

Ely Air Lines -

The Man of Mach Speed

by Mike Ely and Linda Street-Ely

What does it feel like to have your name become “the speed of sound”? We hear Mach 1, Mach 2, Mach 3...and think of fighter jets, Chuck Yeager, the SR-71 Blackbird. But did you know that Mach was a real person? One that makes a great example of how scientific curiosity outlives the scientist.

Ernst Mach’s name became so embedded in aviation vocabulary that we often don’t think about the fact that he was an actual person. And despite his name being synonymous with speed, he wasn’t trying to invent fast airplanes. He was studying how humans perceive motion and sound and the strange behavior of air itself. His story is the human aspect for something that became central to supersonic flight: a regular guy with a wife and a son who was curious and went looking for answers, long before the sound barrier became an aviation milestone.

An Austrian physicist and philosopher, he studied shock waves and supersonic motion. He used photography and visual experiments to study bullets moving through air and helped explain what happens near the speed of sound. What ended up happening is that the “Mach number” was named after him after his work became useful to aviation. The poetic irony is that he died in 1916, before the age of supersonic flight truly arrived.

These days, it’s not uncommon to hear “Mach .82” over the radio. But in Mach’s day, the speed of sound was still a mystery. People understood that sound traveled, but the idea that an aircraft might one day approach, reach, or even exceed that speed would have seemed like science fiction.

As airplanes went faster, engineers discovered that the air behaved differently near the speed of sound. They learned that drag increased, shock waves formed, and control surfaces became less effective. It turned out that the sky had rules that pilots and designers would have to



learn, and the work Ernst Mach had done decades earlier suddenly became very important.

Then, in 1947, test pilot Chuck Yeager pushed the Bell X-1 through what newspapers called the “sound barrier.” It was one of aviation’s great milestones. A generation later, the SR-71 Blackbird would routinely cruise at more than three times the speed of sound, Mach 3, passing over entire states in minutes. Think about it: a man born in 1838, studying motion, sound, and the behavior of air,

never lived to see an airplane break the sound barrier. He never heard a sonic boom. He never saw a Blackbird streak across the sky. Yet every time a pilot references a Mach number, his work lives on.

Most of us hope to leave something behind. A book, a business, a family. A contribution. Ernst Mach left behind an idea. More than a century after his death, that idea remains so useful that pilots around the world speak his name every day without realizing it.

Not many people become part of the language. Fewer still become part of the language of flight.

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Dayton Rotarians welcome Netflix star Sloan Rinaldi

DAYTON - The Rotary Club of Dayton started its regular meeting like most, with the prayer and pledges. However, the club had a very special guest and were in for a real treat. Rotary President Dr. Luke Chachere welcomed and introduced Sloan Rinaldi, known as “The Texas Q,” as guest speaker for its weekly meeting.

Rinaldi shared her inspiring journey from commercial construction to becoming a respected name in the Texas barbecue world. After 32 years in a male-dominated construction industry, she entered another male-dominated competitive field: barbecue/pit master. As a fourth-generation Texas pit master, Rinaldi became the first woman in her family to carry on the barbecue tradition.

Her story included an early success story with a championship finish in her very first competition. Her incredible adventures included her barbecue sauce story. After cooking for the H-E-B “powers that be” and

serving them her barbecue, she was offered a contract on the spot for her barbecue sauce. Her sauce was placed in H-E-B stores across Texas with a five-year exclusive contract with the Texas-based grocery store. Sloan went on to recall her appearances and adventures on national television, including Chopped and Netflix’s season-three Barbecue Showdown. Throughout the lively program, Rinaldi weaved in her faith, the importance of perseverance, entrepreneurship for women, and the importance of listening to customers to ensure success.

The Pit Master also shared her newest projects, including an upcoming Netflix media opportunity. She is about to embark on a show concept focused on how live-fire cooking brings people together across cultures. This new TV series will have her taping in Japan, Spain, Germany, Italy and Argentina – just to name a few countries where she will be traveling. Her message centered on community, family,

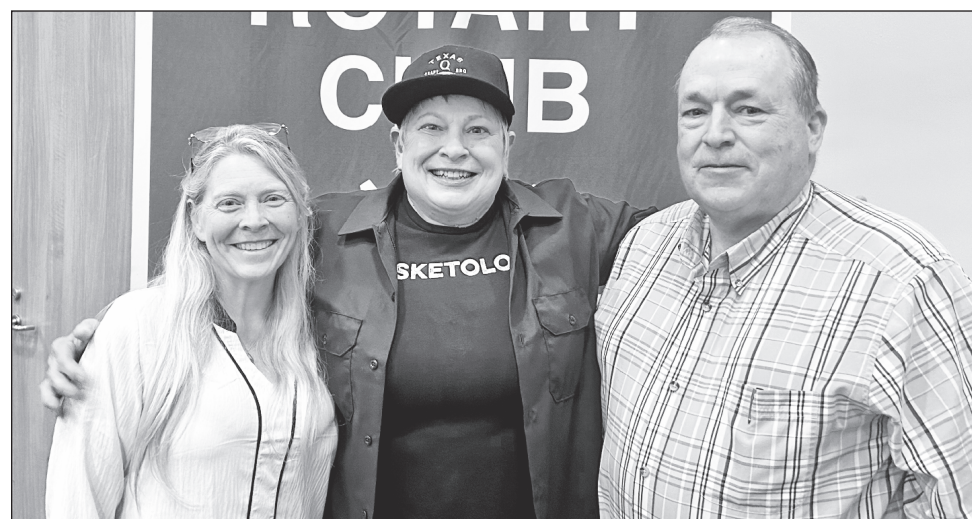
faith, and the power of using your gifts to inspire others.

The Dayton Rotary Club was mesmerized by Rinaldi’s program and presentation. She encouraged members to recognize potential in young people, especially those facing difficult circumstances by telling her

own challenging childhood story and the adults who saw potential in her. She reminded the group that a few encouraging words can make a lasting difference. The Rotary Club of Dayton appreciates Sloan Rinaldi for sharing her time, talent, and powerful testimony

with the club.

The meeting finished up with club announcements including the Summer Social, which will be held at the new Mimosa Gardens event center. President Dr. Chachere then led the members in the Rotary Four-Way Test.



DAYTON ROTARY CLUB
Pictured (l-r): Rotary President-elect Elizabeth Robertson, Netflix star Sloan Rinaldi, and Rotary President Dr. Luke Chachere.

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