



Mid San Fernando Valley

Service Above Self

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



March 3, 2011

Flag Salute: PDG Emilio Basile

Invocation: Marc Tapper

Attending Members:

PDG John Alexander, PDG Emilio Basile, Jean Mabilon, Martha Stulman, Roz Dubrow, Beth Ullman, Barbara Pampalone, Frank Santucci, Zak Nahmoulis; Marc Tapper

Visitors: Clinton Jones, D.C.; Heidi and Nehru Chomatil, Barbara's niece and nephew; Soraya Deen; Itaf Awad, with Salaam Shalom from Israel; Katie Monajerani; Keyko McKelvey; Gay Jones; Renie D'Auria (soon to be inducted!), and Joyce Tapper, our speaker

Announcements:

PETS and the Next Rotary Year

Barbara Pampalone, our incoming club president, had a great time at PETS (President-Elect Training Seminar) this past weekend, and returned full of enthusiasm and wonderful ideas. She plans to talk with each of us about what we'd like to do in the club, what we'd like to see the club do as a whole, and how we can get there. She also promised to tell us more about PETS at another meeting.

Boys & Girls Club

Marc announced that the West Valley Boys & Girls Club, which we help support, just named Canoga Park High School student Michael Almodovar their Student of the Year. In accepting the honor, Michael spoke of the wonderful benefits he has gotten from the B&G club, including how it helped him turn his life around. The award was picked up by the Daily News, in an article about both Michael and the club by Dennis McCarthy. Link: http://www.dailynews.com/news/ci_17524277.

Reminders:

Fundraisers for LAUSD Field Trips

During the week of March 14-20, visit the Denny's at which we hold our meetings (16575 Sherman Way, Van Nuys). Show the server the flyer and we'll receive 15% back to give the Early Education Centers at Gledhill, Joan Elam, Nobel and Northridge Elementary Schools. If you didn't get a flyer, or need more, please contact Sara.

District Conference

This year, our District Conference will be held June 9-12 at the Long Beach Hilton. Reserve your spot by April 30

Calendar

- 3/10** **Paul Eisenstadt**, New Technology for Residential & Commercial Security
- 3/10** **Board Meeting** immediately following the regular meeting
- 3/12** **CLM**, New Horizons, Sam's Café, 15725 Parthenia Ave., North Hills, CA, 8:00-11:00 a.m.
- 3/17** **Itaf Awad**, Salaam-Shalom
- 3/18 Fri.** **Salvation Army Sobriety Banquet**, St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 9501 Balboa Boulevard, Northridge
- 3/24** **Richard Cortes**, Rotaract
- 3/31** **Star Tomlinson**, Cover Those Toes
- 4/2** **District Assembly**, Desert Christian Schools, 44648 15th St. W, Lancaster, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- 4/30 Sat.** **Rotarians at Work Day**
- 5/10** **District Awards Due**
- 5/23-26** **RI Convention New Orleans**
- 6/9-12** **District 5260 Conference**, Long Beach, Hilton Hotel and Executive Center, 701 W. Ocean Blvd.

and save half of the \$35 conference registration fee. Sign up for all the meals and receive an additional \$25 discount. Make certain to reserve your hotel room by Monday, May 9 for the special room rate of \$115/night. Registration forms are included in the March District newsletter.

Interact and Relay for Life

Our Birmingham Charter High School Interact club is busy getting ready for this year's Cancer Society Relay for Life event on their campus, June 4 and 5. As usual, our club will be joining them. To sign up as part of the walking team or just to contribute, go to the website for this location: www.relayforlife.org/encino.ca. As part of their fundraising, the Interactors are holding a laser tag party on March 29. Let Beth know if you'd like to be a chaperon for that. Or play, if you think you're fast enough.

E-Waste Collection #2

If you didn't get a chance to dispose of your e-waste at the Helping Hands for Seniors Fundraiser two weeks ago, you get a second chance. The Greater San Fernando Valley Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring an e-waste collection March 12-13 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00

p.m. It will be held in the parking lot of the Canoga Bowl, 20122 Vanowen St., on the corner of Vanowen and Winnetka.

Bingo Fundraiser

If you love Bingo and want to find out about our next fundraiser speak to Beth, Emilio or Rich. We are now considering dates in May.

Club Collecting for Cuba

Thank you for all the items donated to the humanitarian trip to Cuba that we are supporting. If you missed the deadline from bringing in items that needed to be shipped, you can still help. To donate directly to this Hillel project, go to <http://hillel.kintera.org> by March 18. The team name is "NU ASB Cuba Year 5". Click on Morgan Greenwald. All donations will go to Hillel's humanitarian efforts in Cuba.

Salvation Army Sobriety Banquet & Awards Ceremony

The Salvation Army of Canoga Park is holding its annual Sobriety Banquet and Awards Ceremony for graduates of its Adult Rehabilitation Center. The event will be held at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 9501 Balboa Blvd., Northridge. Our club is invited to attend. The cost is \$24 per person. A donation of \$150 will sponsor a table. Any other donations toward sponsorship would also be very much appreciated. RSVP no later than March 12. Help support the great efforts of Judy, Tim and the entire Salvation Army program.

