



Lamorindan



The Weekly Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Lamorinda Sunrise
Meetings Friday 7AM at Postino's Restaurant in Lafayette

December 7, 2007

Dave Dickson — Pictures
Cal Lee—Editor

Kevin Croak & Patti Witalis — Publishers

QUICK IMPERTINENCE

Jim Brencic gave a thought so brief that even this scribe could take it down, for once. The only nice thing about being impertinent is that it's a joy to others.



LENGTHY START

Nothing like a change in routine to gum up a well-oiled machine. The breakfast setup allowed only a single line of starving Rotarians, so every time someone fumbled around serving him/herself there were grumblings from the rear. The breakfast tables were in an unusual, uh, configuration, with a lot of wine glasses around. And the Prez relived his absence last week by recounting 40 miles on the road to Rancho La Porta, describing the San Diego fire scene with his usual zest.

MERCIFULLY QUICK JOKE

According to Rod Ford-Smith, Johnny came home from Bible School. He'd learned a new chapter about making coffee: HE-BREWS. Hope this is politically correct.

FROM THE RIDICULOUS ...

Birthdays & anniversaries: None.

Gillette Johnson, the always black-clad Sgt-at-Arms, will check us for pins next week. Of course, he wasn't wearing his this week.





Kevin Croak got a Standing O for making his entrance late (but no later than usual).

Paul Bettelheim was requested to give a report on his TGITLFOTM. He's still thinking about it.

Buddy Burke, asked what a picture of him with the Governor autographed by Dr. Bettelheim is worth to him, said \$1,000.

Don Reichert said we should all visit other clubs because you keep running into everyone, such as when he ran into John Fazel this week at Safeway with a cart full of TP.

Chuck Yeager engineered a unanimous vote for the new Bylaws without showing them to anyone.

Mike Edwards urged everyone to sign up for the Christmas Party on Wednesday. Other than not being sure of the time or location, he's right on top of it.



... TO THE SUBLIME



Chuck Kenney received an award which may have been the "Always There" award or the "Marquis de Lafayette Outstanding Service" Award. The Prez was somewhat ambiguous on this point -- how unusual. But there's no ambiguity about how Chuck deserves the award, as he has his fingerprints, toeprints, and every other kind of prints all over virtually every project. He also is extraordinarily generous with his tax advice. Hopefully receiving this Award (whatever it is) will make his leg feel ever so much better.

Steve Ware announced we're helping adopt 30 families this Christmas working with the Salvation Army and Stanley School by transporting contributed items from Lafayette to Clayton Road.

Charlie Franklin responded that we're also helping SF Jail prisoners by sending extra books from the Friends of Lafayette Library sale.

Charlie also thanked those who participated in the Blue Star Moms event, where 4,100 boxes were packed by 312 volunteers (not quite all of them were Rotarians). Special thanks to Mike Edwards who stayed the longest.

And she's not here yet, but next week we will have the truly sublime -- Linda Watson, world renowned soprano (which you certainly would have guessed knowing who her brother is).



MAYBE RIDICULOUS, MAYBE SUBLIME

Chuck Kenney reminded of the Reno Train Trip January 13 and 14. Surely we don't think that a certain member's fetish with Chicken In The Pot is ridiculous.

Speaking of George Chaffey, he spoke of another formation of an evening club being in the wind. This would benefit all the area clubs. Stay tuned.

DEFINITELY HEROIC

Michael deBoisblanc, Campolindo and UC Davis grad and John Muir employee, told of his experiences in Tikrit, Iraq, as a physician.



First he clarified why we're there. First, to protect oil, and second, to have someplace to move our troops out of Saudi Arabia. Iraq is the ideal spot because it's in the very center of the Middle East.

Michael had the pleasure of being stationed at the top of the Sunni Triangle, where the most action takes place. The only two beautiful times are sunrise and sunset. Otherwise, it's just plain ugly. The desert is nothing but black sand. All life is along the Tigris and the Euphrates. A dust storm lasts 12 to 18 hours. Heat is up to 130°, with constant wind.

