



Lamorindan



The Weekly Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Lamorinda
Sunrise

October 12, 2007

Cal Lee — Reporter
David Dickson — Pictures
Kevin Croak/Patti Witalis — Publishers

IT was the real Columbus Day. Nobody noticed.

GUESTS & VISITING ROTARIANS:

Mike Maysuryants - Venera's son
Alicia Maysuryants - Venera's daughter (and please forgive me if I got the name wrong. Pretty please?)
Susan Hahn - Lafayette's head of Senior Services
Larry Ducent - Lafayette Club President and general kibitzer of our doings.
Anna Connelly - Lafayette Club Board member, trying to keep Larry out of trouble.
Katie Rose Ware - Sellin' those raffle tickets
Simone Raeth - still draggin' papa Thomas to the meetings
Ulrich Luscher - Joanne's significant other
Linda McCowan - here because it was the only way to get Skip to take her to pick up her car at the BART station.
Rolf Meyerhoffer - Deutschland

BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES & OTHER NOTEWORTHY STUFF:

Hays Englehart won a "long ball" contest against Brad Davis (the fewer details about that, the better), won 1st place in a golf tournament (in the "Still Breathing But Noone Knows How" flight), and won a trip to Vancouver (B.C., not WA) in the Foundation Day raffle. It could not be established how much Hays thought such accomplishments to be worth, but they did cause King Paul to ask the immortal question: "Who has the receptacle?" (I just report it, I don't make it up.) Paul Bettelheim must have the proverbial Dorian Grey portrait hanging somewhere, because he certainly doesn't look the 60 he claims he just turned. He celebrated by taking the whole Bettelheim clan to Hawaii for a week (notice he didn't bring any of us - harumph harumph), for which he graciously and voluntarily contributed \$50 to the general coffers and another \$100 to the Club's Endowment Fund. Chuck Kenney's anniversary was deemed to be worth \$20 (anniversary of what was left decidedly vague). Meanwhile, Ernie Furtado came up for air and 'fessed up to Barb's birthday and anniversary (also with Barb - what a coincidence), both of which somehow involved snow and wussing out on a bike ride. But wait (said in my best Ron Popiel voice) there's more. As we have noticed, Ernie has been on the road lately - a lot. Now we know why. He was doing dog-and-pony shows for various folks all over the country. Don't know if it was the dog or the pony that made the difference, but the efforts paid off and the company for which Ernie toils and is a major mucky-muck has gone public. Way to go, Ernie. In recognition of all these neat-o things in his life, Ernie matched Paul B.'s largesse. Meanwhile, John Fazel dropped by to (1) give us a banner from the Surprise Valley (CA) Rotary Club, located in Cedarville. (Go north from Alturas, turn right on the last paved road in California, and keep going for a while.) John also had an anniversary. John apparently has not been paying attention, as he tried to find out what fiscal damage would be done to him for these transgressions, whereupon King Paul gently reminded John that we are on the "honor system" now. John thereupon promptly and cheerfully contributed an amount consistent with his sense of honor.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Our website Calendar (<http://www.rotarycoco.org/cgi-bin/caldisp.pl?club=53>) will have even more info, but here is a fair sampling:

Friday, October 19, 2007: Meeting, Postino - Why You Should, at all costs, go to the International Rotary Convention in Los Angeles next June 15 to 18. (One reason is that Salt Lake City's convention was so exciting. Two fellow Rotarians from Winters will tell us all about it.)

Saturday, October 20, 2007: Help the kids of the Garden Park Apartments carve their own pumpkins. 2:00 p.m. This is an easy, fun way to make a difference in a kid's life. Contact Brad Davis to help out.

Friday October 26, 2007: Meeting, Postino - Another installment of the Oscar, Emmy, Tony, Golden Globe and Razzie Award winning series, EXPOSE YOURSELF! This month's victims . . . er, honorees, will feature the best of the newish members and the best of the slightly less newish members: Joe Masciantonio and Don Reichert. We have it on good authority that transmissions and scaffolds will be prominently featured.

Friday, October 26, 2007: TGITLFOTM. 5:30-??? It's happening at somebody's house, and odds are somebody will tell us at whose at some point before the festivities.



Thursday, April 24 to Saturday. April 26, 2008: District 5160 Annual District Conference. Radisson Hotel, 500 Leisure Lane, Sacramento. More info, registration forms, hotel information, and event brochures are available on the District 5160 website.



IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN:

Every year, Brad Davis picks up a bunch of pumpkins at Westival and takes them to the Garden Park Apartments (the transitional housing facility started by the Inter-Faith Council that we have been supporting) so the kids there can have fun carving their own jack-o-lanterns. This year, he'll be doing the honors on Saturday, October 20 at 2:00 p.m.. You should be there - it's one of the great feel-good projects of the Rotary year. Contact Brad for more info and to sign up

LAFAYETTE IS GETTING OLDER:

No, not the Marquis (he stopped getting older some time ago) and not the town (well, it is, but that's not what I meant). It's the population of Lafayette that is aging, right along with the rest of the country. As of now, about 20% of Lafayette's residents are age 55+, and that percentage is increasing all the time. That has some potentially major impacts on city services. And so, Susan Hahn, Lafayette's person in charge of Senior Services, stopped by to recruit for the now-forming Senior Needs Task Force, a group that will represent many wings of the Lafayette community and focus on identifying the future needs of this growing segment of the population and the related needs of the community at large, and then developing recommendations for the City Council and the City Staff to address those needs. Ms. Hahn announced that the proposed make-up of the this Task Force includes one Rotarian. Any takers?



WELCOMING BACK, OLD FRIEND:

Back in 1996, District 5160 had a Group Study Exchange with a District in Germany. Our District's team leader? None other than our very own Thomas Raeth. Today, his German counterpart, Rolf Meyerhoffer, came to visit and renew our acquaintance as part of a 5 week vacation. Rolf hails from western Germany, near the French border, and he enticed us to visit by mentioning the superb wines his area produces. He also invited us to visit his Club, now 24 years old, and generally was a prime example of the kind of one-on-one connections across language and cultural barriers that Rotary is so good at creating. Great to see you, Herr Meyerhoffer. You are welcome here anytime, and we hope some of our members can come sample some of that wine and visit your Club.



BON VOYAGE, OLD FRIEND:



Mike Edwards has been livin' it up and gettin' down in Paris of late. So much so, that he apparently needed to someone to throw bail for him. That's the only reason I can come up with for Pat Flaharty to just pack up and run off to Paris at Mike's behest. (What, you think there's some innocent explanation, like Pat lives right by Mike and Kathleen and they invited him to come join them for a visit? Yeah, right.)

In any event, Prez Paul reported in Pat's absence that Pat reports that all 15 of the International Convention rooms he reserved for us are now spoken for (many thanks) but there is still plenty o' time to get in on the fun of the Convention. Talk to Pat for details - when he gets back from rescuing Monsieur Edwards from the gendarmerie.



GET BETTER, OLD FRIEND:

John Linnemann has apparently had run of less-than-perfect health and landed himself in a hospital. Nothing too serious, we are informed, but enough so that we all wanted to take a moment to send our best wishes, John and Connie.



FOUNDATION DAY REPORT:

Cal Lee reported that Foundation Day officially came off without any significant hitches. The dignitaries were suitably dignified, the raffled items were suitably raffled (with the possible exception of the winner of the trip to Vancouver), and, most important, money was raised for the Rotary Foundation. Also, Cal reports that he had a marvelous driving our Peace Scholar, Domingo Gutierrez of Venezuela, to and from said event, and further reports that Domingo is a personable, well-informed, delightful traveling companion. So if you have a chance to spend some time with him, you should. With Domingo, that is. Well, with Cal, too, but he meant Domingo. Cal, that is, meant Domingo. I'll stop now.



SEEING AMERICA, ZUZKA STYLE:

No time for a Zuzka report this week, so we will await next week's two-fer with bated breath..



PROGRAM/ Common Hope Project/ Skip McCowan

Back in 1984, a couple from Minnesota went to Guatemala with the idea of working through an existing charitable organization to help raise the living standards of the average (read: impoverished) Guatemalan. This was a time of constant civil war in that country, and it didn't take long for this couple to be "invited" to leave. It isn't clear whether it was government troops or rebels that issued the invitation, but one generally accepts such invitations quickly and without asking questions when they are delivered by bands of armed men. So they left. But they didn't stay away. When they came back, they started their own project, first called the Godchild Project, now called Common Hope, and now run by the couple's son. Today, Skip McCowan updated us on this project, one in which Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary has proudly participated for a number of years. (Past and current LSR members who have traveled to near Antigua, Guatemala, to roll up their sleeves and get to work include Skip, Tay Wheeler, Susan Cowell, Patti Witalis, and Bob Schwein, LSR Past President and the person most responsible for hooking us in with this great program.) The mission of Common Hope is to improve the living conditions and expand the options of the people it serves. The lodestar around which these efforts all center is education. Common Hope's basic stock in trade is educational opportunities for the children. Thus Common Hope now supports 1,200 primary school and 900 high school students - this represents an astronomical increase in the number of village and rural children who have access to an education in the area, compared to pre-Common Hope days. 48% of Common Hope's high school graduates enroll at the university level, numbers that would have been unthinkable only a few years ago. Children who previously would have been forced by circumstances to be subsistence farmers - or be forced to fight for or against the government in the late, unlamented civil war - have now become doctors, engineers, and other professionals. Without Common Hope, this simply could not have happened. But Common Hope does more than run a couple of schools. The great insight of the program is the realization that kids cannot learn if they are sick, or if their teeth are rotting in their heads, or if they have only a lean-to with a dirt floor to live in, or if the family is torn apart by alcoholism. Thus there are medical and dental facilities. Thus Common Hope builds houses for families -



