



# Mid San Fernando Valley

[www.midsanfernandovalley.org](http://www.midsanfernandovalley.org)

**Service Above Self**

Meeting at Denny's restaurant  
Thursdays, 12:10 p.m.

16575 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA



## January 12, 2012

**Invocation:** Barbara Pampalone,

**Flag Salute:** Rich Miller

**4 Way Test:** Clinton Jones

**Attending Members:** Frank Santucci, Jean Mabilon, Renée D'Auria, Clinton Jones, Rich Miller, Roz Dubrow, Bub Pickup, Barbara Pampalone, Marc Tapper, Robin Kellogg, Sara Vasquez, Lisa Long, PDG Emilio Basile and Beth Ullman

**Guests and Visiting Rotarians:** Ferne Saltzman and PDG Jay Saltzman of the Woodland Hills club, who are also honorary members of our club, and Alice Muntean, member of the Calabasas club and our speaker

### **Announcements:**

#### **Rotary Zone Meeting**

There will be a Zone meeting February 4 at the Boy Scouts of America Facility, 1211 E. Dyer Road, Santa Ana for district level officers, but everyone is welcome. If you elect to go, our district PRLS committee will refund the \$30 cost, which includes lunch. Registration starts at 7:30 a.m. and the final plenary session ends at 3:00 p.m. For more information, visit the district website: [www.rotary5260.org](http://www.rotary5260.org).

#### **Dues Are Due**

It's January already, so please, get your club dues into Frank ASAP. It's \$100 for this six months, plus any contribution you are making to The Rotary Foundation. Thank you to everyone who has already paid.

#### **Further Adventures of Leo Baum**

Thanks to Barbara and her family, Leo, our German exchange student, had a perfect day at Disneyland and California Adventure this week – with no lines! That plus the ideal weather and good company made the day one they will all remember.

#### **District Event January 21**

Come to Woodbury University January 21 for a mid-year review of District activities, plus guest speakers from Districts 5280 and 5300 and special guest, PDG Roy Massey, Chair of the Rotary Ethics Initiative. Roy will be talking about the work the Ethics Initiative is doing to advance our vocational service efforts. Cost is \$20, and you can register online: [www.rotary5260.org](http://www.rotary5260.org).

### **Calendar**

**1/17 Tues., Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.**

**1/19 at 9:00 a.m., The Salvation Army Store Grand Re-Opening, 21375 Roscoe Blvd., Canoga Park**

**1/19 Melanie Bickelman, Newborns in Need**

**1/21 Sat., Mid-Year District Meeting, 8:00 – 11:30 a.m.**

Woodbury University | Ahmanson Main Space, 7500 Glenoaks Blvd., Burbank

**1/26 Zoe International, Human Trafficking**

**2/2 TBA (Happy Groundhog Day)**

### **Rotary Knitting Communities Together**

We received a beautiful thank you note – with photos! – for the 6 afghans this week Roz delivered last week to the Therapeutic Center for the Blind.

### **Possible Last NID in India**

PDG Jay reported that with no new cases of polio reported in India last year, the upcoming NID (National Immunization Day) may very well be their last. We are coming very close to finally eliminating polio!

### **Rotary Minute**

Frank read an article in the November Rotarian about a Japanese club's project providing soccer balls. A GSE team member to Brazil, Takashi Kuroda noticed long lines of barefoot children waiting to play with one lone soccer ball. Returning to Japan, he worked with the Rotary Club of Omiya to set up a soccer ball recycling project. Starting in 2009, students clean the balls used by local professional teams and the club sends them to Brazil. After the devastation of last year's earthquake and tsunami, they also delivered balls to children in the stricken areas.

### **Speaker: Alice Muntean, Trip to Fiji**

Alice joined Rotary in 2000, captured in part by the appeal of GSE team members from other countries visiting her club, and the chance to connect with other countries. She stayed friends with the Brazil GSE team that visited in 2004, one of whom was just here visiting her. But the 2007 team from the Philippines instigated the trip that changed her life.

At a club fundraiser for them, one of the prizes was to be on the team implementing a project in the Philippines. She and another woman bid together, and won. But

problems in that country forced the planners to make a change; they asked if she would mind going to Fiji instead. Since that first trip she has gone twice more, each time to expand the Rotary project of providing computers and training on them to the children and their teachers.

