



Roto News

“Change to Grow With Rotary”

Be a gift to the world

Honoring Those That Served

Members and guests arriving at Bakersfield East Rotary Club on Friday the 13th of November were greeted by President Rena Kay wearing a vintage hat with a 1940s flair and music and videos from the war years. This was all part of our Veterans Day celebration.

Mike Brazzell gave a thoughtful invocation. Sandi Schwartz stepped and led the flag salute in for Ron Biglin, who was too swamped making travel arrangements for clients to get away for the meeting. President Rena Kay wanted us to sing Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree with Anyone Else But Me, but the delay in finding the lyrics caused a music mutiny to occur, and members began singing My County Tis of Thee instead. We welcomed guests Vince Fong, Jane Lewis, and Lourdes Arrubla.

We congratulated Dean Carpenter on his 53rd wedding anniversary with Fredda.

President Rena Kay read Frank Geddes's obituary to the club, and we celebrated the life of our lost member. All are invited to gather for a memorial to Frank after the meeting on November 20, at 2 p.m. at the Rice Bowl. Frank's favorite colour was purple, so all are encouraged to wear purple.

Past President Lloyd Plank joined Rena Kay at the podium for a salute to his year as President, 1977-1978. Lloyd said his year as President was a piece of cake, because he followed Barney Gill as President and he had Frank Geddes as Secretary. He remembered hunting wild boar on Santa Cruz Island off of Oxnard and having a feast featuring the wild game. Rena Kay was thrilled by the pig connection.

Sandi Schwartz has returned from visiting her grandchildren in Hawaii, and she brought suck up gifts for President Rena Kay, who told us how much she is loving these suck up gifts. (So, keep them coming, folks!) Sandi brought a painted coconut, a lovely puka shell necklace, and the one macadamia nut that escaped the notice of Jane Lewis and Richard Schwartz.

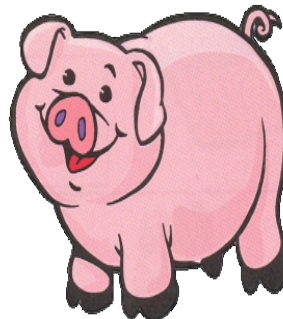
Sandi also asked us all to keep Larry and Susan Moxley in our prayers, as Susan has undergone surgery for what may be colon cancer. Larry and Susan are not ready to receive visitors, but they appreciate all of our good wishes.

Our program celebrated BERC members, past and president, who have served our country in the armed forces. Susan Gill shared stories about several members, while Tony Ansolabehere projected photographs of our members in their uniforms and at their duty sta-

tions. For those who missed the presentation, it is provided here, sadly without the photographs.

Today we celebrate our own veterans – members of Bakersfield East Rotary Club, past and present – who served in our nation's armed forces.

With stories of the Greatest Generation, we now understand a few truths that may not have been self-evident. First, many among us have put their lives at risk to maintain the freedom we all enjoy. They faced death every day and watched many of their comrades die around them. Without a doubt, we all consider them to be heroes. Yet, they do not consider themselves to be heroes. To a man (or woman), they maintain that the true heroes are those who were left behind on the battlefields. They returned from the battlefields and went about their lives, and many of us remain blissfully unaware of the horrors they faced . . . for all of us.



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Bakersfield East Rotary
Club
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Thank you to these and all of our BERC Veterans.

Tom Akers

One of our Charter Members, Tom Akers, was the most affable, laid back, southern gentleman. He smiled easily and put everyone at ease around him. He was a leader in our community. We celebrated him as a hail fellow well met, a Charter member of our club, and one whose invocation always made us smile (You pray to your God, I'll pray to mine.) Many of us received a shock when we attended his memorial service. Tom's son stood before us and told us that Tom never stopped reliving his experience in the jungles of the South Pacific during World War II. In a humorous manner so like his father, Tom's son told us that he had to warn his friends never to awaken his father if he had fallen asleep in his comfortable armchair, for if startled awake, Tom would think he was in the jungle and would jump to action accordingly. Sometimes he would awaken – kind of – in the middle of the night and go on patrol, crawling through the backyard as though slinking through the jungles of the South Pacific. Yet, none of us had any idea that those memories continued to be so real for our friend Tom Akers.

