

**HEALDSBURG ROTARY SUNRISE CLUB
KRUG EVENT CENTER
MEETING SUMMARY**

DATE: Wednesday, 16 September 2015

ATTENDANCE: 31/48 64.58%

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Philippe Hobson led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance

ROTARY MOMENT/INSPIRATION:

Jay Beckwith provided two quotations:

I reached the age where my brain went from "you probably shouldn't say that" to "what the hell, let's see what happens!"

From Stephen Colbert: *Sleep is the new sex and I'm not getting that either.*

SINGING:

California Here I Come was sung by the group with their usual enthusiasm.

GUESTS:

1. Vince Doherty, Special Guest of George Dutton
2. Christine Webster, Guest of Jay Beckwith
3. Joe Heien, grandson of Jim Brenton, evacuee from Valley Fire
4. Don McEnhill, program speaker, Russian River Keepers

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Pam Moulton presented pictures from the **Valley Fire** along with a request that members of the club consider donating to the **relief fund** through our Sunrise Foundation. Over \$1,600 was pledged.

At the Combined Board of Directors meeting following our regular meeting it was recommended that all members, including those who were not at the meeting today, consider donating generously to a fire relief fund within our Sunrise Foundation. All money collected will be sent from our 501(c)(3) corporation to the Redwood credit Union 501(c)(3) corporation that is being established to receive and disburse funds. The Redwood credit Union has generously donated all of the legal, accounting and administrative costs of managing this money so every penny that is donated will go towards relief.

2. Pres. Lee reminded members of the **Foss Creek Cleanup** to be held this Saturday starting at 8 AM with breakfast behind the Bear Republic. Work details will start at 8:30 AM and lunch will be served between 12 o'clock and 12:30 PM.
3. The **CHOICES PROGRAM** will need to be delayed because of difficulty obtaining the license and supplies. Future dates will be brought before the group by Lance Cottrell in the next 1-2 weeks.

4. The **Chamber of Commerce** meeting on the Plaza has been canceled because of forecasted rain. Future date has yet to be established. This was to have been held this evening.

5. Pres. Lee presented gifts to past president Pam Moulton and President-elect Brad Benson for their services in chairing our weekly meetings in his absence on a trip to Alaska. This trip was recognized grandly.

6. A letter was circulated to the membership regarding the relationship that developed between one of the **Wonder League** players and his "buddy" from earlier this year. Our program is working to foster a wider sense of community. (*Copy of letter is attached to this summary*)

6. **The monthly SCARC dinner** will be held on **Thursday, 24 September** at the Highland Dell Lodge in Monte Rio, California starting at 5:30 PM. Members wishing to attend should contact Doug Pile to have their name put on a list. Carpooling can be arranged if there are enough members planning to attend. (*Flyer attached*)

RECOGNITIONS:

George Dutton was recognized for his wife Karen's forthcoming birthday.

Jack Vallerga reminded members to keep supporting Polio Plus along with encouraging members to participate, through the Club, in monetary donations for relief of the Valley Fire victims.

Ann Marie Montecucollo has recently returned from a three week trip to Italy. She brought back a pencil, an essential tool of the trade, for President Lee Morton.

RAFFLE:

Doug Pile held the winning ticket but was unable to correctly identify a number that President Lee had written on a piece of paper on the podium. He wasn't even close! Free breakfast next week.

PROGRAM:

Don McEnhill from the Russian River Water Keeper Association presented an overview of water and its central role in the economy and quality of life in Sonoma County. He tied this with climate change and left the group with the message that we need to do all we can NOW to both conserve our water and find ways of reclaiming the water that we have used as well as the water that is increasingly flowing through the Russian River to the ocean without recharging the aquifers.

The Russian River Keeper organization is locally funded. They are members of the International Water Keeper Association and the California Coast Water Keeper Association. The Russian River is essential for the future water supply of Sonoma County. As such, the Russian River waterway is one of the most important community assets that we have. Nine out of 10 jobs require water in Sonoma County. The River and its tributaries support a very diverse collection of plants and animals that form one of the tourism draws to our area. The river also adds to our quality of life with recreation, fishing, canoeing, swimming, and joyful vacations.

Water is increasingly a worldwide problem that is aggravated by climate change. In developed countries, much of the groundwater is being channeled off without an opportunity to soak into the ground as we pave over more and more areas. The increased storm sewage that enters the rivers and tributaries increases the rate of flow of the river leading to increased erosion and dropping of the riverbed, which in turn drops the level of the water table. With the rapid flow of water comes an increased risk of flooding.

In the middle reach of the Russian River alone, an area stretching from just south of Dry Creek to Wohler Bridge there has been a loss of nearly 2,300 acres of catchment area in the past 30 years. If this land were available for overflow of the river, it could recharge the aquifer with as much water as is drawn from Lake Sonoma on a regular basis. It would also provide habitat for salmon and steelhead as well as other creatures living in a riparian environment.

Economic analysis shows that the economic consequences of flooding are equal to or greater than the economic consequences of droughts or earthquakes. We are likely to have more floods as climate change brings about less frequent storms, but storms that are much more powerful than they have been in the past which will lead to much higher rates of runoff and movement of water. With hotter temperatures and less steady rain, vegetation will tend to be drier and fires more likely to occur and to burn hotter increasing damage to the environment.

He suggested 4 strategies to help solve our problems with inadequate amounts of water on a steady basis:

We need to **prioritize water conservation**. Even though we may have good rains and storage capacity, the population of California is likely to increase by another 20-30% in the next 30 years, and we do not have enough water capacity even in good years with our present system to sustain that population.

We need to develop programs to **increase groundwater recharging**. This involves slowing down the river by widening channels and developing catchment basins to take water at times of peak flow. Not only would this recharge the aquifers but would also stop downstream erosion.

We need to **stop polluting the water** by taking all of our industrial and commercial as well as yard waste products off the street where they run into our storm sewers and instead dispose of them properly.

We need to **conserve what riparian areas currently exist as well as expand the area for riparian growth**. Increased riparian areas lead to a richer nutrient supply for wildlife and as a consequence healthier populations of fish and riparian mammals.

Already Healdsburg High School, Cloverdale High School and El Mulino High School are participating in the *Clean Campus/Clean Creeks* in which they build rain gardens on their campuses and at their homes along with bio-swales to prevent water from reaching storm sewers and to percolate downward into the ground for aquifer recharging. New real estate developments in the county are being encouraged to develop along these lines as well.

The possibilities exist for adequate water supplies to be present in Sonoma County with just a few simple steps to be taken over the next 10-15 years. Now is the time to start this process.

Don closed with a quote:

Our memory is incredibly short. We're busy people. We have busy lives. We have so many distractions. It is so easy to forget two or three years from now the drought we are in today.

More information is available at russianriverkeeper.org. Don can be reached at don@russianriverkeeper.org.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday , 23 September 2015

Keith Woods, North Coast Builders Exchange

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Pile, Club Secretary