Fiji is an archipelago country of over 330 islands, of which 110 are permanently inhabited, but most so small they have no roads and no airport, and more than 500 islets. The total land area is about 7,100 square miles (for comparison, Los Angeles County is 4,083). The two major islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, account for 87% of the population of almost 850,000. The former contains Suva, the capital and largest city. Most Fijians live on Viti Levu's coasts, either in Suva or in smaller urban centers.

Alice described the effort needed to bring 150 laptop computers to the five villages on Beqa (pronounced Benga), during the worst typhoon in a decade. They experienced a very scary landing at the international airport on the main island and were lucky enough to find rooms – those on slightly later flights did not. Their 150 laptops stayed at the airport for lack of customs people to check them in or the expected paperwork allowing their import. Two days later, when the storm had subsided, they dealt with customs. Still with no paperwork, it took a bribe to get the donation cleared.



*Barbara Pampalone and Alice Muntean*

Then came the challenge of delivery. A small boat was the only way to reach their island destination, but the computer boxes were too large to fit in the van they had to take to reach the harbor. They carefully unpacked each computer and flattened the boxes to stack on top. A two hour drive later they were at the boat. With the boat just 20 feet long, the computers had to be repacked in their boxes and juggled to fit alongside Alice and her fellow Rotarian, 55 gallons of diesel fuel, a number of wood 2x4s

and other supplies. But they made it. Soon they see their destination, but the boat stops 500 yards from shore and drops anchor – it can't go any closer! A smaller boat comes to them, everything is transferred over several trips, and off-loaded still several yards from shore, because there is no dock. Once on the beach they do get help in carrying with the only motorized transport on the island – the equivalent of a riding lawn mower! Amazingly, even though some of the boxes were damp and the machines had been tossed around, all the PCs worked.

With no roads and no real motorized transportation, the only way to get around was to walk. There are some generators on the island to serve the 5 villages, but no electricity. There are no tourists on the outer islands and little commerce, but Alice said she has never seen happier people anywhere in the world.

Children are very important to the islanders, but the village chiefs did not see the need for schools to have use of their generators during daylight hours, so on their second trip they brought a generator just for the computer teacher, who takes it and the laptops from village to village for her classes. The generator was purchased by the Calabasas club, and the trips were sponsored by Global Classrooms for Peace, which sponsors a minimum of 40 US teachers every year to travel to and co-teach in each participating country for a period of 10 to 14 days. Currently there are programs in the Philippines and Fiji. (Visit [www.globalclassroomsforpeace.org](http://www.globalclassroomsforpeace.org) for more information.) Fiji Rotary clubs have been very supportive as well, and they applied to UNICEF for additional help.

A composer from Washington State joined that second trip, and was so impressed she donated an elaborate keyboard and got permission to set up music curricula through the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

On her third trip the pre-school teachers were given a 3-day seminar, certified and registered with the government, which gives them both a monthly subsidy and adds credits to their pensions. Because there are 200 dialects, English (a result of British colonization) is the primary language.

That most recent trip saw the group also bringing clothes for the children – some of what was originally collected for Japan after last year's earthquake and tsunami, but which Japan Rotarians declined (money for supplies, rather than clothing, was what they needed), so it was sent to Fiji, Romania, Armenia, and, through the Woodland Hills club, the kids in the RESCATE program.

More Rotary projects in Fiji are on the horizon, including more water collection barrels (just \$350 each) to collect rain off the roofs of buildings – there is no running water. The club has already put one such collection barrel at one of the schools they work with.

Alice told us not everything is work on their trips. She was privileged to attend a seafood luau, amazed at a church service by the beautiful *a cappella* singing of the women, swaying to the music, and delighted to get her own island dress made from local fabric to her measurements by a local seamstress. There aren't any tourists in the outer islands, so not much to buy in the way of arts and crafts – the people just make what they need.

When possible to go between islands by plane, it's still an adventure. Not only is the luggage weighed, but each

person – the planes are so small and at a premium for cargo that every pound counts!

When on the main island, they usually stay for free at the local resort, just paying for meals, because the islanders so appreciate of their volunteer efforts and donations. On the small islands there are no resorts, and they stay with Fijians in their homes. Very different homes than ours, with no window screens, no electricity and no television. Most property and large buildings are owned communally, so if a village has enough funds, there might be a TV in a communal room, powered by the village generator and using a satellite link.

Alice shared many wonderful photos with us, from teachers and students to one of the sign welcoming visitors erected by the Rotary Club of Taveuni Island.