Jere Sullivan

Jere Sullivan left college at Amherst in Massachusetts to enlist in the Army during WWII. He was sent to Africa, where he joined the 45th Infantry Division – the Thunderbirds – around Thanksgiving of 1943. Jere was captured by the German forces at Anzio, and he spent the next 14 months in a German prisoner of war camp. Jere made two escape attempts from the camp. During the first attempt one of the men refused to stay with the escaping soldiers, and he was found and shot. Jere and another soldier quickly returned to the camp. Three or four days later they tried again, and this time they found some American soldiers in a nearby town. Unaware of their approaching countrymen, the Americans almost mowed them down with machine guns they were testing. Jere had weighed 160 pounds unclothed when he went into the army, and when he came out he weighed 117 pounds – in his uniform! Jere was awarded the POW medal, the Combat Infantrymans Badge with Clusters, and the Bronze Star.

Not everyone who serves in the armed forces sees battle. However, they are all at risk of being in harm's way.

S. B. Gill

Barney Gill was on a ship headed to Japan for the American invasion of Japan in August, 1945 when the surrender was signed on the USS Missouri. With the end of the war, all of the lawyers in the Pacific Theatre were rerouted to Manila to prosecute Japanese War Criminals. Barney helped write the rules for the prosecution, and he was the chief prosecutor of Sekimasa Uyeki and was also involved in the prosecution of Generals Ohta and Yamashita.

Tom Larwood

In the summer of 1944, Tom Larwood was a 19-year-old kid from Fresno who was enrolled in a pre-med course of study at California State University, Fresno. He crammed in two years of college into a year and a half. He was hoping to get into medical school, but in July of 1944 he received a draft notice instead. Reporting for duty, he chose the Navy over the Army because he wanted to be in the medical corps.

After boot camp, Tom was sent to medical corps school for three months and then was assigned to the Navy Hospital in Oakland for two years. The experience caused Tom to appreciate medicine from the eyes of a nurse, which he believes made him a much better doctor. During the first month at Navy Hospital Tom was on a ward dedicated to treating men with decubitus ulcers. Next he worked with soldiers whose battle wounds sent them home with colostomies. Tom explained that both of these assignments gave him a valuable understanding of these injuries and conditions. After five months on ward duty, Tom was assigned to the operating room as an assistant, which was also helpful to him in his future medical career. Tom spent his last year of duty in the operating room. He was discharged in 1946 as a Pharmacist's Mate 2nd Class.

Following his discharge, Tom went back to college, transferring to the University of California, Berkeley. Next he moved to Southern California to attend medical school at USC. Following medical school, Tom and his family moved to Korea. However, he and his son David contracted polio, so they returned to the US for treatment. An internship at Kern Medical Center brought Tom Larwood to Bakersfield.

Lloyd Plank

Lloyd Plank graduated from high school in Seminole, Oklahoma in 1948 and immediately enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force. He was sent to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas for basic training and then onto Cheyenne, Wyoming for technical training. He was offered a job as a cryptographer – a code breaker – and he jumped at that. Langley Field in Virginia was the next stop for him. Five months later, young Lloyd was ready to code and decode messages, and he was sent to Albrook Field in Panama, where he spent the rest of his duty tour.

As a cryptographer, Lloyd worked four shifts of six hours on, 24 hours off. After a 72-hour break, another shift started. He carried a .45 on his hip and kept a burp gun by his desk. While Lloyd was in Panama, a revolution broke out, and the army tanks lined up at the edge of the canal zone. The Berlin Airlift also occurred during this time, and planes came in and out of Albrook Field. The Korean Conflict broke out in 1951, and Lloyd's tour of duty was extended for a year, as Albrook was the Caribbean Air Command, with lots of the big brass coming through Panama. Lloyd describes his time in the U.S. Army Air Force as good years.

He was discharged as a Sgt. through Maguire Air Force Base at Fort Dix in 1952. He returned to Oklahoma and enrolled in Oklahoma Baptist University. He decided to move to Bakersfield after visiting his sister here. While working in the men's department at Brock's Department store downtown, Lloyd met his bride, Patty, who was Sally the Shopper on Brock's mezzanine floor. They were married in 1955.

