jason's girlfriend (soon to be wife) became pregnant. Jason was elated. He was very excited about becoming a father. Then there were major complications with the pregnancy and only a couple of months after birth, his daughter became a true little angel. Jason was devastated. His world went to a very dark place. He was divorced; his dreams were no longer important; and he didn't care much about work. But Fate (that's what we call the Higher Power) offered an option in the form of a young lady named Joalda. She was positive, she was supportive, and she cared about Jason. After a little while, Jason and Joalda were married. Joalda wasn't really aware of Jason's automotive talents, but she was observant. When a friend coaxed Jason into helping restore a cycle as an entry in the Dream Chopper Contest, Joalda noticed a little spark in what he was doing. As she learned more about his prior dreams, Joalda began encouraging him get back into that world. One evening when Jason came home from his mundane job, Joalda gave him some papers noting that she had registered the business name "Rebel Road Hot Rod Garage, LLC". Jason felt the passion again. He was willing to revive the old plans and that tenacious, determined, "I can do it" guy was back on the pathway to fulfilling his dreams. Joalda's support has been much more than regular encouragement. She quit her promising career in the medical field in order to be a part of the dreams that she had rekindled. Jason has come away from the dark place and has regained the enthusiasm of the teenage Jason Rockwell. He and his wife-friend-partner, Joalda, are living in a happy place these days. Rebel Road Hot Rod Garage is doing quite well. Their work is amazing and their reputation is impeccable. So far they have restored 95 vehicles and have future work lined up for the next 18 months. If you would like to find out more about the vehicle restoration world, see some amazing work, or just visit with an enthusiastic entrepreneur who is very passionate about what he does, you can give Jason a call at (505) 808-7623. You would be talking with a very resilient young man that has traveled a long and sometimes incredibly bumpy path to get to where he is today.

Leads & Business Information:

None submitted this week

Reciprocity:

None submitted this week

- ◆ Time is running out if you want to signup for the EAGA Golf Tournament. If you still want to participate in this fun event, call Jerry Becker at 505-991-4708...and do it right away. There is still room on the roster, but Jerry has to turn in the final count the afternoon of June 7th (after our next breakfast meeting). The tournament will be June 10th at Santa Ana Golf Club. Starting time is 1:00pm. Cost is \$20 for members and \$85 for guests. (The fees will be billed to your EAGA account. Don't bring payment to the event). The committee is also soliciting hole sponsors at \$100 each. Those funds will be used to offset cost of prizes, etc.
- ◆ The EAGA Summer Bash has been set for Saturday, July 23rd. The event will be held at the estate of Randy and Denise Baker. It will start with cocktails at 5:00 pm. Games will begin shortly thereafter. A catered dinner will round out the evening. More details and directions will be provided at our Tuesday meetings. If you have particular questions, you can contact Bash Committee Chairmen Pat Maloy [pat@maloystorage.com] or Dan Mowery [danrmowery@gmail.com].
- ◆ **WE NEED SPEAKERS!** All meetings in June are open. Actually all meetings in July are open, too. Please contact Mario if you can take one of the days. It would be greatly appreciated. Mario's contact information is in the box at the bottom of this page.
- ◆ On June 14th we will elect two new members to the Board of Directors. If you are interested in having your name on the ballot, please contact Raul Rodriguez [info@thekingsofwrap.com or 505-892-1983], but please do it right away so that Raul can have everything in place by June 14th.

Badge Board Greeters

June 7 th	Rick Reese—Blue Ristra
June 14 th	Rich Rosley—A-TECH Security
June 21 st	Chuck Osborn—Steamatic of Albuquerque & Santa Fe
June 28 th	John Woods—PHOCUS Real Estate
July 5 th	No meeting – Fourth of July Holiday
July 12 th	
July 19 th	
July 26 th	

Upcoming Speakers

June 7 th	Open Discussion
June 14 th	
June 21 st	
June 28 th	
July 5 th	No meeting –Fourth of July Holiday
July 12 th	
July 19 th	
July 26 th	

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