



Mid San Fernando Valley

www.midsanfernandovalley.org

Service Above Self

Meeting at Denny's restaurant
Thursdays, 12:10 p.m.
16575 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA



Reach Within to Embrace Humanity

February 16, 2012

Invocation: PDG Emilio Basile

Flag Salute: Max Kellogg

4 Way Test: Robin Kellogg

Attending Members: Frank Santucci, Renée D'Auria, Carlos Menjivar, Robin Kellogg, Sara Vasquez, Barbara Pampalone, Jean Mabilon, Marc Tapper, PDG Emilio Basile and Beth Ullman

Guests and Visiting Rotarians: Max Kellogg; Lorna Milman, an LAUSD Counselor and friend of Sara's who is interested in a 4 Way Test essay contest at Sepulveda Middle School; Lonnie Gershfeld, of Datanet Consultants (818-886-0009), and Monique Bryher, our speaker

Announcements:

Let's Network! now Feb. 23, Rotary's 107th Anniversary

Be sure to come and bring guests to our networking meeting, February 23. We'll give everyone a chance to tell what they do, and some space to showcase their products or services. Bring your brochures or product samples if you have them!

Food Needed – Please Bring Items to Meetings

North Valley Caring Services, 15453 Rayen St. in North Hills is in need of items for both their food pantry and breakfast program. Judy is co-ordinating donations each week until May, at which point they will receive a major influx from the annual US Post Office drive. They prefer non-perishable food but do take fresh fruit and vegetables for both the breakfast program and pantry. We are taking turns dropping off the donations. Their office, located on the Sepulveda United Methodist church site, is open Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Jennifer Rodriguez is the Office Manager, 818-891-0481 x23, and Yvette Pineda is the Executive Director, x24.

New Food Order Procedure

Starting next week we'll be using a sign-up form to place our lunch orders. Please review the menus on the drinks table and mark your choice next to the number you will be given by Frank. We hope this will reduce the usual disruptions during our order process.

Woodland Hills Fundraisers

Robin reminded us that Saturday, March 31, the Woodland Hills Rotary club is holding a fundraiser at the

Calendar

- 2/21 Tues., Board Meeting**, 5:30 p.m. at the Doctors Jones office
- 2/23 Networking Meeting** – Invite businesses and guests to promote their services
- 3/1 Joint Meeting** with the Van Nuys and North SFV clubs, 94th Aero Squadron, 16320 Raymer St., Van Nuys
- 3/8 Joint Meeting** with the Van Nuys and North SFV clubs, 94th Aero Squadron, 16320 Raymer St., Van Nuys
- 3/15 Dale Katz**, Adult Education
- 3/22 TBA**
- 3/29 Club Assembly**, including a vote on the proposed merger

Santa Anita Turf Club. If you attend, you can even get an 8:30 a.m. tour of the track facilities – the races start at noon. If you are taking the tour, please remember jeans and shorts are not permitted in the Turf Club. For more information, contact Robin.

Rotary Knitting Communities Together

Barbara started the meeting with a very nicely crocheted cap on her head, made by a patient of hers who has Down's Syndrome. The young woman makes a cap a day, and when Barbara mentioned how nice they were, and how great for chemo patients but too big for preemies, the crafty woman figured out how to make infant-sized caps! Her mom is taking them all over to UCLA hospital, one of the several places we have delivered caps in the past.

Barbara also picked up over 25 chemo caps from Lily Lande, our almost 103 year-old knitter residing at West Hills Rehab Center.

Marlton School Fundraiser

Barbara announced that she had visited a Rotary club in Inglewood and secured \$500 to help the Marlton School for the Deaf attend the Gallaudet University Academic Bowl. The Chatsworth Sunset club is also helping, through a fundraiser at Los Toros restaurant to be held March 5, from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. The restaurant will donate 20% of your total bill if you present the flyer.

Rotary Minute: Sara told us she spoke at the Glendale Sunrise club last week about her GSE trip to Argentina,

and thanked them for their generous check in support of our dental project! She told them about gauchos, farms and food there, and how wonderful it was to meet so many interesting people – GSE members usually stay at each home just 3 days during their 4 – 6 week trip. They now want her to come back to talk about her year in Spain as an Ambassadorial Scholar – and to dance the flamenco for them! Per PDG Emilio, the GSE program is going to be replaced with another vocational program, probably with much less time for the participants to be out of the country.

Speaker: Monique Bryher, How Short Sale Fraud is Stealing Your Home Equity

Monique is a Tarzana-based realtor working for Pinnacle Estate Properties, but she's becoming even better known for her e-book, "How to Commit Short Sale Fraud... and Get Away with It", available from Amazon (where it's #1 in its category) for both Kindle and other platforms. A 26 year veteran of Information Technology where she investigated fraud, among other tasks, before moving into real estate 6 years ago, Monique noticed some strange goings-on within three months of starting her new job. Within 9 months she had started a blog on the problem: illegal short sales.

A short sale is one where the homeowner is "upside down" in relation to their mortgage – the property's current value is less than what is owed. Rather than face foreclosure, both owners and lenders will sometimes agree to sell the property for as much as the market will allow, with the homeowner either walking away in many states, including California, or still owing the balance.

Because California law prohibits banks from going after the original home owner for the remainder of the loan if the bank had agreed to the short sale, it is very tempting for owners to use this type of sale either legitimately or fraudulently.