Native Fijians make up almost the entire population of the smaller islands, but the big cities are perhaps 90% Indian, from the time of British rule, which does cause some cultural difficulties. Outside the cities one definitely learns to be patient, because the pace of life and expectations are so different than in them. But life in the villages is both very happy and relaxing as a result.

Vinaka – thank you Alice! Alice can be reached by email at [alice.muntean@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alice.muntean@sbcglobal.net) and by phone at 818-610-2052.

#### Reminders:

#### Salvation Army Store Grand Re-Opening

The Salvation Army (TSA) Canoga Park store is re-opening! Fully refurbished and remodeled after suffering major water damage, there will be an official ribbon cutting at **8:45 a.m.** January 19, with the store opening its doors at **9:00 a.m.** Please join business and community leaders and help celebrate the return of this important piece of the Valley's economy. The store is on the northeast corner of Roscoe Blvd. and Canoga Ave.

What else can we do to help? **Please support TSA** with donations, which are down in this uncertain economy. Items of all kinds, from knick-knacks to cars, are needed. Also look for sites where donation boxes (5x5 feet) can be placed, or one of the donation trailers.

**PolioPlus:** Thank you to everyone who contributed to PolioPlus today.

**Happy Bucks:** Thank you to everyone who contributed today These contributions go into our general fund for expenses and projects that aren't self-supporting.

**Raffle:** Rich won the \$5 and Carlos won the chance to try for the joker, but pulled the 3 of spades. The pot is now over \$700, and there are just 22 cards left.

#### Notable Quotable:

"The tax which will be paid for the purpose of education is not more than the thousandth part of what will be paid to kings, priests, and nobles who will rise up among us if we leave the people in ignorance." Thomas Jefferson, third US president, architect and author (1743-1826)

"Taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society." Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., US Supreme Court Justice (1841-1935)



#### 2011-2012 Club Officers:

<b>President:</b> Barbara Pampalone	H 818-882-2395
<b>Immediate Past President</b> Martha Stulman	H 818-708-8947
<b>Administrator &amp; Club Chair:</b> Beth Ullman	H 818-701-6889
<b>Secretary:</b> Rosielee Jones	C 818-703-3201
<b>Treasurer:</b> Frank Santucci	C 818-652-7529
<b>Membership VP:</b> Marc Tapper	H 818-425-6667
<b>Projects VP:</b> Rich Miller	W 818-994-8234
<b>Foundation VP:</b> PDG Emilio Basile	H 818-886-4142
Sara Vasquez	H 818-368-6682
<b>Public Relations VP</b> Robin Kellogg	H 818-993-5378
<b>Bulletin Editor <i>pro tem</i>:</b> Beth Ullman	H 818-701-6889
<b>Community Chair:</b> Judy Rockey	C 818-683-3510
<b>Int'l Chair:</b> Sara Vasquez	H 818-368-6682
<b>New Generations Chairs:</b> Clinton & Rosielee Jones	C 818-609-7105
<b>Vocational Chair:</b> Carlos Menjivar	818-996-7337
<b>Programs Chair:</b> Robin Kellogg	H 818-993-5378
<b>Sgt. at Arms:</b> Renée D'Auria	H 818-882-1659

### **Selected Nearby Clubs and Meeting Information**

Granada Hills, Thursdays at 12:10 p.m.

Porter Valley Country Club

19216 Singing Hills Dr

Northridge CA 91326-1716

North San Fernando Valley, Thursdays at 12:10 p.m.

IHOP

1225 Truman St.

San Fernando CA 91340

Northridge/Chatsworth, Tuesdays at 12:10 p.m.

Porter Valley Country Club

19216 Singing Hills Dr.

Northridge CA 91325

Studio City-Sherman Oaks, Tuesdays at 12:10 p.m.

Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel

12825 Ventura Blvd. Vista Room

Studio City CA 91604

Tarzana Encino, Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.

John O'Groats

16120 Ventura Blvd.

Encino CA 91436

Van Nuys, Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

94<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron

16320 Raymer St.

Van Nuys

West San Fernando Valley, Thursdays at 12:00 p.m.

Canoga Park Bowl

20122 Vanowen Street

Winnetka CA 91306

Greater San Fernando Valley **E-Club**, Mondays at 12:00 p.m., Online 24/7, <http://www.rotaryclubgreatersfv.org>

*Beth Ullman*

*17426 Napa St.*

*Northridge, CA 91325*