

**ROTARY CLUB of HEALDSBURG SUNRISE
TAYMAN PARK
MEETING SUMMARY**

DATE: Wednesday, 16 March 2016

ATTENDANCE: 32/46 70%

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Tom Hartfield led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag

ROTARY MOMENT/INSPIRATION:

Lee Morton (in place of James Gore) offered the following two insights:

Sometimes I drink a glass of water just to surprise my liver.

Advice is what we ask for when we already know the answer but wish we didn't.
Erica Jong

SINGING:

Attendees were given 2 opportunities for singing. A surprise *Happy Birthday To You* was offered to Archie Julian. It was also a surprise that our guest speaker was a bona fide Irishman who helped with singing *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*. In the true Irish tradition, everyone had a good time with singing or a reasonable facsimile thereof.

GUESTS:

1. Myriah Volk, Shoes4Kidz, special guest of George Dutton.
2. Mike Mullins, Dean, Empire School of Law and former Sonoma County District Atty.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Pres. Lee had members stand who were not wearing their **Rotary pins**. Each was asked to contribute five dollars to Polio Plus.
2. **George Lawson** reported that club member, **Colleen Householder**, has had surgery for cancer. He requested that members think of her and offer prayers for her recovery. She will be out for a couple of weeks following her surgery.
3. **Shawn McCaffrey** reminded members of the **St. Patrick's Day festivities** to be held tomorrow. A parade starts at 630 at Sanderson Ford. Our club is sponsoring a concert of Celtic music by Green Band from noon until 1 o'clock in the Plaza. Members are encouraged to attend and spread the message about Rotary and our activities in the community.
4. **Carla Howell** reports on the **Anniversary Dinner**, to be held on Friday evening, April 1 at the Hudson Street winery. Members who have not yet

registered are encouraged to go to the club website and register for this event. Members are reminded to wear their jester hats. The event is being catered by Sally Tomatoes.

5. **Diane Bucher** reports that the drawing for our Wine And Dine event will be held this evening at a club social being held at Cousteau bakery starting at 5:30 PM.
6. **Manuel Ramos** brought before the group the story of a loss of a six month old child by a local employee at Safeway. The family is being overwhelmed with medical and funeral expenses. He provided a website where members can go to donate to help defray the expenses of this local Healdsburg family. <https://www.youcaring.com/erin-and-thailer-polly-guantong-537728#.VuTMYIMAuQw.facebook>
7. **Shaun Shields** as usual, exhorted members to contribute generously to our **Change For Change** Boxes to help eradicate polio.
8. The **District Conference** is being held at Mendocino Junior College in Ukiah on Saturday, nine April. Members are encouraged to attend, particularly if you are a in a leadership position on a committee or a club officer. There is also a dinner the evening preceding this. Elizabeth Gore, Jim Gore's wife, will be the keynote speaker for the event.
9. Special recognition was given to **Brad Benson and the students at the Rio Lindo Academy** culinary department for providing scrambled eggs and potatoes as the heart portion of our meal this morning.

RECOGNITIONS:

Archie Julian, who celebrated his 66th birthday today generously made a contribution to the foundation. He also presented members with a challenge: guess whether the dollar value of coins in a large jar was above or below \$100. Those members who chose erroneously are asked to donate five dollars to the club. At the time of the meeting the amount was not known to Archie but subsequently was shown to be in excess of \$115. Some win, some pay, nobody loses!

RAFFLE:

Dan Erickson was the lucky holder of the winning ticket. He was not so lucky when it came to reading the mind of Lee Morton. The pot continues to grow!

BRIEF PRESENTATION:

Myriah Volk, a graduate of Healdsburg High School who now works as a physical education teacher at a charter school in Sebastopol presented a summary of a nonprofit she has founded named **Shoes for Kidz**. She saw a need for proper footwear for students in her classes and went to a website, Go Fund Me to try to raise money. She was unbelievably successful with this and raised over \$4,000 in just four months. Her efforts were picked up by the

Santa Rosa Press Democrat, which led to speaking opportunities at numerous service clubs. At one club, a member/attorney (Brian Noble) offered *pro bono* services to establish a nonprofit corporation which was completed last year. Since that time, she has distributed over 200 pairs of shoes to students. Not only did the shoes improve athletic performance and willingness to participate in physical activity, but they also greatly improved the student's self-image and belief in themselves that they can be a success. Members interested in her program and possibly donating should visit shoes4kidz.com. Myriah is also considering becoming a member of the Rotary club of Healdsburg sunrise.

PROGRAM:

Mike Mullins, Dean of Empire Law School and former District Attorney for Sonoma County gave a presentation on the current factors that are influencing the production of lawyers and their future roles in Sonoma County as well as in society.

Mike has been the Dean of the Empire Law School for approximately one year. The law school has been in existence for 42 years and currently has an enrollment of 104 students. It is a four-year law school, accredited by the California Bar Association. Classes are held at night and graduates are qualified to sit for the bar examination presented by the California Bar Association. It is not an American Bar Association accredited school. Approximately 25% of the lawyers practicing in Sonoma County are graduates of the Empire Law School.

There has been a decrease in the number of students enrolled in law schools throughout the state. A large part of this is related to the increasing expense of obtaining a law degree. A typical student graduating from the Jefferson School of Law in Southern California comes out with a debt of approximately \$153,000. Empire law school is more affordable, with costs averaging approximately \$65,000 for the four-year program. Contrary to popular belief, the average salary for lawyers is generally under \$60,000-\$65,000 per year. Upon graduation from either type of school, graduates are allowed to sit for the bar examination, in the past a grueling three day experience that has been streamlined to a two day event. Approximately 20-40% of applicants pass the examination on their first sitting. Over 75% of Empire law school students have passed the bar examination within five years of graduation.

In order to make legal education more relevant, many law schools are incorporating "practical" training in their curriculums. This entails 50 hours of *pro bono* (free) work under the guidance of an instructor, either a judge or a lawyer, in which they learn the intricacies of actually working in

a live situation and talking directly with clients. This is a great opportunity for most started to learn how to listen.

The nature of law practice is changing. It is uncommon for current graduates to become associates in large practices with the hope of eventually becoming partners. Instead, students are moving towards loosely affiliated groups of independent lawyers each with a separate area of interest. They share office space, staff and other resources. They will collaborate amongst themselves or seek outside expert counsel in matters outside their areas of specialty knowledge. Some businesses have taken the position of having "in-house counsel" to help deal with the day-to-day legal issues that may come up in their business. This is proving to be a satisfactory work relationship for many recent graduates.

A new classification of "Legal Technician" has been accepted by the Bar Association. These individuals are not actually lawyers, but have considerable knowledge in creating and reviewing documents and can actually provide much legal service at a lower cost, while they work under the supervision of a qualified attorney.

The increased use of templated documents, e.g. Legal Zoom, has helped to streamline some of the legal processes, however Mr. Mullins cautioned against relying completely on the content and appropriateness of these documents for a specific clients needs. They do help to reduce the cost of preparing documents.

As Dean of the law school, he personally interviews each student who is seeking a position, to determine whether or not the law is the area of work in which he wants to spend his life. The great emphasis within the legal profession, particularly those that graduate from Empire Law school, is a provision of *pro bono* work as part of community service throughout their careers. Because of the enormous amount of time and dedication that must be put into obtaining a law degree, Empire law school wants to be sure that its students are indeed going to benefit both from the expense and from the training that they receive.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, 23 March 2016
Hood Dreisbach, Oak Mound Cemetary

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Pile, Club Secretary