



Award Winning

Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter

September 16, 2009

Official Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Malibu

Malibu Rotary Club President Holmes Osborne III

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Edited by Dr. John W. Elman

Pictures by Dr John W. Elman

In This Issue (click underlined topics for weblink when connected to the Internet)

**Last Week's Malibu Rotary Club Meeting September 16 Jonathan Light
"Cultural Encyclopedia of Baseball"**

- **Other News and Guests from the Last Malibu Rotary Club Meeting**
- **Next Week's Malibu Rotary Club Meeting Wednesday September 23
Vitelio Aguilar Talks about the "Family Crisis Center" in Fireside
Room of Pepperdine University at 7:30 a.m.**
- **Project TRIUMPH**
- **Don't Forget the Syvertsen Deal!**

Malibu Rotary Club Website: www.MalibuRotary.org

Rotary International Website: www.Rotary.org

Rotary District 5280 Website: www.rotary5280la.org

Rotary District 5280 "Rotarians Doing Business With Rotarians" Website: <http://yp5280.org/>

RI President (2009-2010) John Kenny

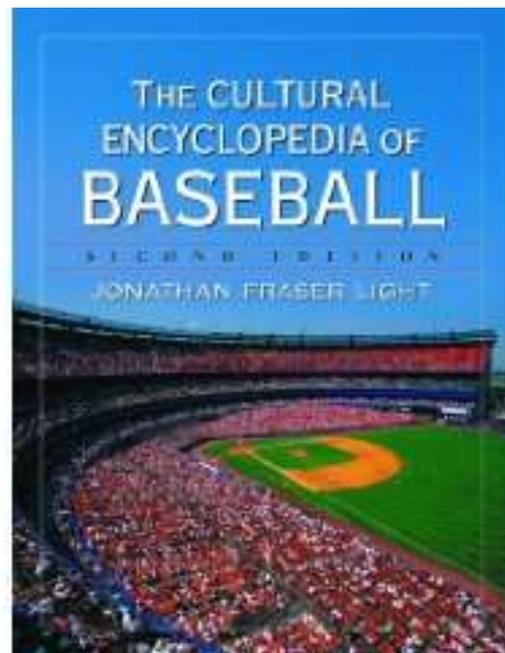
Rotary District 5280 Governor (2009-2010): Suzanne Sundberg

are.

Jonathan Light and the "Cultural Encyclopedia of Baseball"

If you ever wanted to know anything about baseball, who started it, the Negro leagues, the stadiums, the personalities of famous players and owners, why the baseball Hall of Fame is in Cooperstown, and see incredible pictures of all the important people, places and events, you should have been at the Malibu Rotary Club on September 16th, because that is when Jonathan Light talked about two monumental books he has written *The Cultural Encyclopedia of Baseball* 1st edition, and 2nd edition.

Jonathan, who prefers to be called John, was able to get into the local sports scene because his father was Robert Light, who besides being the first U. S. Armed Forces Network Radio broadcaster, signing the network on the air during WWII, was also president of the Southern California Broadcasters Association until 1979. He generally could get tickets for any sports event, and Jonathan always loved the lore of baseball.





The picture of Jonathan to the left is in front of a photo taken in 1965 when his Robert Light, as President of the Southern California Broadcasters Association presented Dodger announcer Vin Scully one of his many awards, this one after calling Sandy Koufax's perfect game.