Shopping!!

- tiny by our standards, but the lap of luxury by the standards of the region. To make sure that the families are truly committed, none of these services are free - but instead of money, the parents put in "sweat equity" by helping to build and run the various facilities. And now, Common Hope is well launched on its most ambitious program: New Hope Village. Think of it as a planned community in what would otherwise be an incredibly poor area. Skip showed us the beauty of this region around Antigua and the incredibly heart-warming success story that is Common Hope through photographs, including photos of LSR members working and having a great time together helping to expand Common Hope's facilities. He showed us the incredible natural beauty, the unique charm of Antigua, the dire poverty most of these people endure, and the strides Common Hope is making in breaking the pattern for an increasing number of people.

Vision Team Dorm



A simple system for clean water

Sorting coffee beans for roasting Kids @ New Hope School



New Hope Village



And guess what? You can be a part of this success story. Continuing the commitment to Common Hope that Bob Schwein began, Skip will be leading a team to the Common Hope facilities for a hands-on work party in just over a year - October 31-November 8, 2008. The cost will be roughly \$1,200 per person all-in - that should even include the airfare. In times past, LSR teams have built houses, put together chicken coops (these folks need more protein in their diets), built the specially-designed cook stoves (instead of the terribly ventilated, dangerous open stoves the people used to use), an myriad other needed tasks. What will you be doing this time? Whatever it is, it will be an important part of an ever-expanding and highly successful effort to improve life and expand options to an entire area. You'll get to see incredible scenery and meet wonderful local residents (like Don Filberto, who every day had to go back and forth between his home and his farm up the mountain while balancing the demands of the government forces against the demands of the armed rebels). But mostly you'll experience the very best that Rotary has to offer, that incredible feeling that comes from knowing you have made a positive difference in the world and have done it with tremendous people.

Interested? Contact Skip. Although this trip is a year away, there is planning that has to get done now. And thanks for reminding us about Common Hope, Skip. It's a great organization to work with.



Briefly Noted

By Paul

Wow, what a game! Cal 28, OSU 31.

Ernie Furtado gave me 2 adult & 2 youth tickets to the game at Friday morning's meeting so we called our granddaughters. It was their turn because two weeks before I had taken our two grandsons to Dave Watson's car show in Danville. There were about 200 cars there worth about \$100 million. It was eye candy for our 9 and 11 year-old car nuts.

Early in Saturday's game we heard LSU had lost to Kentucky. That meant if Cal won they could be the #1 rated team in the country!

Glenda and I had mixed emotions. We both went to Oregon State. Our senior year, OSU *didn't score a point* until their sixth game of the season. So to see them as such a strong contender was very exciting. But having lived here 43 years and in Corvallis only four, our hearts were with Cal.

In the last 14 seconds Cal blew it—they could have won or at least tied the game and gone into overtime. The 63,000+ fans were stunned. What had happened? We kept looking at the clock, "00". The game was over. There must be a mistake. One small wedge of black and orange fans at the far end of the field was going nuts. The rest of the stadium stood dumb-founded.

The inexperienced quarterback had made a mistake. Freshman Kevin Riley, his first game as a starting quarterback, had done a terrific job during the rest of the game. But then, one big mistake. One sports writer attributed it to a lack of experience.

Isn't it wonderful how sports are such a good metaphor for life? Experience is worth a lot.

Our Rotary club is an exceptional group. Collectively we have a lot of life experiences. Coming home, I fantasized about being the quarterback of our team. I've been around the barn more times than most of you (to mix a metaphor) so with all that experience I feel I should be connecting with more of you, gaining more yardage, completing more touchdown passes.

So I committed myself to making better plays, using more players and having more fun.

See you Friday. It's going to be a good one. Bring a friend!