Tom Burch

Inspired by his Dad, who was a gunnery Sargent in Korea, Tom Burch joined the Marine Corps reserves in his senior year at North High. A week after his graduation, he was headed to Marine Corps boot camp in San Diego. Next came infantry training at Camp Pendleton, and then his first posting – just east of Barstow. His assignment was photo and reproductions, but his youth spent swimming

the mighty Kern River earned him a job as a lifeguard.

By the end of 1965, Tom received his orders to go to Vietnam, and he returned to Camp Pendleton for additional training. Tom explained that every Marine is a rifleman first, and his assigned job comes second. So, don't think his assignment as a photographer was a cushy one. Remember, he was a COMBAT photographer!

Tom described Vietnam as "beautiful when the bullets weren't flying." And, they flew often. Tom had some close calls in Vietnam. On one mission, near the City of Dong Ha, on a remote base called Khe Sahn, three miles from the DMZ, Tom's unit was setting up a blocking force. Tom was on a military crest and could hear Viet Cong walking down the trail 100 feet below him. Mortars were flying, and he could hear their whistle as they flew through the air, and the thunk as they landed. The next morning he awoke to find an unexploded mortar only 7-8 inches from the edge of his foxhole.

Another time, Artillery from Naval Guns in the South China Sea was covering the troops. Tom popped his head up out of his foxhole, and a gunnery sgt. pulled him back down, telling him now was not the time to be up. Just then a six foot long, ½ inch thick piece of shrapnel from the naval gunfire sailed right over Tom's head.

Again as part of a blocking force near Khe Sahn, Tom was ordered into a helicopter. He got in and buckled up, when a radio man told him, "No, the skipper wants you to go over there." So, Tom got out of the helicopter and repositioned himself. Shortly thereafter the cop-ter he had been in was shot out of the sky, and 17 of the 19 men on board were killed.

Tom's most famous moment as a Marine Corps photographer came when he took a photo of Dr. Bernard Fall moments before his death. Dr. Fall earned acclaim with the publication of his book about the French War in Indochina, *Street Without Joy*. He returned to Vietnam many times, the last time in February, 1967. Tom's company was on a search and destroy mission, and they had the VC on the run.

They met up with another company with which Dr. Fall was traveling. Tom snapped a photo of Dr. Fall as he sat for a moment. Dr. Fall borrowed a motion picture photographer and a still photographer – fortunately not Tom! – to accompany Dr. Fall on the next leg of his trip. There were mines all over the place, and they told Dr. Fall not to walk out onto the field, lest he trip a mine. Ignoring that warning, he set out, with his photographers in tow, and tripped one of the mines, killing himself and both photographers. Tom's photo of Dr. Fall became the last photo ever taken of the man, and it was featured in the *Time Magazine* article about him.

Sgt. Tom Burch returned to the U.S. in May, 1967, and he finished out his career in Santa Ana. He was honorably discharged in August, 1967, and he enrolled in BC on the GI bill, where he met the girl of his dreams, Gail Peterson, who for 46 years has been known as Gail Burch.

Phil Franey

In 1968, Phil Franey graduated from Bakersfield College with an AA degree. The draft was in full swing, but those who enlisted had some choices, so Phil enlisted in the United States Army. He went to basic training at Ft. Ord in Monterey. His commitment was for three years, so Phil looked around for the longest training program he could find. The longest was the nuclear school, and although he qualified for that, there were no openings. So, he got his second choice and went to Huntsville, Alabama for the 54-week training to be a radar and computer technician. When he was fully trained, Phil was sent to Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas and assigned to an A/V lab to produce Vietnamese tapes for the Vietnamese language school. He also worked with photographers in crime scene investigations. He developed photographs taken during the Apollo 14 and Apollo 15 missions – a TOP SECRET assignment.