Not only does the book have many anecdotes about baseball, but one also learns about other aspects of American culture as well, especially about racial segregation and certain seminal people like Jackie Robinson, who was a UCLA track, football and baseball star in the 1940s, as well as a war veteran, who was picked by Dodger owner Branch Ricky, not only because of his athletic prowess but because of his personality and resolve. From 1942 to 1944, Robinson served as a

second lieutenant in the United States Army. He never saw combat, however; Robinson was arrested and court-martialed during boot camp after he refused to move to the back of a segregated bus during training. He was later acquitted of the charges and received an honorable discharge. His courage and moral objection to segregation were precursors to the impact Robinson would have in major league baseball. Rickey knew there would be difficult times ahead for the young athlete, and made Robinson promise to not fight back when confronted with racism. From the beginning of his career with the Dodgers, Robinson's will was tested. Even some of his new teammates objected to having an African-American on their team. People in the crowds sometimes jeered at Robinson, and he and his family received threats. After spending a year with the Dodgers Montreal farm team Robinson was promoted to the Dodgers. His debut game on April 15, 1947, marked the first time an African-American athlete played in the major leagues.

The Cultural Encyclopedia of Baseball is incredible in its scope. It has 1105 pages and is fully indexed. Jonathan spent 8 years on the first edition and 3 years on the updated second edition. When he started this project there weren't and Google search and internet help for him. He physically went to Cooperstown and went through the archive of baseball memorabilia. This would be an amazing task if Jonathan was a full time writer and researcher. In fact, he is an entertainment lawyer who managed to graduate from UCLA despite this passion to create a baseball encyclopedia.

His book is available at Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble, and various places where books are sold.

Some of the on line reviews rave about the book, such as this one at the Amazon site:

Authoritative and fun to read. What more can you ask of a reference book?

This is not a book of statistics. Obviously a "labor of love," Light has dug up and cross-checked thousands of baseball-related facts about the game's people, places, history, equipment, records, legends, etc...including the inside scoop on many famous "incidents."

According to the forward by its Director of Research, the Hall of Fame staff was so impressed with Light's work that they pitched in to help.

The author is thorough. I thought I knew a lot about baseball till I started reading Light's book. My estimate: 90% of the stuff in here was new to me. Example: there's a section on "Fastest Pitchers" that includes a fascinating story of a "1950s phenom and flame-thrower" named Steve Dalkowski. Never heard of him.

Light writes in a short, crisp style that encourages reading. The book is addicting. Like any good encyclopedia, you start off on one topic, then your eye catches something else and off you go exploring... then you wonder where the last two hours went. Our 17 yr. old son casually picked up the book and disappeared with it for entire afternoon ... he came back and pronounced the book, "totally awesome." High praise, indeed.

The author's wry wit, uncommon in an "encyclopedia," is evident in many entries. For example, in the section on "Fans:" Light writes, "On May 15, 1921, Ty Cobb went into the stands and attacked a particularly vehement heckler. Cobb apparently ignored the fact that the fan had lost his hands in a printing accident. Cobb was suspended for 10 days."

Much of the fun of the book is found in the numerous quotations sprinkled liberally on virtually every page. Light seems to take particular delight in the many gaffs of announcer and former ball player, Jerry Coleman, e.g. "There's a fly to deep center field. Winfield is going back, back. He hits head against the wall. It's rolling toward second base!"

How it is physically set up: a one volume, quality-bound work, organized alphabetically by topic. It is generous with "white space" ... thus avoiding the "densely packed," intimidating look of many reference books. It has boldface references to related subjects elsewhere covered in the book ...which sets you off on your expedition.

The word "classic" is over-used. But Light has written a classic baseball book. Get it...for yourself or for a fan you love

Other News and Guests from the Last Malibu Rotary Club Meeting

The subject matter of our speaker was of interest to our guest **Greg Ramirez**, who was on the Pepperdine Waves base team from 1999 to 2003. He now works with Chris Bauman in the Pepperdine budget office.

Holmes Osborne announced that he will attend Rotary ethics seminar on Saturday September 19 .

Malibu Rotary Representation at Foundation Dinner

Malibu Rotary Club has table #44 for 10 reserved for the Paul Harris Rotary Foundation Celebration Dinner & Casino Night at the Carson Community October 3rd. The club needs to send money to the Rotary District for those going to the event, at a cost of \$75.00 per person. Members can make checks payable to the Malibu Rotary Club.

