



The Voice of the Vineyards

The Weekly Electronic Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Healdsburg

“The mission of a bulletin is inform the membership,
comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable”

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September 26, 2022

WELCOME: President Doug Garrett

Under the dynamic leadership of **President Doug Garrett**, our September 26 meeting was literally action-packed. These notes cannot possibly capture the color, excitement, drama, and humor of Monday’s meeting. You had to be there!

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE



President Doug got the meeting off to an exciting start by asking our own Australian born-and-bred **Graham Freeman** to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. **Graham** only momentarily looked like the proverbial “deer in the headlights” before calmly and capably leading us in the Pledge. Good on ya, Graham!

VISITING ROTARIANS: None

GUESTS of ROTARIANS:



✓

Bill Campbell, Guest of **Jerry Campbell**



✓ Maureen Davison, Guest of **Alex Rollins**



✓ Jim Manly, Guest of **Dick Cochran**

✓ Cindy Brenton, Guest of **Jim Brenton**



✓ Rosemary Jordan, Guest of **Tricia Fichtner**



✓ George Dutton, Guest of the Club

✓ Karissa Kruse and Karen Hart from Sonoma County Winegrowers



TRIVIA WINNER

In keeping with his program-themed trivia questions, **President Doug** asked the Club how many American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) there are currently in Sonoma County. **Emily Martin** was not allowed to answer and for a while it seemed as though our generally wine-knowledgeable members might be at a loss. But **Doug Lyle** correctly answered 19 and received a \$25 contribution in his name to Polio Plus.



President Doug then stumped the Club with his bonus question about the name of the County's latest AVA designation. The correct answer is West Sonoma Coast. **John Avakian** wondered aloud how grapes can be grown west of the Sonoma Coast. How, indeed!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Doug reviewed the actions at the recent Club Board meetings:

- ✚ Activating approved grants for both **Merida Community Garden** and **Russian River** fire risk reduction and water improvement projects.
- ✚ Approved **\$1,500** donation to continue Dolly Parton Imagination Library book program for preschoolers. **President Doug** gave a shout-out to **Don Mitchell** for his successful efforts to sign up families from the North Bay Children's Center.
- ✚ Approved **\$1,000** Donation to "Listening for a Change" with proceeds from film showing at the Raven Theater.
- ✚ Approved a **\$500** donation to support seating at the new Pickleball courts (w/Rotary Club of Healdsburg signage). The indomitable **Graham Freeman** has been instrumental in spearheading the groundswell of public support for the new courts.
- ✚ A team from the Board has been put together to propose how to stimulate donations to the new **Kevin Burke Memorial Law Enforcement Scholarship** program at SRJC
- ✚ A team will study the viability of our Club sponsoring an **AED device** at Healdsburg Rec. Park or a similar location.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ✚ The HHS Interact Club is collecting items for the homeless. Bring items to the next meeting or contact **Don Mitchell** for more information.
- ✚ October **Lunch Signups** are closing. Click here to order lunch for October meetings: <https://bit.ly/3f6CnGc>;



✚ **Adopt-a-Highway** Cleanup, October 8. Meet at 9:00 under the highway overpass on Dry Creek Road. Contact **Nita Parker** for more details.

✚ **John Hazlett** reminded members to sign up for the **AAUW Fall Forums**. Alex Saragoza will be presenting Cities of Empire: Latin America's Great Urban Centers and Terry Ebinger will be presenting Hollywood Comedies of Remarriage From the Golden Age of Film. These classes will be held at the Healdsburg Performing Arts Center Raven Theater as well as live-streamed on Zoom for those who can't attend. Recordings of the classes of each class will be available through November 30th. Proceeds go to support the AAUW's scholarship program.



✚ **Dinners for Eight** signups are closing soon. If you haven't already, go here to pick a date or two: <https://forms.gle/8dEpF9KU31gxyfBy5>;

✚ **Club Wine Social at Merriam Vineyards**. Wednesday, October 19. 5:00 – 7:00 Go here to purchase tickets (includes wine and nibbles for only \$15): <https://bit.ly/3BGLlla>;

✚ **LandPaths work party** at Healdsburg Ridge Open Space, Friday, October 21, 9:00-12:00. Sign up here: <https://bit.ly/3UBE9zu>.

✚ **Club Halloween Dinner at the Trading Post**. Wednesday, October 26. Sign up at the meeting or email Doug if you have not already RSVP'd.

✚ **Paul Frechette** noted that the Cloverdale Rotary Club is sponsoring the **Asti Tour de Vine** on October 8. For more details go to www.astitourdevine.com.



THANKSGIVING LUNCH AT SENIOR CENTER

President Doug announced that this year we will be back in person serving a full Thanksgiving Dinner to seniors at the Healdsburg Senior Center at 133 Matheson Street. This event will take place on Monday, November 21, instead of our regularly scheduled Club meeting. **Doug** asked all of us to show up, participate, and bring a pie and (possibly) a white elephant gift. will confirm

if **Senator Mike McGuire** will be attending. Please reach out to **Graham Freeman** for more details.

MEMBER BIRTHDAYS or ANNIVERSARIES



- **John Torres** celebrates his Rotary Anniversary, 16 years on October 3. **John** pledged \$25 to the Club.