There were several times when Phil was told to pack his things and prepare to be sent to Vietnam, only to have his orders change at the last minute. Toward the end of his three-year enlistment period, Phil was transferred to a special assignment with the Military Police. Although he was offered an officer school position, Phil declined to spend another two years in the Army, and he was discharged as a Specialist IV. He returned to Bakersfield, attended Cal State Bakersfield, married Dina, and he went on to fame as the Kern County Treasurer Tax Collector.

Bruce Keith

Bruce Keith grew up in Whittier, California. He spent his junior high school years in San Marino at Southwestern Military Academy. In 1969 Bruce had completed two years of engineering at Long Beach State. Although he had a student deferment, he also had a very low draft lottery number. So, Bruce joined the United States Army Reserve. Bruce and Claudia had been married for two months when Bruce went to Ft. Dix, New Jersey for basic training. He explained that half of the people in basic training were students like him. But, the other half were young men from New York who entered the army after being given the choice of going to jail or entering the army. Although they did fine in basic training, half of this group graduated from the program in handcuffs.

After basic training, Bruce was assigned to a psychological warfare unit and was trained in operating a radio station – just like in *Good Morning Vietnam!* He said it was like a circus. He remembered when an officer wanted them to play Vietnamese music. They didn't have any Vietnamese music, so they just played music backwards for a couple of hours, until the officer finally said, "That's enough!" Bruce pointed out that the army wanted creative people, but creative people aren't always great at following orders – especially when they are stupid orders. Bruce also learned the perfect place to escape, where no sergeant would think to look for a soldier – the library! From Fort Dix, Bruce went to Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey. After his six months of training, Bruce returned home to Claudia. He spent two weeks each year and one weekend a month in the army for the six years of his enlistment. Bruce served at Ft. MacArthur in San Pedro, Camp Roberts near San Luis Obispo, and Ft. Irwin, which is 60 miles north of Barstow. He said one nice side benefit of being a radio broadcaster, was that only one man was needed at a time. So, with one other man on duty at the same time, they divided their time and worked only every other day. Bruce was discharged in 1975.

Bruce returned to college while he was serving in the Army Reserve. During his senior year he decided he didn't like engineering, so he started over in his true calling, architecture. After eight years of college he graduated from Cal Poly SLO with 333 college credits.

Fernando Aguirre

Fernando Aguirre received his draft notice during his senior year in high school in 1971. He enlisted in the U.S. Army. He attended Army Basic Infantry Training at Fort Ord Military Base in Monterey. From there he went to Fort Belvoir in Virginia for training as a 52D Power-Generation Equipment Repairer. Fernando served in Germany from 1972 to August, 1974 on a missile site, providing power generation duties and repair. He also worked in the motor pool and pulled guard tower duty around the missile site. While Fernando was in Germany, there were numerous missile site lock downs because of the threat of the Baader-Meinhof Gang Red Army Faction. Fernando was in Germany when the Israeli athletes were massacred at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich. Fernando was a Specialist 4/ Corporal.

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Club Directors & Committees

- I. Club Service, Administration**.....Director: **Steve Karcher**
- Attendance/Front Table.....: Tony Ansolabehere
 - BERC Database & WEB.....: Tony Ansolabehere
 - Roto News Publisher.....: Michele Brown
 - Roto News Photographer.....: Brian Oberg
 - BBQ.....: Steve Karcher/Rena Kay S.
 - Holiday Lunch.....: Melinda Westfahl
 - Charter Night.....: _____
 - Gin Fizz.....: Gary Stanfill
 - Venue/Food.....: Steve Karcher
 - Historian.....: Rena Kay Schrader
 - Programs.....: Steve Gibbs/John Wilson
 - Public Relations.....: _____
- II. Club Service, Membership**.....Director: **Jimmie Soto**
- Classification.....:Tom Burch
 - Evaluation.....: Wayne Kress
 - Rotary Information.....: Dan Giordano
 - Fireside/Assimilation.....: Jimmie Soto/Rena Kay
 - Membership Development (Master of Fun).....: Steve Richardson
 - Rotarian Magazine.....: Dan Giordano
 - Membership Directory.....: Melinda Westfahl
 - E-mail Blasts.....: Michele Brown
 - Family of Rotary.....:Jenny Dierck/Steve Karcher, Christy S.
- III. Vocational Service**.....Director: **Mike Brazzell**
- Employee Recognition.....: Steve Richardson
 - Business Person Of The Year.....: Mike Brazzell
 - Craft Talks.....: Mike Brazzell
 - Vocational Scholarships.....: Mike Brazzell & Aaron Markovits
 - Officer Of The Year.....: Mike Brazzell
- IV. Community Service-Youth Services**.....Director: **Aaron Markovits / Day Smith**
- East High Interact.....:Tomeka Powell
 - Highland High InterAct.....: Brian Oberg
 - Garces High InterAct.....: Scarlett Sabin
 - OLPH InterAct.....: Scarlett Sabin
 - Joe Alexander Scholarship Foundation Liaison.....: Aaron Markovits
 - RotarAct.....: Aaron Markovits
 - Scholarships.....: Gary Creott & Bill Gresco
 - RYLA.....: Day Smith/Sandi Schwartz
 - Business & Ethics Conference.....: Steve Richardson
 - Four Way Test.....: Aaron M. & Day S.

