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Listening In

August 23, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

President **Diane Henderson**, smiling as ever, started the meeting at 12:15

PLEDGE AND THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Oak Dowling, thespian and former lawyer, led us in the pledge of allegiance and then provided us with a bit of wisdom from Will Rogers to the effect that the US Senate is the only organization to start with a prayer and end with an investigation. Of course that was a long time ago. Today that is more the standard than the unusual.

VISITING ROTARIANS AND GUESTS

Rounds of applause greeted our visiting Rotarians, Asst. District Governor **Nancie Bottmeyer**, and our former member **Bud Marchant**, who has 50+ years of perfect attendance. Now a member of Ross Valley, Bud made a bell ringer donation in memory of his time with our Club and as thanks for his continuing to receive our Club Bulletin.

Oak Dowling introduced his lifetime director, **Mary Dowling** (on hand to make sure Oak got through his speech).

PP **Dan Dufficy**, perennial chair of the scholarship committee, introduced **Hanna McNeil**, a recipient of one of our scholarships this year. She just graduated from SRHS and will be attending UC Davis, where her sister, **Lindsey**, is in law school. Her other sister, **Kerry**, received a scholarship from us in 2006. Kerry just graduated from UCSD. **President Diane** presented Hanna with a check for her scholarship.

FINES

Jim McKinney tried to quietly sneak a large donation to Mini Grants by passing a check to Chair **Bob Marcucci**. Caught in the act, he had to stand and receive the applause of the Club while **Pres. Diane** struck the bell a resounding five times. Thank you Jim. **Tom Davey** just returned from a month long trip to Thailand with banners from three clubs that he visited. In addition, while there, he visited a Rotary water project and stayed at the home of the exchange student that lived with his family for the last year. His visit will be discussed further at a future date, according to Pres. Diane.

Next to be called upon was President-elect **Don Violin**. For the 113th consecutive time, the call came just as Don took a bite of food. This should be referred to the Buck Center for analysis. I am sure it means something. After a

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug. 30 – District Governor

pause, Don, announced that District 5150 was “*Putting on the Ritz*” on November 7, and we should mark our calendars. Also, it is time to think about the Rotary Foundation and making a contribution. To make it easy, you can buy raffle tickets and win a big prize for your donation. See Don for tickets, or go to the District 5150 website for information. (google rotary district 5150). Don returned to his lunch.

Michael Dybeck arose looking tanned. Unfortunately he described it as a Boy Scout camp tan that washes off. Hmm, I will have to think about that one. Anyway, Michael made a donation in honor of the successful completion of another season of Camp Marin in the Sierras. This started a round of muttered “remember whens” from all of the old Boy Scouts scattered around the room.

Not called upon, but sure to be heard from in the future, were **Jack Hunt** who just returned from Rio de Janeiro. He will be talking about “*what I saw on the Ipanema Beach*”. And **Steve Easley** who vacationed at Black Butte in Oregon. He will be discussing “*sight-seeing tours taken while playing golf*”.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Diane thanked the host families of our visitors from Japan, noting that **Laura Bertolli** took them for a ride in her classic convertible in a classic car parade.

Things are hopping around District 5150. On October 24, Rotary International President **Ray Klinginsmith** will lead a walk across the Golden Gate Bridge and then, at the Ferry Building will light up the clock tower in honor of Rotary’s pledge to end polio now. Again, see the District 5150 website for details.

On September 12, the Rotary Club of Ross Valley is holding their annual car show. On September 19, the Rotary Club of West Marin is holding a scenic hike of Point Reyes Seashore.

District Governor Koefed will be speaking to the Club at our meeting on August 30. It is hoped that we will have a large turnout for his talk, always a highlight of the Rotary year.

Fellowship last week was a “*quality*” not “*quantity*” production. Next month we hope to reverse that feature.

MARBLE GAME

Again **President Diane** forgot the game, but that is becoming a tradition. With over \$1,000 at stake, anticipation was high, but **Carolyn Hoffman** went for a black marble. All she got was a promise of a bottle of wine sometime in the future.

SPEAKER

PP, PDG **Lou Bartolini** mumbled an introduction of **Amelia Spilger**, the Director of PR and Advertising at the Agricultural



Institute of Marin, aka Farmer’s Market.

Amelia, a person of energy and charm, described the purpose of the Institute as “*educating the public about nutrition and benefits of buying from local farms*”. They operate 9 farmers markets in the Bay area. Six of them on a year round basis and 3 on a seasonal basis. The Institute has 483 members located in 30 counties in California. Of their members, 207 are farmers or ranchers, 5 are fishermen and 24 are bakeries. The markets are “*Certified Farmers Markets*”, under the 1977 California Direct Marketing Law. Only “*Certified Producers*” can sell their farming and ranching products at their markets. Most of their providers are within a 150 mile radius of the market vs. 1500 miles for normal supermarkets.

She spoke of the educational programs of the Institute. 50-60 tours of the markets and their wares for students during the year and Edu-Advertising in local newspapers and magazines telling the stories of the farmers and craftsmen at their markets. She emphasized that farmers markets enabled people to “*vote with a fork*” to push for more food safety and purity by utilizing their markets. At their markets the customer talks with the farmer, not with a product manager, who talks to a distributor, who talks to a packing house, who talks to the farmer.

Amelia had arranged 5 different apples on each table, organized neatly into a specific order, with an apple slicer, so everybody could taste the current seasonal crop of apples. In order, the apples were: Red Delicious, Pink Pearl, Akane, Gravenstein and Gala. In true Rotary fashion, the orders got mixed up at the tables and no agreement was reached as to the favorite apple of the Club, which of course should have been the Akane.

Question time was exciting. PP **Rick Riede** jumped to his feet to ask a question when PP **Marilyn Riede** held the microphone. The contest of wills between these two powerful personalities over who should speak was intense. As expected Rick lost.

It was an interesting, delicious and exciting presentation.

Chuck Stuckey