Monique Bryher and Barbara Pampalone

In a legitimate sale the current owner and new buyers of the property do not know each other. It is expected that the bank will get the most money possible from the sale to cover the loan. But too often short sales are cases of

fraud: the current owners conspire with relatives or friends to be the nominal buyers, then either never move out or quickly have title of the property turned over to them once again. This is unfortunately made easier by the banks' pattern of looking only at the first offer being made in a short sale situation, rather than looking at all bids and trying to get higher offers.

The fraud affects not just the banks, that pass the loss onto us, the taxpayers, but everyone. Those who own in property in the same area see their property values decrease, because the sale prices of short sales are used to calculate average prices. It leads to area blight, because home owners can't borrow the money they need for home maintenance and improvement – their houses don't have enough equity anymore. With lower values, taxes are artificially lower, short-changing our state budget and all the services we need and expect. As Monique said, these short sales are the epitome of the opposite of the 4 Way Test. They aren't true, are fair to none and hurt everyone.

It takes both sellers and crooked real estate agents and/or banks to allow fraudulent short sales. This kind of manipulation of real estate values is a kind of mortgage laundering. The impact is likely to get worse: with our current state budget crisis, we lost \$70 million from the department responsible for investigating fraud. And it's almost impossible to get banks to pay attention to the problem, even when you bring them specific cases.

With her IT background, Monique sees the solution in an elegant, simple control of the process: banks need to see all offers being made, not just the first, and be able to select the highest. If a property is in foreclosure they have that right but short sales are often arranged before the three months of missed payments forces a foreclosure. When fraud is found, perpetrators should be prosecuted; too often they aren't. The IRS could, and should, go after the taxes lost and penalties for false filings; banks should sue for lost mortgage amounts, etc.

It was because of her clear identification of short sale fraud and solutions that Monique's attorney told her she "had to write a book" about the situation. The result was "How to Commit Short Sale Fraud... and Get Away with It".

In addition to fraud, Monique warned us about a rash of squatters in empty homes. In California they can put utilities in their names, which makes the law then treat them as renters, even though they are paying nothing to the owner. If you think there are squatters in your neighborhood, alert the authorities immediately. In addition to usually letting the property go unmaintained, lowering property values, they may be running drug or prostitution rings, harboring sex offenders or engaging in other criminal behavior.

You can contact Monique on her cell, 818-430-6705, or via email at monique.bryher@gmail.com. Her website is www.moniquebryher.com. For information about her books, visit www.CaliforniaRealEstateFraudReport.com and www.ShortSaleFraudBook.com. The latter is also on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/vlu9P6>. If you buy her online book, just \$9.95, Monique will donate 5% of her net sales commissions to the non-profit of your choice – she recommended Rotary.

Reminders:

Robin Kellogg Being Inducted to Chamber

February 24 Robin will be inducted as the North San Fernando Valley Chamber of Commerce's new Secretary – congratulations! Come show your support, showcase your company, and meet other Valley business people and the honorary mayor of Northridge, Nancy Cartwright (the voice of Bart Simpson). The lunch will be held at the Odyssey Restaurant; tickets are \$55 each. Tables for the vendor faire are \$125 each.

Turn in Your Project Surveys

Surveys for next year's activities were emailed to those members who have email, and paper copies passed out to members without email. Please fill yours out and get it back to Sara! If you opt not to fill out the form, please at least email "no response". We'll be using the results to determine which projects to continue and which to add or drop for 2012–2013.

Casa Esperanza Needs Supplies

If you have sewing supplies or equipment to donate, please contact Maritza De Artan (or Beth). They are starting a class teaching sewing skills and still need machines, thread, fabric, scissors, etc. Maritza was able to have the Chesed Committee at Valley Beth Shalom also send out an email asking for donations, so hopefully they will soon have enough to start the first group. Maritza can be reached at 818-786-1076.

Dues Are Due – Please Pay Frank if You Haven't Yet!

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 Sara won the chance to try for the joker, but pulled the 9 of clubs. There are just 17 cards left, and \$826 in the pot!

Notable Quotable:

"Any idiot can face a crisis – it's day to day living that wears you out." Anton Chekhov

2011-2012 Club Officers:

President: Barbara Pampalone	H 818-882-2395
Immediate Past President Martha Stulman	H 818-708-8947
Administrator & Club Chair: Beth Ullman	H 818-701-6889
Secretary: Rosielee Jones	C 818-703-3201
Treasurer: Frank Santucci	C 818-652-7529
Membership VP: Marc Tapper	H 818-425-6667
Projects VP: Rich Miller	W 818-994-8234
Foundation VP: PDG Emilio Basile	H 818-886-4142
Sara Vasquez	H 818-368-6682
Public Relations VP Robin Kellogg	H 818-993-5378
Bulletin Editor <i>pro tem</i>: Beth Ullman	H 818-701-6889
Community Chair: Judy Rockey	C 818-683-3510
Int'l Chair: Sara Vasquez	H 818-368-6682
New Generations Chairs: Clinton & Rosielee Jones	C 818-609-7105
Vocational Chair: Carlos Menjivar	818-620-2569
Programs Chair: Robin Kellogg	H 818-993-5378
Sgt. at Arms: 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 12:00 p.m.

94th Aero Squadron (with the Van Nuys club)

16320 Raymer St.

Van Nuys

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, Thursdays at 12:00 p.m.

94th Aero Squadron

16320 Raymer St.

Van Nuys

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

Coco's on Victory and Owensmouth *NEW LOCATION*

Topanga

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