About 200 people are deployed in the hospital facility, including a handful of physicians. There are 5 big medical units like this one in Iraq, and a number of smaller ones. This facility was formerly Saddam's old air force academy. Patients are brought in by air, not ambulance. (A Red Cross helicopter itself is a prime target.) The hospital can do 15 simultaneous resuscitations, but the space is limited, although the equipment is modern. The CT scanner was better than John Muir's -- but finding knowledgeable people to run it or repair it was the tough part.

Michael's job was to stop the bleeding. Whole blood, mixed with donated blood, was used with magical effect. (It isn't used here because of infection potential.) Supply was an ongoing problem.

Typically patients were stabilized for 48 hours, then sent elsewhere. They (especially burn patients) would be elaborately "packaged up" with all kinds of protective items when being sent out. Oxygen tanks had to be refilled every 45 minutes, so the hospitals tended to be 45 minutes apart.

90% of the patients are Iraqis, as they have virtually no medical facilities. The hospital takes on all comers, including insurgents.

The Surge caused a great increase in casualties when Michael was there, but he's heard that since October they have plummeted by 50%.

He showed a few slides of camaraderie, but mostly this was not a fun assignment. But regardless of views about the war, there's no denying that truly heroic work is being done in that, well, what's the proper word? Hell-hole?



VISITING ROTARIANS

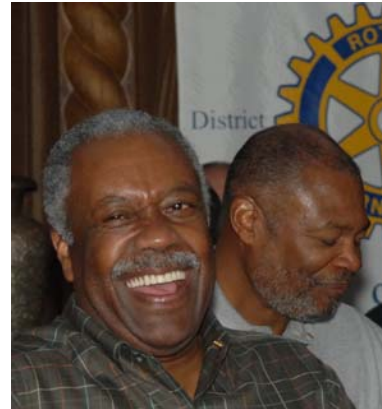
Larry Duson, Lafayette president
Anna Connolly, Lafayette
Angelo Constanza, Moraga
Dave (not Hays) Englehart, Orinda
Bill Pugh, Benicia

GUESTS

Ron Brown, 2nd visit
Holly Burke, lotsa visits

UPCOMING

12/11: Board Meeting, Lafayette Park Hotel
12/12: Family Christmas Party, Frank's Church, 5:30
12/14: Linda Watson, soprano
12/21: Christmas musical festivities
12/28: Scott Denison, Gen Mgr, Dean Lesher Center
1/4: Jim Marggraff, new invention replacing lap top?
1/13-14: Reno Train Trip
1/18: Richard Bolles, best-selling author, job hunting
1/25: More exposure: Rod Ford-Smith and Steve Ware
4/24: District Conference, Sacramento
6/15 - 6/18: Rotary International Convention, Los Angeles



Briefly Noted

By Paul

Getting away for a short vacation this time of year, like I just did, is mighty invigorating. You think of all the things you should have done and all the things you want to do in the future. Then, when you get out of the hot tub, you forget them all.

It's good to forget the mistakes and regrets but frustrating to forget all the good intentions.

For example forgetting to tell all of you what a good Rotary Club you collectively make here at Lamorinda Sunrise.

What a great list of projects and man/woman hours you put in that makes such a difference in this community and which I forget to acknowledge at our weekly meetings.

What a spirit you generate at our meetings, work projects and social events that incorporates such fun humor goodwill and (dare I say it) love that I also forget to acknowledge.

Yes, we have a good thing going here. When you step back for a week or visit another club, you see it more clearly and appreciate it more genuinely.

So before I get too mushy, go out and do all those Holiday things that makes this such a frantic time of year but don't forget to come to our Christmas Party at Frank's church, Wednesday at 6PM—and bring your kids, or someone else's kids!

Cheers,

Paul

