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# Listening In

August 16, 2010

## CALL TO ORDER

President **Diane Henderson** "*rang in*" the regular meeting of the Rotary Club of San Rafael at 12:15 p.m.

## PLEDGE AND THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

**Janet Campbell** led us in the pledge of allegiance. As her thought for the day, Janet treated us to a tale of an Irish nun, Irish wisdom and a little Irish whiskey, bringing a chuckle to all (except, apparently, Italian **Mario Ghilotti**, who mistook the story for a sermon).

## VISITING ROTARIANS AND GUESTS

Visiting Rotarians **Alan Dunham** (Novato), **Tim Long** (Terra Linda), **Cal Farnsworth** (Mission San Rafael), and **Susan Marchant Angel** (Mission San Rafael) were welcomed warmly. **Dan Dufficy** introduced his son **Ryan**, and **Joe Shekou** introduced his guest, **Capt. Robert Hagerty** (?), for the second time. **President Diane** shared a couple of nice stories about how often Rotary comes up in her day-to-day life, and in particular honored our visitor Alan Dunham, who, after their first meeting years ago, was instrumental in getting Diane on the GSE team to Austria and the Czech Republic. That was her first introduction to Rotary. You just never know where opportunity will take you!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**President Diane** recognized **PP Maynard Willms** for his birthday and for his 10 years in Rotary, and gave him his past president's pin as well. **Jim Russell** received a new badge, and **Don Violin** received his president-elect pin. **Janice Vela** announced that the next monthly Rotary Manor spaghetti dinner will be on September 3 and asked for 2-4 volunteers to participate. She particularly thanked **Barrett Schaefer** for helping out this month, and Barrett shared a little about his experience that evening. As a relatively new member, Barrett had never been to Rotary Manor, and was truly impressed. He recommended that everyone, especially newer members of our club, participate in this special way to serve our residents and enjoy their company. And speaking of Rotary Manor, **President Diane** announced that on Monday, September 27, we will meet at Rotary Manor for a barbeque in lieu of our regular luncheon meeting. **Pat Burke** asked us to hold Sunday, November 7 for a District 5150 event in Foster City at the Cowne Plaza Hotel. District Governor **Bill Koefoed** has set a

contribution goal of \$150 per Rotarian in our district for the Rotary International Foundation, and is looking for our participation in this "*Puttin' On The Ritz*" evening. Additionally, on October 24 there will be a district wide event to raise \$\$\$ for Polio Plus. Rotary International President **Ray Klingensmith** will lead a walk across the Golden Gate Bridge and down to the Ferry Building, where shortly after sunset President Klingensmith will "*light up the ferry building*" with Rotary's pledge to End Polio Now. And finally, as a treat for this week, **Gary Carter** announced that our monthly fellowship mixer will be this Friday at 5:30 p.m. at BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse in Northgate. Come for the fun!

## FINES AND FUN

**Noralee Monestere** confessed to 3 happy events: her 8/22 birthday, a trip to a statewide conference for symphony orchestras, and her daughter's wedding. Her bellringer entitled her to additionally remind us that we should all join as members of the Marin Symphony, and she made her contribution "*for her many absences and sins*". Proud grandmother **Laura O'Malley** delightedly gave a bellringer to the foundation in honor of grandson **Felix**. **Dennis Thompson** helped out the scholarship fund to commemorate his 8/19 birthday and his 8 years in Rotary. August is apparently a very romantic month: **Gary Frugoli** contributed a dollar a year for the 30 happy years he has been married to **Lori**; **Jack Diego** offered \$41 for his 41 years of wedded bliss with **Vicki**; **Lou Bartolini** and **Marge** have had 19 wonderful years married. **Patricia Sarris**, celebrating her birthday today, embarrassedly tolerated our choral efforts at a rousing round of Happy Birthday to You and paid her fine with the stipulation that "*you never do that to me again!*" **Joe Shekou** had a great fishing trip in beautiful Canada and made an appropriate contribution for his good time. **President Diane** noted that **Mario Ghilotti** is looking healthy and terrific and asked for some words of wisdom. Mario, prefacing his comments by announcing that he will be 88 in December, shared this sage advice for a happy life: have a business or profession you like, a good wife (that is, one who listens to you once in a while), a good doctor, and a good lawyer. The attorneys in the room duly mumbled their appreciation for this remark.

## MARBLE GAME

Secretary **Jeffrey Ehlenback** diligently fined **President Diane** for nearly over-

looking the much anticipated marble game. With only 21 marbles in the bag and \$971 at stake, interest is running high. It's all working out for Diane, however, as **Dennis Thompson** drew a black marble and Diane informed him she'd be over to help Dennis and **Nancy** drink the consolation-prize wine (Diane was a bridesmaid in their wedding and is still sharing wine toasts with them after all these years).

## SPEAKER

**Lou Bartolini** introduced **Matthew Hymel**, Administrator, County of Marin. Mr. Hymel has worked for San Francisco, Oakland and now



Marin, serving as a budget and budget analysis professional for over twenty years. His presentation explored "*The New Economic Reality*" brought about by our current economic downturn. He focused on 4 points: 1) lower revenues from sales and property taxes; 2) 30% of our budgeted revenues come from the state, and that amount is diminishing; 3) stock market losses have hit the county pension fund hard, so our contributions are, as mandated by law, way up; and 4) needs of individuals in the community are much greater. The county needs to be more adaptive to changing fiscal realities, and county workers are implementing steps to reduce our costs. There has been a hiring freeze in place since 2007, and there have been staff reductions, mostly due to attrition. While current pension and retirement benefits are contractual obligations, they are negotiating for lower costs to cover benefits for new hires going forward. As the state continues to shift fiscal responsibility to the counties, we need to find other ways to cover human needs in our communities; therefore, the county is looking to partnering with nonprofits and to tapping into volunteerism to augment county services. Mr. Hymel invited us to go to the County of Marin website and review the 42 page report on the long-term restructuring plan for our county.

Respectfully submitted by  
**Ann Laurence**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug. 23 – **Brigitte Moran**, CEO / Executive Director of Marin Agricultural Institute, AKA the Farmer's Market