V. Community Service-Outreach.....Director: **Fernando Aguirre**

Blood Bank Organ Donation.....:Sandi Schwartz

A. Blood Bank Days

BGC & Children Outreach.....: Fernando Aguirre

A. Backpack Project.....: Tom Burch, Christy Swatzell & Fernando

B. Jamison Center.....: Tom Burch

Environment

A. Bike Path Maps.....: Terry Schroepfer

B. Rotary Park.....: Ron Biglin, Tom Burch & Jon Lifquist

C. Cleanup Projects.....: Fernando

Handicap/Poverty/Senior Citizens.....:

Other Community Service Outreach

*Can Food Drive.....: Christy Swatzell

*Salvation Army Bell Ringing.....: Michelle Brown, Susan Leedy

*Youth Financial Literacy.....: Jim Williams & Roy Herrmann

A. Dictionary Project.....:

B. Listen to Readers.....: Julie Womack

*The Forgotten Initiative.....: Jenny Dierck

Veterans

A. Honor Flight.....: Tom Burch

B. Rebuilding Kern Together.....: Fernando Aguirre

VI. International Service.....Director: **Amanda Frank**

• Polio Plus.....: Dan Giordano

• Polio Plus Donations.....: Dan Giordano

• International Service Development/Grants.....: Christy Swatzell & Committee

• South of the Boarder/Education.....: Amanda & Sandi Schwartz

• Love Water.....: Amanda & Christine Randall

VII. BERC Foundation.....Director: **Dan Giordano**

• Vino Amore Chair.....: Tom Burch & Michelle Brown

• Vino Amore Sponsorships.....: Scott Begin

• Vino Amore Auction Items.....: Jenny Dierck / Dan Urban

• Vino Amore Treasurer.....: Bob Parker

• Vino Amore Tickets.....: Sandi Schwartz / Christine Randall

VIII. FUN Raisers

• Shooting Contest.....: _____

• Photo Calendar, Note Cards, Post Cards.....: _____

Updated 07.16.2015

Baynes Bank

Baynes Bank took a rather unusual path to service. His father was a career navy officer who graduated from the Naval Academy and did two tours as a fighter pilot in Vietnam. When he left the Navy he enjoyed a long second career as the Director of Aviation Safety Programs for the Navy in Monterey. Although Baynes admired his father greatly, he did not follow in his father's footsteps. Baynes earned degrees in Religion and Economics in college and went to work for Proctor and Gamble. However, during long commutes in the Bay Area Baynes started dreaming of flying jets. He mentioned this to his father, and a week later a Naval recruiter called and insisted that they meet. Apparently Dad had mentioned Baynes' interest, and that sparked the Navy's interest. The recruiter encouraged Baynes to take an aptitude test. Not wanting to spend his life lamenting what ifs for lack of taking 90 minutes to sit for the test, Baynes agreed to take the test. He passed with flying colours and soon gave notice to Proctor & Gamble.