District Assembly April 2

Join our club and the rest of the district at our annual District Assembly, being held this year at Desert Christian Schools, 44648 15th St. W, Lancaster, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. It is free to all Rotarians, lots of fun, and a great place to learn – all incoming officers and Avenue of Service Chairs will have break-out training sessions to help them prepare for next year. Please let Martha know if you plan to attend, so she can turn in our headcount.

Speaker: Joyce Tapper, The Didi Project

Joyce is President of The Didi Project, a group of professional women working to provide educational opportunities for women and children in Nepal. She fell in love with the country and its gracious people when visiting many years ago. Now retired, she has made 17 trips to Nepal, planning one every October for both pleasure and "social work", as her husband calls it. She says on your first trip you get a "chip in the hip" that starts to beep and bring you back once you've saved enough money to return.

As those of us fortunate enough to meet the GSE team from Nepal last year learned, Nepal is a country of great beauty, diversity (more than 60 languages are spoken there) and poverty. Known perhaps most for trips to the Himalayas, that rough terrain creates both severe landscapes and difficulties in connecting villages to the cities and each other.

The group focuses on education, believing that improving education is the best way to ensure a better

future for the people of Nepal, but they also look for other opportunities to help. Although most members are women (Didi means respected sister), Bhais (respected brothers) are also welcome.

The Didis and Bhais work with communities, non-governmental organizations, and government institutions to create new sustainable partnerships for positive change. They use their personal encounters and experiences to identify persons and families in need, and causes where they can successfully lend their skills and resources to help.

Making personal contacts has led to the group adopting two girls, helping them get essential schooling. The girls love getting things from America, which is what Joyce was buying when she found Sold by American journalist and author Patricia McCormick, and decided she had to read it before giving the girls a copy. This novel is about a young Nepalese girl who is sold by her step-father into a brothel in Calcutta, India. There is more truth than fiction in the book, as too many girls or sold, often their virginity auctioned off, just as they enter puberty, in spite of the laws against such practices.

Joyce and others in The Didi Project were so impressed and inspired by the book that they funded its translation into Nepali. She showed us copies of the book in English, which came out in 2008, and in Nepali, which was published last August. It is making inroads in Nepal, with one radio station reading it in installments on the air *and* making a recording of that reading for schools and libraries to use.



Martha with Joyce Tapper, our speaker

Sold also spurred the group to make anti-trafficking a key element of their work in Nepal, enlarging the scope and geography of their "social work" there. Education of village girls, who are seldom schooled and very much discriminated against in other ways as well, while getting the message out on the evils of human trafficking, are two elements essential to change attitudes and increase

respect for females outside the urban areas. To make all this happen, the Didis are working with schools and numerous other organizations working to empower girls.

On the group's website (www.didiproject.org) is an interview with the author of Sold, Patricia McCormick, in which she describes her "dream reader": someone who reads the book, becomes at lead mildly outraged, and does something to help fix the problem. The Didis are definitely doing something, as are groups like "Mighty Nepal" which have set up homes for abused and returned girls, who often are not accepted back into their families.

What is the US doing? USAID is active, and, now that their civil war is over, Nepal is inviting the Peace Corps to return. Joyce is hoping to connect with Rotary clubs there, to increase her connections and get help in knowing what is most needed, and where. Urban areas are much like the US, where women attend school and hold professional jobs, but most villages are woefully lacking in both educational and job opportunities for females. The lucky ones help with farming and do crafts to supplement the family income. The unlucky are abused or sold into prostitution.

To reach Joyce, call 818-785-3965, or email her at Hist2j@aol.com. To learn more about the organization, visit www.didiproject.org. All donations go directly to support projects; the Didis are all volunteers and pay their own way on trips. Their new motto is "\$1 buys a book to save a girl." To help with that, several of us bought copies of Sold and gave Joyce contributions for their work.

Photos from previous weeks:



Robin with guest speaker Gail Meyer 2/17



Clinton Jones, D.C., with Martha 2/10

2010-2011 Club Officers:

President:	
Martha Stulman	H 818-708-8947
Immediate Past President & Public Relations VP:	
Robin Kellogg	H 818-993-5378
Club Administrator:	
Emilio Basile	H 818-886-4142
Secretary:	
Sara Vasquez	H 818-368-6682
Treasurer:	
Frank Santucci	C 818-652-7529
Membership co-VPs:	
Rich Miller	W 818-994-8234
Marc Tapper	H 818-992-8211
Projects VP:	
Beth Ullman	H 818-701-6889
Foundation VP:	
Emilio Basile	H 818-886-4142
Community Chair:	OPEN
International Chair:	
Barbara Pampalone	H 818-882-2395
Vocational Chair:	OPEN
Youth/Interact Chair:	OPEN
Programs co-Chairs:	
Debbie Navarro	H 818-838-7218
Robin Kellogg	H 818-993-5378
Sgt. at Arms:	
John Alexander	H 818-899-2045
Bulletin Editor:	
Robin Kellogg	H 818-993-5378

PolioPlus: Thank you to everyone who contributed this week.

Happy Bucks: Thank you to everyone who contributed this week.

Raffle: Barbara won the \$5 and John A. won the chance to pick the joker out of an ever-decreasing deck of cards with a chance to win half of the \$465 pot. He chose the 4 of clubs. There are just 28 cards left.

Robin Kellogg
18604 Stare St.
Northridge, CA 91324