HAPPY DOLLARS RECOGNITION

- On September 17, **Pat Williams** celebrated the wedding of her oldest daughter. The affair at Rue's Farm was lovely, the weather cooperated, and both the bride and the groom said YES. Pat donated \$117 to her Paul Harris fund.
- **Alex Rollins** and her husband Paul are headed to an exciting (and much-deserved) vacation in Australia. To help **Alex** and Paul communicate with the locals, **Graham Freeman** loaned them his Australian slang bible, The Dinkum Dictionary. **Graham** also donated \$50 to Alex's Paul Harris fund.



- **Dave Anderson** had the pleasure of recent visits from his wife's sister (5 days) and brother (2 days). To celebrate their departure, **Dave** donated \$50 to Polio Plus.



- **Jerry Ogden** recently took a 90-minute flight to San Diego from the Santa Rosa airport. The flight was only delayed 3 hours. In gratitude, **Jerry** gave \$50 to Polio Plus.

- **Rob Rinne** enjoyed a month-long trip to the Pacific Northwest, including Vancouver, Vancouver Island, Port Townsend, and Seattle. The weather was fabulous, with the temperature in the mid-70s and no rain until the drive home. **Rob** came bearing gifts for **President Doug**, including seeds from the Butchart Gardens in Victoria and some genuine Canadian maple syrup. **Rob** also donated \$50 to the Club.

- **John Avakian** is doing well after his recent hip replacement and he thanked **Phil Luks** and **Paul Frechette** for loaning him two walkers (one for upstairs and one for downstairs). In their honor, **John** donated \$25 to the Club.



- **Emily Martin** noted that her younger sister has been battling breast cancer since January and that she recently completed 35 days of radiation treatment. **Emily** donated \$35 to her Paul Harris fund.



TODAY'S PROGRAM

President Doug introduced our speaker **Karissa Kruse**, President of the Sonoma County Winegrowers (SCW), a marketing and educational organization dedicated to the promotion and preservation of Sonoma County as one of the world's premier grape-growing regions. (Doug also fined himself for inadvertently referring to the organization as the Sonoma County Winemakers and donated \$10 to the Club.)



Karissa was a dynamo! Your poor scribe wrote furiously but will only be able to touch on the highlights of Karissa's presentation. For more information – and for what is probably more accurate information – please go to the SCW website at: <https://sonomawinegrape.org/>

Karissa began her presentation by providing a brief update on this year's harvest. She noted that the first grapes were harvested on July 29 and that Sonoma County beat Napa in this annual contest.

At this point, almost all of the county's Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes have been picked, representing about 42% of the anticipated total harvest. Growers expect that this year's harvest will be completed by the third week of October – about two weeks ahead of normal.

To no one's surprise, the recent high temperatures and unseasonal rain were not a benefit to this year's crop – although the rain was a welcome break for the county as a whole. Karissa expects that this year's total harvest will be about 185,000 – 190,000 tons, slightly less than the average harvest of 200,000 tons.

As a follow-up to **President Doug's** bonus question, Karissa explained that an AVA designation is based on uniqueness in four different characteristics: climate, soil, elevation, and history. She also said that Sonoma recently applied for a 20th AVA designation for **Pocket Peak** – a mountainous area above the Alexander Valley.

For most of her presentation, Karissa focused on the recent (2016) re-launch and expanded efforts of the Sonoma County Grape Grower's Foundation. This is the only non-profit organization in Sonoma County that solely serves vineyard employees. The foundation provides direct support in the areas of childcare, education, healthcare, housing, resiliency, and workforce development.

Karissa underscored the importance of the foundation by noting that Sonoma County's vineyard employees are not migrant workers. They are skilled employees who live in Sonoma year-round. In recent years, growers have increasingly come to recognize the importance of supporting these workers so that there is a stable and reliable source of labor. At this point, there are about 6,000 vineyard workers who are full-time employees, and most of these do receive healthcare benefits. They are currently supplemented by about 1,100 Temporary Agricultural Workers who are available because of the H-2A visa program.

The Sonoma County Grape Grower's Foundation has done a phenomenal job of supporting vineyard workers who were displaced by recent fires. And the Foundation also led the way in providing workers and their families with Covid-19 vaccinations. But some of the Foundation's most impressive work has been in the areas of employee recognition and workforce development. Since 2018, the Foundation has supported a monthly and annual employee recognition program that celebrates the efforts of these critical workers and brings together employers, employees, and their families. And the Foundation recently introduced a Leadership Academy to train vineyard workers who would like to advance to leadership positions.

In the fast-paced Q and A session that followed her presentation, Karissa responded to a question about the extent of mechanical harvesting by indicating that about 15-20% of Sonoma County grapes are currently harvested by mechanical means. And in response to a question about worker safety during periods of fire and smoke, she emphasized that agriculture is the most closely

regulated industry in the state of California and that there are very high standards protecting vineyard employees.

RAFFLE WINNER

Karissa Kruse selected the lottery ticket and the winner was **John Hazlett**. **John** did not pick the lucky marble but did leave with a great bottle of wine.



CLOSING

President Doug thanked members and guests, then gave the meeting closed.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS: Craft Talks with **Devin Drew** and **Bob Livingston**