In June, 1981 Baynes went to Aviation Officer Candidate School in Pensacola, Florida. He graduated 2nd in his class and in the top 5% of all those graduating from Naval School Command during the past 12 months. He was given a U.S. Navy Commission – the same that a graduate of the Naval Academy would have. Baynes was on the fast track for an impressive career in the Navy. He soloed in a T-28 (which is a really big plane).

A good singing voice, a desire to play his guitar, and the graduation of the cymbal player in the band led Baynes to join the Naval Officer School Candidates Band in Pensacola.

Baynes soon realized that military life was not really for him. By agreeing to spend the next six years on inactive reserve duty, Baynes was allowed to separate from the military. His departing grade was a Lt. Junior Grade. Baynes returned to California and in May, 1983 he answered the call of a friend who invited him to sell real estate for the Coldwell Banker Commercial Group in Bakersfield, where he worked for Wayne Kress. And, the rest is history.

Mike Brazzell

Mike Brazzell graduated from Tuskegee Institute in Alabama with degrees in Political Science and English. He had spent all four of his college years in ROTC, and immediately following his graduation he was sent straight to his first duty assignment in the United States Air Force at Barksdale Air Force Base in Bossier City, Louisiana. As the youngest officer on the base, Mike drew duty that started at midnight. He was responsible for 175 troops guarding the B52s that were on alert – loaded and ready to go – and the pilots who flew them. His troops were also responsible for guarding the highly volatile nuclear weapons that were stored on the base. In addition to the security enforcement, as a shift commander Mike was also responsible for law enforcement on the base.

After six to eight months of this on the job training at Barksdale, Mike was sent to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas for training. After training, Mike was assigned back to Barksdale, where he spent the remainder of his career in the Air Force. While there, he earned a Masters Degree in Criminal Justice from Grambling State University, in his spare time.

Mike applied to the USAF JAG program, but he was not one of the 21 officers chosen for that program. He then applied to be a pilot, but he was excluded because of his eyesight.

After considering a career in the military, Mike decided that although he enjoyed military life and had made good friends in the Air Force, the military was downsizing and civilian life was more his cup of tea. It was a timely decision, as he was discharged in 1990 – just before the Gulf War started.

Mike stayed in Louisiana. He was selling cars for a living and sold a car to a State Farm Insurance agent. The agent was so impressed with Mike that he offered him a career at State Farm, and the rest is history. Mike has found his true calling selling insurance with State Farm, and he has called Bakersfield home for the past 20 years.

Dan Urban

Dan Urban was a high school student in Plattsburg, New York, when he joined the U.S. Army Reserves. He spent the summer before his senior year in basic training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. During his senior year in high school he spent his weekends as a truck driver (64 Charlie) for the Army Reserves. When he graduated from high school, he decided to enlist in the U.S.A.F.

Dan's father was a career Air Force Officer – he retired as a Lt. Col. – so Dan was familiar with the life. He did basic training – AGAIN – at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. After an academy in Wichita Falls, Texas and survival school in Spokane, Washington, Dan went to Merced, CA to be trained as an in flight air refueler for KC 135s. And, that is what he did for the Air Force until his discharge in July, 2004 with the rank of Staff Sgt. He took quite a roundabout way to Bakersfield, but we are glad he and Erin moved here in 2004.

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|--------|-----------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| | Greeter | Greeter | Flag Salute | Invocation | Visiting | Reception | Reception |
| 6-Nov | Williams | Wilson | Womack | Aguirre | Amstutz | Auriemma | Bank |
| 13-Nov | Bass | Begin | Biglin | Brazzell | Brown | Burger | Burch |
| 20-Nov | Carpenter | Coffey | Colatruglio | Creott | Dierck | Franey | Frank |
| 4-Dec | Gibbs | Gill | Giordano | Gresco | Jackson | Jung | Karcher |
| 11-Dec | Keith | Kress | Lifquist | Louey | Markovits | Maxwell | Moxley |
| 18-Dec | Oberg | Parker | Pereyra | Powell | Ramsey | Randall | Richardson |
| 8-Jan | Sabin | Schroepfer | Schwartz | Smith | Sorci | Soto | Stanfill |
| 15-Jan | Swatzell | Sullivan | Urban | Watanabe | Williams | Wilson | Womack |