Chili Cook off Malibu Rotary Post Mortem

Jack Corrodi headed up the annual participation of the Malibu Rotary Club at the Annual Malibu Kiwanis Chili Cook Off held Labor Day weekend September 5 and 6. Malibu Rotary club members and Jack's son Ben Corrodi ran the water booth and Fred Cornet again put up and took down the signs. So how did we do? We took in \$215.00 and after deducting \$33.33 for water (our product) and \$39.32 for ice we netted a profit of \$142.35.

Chris Bauman has more raffle tickets for the Rotary Foundation Celebration Dinner & Casino Night at the Carson Community October 3rd, for which the Malibu Rotary Club already was reserving a table for 10 at a cost of \$75.00 per person.. Grand prize is timeshare in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico including 60,000 frequent flyer miles on Alaska Airlines. Second Prize is \$1000 cash and third prize is \$500 gift certificate to Gearys Beverly Hills.

\$\$\$ Don't Forget the Syvertsen Deal! \$\$\$

“What's the Syvertsen deal?” you ask. It a special deal given to Members of the Malibu Rotary Club to help them pay for the minimum Rotary Foundation \$100 raffle tickets. I asked by Bob to explain it:

For each club member who has paid the entire amount due to the club, as reflected by the 7/1/09 statements, by September 30 the club will send \$100 and the raffle ticket stubs to district 5280. As there are some drawings prior to the event, we will forward the stubs and \$100 when each bill is fully paid at three different dates:

July 29.

August 26. and

September 30, 2009.

You of course can get more raffle tickets from Chris Bauman, but \$100 contribution is minimum.



*Editors Note:
Most of you know how strongly I feel about the Project TRIUMPH program conceived by Ilan Magdali of the Newbury Park Rotary Club. The program brought 10 teenage Arab and 10 teenage Jewish students from Israel to a leadership camp in Simi Valley where they all learned to work*

together, develop leaders skills before returning to Israel to use what they learned back home. Most of us feel helpless in trying to find a solution to the constant war in the Mid East, but at least this program is trying to do something, In the last issue of The Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter I had written about e-mail communications I had had with Frances Fuji of the Project TRIUMPH organizing committee. She had written

“In light of the current economic climate and more challenging environment for securing grant monies, instead of hosting students this year, we are taking the opportunity to strengthen infrastructure in Israel and to establish collaborative relationships with aligned organizations.

Upon our request, Shaul, from the Rotary Club of Haifa, provided us with a budget and proposal to hire a part-time facilitator to be responsible for year-round support of both new Project TRIUMPH students and alumni. We are sending money to contribute to the facilitator's salary, and she has already begun meeting with the kids there.

We are excited about prospects for 2010 and beyond (the plan is to resume bringing kids over in 2010, assuming that we can raise enough funds in 2009) and believe we will emerge from this fallow year with an even stronger, more well-rounded and promising program than ever before.”

Calendar

Speakers

Sep 16 2009

Jonathan Light

"Cultural Encyclopedia of Baseball"

Sep 23 2009

Vitelio Aguilar

"Family Crisis Center"

Sep 30 2009

Rotary District Gov Suzanne Sundberg

"Rotary District 5280 Year 2009-2010 Annual Report"

This day is marked by the visit of Rotary District 5280 Governor Suzanne Sundberg. It is a day where Malibu Rotary committee members will report to governor on this year's plans and activities and the Governor and Assistant Governor will talk about district events in the Los Angeles area and Malibu Rotary Club's participation in them

Oct 7 2009

Dr. Lee Kats

""Solar Frogs""

Oct 14 2009

Dr. Eric Savitsky

""Current Challenges to Global Healthcare""

Oct 28 2009

Sanda Alcalay

"Polio & Rotary's Goal to End it Once & For All"

Sanda is a Realtor and a member of the Pacific Palisades Rotary.

